QUAKERS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE

MAY 2019 EDITORIAL

Welcome to our May 2019 edition. Some of you got to meet me at the conference in Leeds this year, and I was so privileged to have had time with you. Having had spent time in custody I am aware for some of the issues around our Criminal Justice system, and you will have seen or heard media reports that the prisons are not in a good place right now. On the whole that is the truth, and yet we have some amazing staff within those high walls doing great jobs – all is not lost. Melanie Jameson, in her article, shares some of the current work happening within the system right now.

Legal regulation of the illegal drug issue was discussed at length at the conference. William Waddilove has written an overview of the conference, and that has been published here. And those who follow our speakers on social media will find that the conversation is being heard in the right places. There are moves to open drug administration rooms allowing those who use to do so in a safe place.

Steve brings us an article on life after death. He discusses his rehabilitation and how sometimes we can get carried away with questions we ask of ourselves. Having served a life-sentence I have had to ask myself these questions, and am pleased to say that life is much more valuable to me right now. The Lightless Sky brought to this newsletter by Adrian Smith. It is another book that has joined the ever-increasing list that I want to read.

Enjoy this edition, but remember, without your contributions we would not have this resource that we can turn to.

Mark Humphries
Editor



Jonathan & Mark (co-editors)

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QICJ CONFERENCE 2019

Concluding Minute of Quakers in Criminal Justice. Annual conference 2019.
The Decriminalisation of the personal use of illegal Drugs.



Quakers in Criminal Justice met in February 2019 to discuss, learn and discern matters relating to drug policy. The conference concluded having discerned the following Minute:

We feel strongly that the present drug policy causes harm as it is based on the criminalisation of people who use illegal drugs. We learnt that criminalisation is ineffective in reducing illegal drug use and that systems used to control drug use make no impact upon prevalence.

We understand that doing nothing is to condone the status quo and the harm caused by the current policy. Quakers in Criminal Justice understand that legal regulation will provide greater protection to people who use drugs. We need a health based system which encompasses harm reduction, health, social care and community resilience.

We consider that drug problems must be addressed alongside the problems caused by an unjust and unequal society. We believe it would be beneficial to have a regulated and licensed supply of all drugs. Public education is essential to convey that legal regulation would safeguard people who use drugs and the wider society as a whole - preventing deaths, drug related crime and reducing the involvement of organised crime.

We appreciate the deepening of this subject and we encourage Friends to explore how we can influence public opinion and political decision making. Friends can be in touch with the Quaker Decriminalisation Network about actions that can be taken.

This is a moral issue and Friends can be a force for change. We call upon Quakers in Britain to gain clarity on how to end the 'war on drugs'.

We ask that our Recording Clerk consider how to make best use of this Minute.

Signed

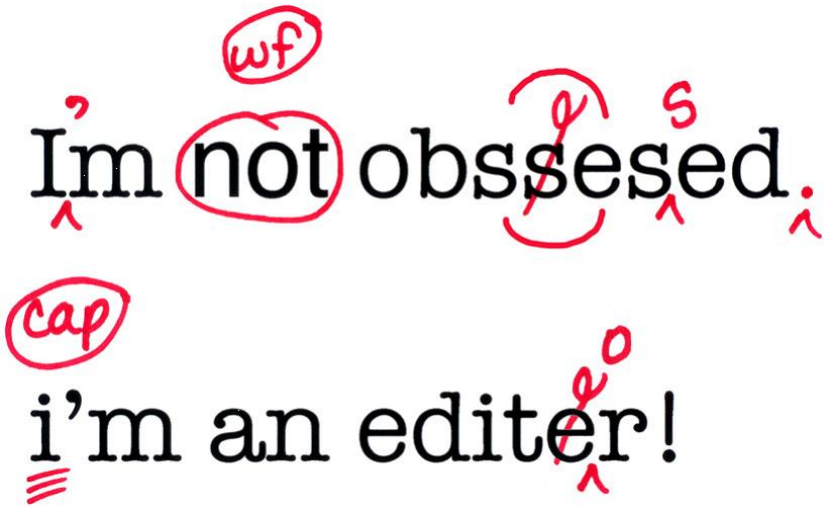
Quakers in Criminal Justice

WHO IS THE NEW EDITOR?

I am Mark, and was formerly appointed to this role In February at our conference. So, for those of you who did not get to meet me at the conference I thought that I would share some of my story here.

I served a life-sentence from 1992-2003, and a period of licence recall from 2011-2018. In that time I changed my career from Chef and Pastor to writer and journalist. I was released from prison on St Valentine's Day 2018, and since then a lot of positive things have happened in my life.

I come from a non-believing home and found faith in my teenage years. I gained ordination in my twenties and served in a church that sought to help those with addiction and vulnerability issues. My offending happened due to a mental health breakdown and not seeking advice from the professionals, and that is not to diminish the lives that I put at risk. I have learned a lot over the years.



