

Book Review

Stories Mediators Tell, World Edition

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Stories Mediators Tell, World Edition, edited by Lela Love & Glen Parker, ISBN: 978-1-63425-674-2, 336 p. American Bar Association Section on Dispute Resolution, 2017, Chicago, USA

The book *Stories Mediators Tell, World Edition* is released as a follow-up to another book, simply titled *Stories Mediators Tell* (2012). All of the ‘stories’ in the 2012 edition came from highly experienced mediators working in the United States. It was a treasure trove of mediation war stories, most of which involved special cases of peace-making. Some made such an impression that I can still remember them well, even though it is now over five years since I read the book. Lela Love and Glen Parker continue in a similar vein with their 2017 release, as they aim to use story-telling to broaden the public’s understanding of the inner workings of mediation. It is very useful to have access to a series of such stories. Both books offer insights into ‘the other way’ to approach conflict and offer a counter-balance to the omnipresent narrative of litigation as the solution to conflict. In this sense, both books are well worth reading.

The 2017 edition contains no stories from the United States, instead sharing stories from mediators around the world. Readers will compare and learn from the approaches favoured by mediators in a series of different cases, adapted to local cultural norms and the approach of individual mediators. Lawyers who may be less familiar with mediation will get a glance into the range of approaches that mediation can make use of. It is helpful that this book is published by the American Bar Association – it will probably gain more attention from lawyers than might otherwise have been the case. The book contains real-life stories about the workings of mediation, although the authors have changed the identities/details of the participants and ‘recreated dialogue’ to protect client confidentiality. The stories demonstrate the value that mediation can bring to a conflict situation, regard-

less of whether the dispute is between individuals, communities or big businesses. It is helpful that the authors do not spend too much time on scholastic issues. However, a brief and concise explanation of the core values of mediation (inviting participants to change their paradigm from positions towards interests) and what, in general terms, the mediation process entails would have been helpful to the non-specialist reader. It could provide useful context for the broad range of stories. The real value of a book like *Stories Mediators Tell* is to reach a wider audience beyond mediators and lawyers and broaden the global mediation phenomenon. I hope that any future issues (of which one can certainly hope there will be more) will spend some time introducing the basics of mediation, without getting too far into the weeds. This consideration aside, the book is an addition to the mediation library and may also serve as a useful giveaway to spread awareness of mediation.