QUAKERS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

AUTUMN 2020 EDITORIAL

Well it turned out that the Autumn edition of the newsletter was to be a “bumper” one with submissions so numerous that I had to add an extra 4 pages to the newsletter to accommodate them all, and even with that, some still couldn’t be included! So I’d like to thank you all for taking the time to contribute to your newsletter.

Many of you have drafted up articles focusing on the impact which the current pandemic has had on our day to day work and lives. Highlighting the changes to prison visits and court room activities. I personally have found technology vital in allowing me “into” the prisons to do my work, and maybe chatting to me in my living room over zoom, with constant “pet disturbances” has been a bit less of a formal and stuffy experience for my clients than in the austere, magnolia boxes where I normally conduct interviews with prisoners.

We have plenty of suggestions for lockdown reading material and a wide range of informative and sometimes disturbing pieces on topics such as restorative justice, quaker involvement in the United Nations, domestic abuse, alternatives to violence. We received a very interesting article on “Using Automated Facial Recognition Technology” written by Mike Nellis which was just too long to include in the newsletters at just over 7500 words, but I felt it was important you got to read it, so I have attached it as a bonus to the digital mail out. If you didn’t get a copy drop me an email to the address on the last page of this newsletter.



It’s never too early to make a submission to our winter newsletter, but in the meantime enjoy the Autumn one.

Jonathan Lamb Editor

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DARE TO DREAM

STEVE

Whether it passes the lips of an empathetic soul, or is penned with a sincere objective of support in mind, “Hope” can be a word which is hard to grasp or fully understand. In some ways it has become a cliché, a word, which as a supportive gesture, has become as common as a simple hello or smile in greeting. Conveyed alone in our darkest moments, hope can be a distant thing, indistinct, its healing properties blurred and beauty hidden, similar to how we view a butterfly as it flitters around the garden, unable to fully define its vibrant colours and intricate patterns, until we can gently catch it and examine it in detail.

I would like to say, defining hope was an easy exercise upon arriving in prison , that traversing the dark, fast flowing river of loss was a smooth journey, but of course it wasn’t. Each period of time was a steppingstone, each day a struggle to maintain my balance, but in time, I crossed further and further towards the opposite shore, where hope waited patiently for my arrival. One steppingstone was time, another friendship, another verbal or written reassurance, until I found myself one step away from my goal. That last step was the discovery of “Perspective”, without which, hope can remain tantalisingly out of reach. A realisation, that an improvised noose, a razor blade, or hoarded pills, may seem attractive today, releasing me from the emotion pain, but that’s today, who knows what tomorrow will bring, next week, next month, next year, or five years from now. The world slowly turns, changes come, time heals. For those closest to me in the past, painful memories and betrayals may fade, anger lessen, perspective shine a light, leaving a clear and concise image of the person I was, not the person I became.



Rightly or wrongly, depending on your personal point of view, I have moved on from the walls and fences of prison, leaving behind people I think about nearly every day. Not only friends, but strangers too. I think of those who suffer the anguish of guilt and shame, the pain of loss, the damaging addiction, or the burden of mental illness. I think of the first-time prisoner, the recall, the IPP suffering yet another knock back, and the lifer with many years left on their tariff. I think of what I would say to them in their cell, when the decision has been made, and their chosen instrument of escape from the emotional pain lies between us. I would not simply say “Don’t give up hope”, I would relay to them the steppingstones I used to reach the further shore, where hope lies waiting for us all. The critical final step being perspective, the need to stop and put their minds to tomorrow, and by degrees, weeks, months, and years into the future. To grasp one thing, however small, which they can hold on to. A hope they can cherish and nurture, examining its beauty every day. It doesn’t matter if it’s simply to taste freedom again, to devour a favourite meal, or something deeper, such as relishing a daughter’s smile, what’s important, is its power to overcome the darkness of the here and now.

So when we have defined and embraced hope, where can it take us? For me, it took me to a day nearly five years on from a crippling parting of ways, one I feared at the time would be fatal. It took me to an email received from my uncle, forwarding words more valuable to me than any precious metal or stone.



“I was just wondering if you could do me a favour, if you're still in contact with my dad. I've had a lot of time to process and think, and if you could, could you pass on a message for me? Just tell him that I love him, and I forgive him.”.

Reconciliations of this kind do not happen overnight however, and it was some months before a direct email arrived in my inbox. A tentative rebuilding of our relationship followed, until one cold November day, I found myself walking through the streets of Cambridge, seeking out a Café Nero. Standing outside, no longer a child, was my daughter. Unsure how to approach, frightened of breaking the spell, I stood a foot or so away, sensing time may be needed to bridge the physical divide between us. My daughter however, stepped forward and took me in her arms, the roles reversed, and the world faded away around us again. We have spoken of the past, as remorse and sorrow must be relayed, questions need to be asked, reasons offered, although in cases like mine, reasons are not something many people can accept or comprehend. As time has passed, the need to analyse the past has been satisfied, leaving a relationship as strong as it’s ever been. During this time of enquiry and disclosure, one thing shone through. The qualities I had sensed within her so soon after birth, had not been an illusion driven by emotion, but as real as the stars which shone that balmy August night.

Art has many virtues, its creation can be a purely therapeutic exercise, or it can be

created to lift the soul of the beholder. It can also give the creator a sense of worth, a medium to send a supportive message to others. The message within the words I have written, is probably as clear as the August night sky where my story began, no need to elaborate or embellish further. There is one thought I would like to add however, which I hope will find its way into the darkest of places. The primary emotions I experience every day, are ones of relief and thankfulness. I am so relieved and thankful, that when I was in my darkest hour, I didn't succumb to that darkness and make an irreversible decision. I dared to dream, and was rewarded with a dream come true.

SILENCE IN COURT

STEPHEN HANVEY

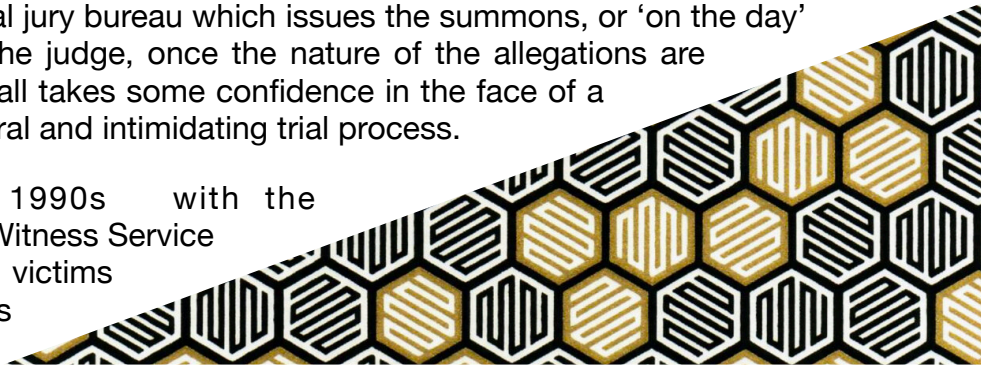
Silence in Courts. Juries and the potential for re-traumatisation.