I found Quakerism when I was recalled to prison, and met a fantastic lady who introduced herself as the Quaker chaplain. We chatted about my faith, and she introduced me to her Meeting for Worship, and that was the genesis of a renewed way of worshipping for me. I was still in prison when I felt it was right to become a member of my Area Meeting and since then Quakers have been my mainstay of worship even though I still attend church with my friends from time to time.

I now work within the prison education sector, and have written a Creative Writing course that can be accessed by over 25,000 prisoners. I am also involved with a variety of organisations that work with or for those in prison, and it is great to be putting something back into the system.

My role here, along with my co-editor Jonathan Lamb is to facilitate your newsletter. Feel free to email me anything that you think might be of interest to our community. I am contactable on huphries.mark@outlook.com.

Mark Humphries

2019 CONFERENCE OVERVIEW

Quakers in Criminal Justice Conference 2019. Held at Hinsley Hall Leeds 22 to 24 February. The theme was "The Decriminalisation of the Personal Use of Drugs"

Overview – I was not sure what I was going for but knew this annual event was always filled with interesting people I knew and doing a lot of good work in areas I cared about. There was a brilliant selection of speakers who were well informed in their subject areas and imparted a lot of sound information and knowledge. By the end we had all developed a clear knowledge and understanding of what was suggested and the related problems. The theme came from a concern of Cornwall Friends and the members of that steering group were present.
Summary – Inspiring, Challenging and Motivating

Speaker 1 – Alex Stevens – Professor in Criminal Justice at University of Kent. The currently situation is that anyone in possession of an illegal substance can be prosecuted. There is some tolerance toward some drugs in some small quantities but it is not regularised. Some countries have legalised personal consumption of some drugs and he explained how the Portuguese system worked. Generally there seemed to be several approaches. One was 'make drugs so boring not one is interested' (anyone can get them), Make them cheap (removes the black market). Make drug taking a health issue (not a criminal one). He showed us that generally liberalisation did not necessarily give a rise to an increased 'problem' and certainly eased police and court work.

Speaker 2 – Peter McCall – Police and Crime Commissioner for Cumbria – He gave us an overview of his work and focused on one particular area. Barrow in Furness. A 'remote town' two classed of work highly paid technical working for BAE and virtually nothing else so two 'poor' estates for the others which have substance abuse problems. Imaginatively the Police had bought a flat on one estate as a focal point of help called The Well. https://www.thewellcommunities.co.uk/ It is staffed by a enthusiastic members and involves a wide range of community organisations. Who all support it with finance and staff. It cost £98,000 and he points out that it costs £50k per year to keep someone in a low security prison. Save two people and you are winning. The success rate was impressive. He did impress upon us that money talks. Nothing will happen unless you can prove the financial effectiveness and get the people behind you.

Speaker 3 – Danny Kushlick – Head of External Affairs – Transform Drugs Policy Foundation - www.trasformdrugs.org
His concern was related to uncontrolled drug supply. His charity is campaigning to make the dangerous safer. Stopping drug taking is not an option but we can ensure that what they are taking is a safe and a known substance. It is closely allied with the organisation



https://anyoneschild.org/ which campaigns for getting drugs under control to protect our children. Their website features many people who have lost loved ones though poisoning either by pollutants in the drugs or not knowing the strength of what they were getting.

Thoughts – Something needs to be done. Action Points
If you get a criminal record even in your youth/teenage years it will haunt you for the rest of your life. It doesn't matter what the crime was or in the case of drug taking how 'transient'. We need to decimalise personal drug taking as matter of urgency.
There was a recent report that uses of cannabis in their youth that a large proportion went one to develop depression problems. How is that connected to this concern?

Buying an unregulated substance from an unlicensed dealer means that you do not know what you are getting!
Also from discussion with other delegates I suspect that not many were thinking about other 'weird' and unregulated substances often from the industrial world.

Venue – Hinsley Hall – The conference and Pastoral Centre for the Catholic Diocese of Leeds. What a lovely place. Very well appointed and organised standing in its own spacious grounds and just a perfect place for this sort of conference and event. It also hosts normal short stay B&B

Future – We have a challenge. See the minute below. This decimalising of drugs for personal use and related issues is an achievable objective. It is very different from 'Legalising Drugs' The two must not be confused and this conference made me aware of important difference.
Another problem is the adversarial nature of politics where if any political party changes its approach it will be used as a weapon against it by the other one.
There was even wild suggestion of introducing a 'Q' mark of drug purity.
So Friends the matter is before you.

William Waddilove - Feb 2019

SURVEYING THE PRISON REFORM LANDSCAPE



During his short spell as Secretary of State at the Ministry of Justice (MoJ), Michael Gove made one good move. Faced by damning prison inspectorate reports, he asked his friend and colleague, Sally Coates, to review the situation and recommend reforms. Unfortunately he then became immersed in the politics of the Referendum and was removed from office shortly after Teresa May became PM.

