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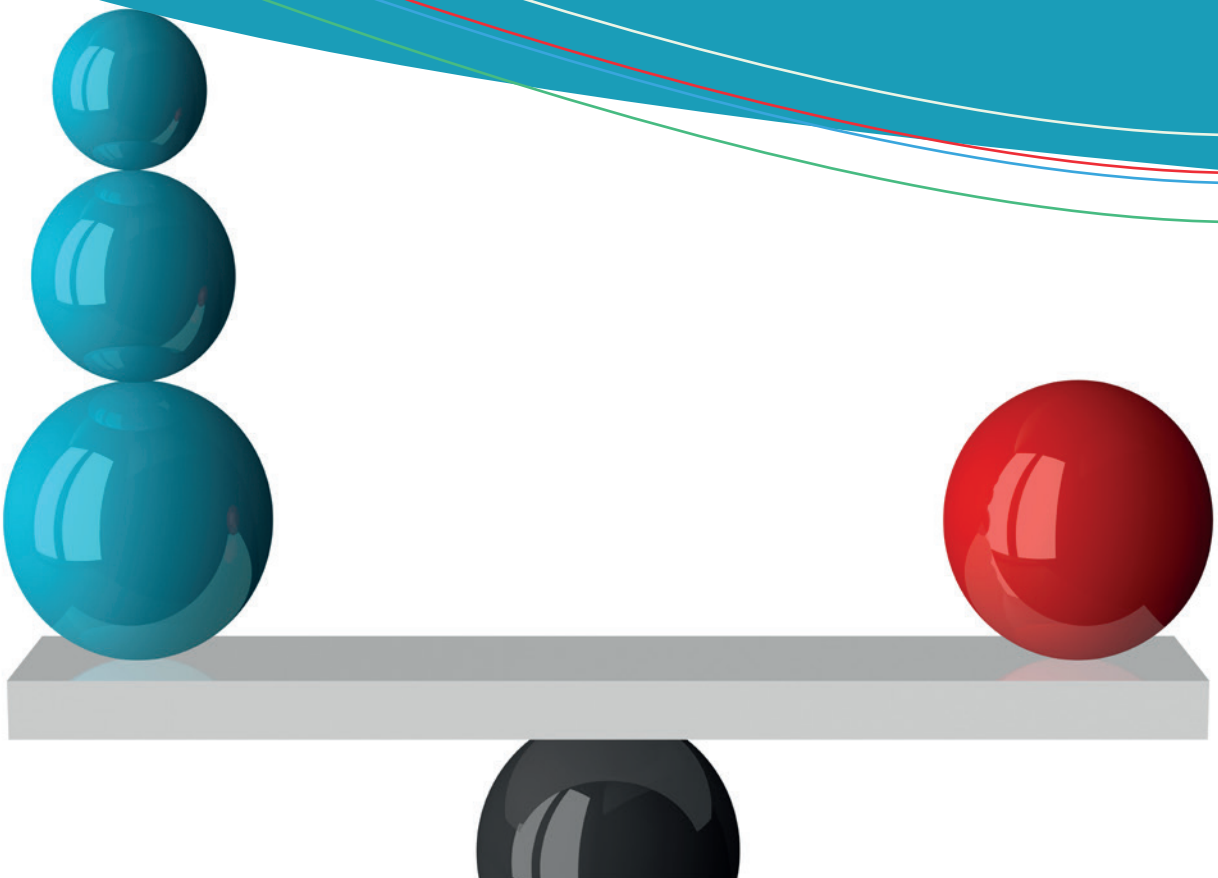

Restorative Justice for All (RJ4All) Publications

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RJ4All Publications is the publishing arm of the Restorative Justice for All (RJ4All) Institute. RJ4All is an international NGO with an aim to create, increase and disseminate knowledge in the areas of restorative justice, justice and human rights. The Institute challenges the restorative justice movement through ground-breaking research and evaluation, and by bringing people together to network and exchange best practices.