It's a fair guess that the topic of jury service arising around a dinner table will prompt some predictable responses. They will range from, "Oh, I've never been called and would love to do it," through, "Well I was on a really boring case," to "As long as you don't end up on a sixteen-week fraud trial!". However, for a relatively small number of people fulfilling their civic duty in doing jury service, it may turn into something more traumatic than most of us would ever anticipate when the Jury Summons letter drops onto the mat. Having been given a date to attend for some months later, assembled in the jury room, randomly selected for a trial, sworn in and seated, only then will the unpleasant nature of the allegations be presented. Her Majesty's prosecuting barrister outlines the approach the prosecution will pursue. On the first day at court of course the prospective juror has no choice whether to serve on a three or four day aggravated burglary trial or the dreaded multi-week, multi-indictment fraud case brought by HMRC. Jurors are instructed to attend for two weeks. What then for the new juror who sits and listens as the prosecuting barrister explains that in this trial the evidence to be presented will prove allegations against an elderly man that he sexually abused his, at the time, twelve, year old niece? What if that juror listening with growing trepidation had, like 7.5% of the population in England and Wales, themselves experienced similar abuse by the age of 18? The forthcoming trial could be for them more than a 'test' of just the evidence. Whereas skilled witness service volunteers provide excellent support for the thousands of complainants and witnesses who come to Crown Courts every year to give evidence, there is it appears a marked absence of attention in procedural and

practical ways for those jurors sitting on a sexual abuse trial, who have their own history of abuse. The potential for their re-traumatisation needs recognising and somehow accommodating. Friends and colleagues, not themselves having experienced sexual abuse as a child or young person, have described their jury service on a sexual offences trial as deeply upsetting. The nature of the evidence is of course frequently far more harrowing than that in many other trials, notably around property-based offences .Furthermore the legal constraint on jurors, as repeated at the end of every day's sitting by the judge, includes a firm warning that they must not talk about the trial to anyone outside, and only with their fellow jurors when all are together. This is for proper and understandable reasons, but it may for some have uncomfortable echoes of that dynamic of 'keeping secrets' by which sexual abusers control their young victims. Nor, once the trial is over, will the survivor-juror be automatically offered or provided with any avenue of emotional or psychological support for any trauma reawakened. At two Crown Courts in which I have worked I know the jury deliberation rooms simply have a card with the contact details for the Samaritans available. Perhaps more guidance is provided in other courts. However, there may be something of a post-code lottery at play across the courts' estate with some courts perhaps more sensitive in this regard; but resources being as they are, one wonders. Judges very occasionally it would appear do instruct psychological support to be made available for jurors, as after the trial of the multiple abuser Joseph McGann last year, but given the pressures on mental health and psychological services, I would suspect this avenue is 'more honoured in the breach than the observance'.

Not all those of course who have experienced sexual abuse as a child or young person will be vulnerable to some form of re-traumatisation in such a setting or situation. It may sound far-fetched to equate participating in our well-established and internationally respected, jury-based court system, but there is evidence elsewhere of how being on a jury can traumatise some individuals. The point is we simply don't know how many are, or could be; there has been no research.

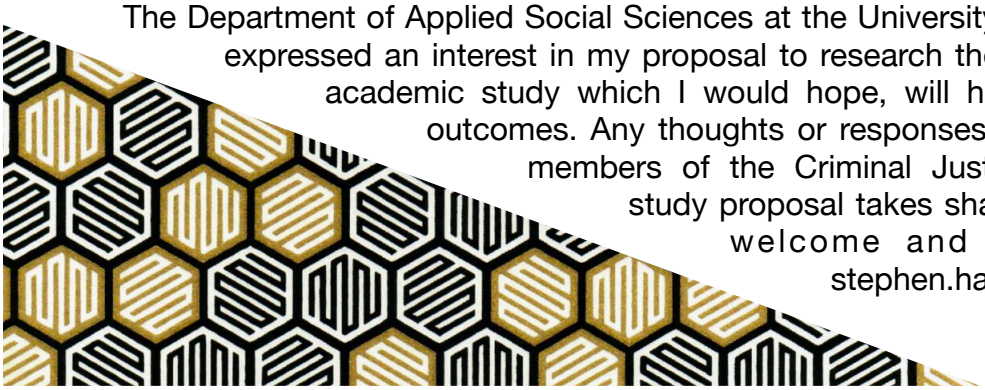
The most recent Office of National Statistics indicate 3.1 million adults have been sexually abused by the age of 18, representing 7.5% of the population of England and Wales. Each Crown Court trial of course depends upon twelve jurors drawn from 175,000 randomly selected jurors annually, Trials of child sexual abuse make up a significant proportion of all Crown Court trials, particularly so since the Savile and other 'celebrity' revelations which resulted in many more so-called 'historic abuse' disclosures. There is then a reality, and some degree of likelihood that some previously abused jurors will find themselves listening to disturbing evidence with a risk of re-traumatisation. Once again, we do not know the likely percentage; we have nobody has as yet tried to find out. It is of course possible for the prospective juror to raise their fears with the central jury bureau which issues the summons, or 'on the day' through a note to the judge, once the nature of the allegations are presented, but this all takes some confidence in the face of a highly formal, cerebral and intimidating trial process.



Since the early 1990s with the introduction of the Witness Service across all courts, victims and witnesses called to give

evidence are now supported through what can be an intimidating and de-humanising process. In 1999 and 2009 a range of specific 'Special Measures' were made available to complainants and witnesses deemed to be vulnerable or intimidated and needing especial assistance to provide their best evidence. However, for the new juror arriving at court on a Monday morning, abused as a child or young person, and who significantly has no idea as to the nature of the offence and evidence on which they will be called to deliberate, it appears there is systemically little thought as to their well-being, either before or after the trial.

It was through my professional background in social work I became familiar with child abuse, including sexual abuse and in co-facilitating self-help groups for adult survivors became aware of the often lasting and debilitating impact of such abuse and indeed of the phenomenon of 're-victimisation' through unintended and inadvertent terminology, processes, and casual assumptions. While with Circles UK, the national charity developing Circles of Support and Accountability, which is of course well-known to Friends, who brought the model over from Canada in 2002. I saw more of the criminal justice processes. More recently working with the Witness Service at Southampton and Winchester Crown Courts prompted my concerns as to other ways in which the criminal justice system itself can fail those who have been sexually abused.



The Department of Applied Social Sciences at the University of Winchester has expressed an interest in my proposal to research the above through an academic study which I would hope, will have some practical outcomes. Any thoughts or responses to this article from members of the Criminal Justice Group, as the study proposal takes shape, would be most welcome and appreciated, at stephen.hanvey@ntlworld.com

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

SIMON EWART (MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY)

QICJ membership now stands at 142, that is an increase of 7 since the spring newsletter of this year, so 142 paid up members is very encouraging. We have welcomed 21 new faces, but have lost, through resignation or failure to renew the subscription, some 14 members.