Coates' delayed Review was worth the wait. Her far-reaching recommendations fed into the Prison Safety and Reform White Paper. In the forward, the new Secretary of State quoted Elizabeth Fry and referred to the huge 'cultural and structural shift' required to move prisons from 'warehouses' to 'purposeful centres of reform'. Aspirational stuff! All the more disappointing then that the Bill had not

quite finished the scrutiny process when May called her ‘snap election’ and failed to emerge afterwards. Or did it?



Since parliament had approved the Bill’s content I discovered that the reforms were going forward after all, via intricate measures devised and implemented by MoJ civil servants. It has been most helpful to have contact with a number of them, in order to track what is going on. My enquiries have elicited details of a patchwork of reforms (in MoJ speak: ‘programmes’, ‘strategies’ and ‘projects’) Perhaps the best known project is the Prisons Minister’s ‘10 prisons project’ whereby Rory Stewart promises to resign if he has not turned around ten of the more troubled prisons within a year – that year is up in August 2019. It does not include prisons now in the equivalent of ‘special measures’, a provision of Prison Safety and Reform, whereby prisons came under the direct jurisdiction of the MoJ.

The most fundamental reform relates to the role of Prison Governors. They are being transformed from operational managers to business commissioners, using their devolved budgets to select who delivers their core education provision and to buy in further services needed at their establishment. For instance, a prison with many elderly prisoners might buy in Age Concern, another might commission a course on parenting skills. This is why the central National Offender Management Service was laid down, to underline this new autonomy. Of course there are strings attached, in terms of governor accountability.

My own specialist area is awareness of and support for prisoners with Dyslexia, Dyspraxia, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder and Dyscalculia. As an educator, Sally Coates was persuaded of the need to take this population into account, along with people with Learning Disabilities. A number of ‘mandations’ relate to their screening, assessment and support. After 25 years of pushing this particular rock up the hill, my guidance on Dyslexia etc. has now been accepted by the MoJ and relayed to governors.

On 1st April 2019, the education reforms went live. Along with other members of the Prisoner Learning Alliance (a committee set up by the Prison Education Trust) I shall be monitoring it carefully – fortunately contacts and conferences enable me to touch base with prison governors who will share their experiences.

An intractable challenge relates to the implementation of a single database on which all screening results, personal learning plans, healthcare information etc. are entered. The current muddle of multiple systems is clearly problematic when information on a prisoner’s needs is required. Despite assurances (and I spoke to the women in charge of

this initiative last September) ‘New NOMIS’ is far from perfect, and a single database is not yet in sight.
What else is happening in education and training? New ‘Apprenticeship Pathways’, better training to link with local employment opportunities and renewed attempts to engage employers through the ‘New Futures Network’. Two messages are promoted: ex-prisoners make committed employees and they are ready to be trained up to fill skill shortages. Another initiative, ‘Ban the Box’, relates to non-disclosure of convictions and is gaining support.

Family links are also moving up the agenda. A report by Lord Farmer refers to families as ‘the golden thread’ and ‘third leg of the stool’, along with education & employment. Governors must produce Local Strategies to engage families – this will be evaluated in HMIP inspections. The Digital Change programme, including in-cell phones, should help to maintain family ties.

Given increased attacks, both prisoner on prisoner and on staff, security will always be a priority in funding allocation. Suicides, overdose deaths and ever-increasing incidents of self-harm are of great concern and evidence of prisoner trauma.

The most costly programme is the Prison Estate Transformation Programme which is planning for 10,000 new places and six modern Category C establishments. The prison estate will be re-organised into three functions: reception, training and resettlement.

Ever since the Corston Report in 2007 the distinct needs of women in prisons have been flagged up. It is a great disappointment to many campaigners that Corston’s recommendations, accepted in full by parliament at the time, have largely failed to materialise. However there is one thing to celebrate: the MoJ has scrapped plans to build five community prisons for women, deciding instead to focus on community provision. Since the prisons were to cost £50 million and only £5 million has been allowed for alternatives, campaigners rightly ask “Where is the remaining £45 million that was allocated?”



What about accommodation on release, a real issue for so many ex-prisoners? The Rough Sleeping Strategy (from the Housing Ministry, Aug 2018) expresses the aim that ‘no-one leaves prison without suitable accommodation’. I have yet to ascertain what measures have been put in place.



David Gauke, the current Secretary of State at the MoJ (at the time of writing!) made a welcome announcement this February. Accepting research findings that sentences of up to 6 months achieve next to nothing, he proposed a re-think (however knife crime stats may well stall this process). This preceded the damning Audit Office report into the Grayling's 'Transforming Rehabilitation' strategy whereby our world-renowned probation Service was dismantled and largely given over to private companies delivering rehabilitation services. One of these, Working Links, ran three regions and and has now gone in to administration. Unfortunately, like Humpty Dumpty, probation cannot be reassembled. What a loss! This failed TR strategy cost millions to set up; terminating contracts prematurely is costing an additional £11 million.

