Uriel Abulof, Tel Aviv University
"Existential Encounters: Mortality and Morality in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict"
Abstract: This paper challenges the prevalent description of, and prescription for, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Uncovering the rivals’ deepest angsts reveals a mortal mismatch: Israeli Jews doubt the viability of their polity, Palestinians the validity of their identity. Examining the rivals’ languages of legitimation further suggests a moral mismatch between an ethnonational Zionist movement and an anti-colonialist Palestinian movement, with both giving an ever larger role to religion in justifying their claims (and rejecting their rival’s). Thus, on both sides, hawks retain an “existential veto right” on any substantial compromise. This alternative understanding of the conflict renders the “two-state” formula almost meaningless without its concluding condition—“for two peoples.” It also points to two roads not taken to peace: one reverses the typical order of conflict-resolution to beg the creation of a Palestinian state before peace; another introduces the vehicles of a dual plebiscite to pull the moral rug from under the radicals’ feet and facilitate a viable coexistence. It suggests the construction of a moral common ground before a middle ground of compromise can be reached. Finally, the paper draws on comparison between the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to the ethnic clashes in Canada and South Africa, to scrutinize its claims.

Hani Albasoos, Sultan Qaboos University
"The Israeli-Palestinian Conflict: Will Economic Peace Lead to Political Settlement?"
Abstract: This research will examine the political phenomenon of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from analytical and empirical perspectives using appropriate methodological triangulation. It will reflect a methodological originality and hypothetical enquiry of an assignment with descriptive, empirical and analytical overviews in the field of political science. This research is fairly based in a combination of “effective negotiation methods and roles of mediation and other interventions” and “contributions of leadership at various levels.”

Phillip Arnold, Syracuse University
"Skä•noñh—Great Law of Peace Center: De-colonizing Sacred Space at Onondaga Lake, Syracuse, NY"
Abstract: Skä•noñh, is an Onondaga welcoming greeting meaning “Peace and Wellness.” The Skä•noñh – Great Law of Peace Center is a Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Heritage Center focused on telling the story of the native peoples of central New York. The history is told through the lens of the Onondaga Nation and covers topics such as Creation, European Contact, The Great Law of Peace, and more. The Onondagas, or People of the Hills, are the keepers of the Central Fire and are the spiritual and political center of the Haudenosaune.
Daniel Bar-Tal, Tel Aviv University  
"Socio-psychological Barriers to Peacemaking in Intractable Conflicts and Ways to Overcome Them"  
Abstract: The presentation in its first part will describe the socio-psychological barriers that greatly help to maintain intractable conflicts once they develop. In the second part the presentation outlines processes, conditions and methods that enable overcoming these barriers and open a long way of peacemaking.

Ronit Berger, Syracuse University  
"The Dynamics of Conflict Transformation Processes: Understanding Northern Ireland"  
Abstracts: Some conflicts are successfully resolved, while others persevere. This paper seeks to understand the conditions under which conflict transformation processes can succeed, and focuses on the factors that help transform conflicts from violent to less violent modalities. It examines the successful conflict transformation process in Northern Ireland with a particular focus on the changing behavior of The (Provisional) Irish Republican Movement (IRA/Sinn Fein) during the Troubles. The paper offers a theory that adopts a levels-of-analysis approach highlighting the dynamic interaction between individual leaders, organizational settings, and the overarching conflict structure, and their combined effect on the use of violence in conflicts.

The paper’s main argument is that conflict transformation processes are dynamic and any movement either toward or away from cooperation depends on the interaction between specific factors at the three levels of analysis. Moreover, the findings show that when factors from the three levels do not align to promote cooperation, specific types of leaders have the power to overcome disadvantageous contexts. Specifically, I show that leaders of dual-wing organizations (violent non-state actors sustaining both a social/political wing alongside a military one) will succeed in pushing forward a positive change in the conflict dynamic if they are strong organizationally and sensitive to both the external and organizational contexts.