I have wandered over pastures wide and far for these lost friends, but alas they could not be returned to the fold. Some feel that they are no longer involved in Criminal Justice

matters, others that, as they belong to a group that supports QICJ through group membership, then they do not need to join. Two thoughts here. The first is that Criminal Justice is all about Social Justice and Vic versa. We are all involved with these issues throughout our lives. The second is that group membership is about the support of that group for the torch that we carry as QICJ. if all corporate members deserted us as individual members, then we would find it difficult to function. Membership costs are low. £10 for those who have a low income, £20 for an individual, £25 for a couple at the same address and £35 for the group. Membership is free for those people resident in an HMP establishment. If you are reading this newsletter and are not currently a member, we do hope that you will think about joining.

Simon Ewart, Membership Secretary. simonofskewjack@gmail.com

QUAKERS & C.J. REFORM AT THE UNITED NATIONS

NICHOLAS GEORGE

Quakers have been present at every Congress and every Commission meeting concerned with criminal justice and crime prevention for the since 1985.

A Quaker statement made at the 2009 UN Commission explained why.

“Firstly….Quakers speak from historical experience, as one in ten of us was in prison in 17th century. Secondly, it is a fundamental principle of Quakerism that there is spiritual value in every individual. Every person deserves respect and dignity; every wrongdoer is capable of redemption. Applying this principle to prisons means that every prisoner has a right to be treated decently.

“Unfortunately even the best prisons are damaging environments….Prisons are intrinsically damaging to human dignity, and therefore should be used sparingly. But the opposite is happening. Sentences for the same offences are getting longer, more offences now get prison sentences.

The concluding paragraph said “Quakers will continue to work for the reform of justice systems around the world, inspired by the essential dignity of each person. We seek a

system of justice which, promotes personal responsibility, mutual understanding, and healing."

Major outcomes of Quaker activity at the UN have resulted in new and modified conventions, codes and norms. basic principles on the use of restorative justice, rules covering pre-trial detention, the code on the use of firearms by law enforcement officers, examination of life imprisonment use and purposes, the Bangkok rules for the treatment of women prisoners, and the care of the children of prisoners.

In particular we worked with WHO Europe and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime who jointly published in 2009 the Kyiv Declaration "Women's health in prison".

Much of this work has been based on original reports and international comparisons from the Quaker Council of European Affairs, Brussels, (registered with the Council of Europe) and Quaker United Nation Office, Geneva.

Quakers have been directly involved in UN expert groups on the code on the use of firearms, Bangkok rules for the treatment of women prisoners, women's health in prison, the revision of the UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, and the planning and text of the new UN Handbook on Restorative Justice.

At all the official UN Meetings, Quakers have always run workshops and ancillary meetings on a range of criminal justice issues. A continuing theme of these events has been about restorative justice. The first presentation to the United Nations on restorative justice was made by the Quakers in 1990 at the UN Congress in Cuba. The UN principles on the use of restorative justice were accepted by the UN General Assembly in 2002.

Besides the work directly with the UN and its organisations, Quakers have been invited speakers at international conferences and meetings in Italy, Netherlands, Northern

Ireland, Belgium, Hungary Mexico, Chile, Poland, Thailand. The UN Congresses have been held in Italy, Cuba, Austria, Egypt, Thailand, Brazil, Qatar. The one in 2020 is in Japan.



A continuing concern about the activities of the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice is the feeling that human rights are being downplayed as an essential part of criminal justice. The following phrase, for example, was included by Brazil and Thailand in a resolution about the follow up to the Bangkok Declaration from the UN Congress in Thailand in 2005 " taking into account the economic, social, legal and cultural specificities of their respective States". The resolution had no mention of human rights, although the Bangkok Declaration did.



This was similar to a phrase in a major resolution at the Cairo Congress in 1995. On that occasion Amnesty International, International Jurists, Penal Reform International and FWCC issued a joint statement. The offending text was removed. On this occasion, we had the support of the Netherlands delegation, backed up by the Canadian delegation, and the above phrase was deleted. A member of the UK delegation told us afterwards that the four organisations working together had been a major factor in getting the text removed.

One of the necessary tasks of the Quakers at the UN Congresses and Commissions is reading all the draft resolutions being presented at plenary sessions to check that human rights are not removed or made optional in criminal justice systems.

29 November 2019

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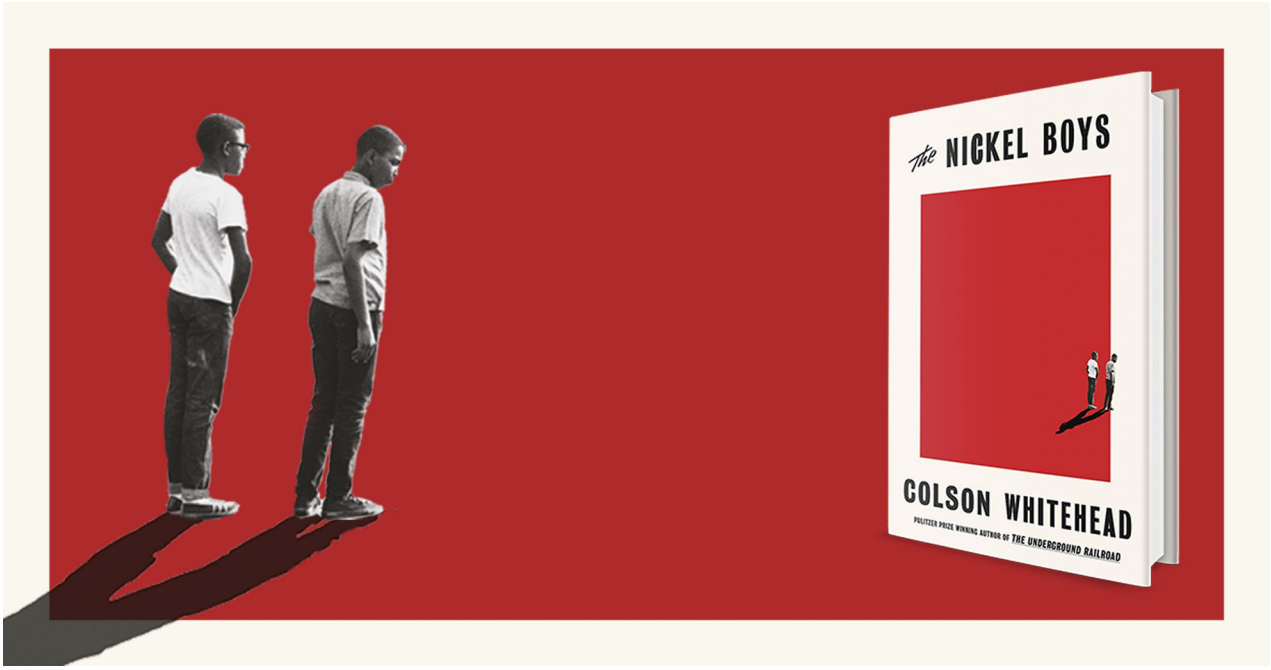
THE NICKEL BOYS: BOOK REVIEW

ADRIAN SMITH

If you are looking for something to depress you further during these difficult days, I recommend this book. It has the most arresting opening of any novel I have read: 'Even in death, the boys were trouble…' The site of a former industrial school in Florida is being redeveloped, and when bones start to come to light, someone has the idea of using the graveyard as a training ground for young archaeologists.