If you go into a prison, it's worth taking a look at the Prison Officer Assn Journal Gatelodge. A recent issue stressed the unsafe environment, encapsulated by the poster. At this critical time, with parliament otherwise engaged, our neglected prisons will not get the attention they require. We can only pray that, once there are meaningful activities available to prisoners, the spread of drugs and violence can be curbed and that the good initiatives outlined here will prevail.

Melanie Jameson

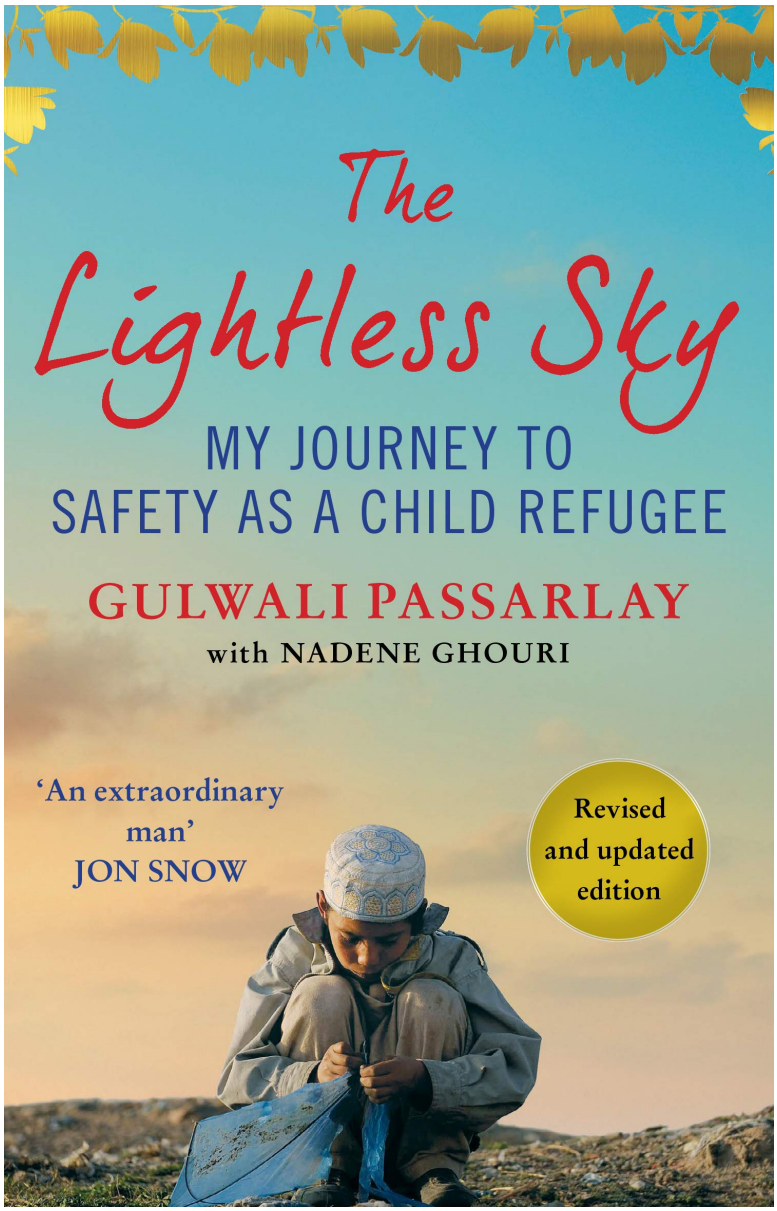
THE LIGHTLESS SKY - A REVIEW

Book Review: The Lightless Sky by Gulwali Passarlay (2015)

This book makes grim reading as it tell the story of an Afghan boy of 12 years old, who is sent abroad by his mother, with an older brother after their father, a doctor, is killed. In the opening scene we are gripped by Gulwali, who has never seen the sea, on what should have been a short crossing from Turkey to Greece had been travelling for over a year.

Gulwali was born in 1994, when the Taliban came to power ending 15 years of war. During this time a third of the Afghan population had died, and another third had become refugees. His parents were married in a refugee camp, and had five children; two were daughters who were not educated at school because they were not allowed to be seen by men that were not part of their family.

Opium and cannabis cultivation had been banned along with music, photography and TV. It was compulsory for men to wear beards, and the Vice and Virtues committee enforced the rules, taking boys to see the stoning of an adulteress woman. If you transgressed Final Warnings came in the form of Night Letters.



