

Dialogue

Newsletter of the Network for Peace through Dialogue

Mission:

**Network for Peace,
Through Dialogue
creates opportunities
for individuals and
groups to engage in
constructive
conversation in an
atmosphere of
openness and mutual
respect.**



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“Dialogue In/As Action” Conference: What Did We Learn?

Is dialogue just a lot of talk or does it accomplish something? Can it be conducted through other means than speech? Does it have to lead to action or is it valuable in itself?

These are some of the questions that were explored in the Network’s second conference on dialogue. Called “Dialogue In/As Action,” the conference brought over 100 people to Marymount Manhattan College on Friday evening, June 12 and all day Saturday, June 13. By the end of the conference it was clear that dialogue, conducted through talk, music, drama, and film, at times prepared for by quiet and mindful reflection, can have rich and fruitful results.

On Friday evening, three presentations set the tone for the conference. First, former Congresswoman and Vice Presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro was interviewed by Network Board Member Laurence Berg about the ways she has used dialogue effectively in her work. You can find a report on her remarks on p. 4 of this newsletter.

Following Ms. Ferraro’s interview, Marymount Manhattan Theater Arts students demonstrated a way to explore dialogue through improvisation. They first dramatized a situation in which an employee was in conflict with her boss, then invited members of the audience to come on stage and replay the scene using their ideas for a dialogue that could help resolve the problem.

Finally, Sandy Heierbacher, founder of the National Coalition for Dialogue and Deliberation, talked about the possibilities for bringing dialogue into public life by taking advantage of the openings for dialogue that President Obama has encouraged.

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***You are invited!
Recognition Night 2009***

***Honoring Lela Love, Professor of Law
Cardozo School of Law, Yeshiva University***

November 3, 2009

6-9 pm

\$100 per person

Marymount School—Fifth Avenue at 84th St.

Please respond by using the enclosed envelope.

From the Director

We continue to promote dialogue locally, nationally and internationally. We introduce and teach dialogue among young blacks and Latino(a)s in Harlem, neighbors attending Living Room Dialogues, and international participants in our on-line dialogues. We are supporting the White House's Public Engagement Initiative and cringe as we hear reports of the angry debates and name calling at town hall meetings about health care reform. We hope work like ours will lead to more respectful discussions about public policy.

Conference Thanks

Last June we organized the national conference on dialogue described on p. 1. The hours spent preparing all details for the June Conference were rewarded as participants felt welcome, well fed, and energized by the variety of the offerings and all of the connections made. There is not room here to tell of all that people contributed, but you can find detail of their many gifts at www.networkforpeace.com. Once there, click on Updates, Conference, Thank Yous. Here are their names: Carrie-Ann Biondi, Emilie Brown, Ross Chappell, Dana Edell, Geraldine Ferraro, Devon Fredericks, Liz Grefrath, Chris Merideth, Peter Naccarado, Bret Nelson and all members of the Network Board. It took a village to run this conference and the good will was palpable. Thank you to all who helped.

New Facilitators' Group Planned

Last year the Network brought together 10 experienced dialogue facilitators in six meetings where they shared experiences and some of the challenges of their field. The facilitators appreciated the connections they made so much that they have since organized two reunions in participants' homes.

Now we are organizing a second series of meetings for facilitators, the DFNG II. The new group will include "fishbowl" exercises with respected peers, opportunities to explore professional dilemmas by "replaying" them in the group as a way to think about solutions, and informal mentoring opportunities.

Since the dialogue field is in its infancy, we at the Network believe in creating such groups, we pro-

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Coming Up

Tuesday, October 13

First session of the DFNG II

See note in From the Director for Description.

Tuesday, November 3

Marymount School, 1026 Fifth Ave., NYC

Recognition Night 2009

We will honor **Lela Love**, Professor of Law, Director, Kukin Program for Conflict Resolution and the Cardozo Mediation Clinic. More about her on p. 5.

Guy Bennett, will once again lead the auction. The requested donation for this evening is \$100.

Call 212-426-5818 to reserve your space!