Though presented as a novel, this story is not fiction. It would be unbelievable if it were. It is based on events that actually occurred at the Dozier School for boys, Marianna, Florida. The incidents described did not take place in some vague, Dickensian past, but in the 1960s. JFK and Elvis are mentioned, Cassius Clay and transistor radios. The Florida School for Boys opened in 1899 and in early years took children as young as five. It set them to work ('training') so that the establishment actually ran at a profit. (A similar school in my native town, closed in the 1970s when it was found that the cost of maintaining a boy there was twice the fees of Eton.) Nickel was the name of a Director, who had never held an educational position, but had a background in agriculture. He was an enthusiast for boxing and a member of the Ku Klux Klan.

Elwood Curtis, the central character, is a black boy inspired both by Martin Luther King and by the American dream of making his way in the world through his own efforts. His parents left when he was six, and he was reared by his grandmother Harriet. He is well



aware of the prejudice against black people. Harriet's husband hanged himself in jail after a conviction for 'bumptious contact' i.e failing to give way to a white woman on the sidewalk. Black children are banned from entering Fun Town, an amusement park which white children visit as a matter of course. White and black pupils are educated separately.

Elwood has a part-time job in a store. His grandmother takes half his wage and puts the rest aside to see him through college. When the great day arrives, he hitches a lift on a truck, but it is stopped by police and found to be stolen. So instead of college, Elwood arrives at the Nickel School. We hear nothing about his trial and his 'crime' is presented as just another instalment in a lifelong litany of injustice. His first impressions of Nickel are not too bad. Inmates start as GRUBS, and are in time promoted to become EXPLORERS, PIONEERS and finally ACES. The younger boys are known as CHUCKS. The community is, of course, divided into separate sides of white and black. Most boys assigned to Nickel are sent there for 'nebulous, inexplicable' offences, for 'having no family' or even 'for having been at Nickel before'. Many of them are spindly and undernourished. Elwood is appalled by the rudimentary education on offer.

He is assigned to the works party and through this he discovers the graveyard on Boot Hill. Graves include those boys who died in a fire, two of whom were in punishment cells at the top of the building and were not rescued 'in case they escaped'. Elwood also sees the 'White House' where, according to his friend Turner, boys are taken at night to be beaten. The roaring of an industrial fan is used to hide their screams. Elwood unwisely intervenes in a bullying incident and is taken to the White House, along with the victim and both the assailants. He is beaten unconscious and taken to the hospital where aspirin is the only medicament provided. Turner warns him that the only way to survive is acceptance of the way things are.



Elwood studies English Literature as he had hoped to do at college. His teacher, a sympathetic white man, takes him off site for 'community service'. In the course of redecorating old people's rooms, he sees for himself the scams that are going on: paint bought at public expense is sold on the side and food intended for the boys,

mysteriously never reaches them. When a 'surprise' inspection takes place, Elwood gets a careful record of the abuses he has noted into the hands of one of the governors, thinking action will follow. Indeed it does: he is taken to the dark punishment cell, and left naked with one meal a day. Turner knows that worse is in store: his friend is to be 'taken out back' which is a euphemism for being killed, like the black boxing champion who was instructed to lose at important match, but persisted in winning. Turner brings Elwood clothes, and they escape together. This moment promises a happy ending but we are denied that. The boys are hunted down and Elwood is shot. His bones, like those of the boxer, are excavated years later, to the bemusement of the archaeologists. Turner gets away and adopts Elwood's name as a tribute to his friend.

Familiar themes haunt this unnerving book. Any situation in which one human being has absolute control over another is going to lead to abuse, especially where there is no mechanism to call people to account. And trouble awaits anyone who tries to assert themselves despite belonging to a stigmatised group. The degree of corruption should underline the distrust many of us feel at the working of democracy within the most powerful nation in the world. If this is the way it treats its young people, it cannot survive.

GUY'S FUNERAL MEETING FOR WORSHIP

WILLIAM WADDILOVE & MELANIE JAMIESON

Having been around the Society of Friends for very many years one of the first places I look at when The Friend arrives is the 'Hatching, Matching and Despatching' part of the ads. Most weeks we see an announcement of someone we know, knew or even whose grandchildren who have just been born. However there was one enigmatic announcement of the death of 'Guy' with no other names, affiliated to Banbury & Evesham and Long Lartin Meetings. Further information emerged via my Quaker Community Justice Group: this was a prisoner from Long Lartin who had died in hospital.

There had been three deferments to his parole hearings (due to his declining health) and there had been hope of compassionate release.

The funeral Meeting was to be the following day at Evesham Meeting House – a lovely old building with a burial garden, and I was able to attend. There I learnt more about



Guy. He was a very artistically creative person who, once he had discovered Friends, took the matter very seriously, became a member of the Society and was a stalwart of his 'Silence Inside' Meeting where he took on the role of Elder. He studied QF&P extensively; see the photo of his heavily annotated and indexed 'red book' .The picture also shows some of Guy's artist creations including a panel after the style of the Quaker tapestry but with a different interpretation on the rays, which he designed for 'Silence Inside' .

At the funeral Meeting some of his family were present, along with local Friends and those Quakers who regularly attend the Long Lartin meeting, along with several members of the prison's chaplaincy team and some prison staff from the healthcare wing.

I attended out of loyalty to a person whom I had never met but found the Meeting a very tender and inspiring one. His ashes have now been scattered in the garden.

COVID AND US - LISTENERS DURING A PANDEMIC

GILLY CHARTERS

My recent experience of prison has been as a Samaritan helping train Listeners at our local male Cat C prison. This work is, for me, one of the most interesting parts of volunteering as a Samaritan. A group of between 4 and 6 of us goes into the prison to deliver 9 sessions of face to face training which closely follows that which all Samaritans undertake. This has a focus on listening to feelings, being open to hearing about self-harm and suicidal thoughts, and trying to support callers to find additional support where appropriate. All contacts between Listeners and callers are totally confidential unless there's immediate risk to life.



We always hope to have between 8 and 10 trainees in each training group as the movement of prisoners can be rapid and often unanticipated. To give a good group of Listeners we need plenty of new recruits. In between the training (which requires the experienced Listeners in the prison to participate in order to provide sufficient one-to-one support) Samaritans visit the Listeners every fortnight for a meeting which enables them to express any joys or difficulties they're experiencing.

At the start of March 2020, we had just begun training a new group - a much needed addition to the support available in the prison as our experienced Listener group was down to four. There was a feeling of energy and enthusiasm shared by the trainers and the current Listeners. Two sessions in, lock-down happened. No outside volunteers were allowed into the prison, so training came to an abrupt halt. As disappointing as this was for Samaritan volunteers, it was nothing compared to the difficulties men were facing inside the prison. The lock-down meant that all prisoners were behind their doors for 23.5 hours, there was no work or training or education, only cleaners were allowed out of their cells. The routine that, for so many men provided a safe environment whilst they were inside, was completely lost. The trained Listeners were told that they would be at risk if they were escorted from their cells to men in distress, so all listening was ended. With only two sessions of 15 minutes outside their cells each day, even our very experienced Listeners had no time to catch a word with anyone.