RJ4All re-distributes Power through Education

First published in the UK in April 2018 by RJ4All Publications

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Designed by Rita Seneca

ISBN: 978-1-907641-51-0

Restorative Justice for All

Redistributing Power through Education

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ISBN: 978-1-907641-51-0

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ISBN: 978-1-907641-51-0

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Besides numerous published articles and book chapters she is the author of the book 'Towards restoration and peace' (Napvilág, 2009), one of the first comprehensive studies on the implementation of restorative justice in Hungary.

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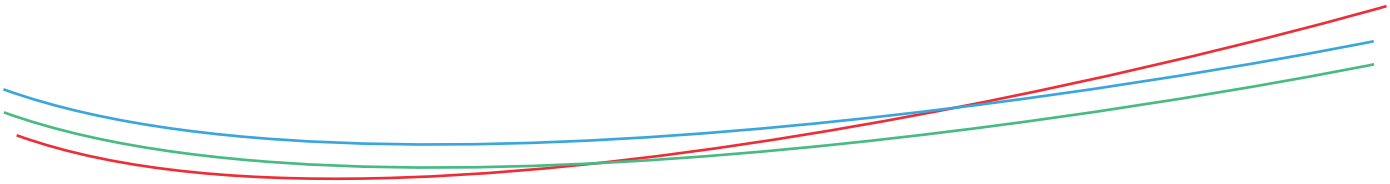
ISBN: 978-1-907641-51-0

PREFACE

Prof. John Braithwaite, *Australian National University*



The human rights movement is an older and stronger global movement than the social movement for restorative justice. So are the peace movement, the women's movement, indigenous rights movements, the children's rights movement, the animal rights movement and the environment movement. Creatively conceived, however, these are all related social movements against domination, against arbitrary power, advocates of humbling power. The arbitrary power that must be humbled include overreaching state power, corporate power, institutions that are hegemonically male, prisons, militaries. These different movements differentially focus on these fonts of power. The kinds of domination that the environment movement scrutinises is domination of nature especially by corporate power, the animal rights movement focus is on domination of animals, the human rights movement on domination of human beings, the womens' rights movement on women, children's rights on children, the peace movement on victims and fighters in war, the restorative justice movement on victims and perpetrators of crime (and other injustices). The political connections among these agendas are intimate. Those who fight wars are often perpetrators of crime, injustice, theft or violence of kinds not so different from those who commit common crimes. Their victims often suffer emotional loss, property loss and bodily affliction akin to those of crime victims.

Restorative justice is indeed centrally relevant to peacebuilding, as several chapters in this collection argue. It can and should be centrally relevant to restoring womens' rights as Christa Pelikan, Theo Gavrielides and Vaso Artinopoulou's chapters particularly argue. It can and should be relevant to indigenous rights as Pat Lauderdale and Annamarie Oliverio's contribution contends. Indeed, this whole book is about the idea that the restorative justice and human rights movements are kindred struggles. The collection probes this idea in many revealing ways.

While all these movements are cognate in that they arm us against arbitrary abuse of power, we do best to see them as having both shared and separate agendas. Social movement activists must have a focus, a constituency and must build expertise on just some institutions.

For all these social movements to flourish in mutually supportive ways, it is not required that all of us who are concerned with diverse forms of domination are politically engaged with all the movements. It is only necessary for many of us to engage with some of those movements. It is quite possible to do that while meeting obligations to our family, our job, our community and living a full life of camaraderie, fun, reflection, love and music. Lauderdale and Olivario's chapter shows that fellowship and music are part of being whole, something we can learn from the connectedness of indigenous peoples. Music is actually part of holistic restorative living that heals hurts. Usually it is more important that UN peacekeepers carry musical instruments into wartorn nations than guns. We can live restorative lives of deep satisfaction and joy by throwing ourselves into many different struggles against domination while eschewing guilt over struggles we have left to others. We can be an audience for their music from their struggles even when we do not play ourselves.