Stuart Brown, Syracuse University  
"Global Economic Imbalances, Currency Wars and the Future of the International Monetary System"  
Abstract: Places the issues of global imbalances, currency wars and the call for reforms to the international financial architecture within a conceptual framework centering on conflict and conflict resolution. While trying to place the severity of the strains besetting the international financial system in context, assessing how concerned the international community should in fact be about the current trajectory of global financial imbalances and the competition among nations to rely disproportionately on external (as opposed to domestic) demand to promote national economic recovery. Does the debate on these questions reflect a clash between legitimate if opposing economic perspectives or does it reflect more an ideological and/or political economy power struggle? Can and should we still expect decisive solutions to these challenges from international financial institutions and if so, which ones and with what kinds of tools and strategies? Or do we need a fundamental revamping of the international monetary architecture itself?
John Burdick, Syracuse University
"The Role of Coercion in Collaboration"
Abstract: A key argument in the literature on collaboration and deliberative democracy is that, in order for such processes to be constructive, participants need to minimize coercive inducements. According to this literature, coercive acts are constructive only in the early stages of a political process, to pressure the parties to sit down with each other. Once at the table, in this view, coercive threats have little or no place. This paper argues, in contrast, that actors advocating for the interests of socially less powerful populations contribute constructively through all stages of collaborative processes by retaining the capacity, threat, and cautious exercise of well-disciplined coercion. In contexts of sociostructural inequality, then, coercion and collaboration should not be conceptualized as alternatives to each other, nor as sequential stages, but as simultaneous parts of a single political ecosystem.

Kristy Buzard, Syracuse University
"Unrecognized States: A Theory of Self-Determination and Foreign Influence"
Abstract: Unrecognized states are characterized by stagnant or crumbling economies and political instability, often serve as havens for illicit trade, and challenge the territorial sovereignty of recognized states. Their persistence is both intellectually puzzling and normatively problematic, but unrecognized statehood can be a remarkably stable outcome, persisting for decades. Our four-player model reveals that unrecognized statehood emerges as an equilibrium outcome when a patron state is willing and able to persistently invest resources to sustain it. We assess options available to actors in the international community who seek to impose their preferred outcomes in these disputes and find that, although sanctions are the most frequently employed, they can often lead to renewed conflict instead of the intended resolution.

Peter Coleman and Joshua Fisher, Columbia University
"The Fractal Nature of Intractable Conflict: Implications for Sustainable Transformation"
Abstract: The scholarship on intractable conflict has offered a disparate constellation of constructs, models, theories and methods for understanding and addressing these highly destructive and persistent dynamics. This eclecticism has contributed to a nuanced understanding of such problems, but presents real challenges for policy-making and peace-building practice. This paper will apply thinking and methods from complexity science - in particular the fractal nature of attractor dynamics - to offer a more parsimonious account of intractability, with an emphasis on three components: 1) the commonalities of intractable attractor dynamics across levels of analysis (from micro individual through macro structural), 2) the variance in the geographies of these dynamics across levels, and 3) the mechanisms that account for feedback transfer effects between levels of analysis. Implications of this perspective for policy-making and peace-building are discussed.
Çerağ Esra Çuhadar, Bilkent University
"National Dialogues as Inclusion mechanisms of political transitions: Opportunities, Challenges, and Dilemmas"

Abstract: National Dialogues are increasingly regarded as a legitimate and effective negotiation format to tackle national political crises. Yet, there is no common understanding on the features that distinguish National Dialogues from other multi-stakeholder negotiation formats, nor on the design and context features that influence the outcomes of National Dialogues. The purpose of this paper is to fill this gap by presenting empirical evidence regarding the set-up of National Dialogues, how they have functioned, as well as the conditions under which National Dialogues have produced sustainable outcomes. We also elaborate on the relationship between the National Dialogues and other participation mechanisms used in negotiation processes.

Galina Golan, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
"Transformation of Armed Conflict: Lessons from the Arab-Israeli Conflict"

Abstract: Employing theories of intractable conflict and their transformation, the paper examines the factors that led to or facilitated a breakthrough or those factors that were either missing or militated against a breakthrough, accounting for failure, in Israeli efforts at peacemaking since 1967. Such factors as leadership changes; changes in the adversary, or regional and international environments; negotiating style; and domestic public opinion are some of the factors examined with the purpose of drawing lessons from past experience.