At this point (late March) Samaritans like me wondered how we could support the men who had been prepared to put their 'cool', 'hard' image on the line to offer support to the many prisoners with mental health and other difficulties. Fortunately, the prison has a

governor who is aware of the value of the Listener team and was open to looking at new ways to get us 'into' the prison. It seems so easy for those of us who have experienced many Zoom meetings over lock down, but security in prisons requires a lot of additional layers of care. In the end we have been able to maintain links with our current Listeners via conference calls, so have been able to rejoice with those moving away from our prison, and empathise with those still inside.



What have we learned? Well, the most obvious thing to us as a team of trainers, is the enormous resilience of the men inside, and the care of the staff in ensuring that our links with Listeners are maintained. It's become clear that more mental health workers are needed inside prisons at all times. There are different ways of keeping in touch and maybe, once training is able to resume and listening duties can take place again, we can involve Samaritans who find physically moving around prison difficult, in our support network. We need to work more with staff in the prison to find safe ways for Listeners to listen (it's always two Listeners and one caller) – maybe more physical space needs to be provided for men who are very distressed. Is there a possibility of more use of video technology within the prison to help men access Listeners safely? There are more questions than answers at this stage, but we are all hopeful of returning to provide a safe, peer-listening service in prison.

OPINION CORNER: VIRTUAL HEARINGS

RONALD EVANS

My take on Virtual Hearings is 'video link'. If this is the case then here's my take on the value of this facility, at least for pre-trial hearings, but would need to discuss its value if intended for a full trial/hearing.

I would favour pre-trial video links. Why? Normally for these hearings one would be taken to the prison reception where you would spend a tediously boring time waiting to be transported to the Courts.

On arrival at the Courts you are taken to a holding cell to spend another tediously boring time waiting for your case to be called. Once called, the hearing could be just a matter

of minutes, you return to the holding cell to wait for transport back to the prison, tedious.

Back in reception the readmission process once again a tedious operation and it could be very near midnight before you are returned to your cell.

A video link is a much simpler process and far more comfortable for the prisoner as it is completed in the few minutes that you would have appeared in Court. Therefore a great deal of stress is avoided.

QUAKER PRISON VISITS UNDER LOCKDOWN

PENNY HOLMES

Since lockdown, Yvonne, the Quaker Chaplain at the prison where I volunteer has been unable to hold our weekly Meetings for Worship, to which as many as 10 men were coming, plus 3-4 volunteers from neighbouring Area Meetings. Nevertheless Yvonne has been going in each week and I have now joined her, as I recently got my keys. After a quick check of what has been happening in the previous seven days, we walk round each wing at teatime and try to catch a few men we know, or others we don't, to chat to. We take some books, kindly donated (in huge numbers) by our local Area Meetings, both Quaker and non-Quaker, and magazines such as The Friend plus copies of the weekly 'Words of Encouragement' sent out by the Quaker Prison Chaplaincy Group.

SO WE FEEL PART OF OUR MISSION IS TO DEMONSTRATE THAT WE ARE THERE, EVERY WEEK, AND THE MEN ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

Is this Ministry? As a relatively new Quaker and Prison Volunteer, I'm not sure I know the answer. But the men, without exception, have been pleased to chat, appreciative and positive. We often hear 'Oh I didn't know you were still coming' so we feel part of our mission is to demonstrate that we are there, every week, and the men are not forgotten, despite their privations; 23 hours a day in cells, no meetings, no work, no education. Some are keen to tell us how they are doing, and most are eager for reading material.

So how has lockdown affect the men's mood? Surprisingly to me, most are sanguine and accepting of the situation. They follow the news and can often update me with the latest shifts in the pandemic. There is generally much appreciation of the efforts of the Prison Officers who are doing overtime to ensure they all get a shower, a phone call and a decent amount of exercise time each day, in small groups. They miss family visits the most but ipads/tablets have been used to enable a few men to make contact with loved ones who are very ill, or to virtually attend a funeral.

I wonder how this will change the Quaker work at the prison. We feel it may be sometime before Meetings resume, but the men say they miss the opportunity for a peaceful silence in the company of like-minded others and we hope they will return soon, ready for more thoughtful time, focussing on our spiritual lives. They are not restricted to attending only one type of religious meeting so we have many who come from other faiths, or none but all appreciate quiet time and fellowship. One man who became a Quaker at his previous prison, has begun to build a model of the Quaker Meeting house in Bridport using matchsticks – he reckons he has plenty of time to complete it!

WE HOPE THEY WILL RETURN SOON, READY FOR MORE THOUGHTFUL TIME, FOCUSSING ON OUR SPIRITUAL LIVES

This has been a different experience to attending Quaker Meetings at the prison and in many ways, more challenging. On the wings we are on the men's territory, as compared to the Chapel, that is low lit, quite small, friendly and contained. We haven't talked much about spiritual matters in recent weeks, but I feel it is a practical demonstration of the Quaker principle that we try and look for that of God in everyone.

TWO ISSUES FOR THE DOMESTIC ABUSE COMMISSIONER

NICHOLAS GEORGE

The Domestic Abuse Bill is currently going through Parliament. Its main features are to establish the Domestic Abuse Commissioner as a statutory office holder, and place duties on specified public bodies and Government Ministers to cooperate and respond to the Commissioner's recommendations.

The Office of National Statistics crime survey published in November 2019 showed that 1,600,000 million women and 786,000 men aged 16 to 74 years experienced domestic abuse in the year ending March 2019.

I am hoping that the Commissioner will look at two particular issues.

Firstly: the ONS survey reported that 480,000 of the female victims and 359,000 of the male victims suffered violence. With such a high figure for violence against men a review of support resources for them is needed.

The US Federal Department of Justice published in 2016 a major suicide survey covering several states, including North Carolina. The survey used a standardised list of motives. And one motive was 'intimate partner problem".

During the three-year period from 2009-11 this motive was the cause of suicide for 744 men and 162 women



In the same period, there were 129 cases of domestic homicide in which the victim was a woman, and 21 cases with a male victim.

I have not been able to compare the data North Carolina with data in England and Wales as there is no such list of standardised motives for suicide. But male suicide rates in England and Wales are around 3-4 times more frequent than female suicide rates.

Secondly, review how restorative justice in cases of domestic violence can be used. For example, in half of the crown court cases in England and Wales, the victim does not attend. No trial takes place. And the defendant goes free. What happens to the woman?



Besides being a chartered forensic psychologist in UK, I have been a state certified district criminal court mediator in North Carolina for the past 16 years. I was involved in research, (Bryant, Seigle, Jabbar, McGeorge 2010) in North Carolina on the use of pre-trial mediation in cases of “Assault on a female”. Using mediation when the man had no criminal record showed a very significant reduction in re-offending rates compared with the use of imprisonment.

I was surprised to discover that after the publication of this research that the option of having mediation in cases of ‘assault on a female” was removed by the Department of Justice of North Carolina. The two women staff in the section dealing with domestic violence told me that they had not wanted the change.

