



Jack Himmelstein

Jack Himmelstein is co-founder and co-director, with his long term colleague, Gary Friedman, of the Center for Understanding in Conflict, formerly the Center for Mediation in Law. The Center is a national non-profit educational institute which trains lawyers and other professionals in mediation based on Jack's and Gary's unique Understanding-Based approach to conflict. (www.understandinginconflict.org) He is co-author, with Gary, of *Challenging Conflict: Mediation Through Understanding*, published by the American Bar Association in cooperation with the Harvard Program on Negotiation (2008).

Jack first practiced law with the NAACP Legal Defense Fund where he led a national project against the death penalty, which culminated in the 1972 Supreme Court decision in Furman v. Georgia, overturning the death penalty as it then existed in the United States.

After Furman, Jack became a clinical professor at Columbia Law School where he taught and directed for 10 years - the Community Clinical Law Project - a clinical program that focused on the legal problems of low income community residents. During his time teaching at Columbia, he became co-founder of the City University of New York School of Law (CUNY Law), where he also taught for its first 10 years.

While at Columbia and then CUNY, Jack and Gary co-founded in 1980 and developed the Center for Mediation in Law which later became the Center for Understanding in Conflict. They started practicing mediation in the Understanding based model as well as writing about and teaching their unique approach to conflict resolution.

Through The Center for Understanding in Conflict Jack has devoted his work to the practice of teaching and mediation and has conducted trainings in the Understanding-Based approach in the United States, Europe and Israel and written about this unique approach to resolving conflict. He also conducts ongoing Support and Development Groups in New York for those applying the Understanding-Based model in their work as mediators.