The mother decided that her two eldest boys must leave for their own safety. The boys promised that they would stay together, but events means they got separated fairly quickly as happens on journeys like this. Gulwali made it is far as a moving train in Bulgaria. He was thrown from it, arrested and experienced prison in Bulgaria, Iran. Turkey and Greece – all within a six-month time period. Hidden in a lorry he escapes the UN Refugee Camp and ends up in Italy where he was treated well in an Italian Children's Home. He soon escaped there and fled to Paris, and eventually reached 'The Jungle' in Calais. Here he was fed by French and English activists.

Travelling through Belgium and Germany Gulwali made it to England where he claimed asylum at Dartford Police Station, from there he was driven back to Dover and assigned a Social Worker. Here he was accommodated in a hostel for unaccompanied children, but was not believed when he said that he was 13 years old; people thought that he was 'too clever and too smart' to be so young.

He did not enjoy being at this hostel as he preferred to be around adults. He went on to become involved in a tree planting project along the Kent and East Sussex Railway. Asylum status was refused meaning that he could not attend school or work, and while living in a flat in Gravesend he attempted suicide for the first time. He was reunited with

his brother through some allies, and the older sibling was designated as his guardian. Gulwali was then allowed to attend school, did well in his GCSEs, and was awarded the Duke of Edinburgh Award. He gained roles as a school Prefect, Librarian and served on the School Council. In 2012 he was selected to carry the Olympic Torch, and during his college days he became an adviser for children in care. Gulwali finally won an appeal against the original asylum decision.



His brother, unwisely, travels back to Afghanistan and is kidnapped by the Taliban where he is sent to a training camp. From here he escapes and has to start all over again.

Recently on a trip to Saffron Walden I came across a sculpture which had been installed in a public garden. This piece is by Ian Walter and is titled 'Children of Calais'. Two of the six children are black, under-fed and their clothes are ragged. Their attitude suggests total despair. Seeing this sculpture 'struck at my life', to borrow a George Fox phrase.

Our so-called civilisation stands condemned by its institutionalised oppression of children. Sometimes I feel 'the wrong people are in prison'. Gulwali, deplores in as many words, the wastefulness and inefficiency of the asylum process. He had the intelligence and determination to win through, but how many did not?

Some Friends may recall the old rhyme:
We hang the man and flog the woman
Who steals the goose from off the common,
But let the greater thief go loose
Who steals the common from the goose.

Adrian Smith

LIFE AFTER DEATH

What thoughts do these words invoke within our minds? Many may perceive them in a spiritual sense - a hope that there is something more to come; a hope maybe, of a resurrection or reincarnation, after our corporeal journey has ended. For me, as an ex-offender of maybe the most feared and stigmatised kind, they mean something different in many ways. I believe there are ways to die that are not physical in nature, although I sincerely hope and pray that both victims and offenders can find ways to carry on living.

I was sent to prison for perpetrating sexual offences, and I remember the utter confusion within my mind during those first days, weeks, and months of prison, and the seemingly unfathomable questions I posed of myself. That time is hazy, but the spirit of those questions would be, “What led me to commit such damaging acts? When did I pass away, and become a wraith that drifted between light and darkness?”. Beyond these, but invoked by them, were more immediately pressing questions, such as, “Do I want to live? Should I be allowed to live?”, and most prominent in my mind, “Do I deserve to live?”.

FOR ME, AS AN EX-OFFENDER OF MAYBE THE MOST FEARED AND STIGMATISED KIND, THEY MEAN SOMETHING DIFFERENT IN MANY WAYS.

I felt I couldn’t begin to pursue the answers to these questions, nor to affirm who I really was, until I really understood the full extent of the situation. My embarkation point towards a safer future for all, had to be with victim empathy at the forefront of my psyche. On one specific occasion I can recall, during pre-programme assessment, this flexibility of thinking was stirred within me, connected to my alternative view of death. I was confronted by a psychometric question, that being, “Have you killed someone?”. This invoked two conflicting responses within my mind, driven by two trains of thought. No, I hadn’t in the mortal sense, but yes, I had seriously hurt someone, and taken critical emotional and physiological lifeblood from them. Understanding how much I had hurt someone, helped me when I was undergoing interventions and treatment. As I felt there

can be no stronger incentive to learn, understand, and prevent further offending, than through having the deepest connection to my victim's state I could achieve.

Over time though, especially upon release, I have realised it can be dangerous to become obsessed with this intense analysis of actions and consequences. A balance must be reached: not disrespecting the past, or ignoring the invaluable learning that must be embraced, but not continual, obsessive, introspective research either, that can induce instability within me. In a nutshell, I have had to move on. I have within this process though, found that many of those initial questions from my darkest days have been answered, although others I believe will remain in my subconscious indefinitely. The critical thing is, my pulse remains.

I DIDN'T WANT TO BE DEAD PERMANENTLY, BUT JUST FOR A LITTLE WHILE, UNTIL THE PAIN OF MY EXISTENCE HAD PASSED.