I have been aware over the years about the amount of active opposition there is to using restorative justice or mediation in cases of domestic violence. I was therefore interested in this paragraph from the second edition of United Nations Handbook on Restorative Justice Programmes (of which QICJ member Marian Liebmann was a co-editor) published in April this year:

”While the controversy continues over the appropriateness of, and the risks associated with, restorative justice in situations involving serious crime, enough progress has been made to conclude that restorative justice can be blended with conventional criminal justice responses to address some of the gaps left by mainstream justice responses and be more responsive to the needs of victims.”

Suicide data taken from the report of the Injury Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit, Injury and Violence Prevention, North Carolina Division of Public Health, December 2013: “The Burden of Suicide in North Carolina”. www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov/DataSurveillance/BurdenofSuicide-FINAL-123013.pdf page 34

Domestic violence homicides only involving partners, excluding other family members, taken from : www.nccadv.org/homicides-2009

Mediating Criminal Domestic Violence Cases: How Much Is Too Much Violence?
Dawn Bryant, Diann Seigle, Leila Jabbar, and Nicholas McGeorge. International Perspectives in Victimology Vol 5 No 1, 2010

Handbook of Restorative Justice Programmes, Second Edition,p 68. United Nation Office of Drugs and Justice, Vienna 2020.

TRANSFORM JUSTICE ON ZOOM

JULIA K HORN

I attended this seminar on Zoom, which explained how justice has changed in the last few months under lockdown. The seminar was hosted by "Transform Justice" and a number of articulate and helpful speakers presented their ideas. The session was chaired by Penelope Gibbs, and the speakers were Graham Hieke, Angus Cleary, Kerry Hudson, Sabine Braun, Khebane, Fionnuala Radcliffe and Alex Preston. This is a summary of the discussion rather than a report on speakers or questions. I included links and references for people to follow up.

The presenters spoke about remote justice and people in prison feeling vulnerable and isolated. They spoke about the role the police are taking, in becoming both technological support and lay legal advisor, as legal help is less available and slower. This can be a problem, even if the Police are well meaning.

The seminar contained inherent contradictions- for example, my internet connection was slow and unstable- so I lost a few segments, just as people in remote link from court and prison do. We have limited technology and, and have to share too.

It became clear that immediate and focused local and national research is required. There was concern about increased custodial sentences, in the light of less detailed court reports and personal assessments. Mitigation is far harder to assess at a distance. Nurses rather than custody sergeants may do screening in some prisons, and they pick up on disability and health problems, not just evidence. However, where Police and Custody Sergeants advise and assess, professional boundaries are blurred. Many Solicitors want to return to face-to face work as soon as possible.

Reasonable adjustments for defendants with disabilities were not being recommended, while in some cases their disabilities were ignored. Interestingly, training for youth courts was an advantage in this process and this helped judges and lawyers work more effectively.



The on-line process seemed to make defendants passive rather than active, thereby disempowering them. The change process occurred over a few weeks and months with gaps and faults in the current system quickly becoming apparent. General and technological literacy levels are variable, so defendants are disadvantaged.

Client contact with lawyers has

decreased, but so has travel time so people are ambivalent about the pros and cons of the new systems. Lawyer preparation and reading time has increased, which is potentially positive.

A key message is how long defendants are waiting for access to justice, and that even asking to go to court (rather than an on-line hearing) is perceived as inconvenient. Poor systems have become evident, but alternative safeguards are minimal. Faults are endemic and historical, with poor technology, training, co-ordination and buildings due to inadequate funding.



The speakers suggested that video hearings are more expensive when taken seriously than traditional court systems. Therefore, it is not a cost saving measure, but a new approach. Estimates of times for people awaiting court hearings at magistrates and Crown Court are worrying. News and professional sources suggested thousands of crown court and magistrate's cases are delayed by years. Miscarriages of justice and appeals are potentially increasing, because the processes feel rushed, with an added sense of urgency. There were some examples of positive work in specific local prisons, but lawyers are working with too little information- for example, drug /alcohol problems are ignored. The speakers suggested that need for systemic change is being ignored. Speakers suggested that the Criminal Justice system should be redesigned around the needs of service users. Defendants' perceptions are as important as objective facts, and research is vital right now.

References and links.

BBC radio 4 reports, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53463856, https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53238163

Penelope Gibbs (https://www.transformjustice.org.uk/about/) July 23, 2020
Are video links causing the criminal justice system to slow down?

Graham Hieke (University of Surrey, https://www.surrey.ac.uk/people/graham-hieke)

Kerry Hudson

Sabine Braun (University of Surrey)

Angus Cleary (Equality and Human Rights Commission. https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en)

Rabah Khebane (Barrister, Dougherty St Chambers, Rabah Khebane (Barrister, Dougherty St Chambers, https://www.doughtystreet.co.uk/barristers/rabah-kherbane)

Fionnuala Radcliffe (https://www.transformjustice.org.uk/about/)

Nigel Fielding was also mentioned as a source of research. (https://www.surrey.ac.uk/people/nigel-fielding)

Alex Preston (Solicitor in Manchester)

ALTERNATIVES TO VIOLENCE IN BRITAIN

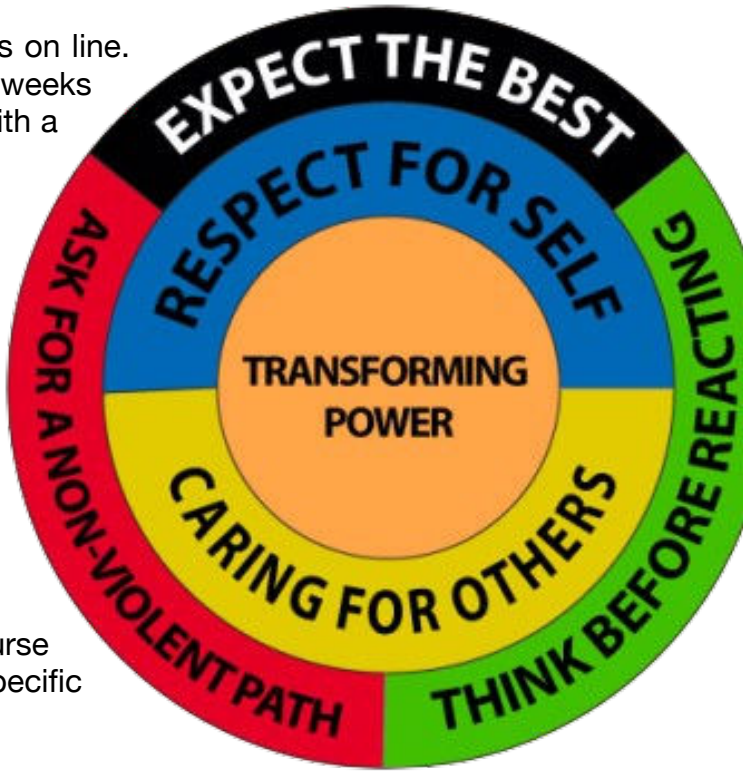
SARAH LANE

As with everyone, the lock down has had a huge effect on AVPB work. However, we haven't been sitting on our laurels (whatever they are!).