Ayelet Harel-Shalev, Ben-Gurion University of the Negev
"Gendering Ethnic Conflicts: Minority Women in Divided Societies"

Abstract: This research explores the practical and theoretical significance and long-term consequences of the failure to incorporate women’s interests in post-conflict negotiations. Analyses of deeply divided societies must recognize that political competition and political violence do not affect all citizens equally. Also, the ‘larger picture’ depicted by inter-community conflicts should not overshadow the effects of intra-community conflicts, which are no less important. Evident within each community conflict are the winners and the losers of the political accommodation process, in which the marginalized and weaker sections of each ‘side’ of the conflict may be the real ‘losers’. The context for examination in the current research is the case of Muslim women in India. Gendered analysis of ethnic conflicts and ethnic conflict resolution demands a reorientation of the concepts of conflict and security – Whose conflict is being solved and who is being secured?
Tamar Hermann, The Open University of Israel and the Israel Democracy Institute
"From Peace Activism to Nationalistic Vigilantism: The Shifting Balance of Israeli Conflict Related Grassroots Engagements"
Abstract: Intractable conflicts influence dramatically the individuals' life on all sides involved. Hence it is not surprising that they serve as a fertile ground for the mushrooming of grassroots activities of various shapes. The more active the conflict is, the more such movements' organizations and trends tend to develop. Different topics and agenda may stand the heart of such groupings: from organized calls for an immediate ceasefire, to strategic solution blueprints, from local self-help projects to regional transformation plans, from anti-militaristic conscience raising endeavors to nationalistic, militant mobilization platforms. Furthermore, as by their definition intractable conflicts last many years, the characteristics of the bottom-up activities which grow in such contexts change over time and so does the balance of power between the worldviews they reflect. This presentation will focus on the variety of conflict-related grassroots activities which developed in Israel since 1967 to the present, with particular attention to the dynamics which took place since the early 1990s: the slow decrease in pro-peace activities and the parallel increase in both frequency but more important in the legitimacy of nationalistic vigilantism, such as the price-tag actions.

Azra Hromadzic, Syracuse University
"Only When the Spider Web Becomes Too Heavy": Youth, Unemployment and the Social Life of Waiting in Postwar and Postsocialist Bosnia-Herzegovina
Abstract: This ethnographic and anthropological study documents the contours of professional solidarity among teachers in postwar and postsocialist Bosnia–Herzegovina. The article illustrates how ethnically divided Croat and Bosniak teachers at the first ‘reunified’ school in postwar Bosnia and Herzegovina – the famed Mostar Gymnasium – came together to strike together, and to voice their profession-shaped citizen demands. These teachers frequently referred to themselves as nezadovoljni građani or dissatisfied citizens, stressing the generational, moral and economic aspects of their predicament. The combined feelings of citizen-dissatisfaction, loss of social status and being left out of administrative procedures – which enable access to rightful entitlements – led to the formation of a teachers’ protest group across the lines of ethnic citizenship. These joint actions generated a shift in the teachers’ political subjectivities, however provisional, and they probed the horizon of ethnic politics in postwar and postsocialist Bosnia.

Shana Kushner Gadarian, Syracuse University
"Social Media Use and Fear Levels after the Paris 2015 Attacks: A Comparative Study"
Abstract: In the wake of major terrorist attacks, how do ordinary citizens use media to understand and cope? We use a 5-country survey fielded in the month after the November 2015 Paris attacks to investigate how citizens in France, Finland, Norway, Spain and the United States utilize social media to inform themselves about unfolding events as well as cope with fear about the attacks. We expect that social media enables citizens the experience of collective mobilization and support, that can in turn reduce fear. We measure how respondents used social media during the attacks in the five countries in a variety of ways; to get updates, to express support, to process emotions, to get information about ceremonies and to discuss the events. The results show, first, that social media use is unequivocally related to increased fear: those who used social media the most during the Paris attacks were more fearful than others three weeks later. Second, while there is a positive relationship between all forms of social media use and fear in France, Spain and the US, such effects are much less thoroughgoing in Norway and Finland, especially for national fear.
Nimrod Rosler, Tel Aviv University
"Ready for Peace?: Society and Leadership in Northern Ireland during the 1990s"

Abstract: A peace process following an intractable conflict is characterized by a complex political and social context creating difficult challenges for societies previously engulfed by the conflict and for those who lead them. Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland suffered from a long and violent conflict until reaching the fruitful negotiation during the second half of the 1990s which led to the Belfast Agreement signed on April 1998. A peace process following an intractable conflict is characterized by duality – a complex political and social context creating difficult challenges for societies previously engulfed by the conflict and for those who lead them. The current paper will delineate the challenges that each of the two groups confronted in the pre-negotiation stage and during the negotiation in Northern Ireland. Furthermore, we will examine the changes that occurred in the social context during these years and how major political leaders addressed these changes and mobilized the public first for the continuation of the conflict and later for the peace process.

