

## **Jay Rothman**

My first reflection is about still puzzling through the issue of fields. I have always been most engaged in the notion of "creative marginality" in which the edges of disciplines meet one another to

>create something new and dynamic (a few years ago I co-authored an essay about the creative marginality between CR and Social Work; accessible at <http://www.gmu.edu/academic/pcs/RothSchw81PCS.htm>. It seems to me that's what both conflict resolution and deliberative democracy are - edges of disciplines. Therefore, while I think Larry's efforts to draw disciplinary boundaries is a worthy exercise, its main value is to stimulate reflection on where and how there is useful complementarity (which includes relative strengths and therefore clarity about differences) between the two "edges."

Bill Isaac's closing comment to further distinguish PD, CR and Dialogue was also quite interesting. I have some trouble placing myself within one or another of these approaches as I have spent most of my career developing integrative models. My use of What, Why, How questions to frame my conflict and visioning work is cross-disciplinary. The question Why? for example, is best engaged dialogically. The question What? is a visioning question (or problem solving question) for which participation, ownership, consensus and deliberation are very helpful. Finally, the How? or operational question, can usefully be addressed in a problem solving mode in which people forge functional cooperation and learn in the doing how to cooperate and achieved shared and respective goals (a Conflict Management outcome).

My next reflection is simply reiterating what I said at the conclusion of our time together. "We are not obligated to complete the task (i.e. of perfecting the world) but neither are we free to desist from it." I found great comfort and support in the acknowledgement that while Utopians (or better: "realistic-idealists") like us seek to traverse from Is to Ought, we will always come up short. I know that. I live it everyday but having a group of such high level and seasoned professionals like all of you saying and accepting that reality, truly gave me encouragement.

Thank you to all the organizers and participants.