We decided early on that as face to face workshops were not possible we would investigate how to provide something on line. We have run 2 sets of pilot workshops initially involving only facilitators, but gradually inviting interested friends of AVP to join in.

It has been a huge learning curve and we have all become so much more familiar with zoom and all its opportunities and foibles.

We have now launched our first level one series on line. This can be accessed as 4 workshops over 2 weeks on zoom, or done online over about 30 hours with a couple of face to face webinars.



We have learnt a lot form Friends around the World through AVP International who have shared their ideas and work. We have also been working on the Facing up to Conflict project which is a correspondence course initially set up for prisoners who are unable to access face to face courses. We are about to launch the first level which can be done online for the general public and are working on level two at the moment.

Also we are rewriting a version of the FUTC course to make it more accessible for people with specific learning difficulties and reading problems.

We continue to offer it to prison's as hard copy, by post.

One big change we've had which has helped all this tremendously is that we have won some funding to employ a National Co-ordinator. She is very talented and dynamic and has done wonders with our work already.

We also have some new and skilled Trustees who have added a new perspective to our strategic thinking.

Another spin off has been the fact that we have worked so hard and zoomed so often that the AVP people are now getting to know each other so much better which is great. We had become quite fragmented across the regions so working together has been valuable and stimulating.

Of course we all look forward to getting back to face to face workshops when we can, but are now able to offer different platforms to suit more individual circumstances.
I was just launching a Midland group based in Birmingham just before lockdown so that has had to go on hold, but the enthusiasm is still there.

We are in the midst of running a 4 week workshop for women who are victims of violent or hate crime (from Cardiff). This is being well attended and early signs are good. John is also about to start an online workshop in the Manchester area.

We still need to do a lot of work with fund raising to make ourselves sustainable and with creating partnerships, and also with accreditation and evaluation. Much work to do but also much enthusiasm.

We're still alive and well!

RESTORATIVE CITIES - THE BRISTOL EXPERIENCE

MARIAN LIEBMANN

The idea of a Restorative City

Most people have heard of Restorative Justice, but in the early 2000s, Hull coined the idea of becoming a Restorative City, to be achieved by successive training of practitioners. Several other cities copied the idea, and in late 2007, Bristol City Council held a high-profile conference about making Bristol a Restorative City. However, although many restorative initiatives already existed, some of 20 years' standing, they were not talking to each other. If we couldn't get ourselves together, how could we ever persuade other people about our cause?



So a small group of us gathered practitioners and started to meet in 2010 in workshops of about 30 participants, helped with slender resources from an independent organisation. Our objectives were to:
Identify common underlying principles of restorative process
Bring people together to be inspired by what we are all doing
Create an ongoing Restorative Justice forum for Bristol
Identify a common vision and find more ways to work together collaboratively
Work out how we could make Bristol a 'Restorative City'

We ran several workshops/ mini-conferences between 2010 and 2012, exploring restorative themes and working collaboratively. Examples were: restorative justice in prisons, restorative practice in schools, police involvement in restorative justice, mediation with homeless people, hate crime, and more.

Restorative Bristol becomes mainstream

We began building links with Bristol City Council, and in August 2012 they decided to make restorative working a mainstream activity. They set up the Restorative Bristol Board and compiled a report on all the restorative justice activities in the city, culminating in a large conference in December 2012 to launch Restorative Bristol officially. A project officer was appointed for one year to help develop a strategy for future development. The 'strapline' adopted for Restorative Bristol was 'working together to resolve conflict and repair harm'. A website was set up and a membership scheme initiated.

Further conferences took place, although with increasing austerity they became harder to arrange. Austerity has also led to loss of staff time, so that our project officer now has about ten other priorities to juggle in addition to Restorative Bristol. However, the Board has continued to meet regularly, and member organisations have collaborated in various ways, including Restorative Justice Week.

Member projects and services

Over the period since the launch of Restorative Bristol, member projects have come and gone according to their funding. In 2019 the restorative projects and services in Bristol included:

Restorative Services in Bristol 2019

- Resolve West (formerly Bristol Mediation) provides mediation and conflict resolution to neighbours/ communities in dispute in the Bristol area
- Restorative Approaches Avon & Somerset (RAAS), led by Resolve West, offers restorative approaches for criminal justice cases
- Avon & Somerset Police Youth Restorative Disposal uses restorative justice to resolve low-level incidents of crime and anti-social behaviour
- The Probation Service refers cases to RAAS.
- CRC (Community Rehabilitation Company) South West delivers RJ and also refers cases to RAAS.
- Bristol Youth Offending Team encourages young offenders (10-17) to take responsibility for the harm they have caused, and to make reparation to their victims.
- Bristol Reparation Service provides reparation projects.
- Hate Crime and Discrimination initiative, a joint venture between SARI (Stand Against Racism & Inequality) and Resolve West, provides a range of restorative interventions.
- RESTORE, part of the Forgiveness Project, works with offenders at Eastwood Park women's prison.
- Two local schools use restorative approaches to handle disciplinary incidents in the school.
- Resolution at Work provides workplace mediation services to organizations
- Several large public sector organisations have their own in-house workplace mediation services.
- Salaam Shalom brings Muslims and Jews together in a variety of ways

Conclusion

There are two main routes to the concept of a restorative city. The first is the 'training route', in which restorative ideas are spread through expanding training in restorative practice to successive groups and departments, and then embedded in the way of working. This is the route taken by Hull, Leeds and several other cities.

The second route is the one chosen by Bristol, gathering existing restorative initiatives into a more coherent organisation, and using this to initiate further restorative services. Other cities that have followed this route include Durham, Brighton and Southampton.

Although we will probably never be able to claim that Bristol is a Restorative City, the fact that we are working towards this gives us a focus and hope for the future.

A 'GOOD READ' INSIGHT INTO THE DRUG SCENE
(THE EASY WAY)

SUE BARRANCE

This seems a good time to hunker down with a novel and, since the present 'keep yourself to yourself' may go on indefinitely, let me offer three chunky novels by Don Winslow that give a very clear picture of the international fall out of prohibition as well a huge variety of viewpoints. You do have to remember huge cast of characters to enjoy the full subtlety of each novel.



The Power of the Dog [Arrow Books 2006] £9.99
The Cartel [Arrow Books 2015] £8.99
The Border [Harper Collins hardback 2019] £20

The primary focus of the first is in South America, whereas the second put more emphasis on the nature of the American market. I picked up a review of the most recent of the trilogy in the Big issue which commented on the quality and extent of the research behind the novels and I would endorse that judgement.

The Big Issue also gave me a different angle on the consumption of drugs in Judith Grisel Never Enough: The neuroscience and experience of addiction [Scribe 2019 £9.99]. She writes from her personal experience of becoming an addict as a young person, how she escaped and has come to be writing now as a leading neuroscientist.
Also recommended by the Big Issue, though I haven't found an affordable copy, is J. Warwick Sweeney Hardy Tree- a Doctors Bible [Brackett Press 2019 £30]. It is described as a grandson's account of his grandfather's pioneering work in addiction therapy which

the author feels has been cast aside due to corporate greed. It shows how the 'war on drugs' need never have happened.