Robert Rubinstein, Syracuse University; Sandra D. Lane, Syracuse University; Timothy “Noble” Jennings-Bey, Street Addiction Institute, Inc., Syracuse, NY; Arnett Haygood-El, Street Addiction Institute, Inc., Syracuse, NY
"Structural Violence in Syracuse"

Abstract: In Syracuse, New York the social determinants of trauma from neighborhood violence are rooted in historical processes, including urban renewal, the Rockefeller drug laws, and de-industrialization. These contributed to destabilizing Syracuse communities of color, resulting in disproportionate incarceration, family disruption, and economic devastation. Community violence, clustering in densely populated neighborhoods, creates unmanageable stress for the families who live in them. A map of gunshots and gun fatalities (2009 to 2014) illustrates the continuing onslaught of bullets being fired, often in close proximity to elementary schools. A community survey indicated that over half of respondents personally knew more than 10 murder victims. Half the respondents scored positive on the Civilian PTSD Checklist; there thus is a great deal of unaddressed traumatic stress in the community. This analysis, conducted to prepare for planning future interventions to reduce the community trauma and violence, is part of an ongoing university-community collaboration.

Timea Spitka, Hebrew University
"Between Ripeness and Necessity: The Tipping Point for External Intervention"

Abstract: The timing of an effective external intervention has been the source of much debate among scholars and practitioners alike. William Zartman, the father of the ripeness theory argued that conflicting groups only resolve a conflict when they are ready to do so. Severe war crimes and crimes against humanity obligate the international community to step in cases where the state fails to protect civilians. How relevant is ripeness theory to long-standing conflicts that show no sign of overcoming a hurting stalemate and civilian lives are unprotected? This article challenges the ripeness theory and argues that effective international intervention comes from a consensus among interveners on the appropriate tools of intervention rather than ripeness among those perpetuating a conflict that may never bear fruit.
Diane Swords, Intergroup Dialogue Program, Syracuse University
"Intergroup Dialogue, Social Power, and Conflict Transformation"
Abstract: This proposed paper brings together Constructive Conflict Theory approaches to dialogue and the Intergroup Dialogue model (IGD) to examine the effects of relations of power in dialogues that are focused on social inequalities at the root of longstanding conflicts around racial, gender, economic and religious strife. IGD and Constructive Conflict Theory have developed in parallel over the last 30 years, and share many elements. Many groups, whether at the interpersonal, community or international level, hesitate to use dialogue to resolve conflicts of this sort, claiming that it “keeps the parties talking” rather than acting; and that it is harmful rather than useful in situations of power difference. These are important critiques that emerge out of experience. Yet research reveals the ways in which dialogue, properly planned and facilitated, has the potential, if power is attended to appropriately, to support better intergroup understanding and build coalitions for actions that can move towards transformation.

Mottie Tamarkin, Tel Aviv University
Abstract: The conventional wisdom in accounting for the smooth transition from apartheid to New South Africa allocates Mandela and De Klerk critical roles. This interpretation has acquired much credibility in light of the subsequent winning of the Nobel Prize by both. It certainly renders a complex historical process easy to comprehend. The paper presented at this conference casts serious doubt about the credibility and veracity of such interpretation. It will rather explore a richer and complex field which contains the conflict’s essence, structure and dynamic and long and complex historical processes. Exploiting the historical perspective, we have now I will try to answer a critical question which needs to be asked about conflict resolution: Was the conflict resolution a success? I am not at all sure. This raises and important question in assessing such resolution: To what extent we can expect conflict resolution to satisfactorily address expected post-conflict conflicts? My answer would be yes. And with regard to South Africa I am not at all sure that this is the case.