Death in all its guises stalks the wings of our prisons. Suicide is known to be a consequence of our penal thinking, and I lost two friends to "lost hope" within those walls and fences. Thankfully, assisted in the main by my "Samaritan" led "Listener" training, a role prisoners take on to emotionally support others inside, my split-second temptations towards such a fate were rare. I deduced that I didn't want to be dead permanently, but just for a little while, until the pain of my existence had passed. As I have described, these brief assignations with the abyss were especially frequent in the early days, as guilt, shame, and loss haunted my waking hours and trespassed into my sleep. As part of the therapeutic support I received, it was explained to me that I was suffering from bereavement in a way. The death of my marriage, the death of the family unit, the loss of my wife, my children, and my friends, with no hope it seemed of seeing them again. It was gently suggested to me, that a living bereavement can be as debilitating as coping with physical demise to an extent. As there is little chance of closure over time, knowing they are out there physically living, but forever out of reach, forever dead to me.

These preceding words are all tainted with darkness, so you may be asking yourself, when does life begin again? I have tried to avoid spiritual concepts, beyond the few within the first paragraph, but it is a truth that you need to die to be reborn. I can pinpoint the precise moment my previous life ended, along with the passing of so much more. It was upon receiving the call that accused me of doing the things I had done. Over time though, with thought, support, and that most critical of tools, perspective, I

realised that my negative, troubled persona had passed away too, at that same precise moment in time. I know many people would be sceptical of that statement, believing "Once a sex offender, always a sex offender.". Having experienced the system though, I cannot concur. Among the many imprisoned, released, and community order offenders, there is a wide-ranging spectrum of risk. There is the offender that should sadly never be released from a secure environment, whose issues are just too extreme to treat, and at the other end, there is the offender that will never contemplate illegal actions again. I would never be so bold as to put myself at the positive end of this spectrum, but firmly believe, that the trauma at the point of that old life passing, can immediately change people, maybe much more than is recognised or accepted at present. Whatever the time frame, I know the man I was has passed away, and in his place is a man more attentive, more empathetic, more caring and kind; less selfish, less unstable, less sexually motivated, less inattentive to inner demons and negative emotions. My goal has always been to regress towards the child I was, purely from a moral and virtuous point of view. Recapturing the innocence, whilst retaining the maturity, patience, knowledge, and wisdom of the adult I am now.

I KNOW MANY PEOPLE WOULD BE SCEPTICAL OF THAT STATEMENT, BELIEVING "ONCE A SEX OFFENDER, ALWAYS A SEX OFFENDER.

To conclude this piece, and please forgive me for one more spiritual analogy, but what keeps me going each day, what drives me on, is the resurrection of the seemingly dead. Around two years ago, my eldest daughter sent me a message. Simply worded it read, "It has taken me a long time to process all this, but you are my Dad, and I love you and forgive you.". For me, this is the pure essence of hope, and "Life after Death".

Steve

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Our membership numbers remain fairly steady - at the AGM in February I reported that there were 135 current members, allowing for resignations, deaths and new members. We were and are very sad to have to report the deaths of two of our very loyal members, Judy Kessler who died last
August, after a long illness courageously borne, and Bob Booth, who died after a short illness last December, and our sympathies go to both their families.
At the same time, we are pleased to welcome a new member, Stephen Hanvey, whose contact details will be included in the updated Membership List, which all being well will be issued at the same time as this Newsletter.

What is less encouraging is how dilatory many members are about paying their subscriptions on time (or at all) - only 87 had subscribed for the current year, 24 last subscribed in 2018 and 24 not since 2017 and likely to be removed from the mailing list, which will leave our numbers unacceptably low and financially less viable. Friends, please attend to this!

I need now to advise you of some changes to roles on the committee:- I am standing down, and Melanie Jameson will be taking over as co-Clerk with Jo Rado, and Simon Ewart has now become our Membership Secretary. Their contact details are in the Membership List, and I know they will bring fresh thinking to QICJ. I will miss my involvement over many years in these roles, but it is now well time that I stood down!