I would endorse Danny Kushlick's [Transform] recommendation, Chasing the Scream by Johann Hari [Bloomsbury 2015] which is also affordable in paperback at £9.99. It is a history encompassing many viewpoints, with many well researched vignettes. It is very



readable – almost a fascinating collection of related short stories illustrating the history of official policy on drugs around the world. . If you were unable to come to the 2019 QICJ conference in Leeds on the drug wars, this book will give you all the background offered on that occasion. Drugs policy has a huge impact on the criminal justice system, economics in the shape of 'big pharma' and discrimination and inequality. Can we disengage from the struggle to radically change the public attitudes and policy that underlie the present suffering?

If, like me, you are just as busy as you were and are having to set yourself up in the new contactless circumstances, try the first of the Don Winslow trilogy as bed time reading to unwind from the day. Below is the review I wrote for our AM newsletter.

Don Winslow The Cartel [2015 Arrow Books £8.99]

This is an almost 700 page novel which rewards the reader with a picture of the results of the American/international war on drugs in Mexico. Drug production, processing and selling is big business, like other big business in most respects except its illegality. As in other markets with high profits, there is strong competition. If one business is taken out of business by law enforcement, others compete for the vacant place in the market. This is where the violence builds.

One of this novel's chief protagonists, Adan Barrera, is a meticulous businessman growing his business by outstripping his rivals. If he is to take over a vacant location, he not only needs to have a fast-acting information network but to have a well trained

gang to keep other rivals at bay. As the business grows its profits by controlling the best supply chains and distribution routes, better trained and more loyal enforcement gangs can be afforded. They are no longer the assorted young men put on the streets by poverty [although some may climb the career ladder] but the most successful businesses can afford to pay more than most countries pay their elite soldiers so military personnel can be lured into serving the most successful drug barons. Armaments and violence escalate. The most sophisticated armaments can be bought. Inevitably the civilian population gets caught in the growing cross-fire and there are streams of refugees. Just as the military personnel are drawn by lucrative career prospects, so can police and politicians be bought with supplements to their income or threats of violence.

Adan's primary focus is business but he is ruthless in using force to achieve his goals and avoid his business being taken over. Most of the time he can stay remote protected by elite troops, but he is the master-mind who arranges the violence. He has an interesting foil to an American with a Mexican background, Arte Keller, who has built his career in American intelligence in the drug wars and goes back to hunting Barrera as an employee of the DEA [drug enforcement agency] . Although he has military training, he is not addicted to the macho-violence that appears in some of the portraits of drug war lords. He is determined to kill Barrera.

WHAT MIGHT OTHERWISE SEEM AN UNREADABLE ACCOUNT OF EVER ESCALATING VIOLENCE IS RESCUED BY INNUMERABLE PORTRAITS OF ALL SORTS OF PEOPLE WHO CANNOT AVOID BEING INVOLVED.

What might otherwise seem an unreadable account of ever escalating violence is rescued by innumerable portraits of all sorts of people who cannot avoid being involved. The leaders of the different drug cartels have different backgrounds, personalities and ambitions. The lawyers, policemen and politicians are just as interesting and have different solutions to living in a society in which violence is embedded. The staff of a particular paper, whose editor endeavours to maintain and live by his principles, reveal their different struggles to emulate his leadership and not all survive. The varied roles and stances taken by women from different strata of society include prostitutes and mistresses, the daughters and brides of drug barons, a journalist, a doctor and others who are prepared to stand up for the needs of their local communities and speak out against what is going on, particularly the corruption arising from fear of violence. Perhaps the saddest vignette is that of a child soldier. His focus and efficiency comes at the price of losing all feeling.

The attraction of the drug business is the immense amount of money which can be made and glamorous life style then possible in a poor country. Barrera, like Shakespeare's Richard 111, finally questions what his ambitions have brought him and considers whether and how he might escape. Arte, the man who has spent years tracking Barrera in the hope of killing him, recognises the blight on his own soul and how many other people he has been drawn to kill as a consequence of that mission. The governments who purport to have a mission to wipe out the drug trade are equally corrupted. The 'war' on drugs is as damaging as any other war and the chief casualty is civil society.

SUICIDES & MURDERS INVOLVING INTIMATE PARTNERS IN N. CAROLINA, USA

NICHOLAS GEORGE

I have been a supporter for many years of getting domestic violence against women to taken seriously as a criminal offence. New laws are coming into being that refer to domestic abuse, to cover psychological abuse as well violence. Up-to-date data shows that a third of cases in England and Wales involve male victims. It is this recent change that made me have at look at my notes from 2016 about the issue.

It is only comparatively recently that male suicide has started to have attention. There are now one or two places of refuge for men. Throughout the world male suicide rates exceed those for females. In England Wales the rate is between three and four times higher. In Russia, for example, the rate is six times higher.

I am a state certified district criminal court mediator in North Carolina. I had done research in that state on the use of pre-trial mediation for cases of 'assault on a female' (a charge not existing in England and Wales). I found that if the male defendant did not have any previous criminal convictions, the re-offending rate after two years was only 5% compared with 35% for those who went to prison.

When the US federal Department of Justice published a major suicide survey covering several states I was interested to read that a standardised list of motives was used. And it included one motive called 'intimate partner problems".
As one of the states studied was North Carolina, I did some more research.

During the three-year 2009-11 period in the state this motive for the cause of suicide was given for 744 men and 162 women

In the same period, there were 21 cases of domestic violence homicide in which the victim was a man, and 129 cases in which the victim was woman.

In two cases, the victims and perpetrators were both women; in seven cases the victims and perpetrators were both men.

Six of the female perpetrators committed suicide, and 35 of the male perpetrators committed suicide.

The total number of men committing suicide with the intimate partner problem motive or being murdered in a domestic setting in those three years was 765. The comparative number of women was 291.

I was not able to compare North Carolina with England and Wales as there is no such list of standardised motives for suicide.

Later I was asked by the Recorder for Southampton Judge Dinage Hope to look at the possibility of providing an alternative to crown court prosecution in cases involving

domestic violence. He said that in half of such cases the victim did not turn up, so the trial did not take place. I asked the Court Administration service for southern England if that proportion was correct. Yes, was the response, and that proportion applies to all crown court cases. What happens afterwards, I asked. They did not know and suggested I carried out research to find out. I have to regret that I have not done so.

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Suicide data taken from the report of the Injury Epidemiology and Surveillance Unit, Injury and Violence Prevention, North Carolina Division of Public Health, December 2013: "The Burden of Suicide in North Carolina". www.injuryfreenc.ncdhhs.gov/DataSurveillance/BurdenofSuicide-FINAL-123013.pdf page 34
Domestic violence homicides only involving partners, excluding other family members, taken from :
www.nccadv.org/homicides-2009
www.nccadv.org/homicides-2010
www.nccadv.org/homicides-2011

Your Committee Members for 2020 are: Simon Ewart (Membership Secretary), Rodney Mahon (Treasurer), Alice Audsley, Marian Liebmann, Jo Rado (Co-Clerk), Melanie Jameson (Co-Clerk), Teresa Parker & Sue Barrance. Jonathan Lamb is our Newsletter Editor

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