On-going

Google Group

Shaping Our Future

A new on-line dialogue is to begin at the end of September or beginning of October. We are seeking participants as well as contributions for a topic for this session. We are also looking for topics that 1) have affected you, or your community personally; and 2) that are appropriate for a dialogue that includes individuals from different backgrounds. If you are interested in participating in this upcoming session, e-mail Karen Ross at: shaping.our.future.dialogue@gmail.com

Network for Peace through Dialogue is a 501(c)3 organization and depends on individual contributions. Any contribution you can make in cash, stock, or a bequest will help to further our work. The address and phone number are on the cover of this newsletter. Thank you.

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On Saturday, another group of Marymount students, this time from a philosophy class, attracted a large crowd to a session called “Is Dialogue with Evil Possible?” A short summary of their conclusions can be found on the Network’s website along with reports on most of the 24 sessions offered at the conference sessions.

Note-takers were present in most sessions so that we could offer a taste of this productive conference to people who could not attend. Following is a report of a session given by young people from our own Confronting Concerns program.

Teens Offer Session At Dialogue Conference

Teens from the Network’s Leadership Institute, Brittani Anderson, Erica Johnson, Jahmala Cornelius, and Roshelle Wickham, and the Teen Coordinator Tene Howard presented a session at the conference entitled “Ten Techniques to Talk with Teens.”

In one activity, participants were formed into three groups which were given different scenarios of youth and adult situations and asked to develop role plays of possible dialogues in those situations.

In one scene a teacher, discouraged about derogatory language being used toward females, had to figure out how he would talk to the youth. The teacher in the role said he was disappointed by the language and then tried to get the youth to say how it felt for them to be using it with one another. After the role-play the teen leaders led a dialogue with the whole group in regard to the presentation. This was done for the three scenarios.

The role-plays were followed by questions the teens asked adults. Here are some of them: Why do teens feel that they have to hide stuff? Why do you think the teens have a hard time talking to



Jahmala and Roshelle Presenting a Conference Ses-

adults? They then presented the ten techniques for talking to teens they had developed, and this led to more dialogue with the participants present.

Ten Techniques to Talk to Teens

1. Being Courageous: It is important to be strong enough to approach any situation needing attention.
2. Listening: Listening to the person without giving feedback right away.
3. Patience: Be willing to accept and deal with the issues in a meaningful way.
4. Non-Judgmental: Not criticizing and not letting the event judge the person’s character.
5. Respect: Showing the same consideration you would want provided to you.
6. Honesty: No sugarcoating.
7. Forgiveness/Understanding: Understanding the situation and taking it for what it is.
8. Involvement: Being active and not just standing in the background.
9. Modeling: Setting a positive example.
10. After resolving the issue under discussion, being able to trust the other person.

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vide welcome support for professionals who are breaking new ground in this area. The six monthly meetings will begin October 13 and will cost \$300. For more information, contact Pamela Zivari at pzivari@networkforpeace.com.

The very best to each of you.

Virginia Dorgan, RHSM

Another Blessing Appears

Hayato Nakayama, a Japanese student, came to us one day in July to offer 20 hours a week of volunteer time for six months. He had examined our website, liked what he saw and called us up. We are delighted to have him. A short profile of Hayato appears on our website.

Geraldine Ferraro's Tips on Dialogue

Geraldine Ferraro – former Congresswoman, first woman candidate for Vice President of the United States, and proud alumna of Marymount Manhattan College – opened the Network's dialogue conference in that school on June 12 in an interview with Laurence Berg, a Network board member.

In her public life, she learned two principles necessary for effective dialogue, she said. The first is that you have to do the work of building relationships before you can begin to talk. The second is that you can't get everything you want — and other people might know something, too!

As an example of the need to build relationships, she described an experience when she was U.S. Ambassador to the UN Commission on Human Rights. Not much could be accomplished in the working Commission because every representative came to Geneva with their country's own agenda and some ambassadors were interested only in scoring points, not really in talking. Real dialogue had to take place behind the scenes.

Getting to Know Muslims

A big accomplishment for her was getting a condemnation of anti-Semitism included for the first time in a UN resolution. For this to happen, she had to get to know ambassadors from countries in the Order of Islamic States and build up their trust in her.

To have dialogue you first have to learn where people are coming from. "Charm" helps in this process, she said. When Laurence questioned her about the ingredients of "charm," she said that being interested and curious about other cultures and customs and approaching people as an ordinary human being rather than as a VIP are important. To make relationships with ambassadors from Islamic countries she went to many Ramadan dinners, putting on six pounds in six weeks.