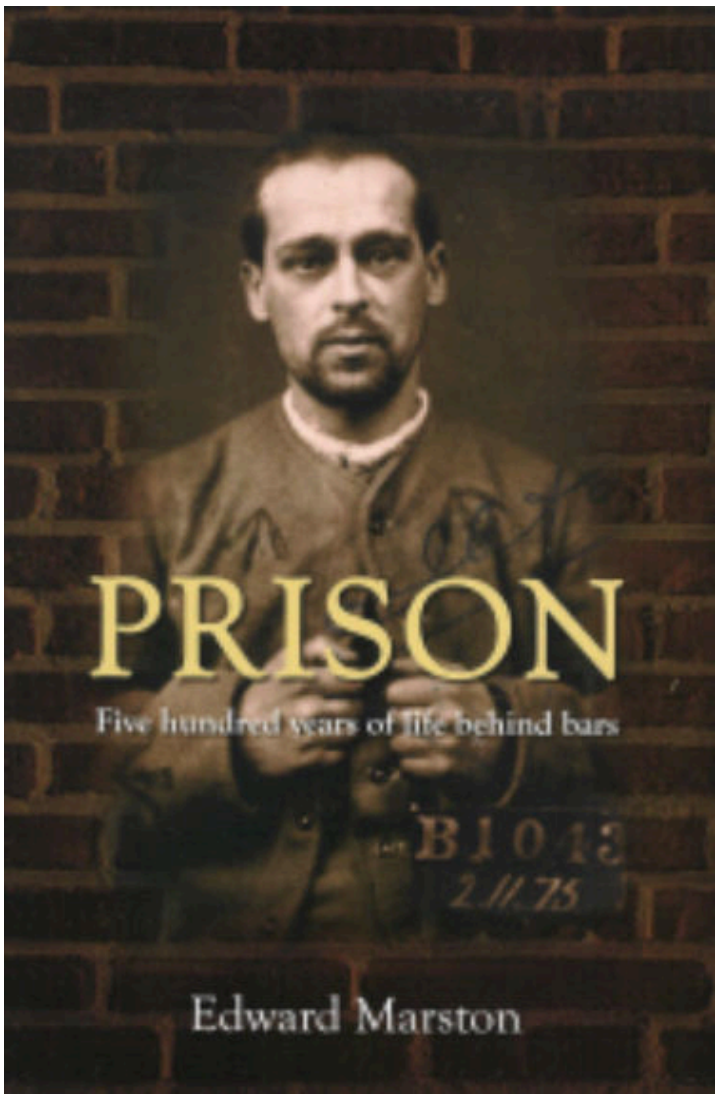


My good wishes to you all.
Ann Jacob, ex-Co-Clerk and Membership Secretary!

We'd like to extend our thanks for Ann for her hard work and dedication over the past number of years.

PRISON : 500 YEARS OF LIFE BEHIND BARS - A REVIEW

Edward Marston draws on his experience as a writer of crime fiction and non-fiction with a long-standing interest in penal conditions and reform, and experience of teaching drama at Winston Green Prison in Birmingham. He also uses the resources of the National Archives, retelling the stories of men, women and children who lived behind bars, taking in Sir Thomas More, Oscar Wilde, and Mary Wade who was transported to Australia at the age of eleven, and John Lee, the man they couldn't hang.



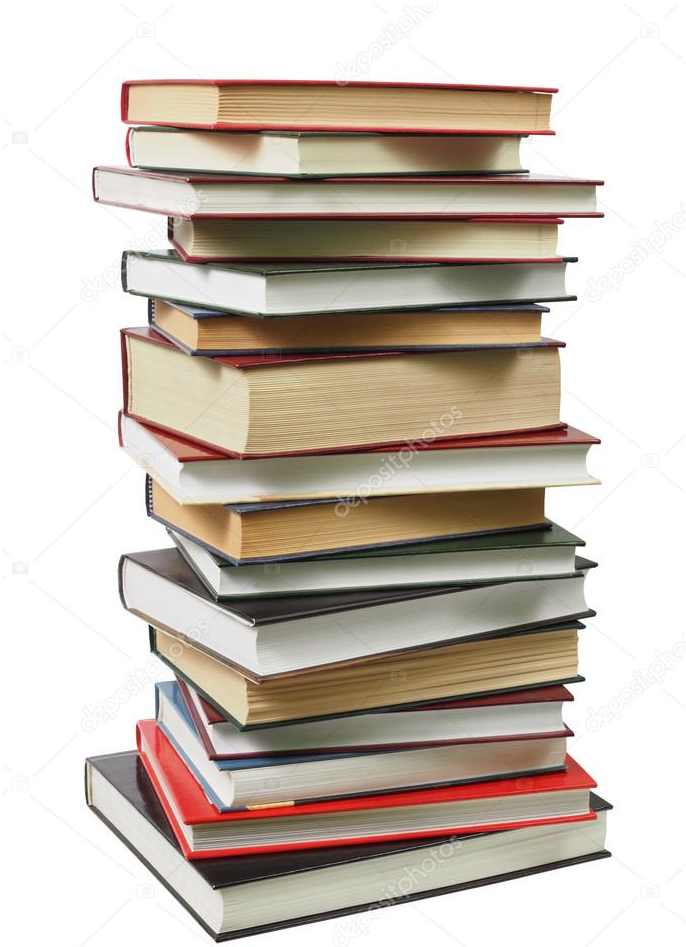
Although the subtitle of the work details five hundred years, he actually begins nine hundred years ago with the Norman Conquest, and the building of the Tower of London, which in the Tudor period became the focus of the monarch's power. So the Introduction details the medieval years, when payments for all aspects of prison life had to be paid for by the inmates, who were often subjected to harsh conditions, punishments and ordeals.

