***Negotiation and Conflict Management Research (NCMR)****:* ***Special Issue Call for Papers***

**Listen and Talk about Controversial Issues:**

**Principles and Strategies for Difficult Conversations in 2020 and Beyond**

**Submission Deadline: March 10, 2020**

This call is for a fast turnaround special issue, driven in part by the upcoming U.S. election, and also by the international challenges we currently face. Data from Pew Research Center indicated that political polarization has become the dominant feature of the U.S. politics today.[[1]](#endnote-1) The past decade is also marked by divisions and major protests all over the world. Protests in locations across almost every continent such as in Hong Kong (China), Indonesia, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Iraq, U.S., Netherlands, France, Peru, Chile, Haiti, Senegal, and Australia have been similarly recognized as a powerful way to promote political and social changes. Globally, the climate strike has attracted more than six million protestors.[[2]](#endnote-2) Although some protests bring in positive social changes, they can have a silencing effect in people’s everyday life and in various social contexts such as family, workplace, school, and social media. “Civil discourse [is] under fire,” stated Dr. Landis and colleagues who have promoted difficult conversations in higher education and other contexts. “The art of respectful argument and the effort to find mutual solutions seem to be losing ground. Our public debates on critical issues are filled with sound bites instead of substance, and our popular culture seems motivated more by the desire to dominate and win than by the commitment to learn, understand, seek common ground, or persuade.”[[3]](#endnote-3)

Although conflicts, protests, and general antagonistic feelings toward those who hold different viewpoints are rooted in various causes, mutual understanding and reconciliation can only be achieved through respectful information exchange and trust building. Among the various goals that conflict management and negotiation aim to achieve, one possible common objective is to bring fair and mutually beneficial resolutions to participators through peaceful and mutually respectful conversations. For many countries, 2020 is an election year. It is crucial for people to conduct calm and rational discussions and listen to reasonable, issue-based arguments rather than label each other and shut down conversations. This special issue calls for contributions from experienced scholars to help laypeople develop strategies and skills to engage in difficult conversations and work with people who hold very different world views and approaches to conflicts than they do. Specifically, we call for scholars**to do their best to put aside their own political stands on any controversial issue but focus on providing insightful guidance to promote mutually respectful communication and approaches to conflict management.**

We welcome creative, thought-provoking manuscripts including original research studies, case studies, theoretical and conceptual articles, articles expressing the insights based on well-experienced scholarship and practices, general principles based on a comprehensive literature review, and so on.

Topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

* What are ground rules to engage people in civil, respectful, and fair conversations regarding controversial issues?
* What are strategies to initiate and facilitate difficult conversations in various contexts such as family, workplace, education, and social media?
* What are strategies for interactants to use active listening and empathetic expressions?
* What are strategies that can help people open their minds, cultivate an attitude to learn, and develop creative resolutions?
* What constructive, solution-oriented processes and strategies can people use when discussing controversial issues?
* How do educators conduct classroom conversations on controversial issues without imposing personal political stands?
* How can academic freedom be protected?

Please direct inquires to Qi Wang, Editor-in-Chief, *Negotiation and Conflict Management Research* (see contact information below). Please submit your manuscript here: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/17504716>

(check the *Special Issue* box after clicking the *Submission an Article* link). When preparing your manuscript, carefully follow author guidelines at http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1750-4716.

Timeline:

Submission due: March 10, 2020

Initial decisions: April 15, 2020

First round revisions due: May 30, 2020

Final manuscript due: June 30, 2020

Expected publication: August 1, 2020

Word limit:

The main body of the work should be no less than 3,500 words (15 pages double spaced) and the entire submission should be no more than 40 pages all-inclusive.

*Negotiation and Conflict Management Research* publishes articles that develop theory and report research on negotiation and conflict management across levels, including interpersonal conflict, intergroup conflict, organizational conflict, and cross-cultural conflict, across a range of domains including environmental conflict, crisis negotiations, and political conflict, as well as across a variety of approaches, including formal and informal third party intervention, mediation and arbitration. Impact factor: 1.189.

1. Pew Research Center (2019, October 10). Partisan antipathy: More intense, more personal. Retrieved from <https://www.people-press.org/2019/10/10/the-partisan-landscape-and-views-of-the-parties/> [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Baker, S., Perper, R., & Watson, S. K. (September 20, 2019). Photos show huge climate-change protests around the world, which have spread across continents as millions strike to demand action. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/global-climate-strike-photos-show-protests-around-world-school-children-2019-9> [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Landis, K., Jenkins, P., Roderick, L., Banchero, P., & Dede, J. (2008). Start talking: A handbook for engaging difficult dialogues in higher education. University of Alaska Anchorage & Alaska Pacific University. <https://cdn.vanderbilt.edu/vu-wp0/wp-content/uploads/sites/59/2017/03/01130311/Start_Talking_full_book_pdf.pdf> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)