Lesley Terris, Lauder School of Government, Policy and Diplomacy of the Interdisciplinary Center, Herzliya (IDC)
"Inaction Inertia and the Consequences of Missed Opportunities in International Negotiations: The Case of Gilad Shalit"
Abstract: In international disputes forgone settlement offers are frequently lamented, but their impact on the dynamics of on-going negotiations is largely overlooked. In the psychological literature, however, the consequences of missing an advantageous action opportunity have been studied extensively in the context of the inaction inertia phenomenon. According to this literature, forgoing attractive action opportunities render decision makers susceptible to regret and increase the likelihood that subsequent opportunities will be missed as well. This article explores the explanatory potential of the inaction inertia effect in the context of international negotiations. Findings based on laboratory experiments and analysis of the negotiations between Israel and Hamas over the release of the Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit, strongly suggest that the concept of inaction inertia can enrich our understanding of failures and deadlocks in international negotiations. The article defines the conditions that are instrumental in identifying inertia induced deadlocks and discusses factors that encourage the termination of negotiation inaction inertia and promote dispute settlement.
Stuart Thorson, Syracuse University
"U.S. and North Korea: A Gordian Conflict?"
Abstract: Enduring tensions among North Korea, the U.S., South Korea, Russia, China, and Japan appear to epitomize an intractable conflict. Since the end of World War II, events including the Korean War (still without a formal peace agreement), assassination attempts, nuclear tests by North Korea, international economic sanctions against North Korea, kidnapping of Japanese citizens, military skirmishes between North and South Korea around the disputed Northern Limit Line in the West Sea, the sinking of a South Korean naval vessel under still disputed circumstances, regular largescale U.S.-South Korean joint military exercises, United Nations flagged vessels patrolling the Han River Estuary to enforce the Korean War Armistice against Chinese fishing boats and repeated North Korean tests of midrange missiles all illustrate the persistence of conflict in the region. During the same period there have been a variety of multi-national efforts directed at addressing the situation including the Agreed Framework, six-party talks, the Kaesong Industrial Complex, and the September, 2005 Agreement to end the North Korean nuclear program. None of these efforts have been durably successful. This paper provides a brief historical overview of these events and argues that many conflicts can usefully be thought of as problems under a description. Sometimes changing the description may offer ways out of what has appeared to be an intractable situation. Conflicts amenable to such re-description are termed Gordian conflicts in recognition of the Phrygian Gordium legend. To be helpful, the development of such re-descriptions requires trust and empathy among parties to the conflict. A program of ongoing exchanges between U.S. and North Korean academic scientists together with occasional Track II meetings has provided a limited but robust context for participants to develop both trust and empathy. The exchange program is described and a problem re-description suggested which, it is argued, could provide a path forward with what has to date seemed an intractable conflict.

Jared Van Ramshorst and Jamie Winders, Syracuse University
"Transit Migration, Borders, and Activism: Understanding the Changing Geographies and Temporalities of International Migration"
Abstract: This presentation will examine the social movements and non-state actors involved in transit migrations in the context of North America and Europe. The first author (Van Ramshorst) is conducting ethnographic research on Central American transit migrations, focusing on the Mexican border city of Tapachula and the U.S. border cities of Brownsville and McAllen, Texas. The second author (Winders) has recently written about the migrant situation in Europe, especially the ways that non-state actors have responded to this unfolding saga. This presentation will put these two projects in conversation to address the following questions: How do the geographies, durations, and key features of transit migration in North America and Europe compare? What kinds of conflicts have been associated with both transit migrations? How, if at all, have these conflicts been moved toward resolution, and with what effects? Who have been the key players, especially in civil society, in attempting to address the needs and concerns of transit migrants in both places? Finally, what can be learned about both transit migration as the most recent development in contemporary global migration patterns and conflicts associated with immigration more broadly, by juxtaposing these two transit migration geographies? To date, nearly all work on transit migration has focused on Europe and the Mediterranean and has yet to consider the most recent chapter that has unfolded in Europe since Summer 2015. Thus, this presentation and paper will be the first to offer a comparative analysis of transit migrations and one of the first to reflect on Europe’s current migration situation.