The first chapter deals with the great gaols of London, beginning with the Tower, but also cataloguing the Clink, the Marshalsea, Newgate, the Fleet and the Compters - Bread Street, Wood Street and the Poultry. In all these establishments, overcrowding, disease and starvation were the order of the day.

The eighteenth century is explored in chapter two, bringing to light transportation, torture and the public executions at Tyburn, which attracted great crowds, and became scenes of entertainment. The great prison reformer John Howard also appears in this chapter, being the Sheriff for Bedfordshire and visiting all the prisons in England and Wales - the details were published in his book of 1777.

When overcrowding reared its head in the prisons, as men and women awaited transportation, the solution was to press hulks - worn-out warships often moored along the Thames, and the Medway. Although intended to be temporary stop gaps, they remained until 1859, and many prisoners perished on board these black holes of disease and dirt, and their use is detailed in chapter three.

At the same time, reform was brought to bear upon prisons, and this is outlined in chapter four, incorporating the twin planks of silence and solitude, intended to induce remorse and repentance, but sadly often creating suicide or madness. Pointless labour was the order of the day - the treadmill, the crank, picking oakum or shotdrill.



The place of women in Victorian prisons is explored in chapter five, focussing on the work of Elizabeth Fry and the support that she gave to women and their children in prison during this period.

Two different categories of prisoners are covered in chapters six and seven - the suffragettes and conscientious objectors - both treated with severity by the prison authorities, with the mistaken aim of changing their views. The final chapter details executions and the hangmen, and the changing attitudes to capital punishment that finally led to its abolition.
In the details and descriptions of various individuals who went through the prison system, the author paints a moving picture of how prisons impacted the lives of ordinary people caught up by the criminal justice process. It is these pen portraits that are the most poignant parts of the book. We are left with questions about the point of it all - reform or punishment, correction or coercion ? The balance between these conflicting aims has yet to be found, and the question remains open as to the efficacy of imprisonment in dealing with offenders.

This is a book that is detailed, yet still gives the broad impact of the policies that evolved over the years, authoritative yet moving at the same time. It could well be read by the general reader curious to know more about prisons, and also by serious students of the criminal justice system.

Terry Nowell

SOUNDS OF SILENCE

Let the sounds of silence
Echo deep within your soul.
Let the Light shine
Both in and out from you.
You are the peace of God
To those that you meet.
You are the love of Christ
That heals the hurting.
We are one body
Shared in separate lives,
Listening to the sounds of silence.

Mark Humphries



DO JUDGES CONSIDER CHILDREN?

The Canadian Friends Service Committee (CFSC) has a long-standing concern about the effects that the justice system has on the children of people who have been imprisoned. They believe that a focus on the fundamental rights of the child could have a positive impact on their criminal justice system.

Canada has signed or voted for several international agreements about the rights of children. UN Conventions are legally binding on the nations that ratify them. They must ensure that domestic law and practice are consistent with their obligations under international law, and should be held accountable for doing so.

CFSC had commissioned research to find out whether Judges were considering the best interests of children when sentencing parents and those with parental responsibilities. The findings were not impressive, and although CSFC admit that their research was limited they do state that the result was not an absolute no.

During the period of research no Judge (according to the researcher) referred to the rights of the child, or to the 'Conventions of the Rights of the Child' (a UN Convention), when sentencing those mentioned above.
There might be legitimate reasons for this, especially where a parent doesn't have actual contact with a child of theirs and pay no support. In cases such as these it might not have such an impact on the child's life Judges also have many other factors to consider and so it can be difficult to work out how these were balanced. Canada has no way to ensure that the Judge is made aware of the fact that the defendant is a parent.

Imprisonment is not the only factor that might impact this invisible victim of offending; it has been reported that seeing their parent arrested can be traumatic for children. This is enhanced with imprisonment, and then the negative experience of visiting their parent in prison settings. Then we need to be aware of the social stigma and shame that comes with this, further enhanced when children of imprisoned parents try to mask this fact from their friends.

This article has been edited to fit our newsletter. It was submitted to Quaker Concern by Joy Morris of the Calgary Meeting; Joy is a member of CFSC's criminal justice program committee.

Anyone who is interested in this research can find the results at https://quakerservice.ca/CaseLawReview

Your Committee Members for 2019 are: Simon Ewart (Membership Secretary), Rodney Mahon (Treasurer), Ann Jacob, Alice Audsley, Marian Liebmann, Nick McGeorge, Jo Rado (Co-Clerk), Carmel Schmid, Melanie Jameson (Co-Clerk) Mark Humphries & Jonathan Lamb are our newsletter editors

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