She also took the unusual step of inviting all the ambassadors and their wives to a formal dinner and showing the film "Schindler's List." The next day the resolution including the language on anti-Semitism passed unanimously in the full Commission.

Her experience in Congress introduced her to the importance of making relationships. President Reagan and Congressman Tip O'Neill were models for this. They didn't agree on anything, yet they knew how to talk to each other, built up a relationship of trust, and always managed to reach accommodation. Her friends who remain in Congress tell her such relationships aren't happening today and that "it's impossible to get anything done."

Accepting Compromise

Congress was also the venue for lesson number two: You can't get everything you want. She concluded that she would have to accept a little bit of what she wanted when the opportunity arose. When fighting for economic equity for women, for example, she authored sections of a bill on reform of pensions that gave women more opportunities for receiving survivor's benefits. Some complained that she had compromised too much, but she argued that accepting a piece of what they wanted gave them something they could all build on in the future.

Toward the end of the interview Laurence asked about situations where a person might feel that he or she just can't trust another person or group. Gerry (by that time she and Laurence had become friends) got a laugh with the line, "Laurence, you weren't raised by Marymount nuns!" She added: "I think most human beings are decent...and willing to participate in dialogue if you have something to talk about."



Geraldine Ferraro & Laurence Berg

Introducing Lela Love....

Network for Peace through Dialogue will be proud to honor **Lela Porter Love** at our Recognition Night on November 3. A professor of law and director of the Kukin Program for Conflict Resolution at Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law (NYC), she founded (in 1985) and directs Cardozo's Mediation Clinic, which trains future lawyers in the art and science of mediation.

Mediation brings disputing parties together to talk about perspectives on their conflict, in order to enhance their understanding, promote problem-solving, and often achieve agreement and closure. Although today mediation training is firmly recognized as part of the law school curriculum, at the time she developed the mediation clinic at Cardozo it was considered a radical innovation.

Love serves as mediator, arbitrator and dispute resolution consultant in community, employment, family, human rights, school-based and commercial cases. She has trained thousands of mediators in the United States and abroad. Her course in Budapest, Hungary, offered each summer for the past decade—*Mediation and Other Methods to Foster Democratic Dialogue*—targets both American law students wanting to learn about mediation and scholars and professionals in the dispute resolution field from around the world desiring to learn better ways to teach and promote peaceful resolution of conflict.

Glen Cove Mediation

Her successful mediation of a rancorous dispute in Glen Cove, NY, in the early 1990s between immigrant workers, some of them Salvadoran refugees, and outraged residents of Glen Cove, brought national attention to the use of mediation in resolving complex litigation. It is still widely discussed because the case demonstrated that even where there are constitutional issues in play (here freedom of speech and assembly) mediation can achieve many things that litigation cannot.

After a two-day mediation, with the days spaced a week apart, the parties reached consensus on many measures that addressed the situation. Moreover, respectful dialogue begun in the mediation continued afterward, making it possible to

work out new problems as they developed. Many of the commitments made as a result of the mediation called on the town and representatives of the workers to collaborate to ensure the peaceful and constructive implementation of their agreement.

The case resonated across the country because of tensions in many towns between immigrant workers and long-time citizens. As such cultural clashes continue to take place today, Love's work in Glen Cove and elsewhere holds out hope that dialogue and mediation can set up processes for addressing complex issues of public policy that respect the essential humanity of all the parties.

Mediation in Everyday Life

Love is the author of three law school textbooks on mediation and negotiation. Her latest book, *The Middle Voice: Mediating Conflict Successfully*, co-authored with Joseph Stulberg, brings techniques of mediation into everyday life. Everyone from the parent confronted with a dispute between children over a TV program to policy-makers can benefit from this very accessible but thorough discussion of when and how to conduct a mediation.

Dialogue and mediation are inextricably intertwined in both their purposes and their techniques. We are proud to give our award this year to one of the pioneers in the mediation field, Lela P. Love.



Above, Lela Love shown at the Peace Palace in The Hague where she led the first-ever International Mediation Leadership Summit. This year she participated in the first-ever mediation conference of the Croatian Bar in Zagreb and will be a featured speaker at a similar conference in Moscow in October.

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Lela Love

**Professor of Law, Director, Kukin Program for Conflict Resolution and
the Cardozo Mediation Clinic**

(more information about Lela Love inside)

**Live auction with Guy Bennett
Delicious refreshments**

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