Separateness of cognate anti-domination movements is also important because it is best that each movement be a check on abuse of power by other movements. Hence, if western restorative justice movements set accreditation standards for restorative justice that imply that traditional elders ought to be accredited by westerners before they engage restorative practices their forebears have practiced for centuries, indigenous rights movements are needed to critique restorative justice. If restorative practitioners exclude women, critique from a separate movement dedicated to the empowerment of women is vital. If they fail to give voice to children (Gal 2011) or treat them as chattels, critical advocacy against restorative justice by

a vibrant children's right movement is imperative. Most pointedly for this volume, restorative justice should be a movement that checks tendencies for human rights law to become technocratic, 'an accountancy of rules' that tames justice (Douzinas, 2000: 374):

> *Too often arguments in human rights law give the appearance of abandoning the very thing that is supposed to underpin the subject: a recognition and acceptance of the dignity of each person within a shared interpretative community.*

And

> *There is currently a real risk of the practice of rights being aggressively colonised by lawyers' intent on policing the boundaries of human emancipation through stultifying forms of legalism. The ominous shadow of the lawyer may discourage open communication... Participants can feel ill at ease in the company of those who wield legal expertise, and who often do not wear their legal learning lightly. This reverence for legal form and formalism can be counterproductive and ultimately corrosive of an imaginative and experimental democratic practice of rights.*

Restorative justice is not an enemy of the rule of law; it is an ally, but a critical one.

Several chapters in this volume show the positive role restorative dialogue can play in advancing legal literacy among the people. Restorative justice critique of excessive legal formalism can save the noble purposes of democratic law from itself. Restorative justice is a distinctive kind of reminder to lawyers that law is a democratic practice that should serve the people rather than put itself professionally above them.

Conversely, of course, the law is a worthy critic of restorative justice, particularly when it comes to honouring the constraining values that must be central to restorative practice. These include constraint never to breach upper limits on punishment laid down by law for particular offences, the constraint against humiliating or degrading forms of censure (such as asking a child to wear a shirt that says 'I am a thief') and constraints to honour childrens' rights more broadly. Responsiveness is another important theme that I suspect is required by both restorative and republican values. Restorative justice offers a different approach to checking the law's abuses from the approach the law advances to checking restorative justice's abuses.

Empathy, a theme of Borbala Fellegi's chapter, is a key to the restorative justice method for checking abuse of power. Empathic communication can check power by sensitizing it, by improving its ability to learn from its mistakes. Empathy has methodological centrality for restorative practice whether this is accomplished by inter-ethnic communication or by sensitizing those who utter hate speech that what a speaker thinks funny can be deeply hurtful.

This is an important and timely collection on a topic that has been neglected by both the human rights and restorative justice movements. It traverses a great diversity of specific and crucial issues from Borbana Fellegi's chapter on restorative practices in prisons to deinstitutionalising the stigma of criminal conviction in Rod Earle and Alison Wakefield's.

Perhaps the single most impressive feature that distinguishes this collection from others on restorative justice is that it corrects the usual focus on North America, Western Europe and the Antipodes with learnings from Central and Southern Europe (the contributions of Theo Gavrielides, Vaso Antinopoulou, Tunde Andrea Barabas, and Borbala Fellegi). Many of these Central European and Mediterranean lessons are profound ones that can greatly enrich the predominantly North Atlantic restorative debate.

As a scholar who thinks normatively about restorative justice in civic republican terms that value freedom as non-domination, this is satisfying because the journey of republican freedom starts in southern Europe before it much later moves west and north. May the critical restorative energy and the rights focus of the community of republican scholars survive for another two millennia.

ISBN: 978-1-907641-51-0

INTRUCTION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Dr. Theo Gavrielides, *Founder and Director of The IARS International Institute and the Restorative Justice for All institute (UK); Adjunct Professor at the Centre for Restorative Justice of Simon Fraser University (Canada; Visiting Professor at Buckinghamshire New University (UK).*

Over the last fourty years, restorative justice spread fast across the world occupying scholarly and policy debates principally within the criminal justice arena. Its proponents see it as a 'reincarnation' of an old justice notion that puts conflicts into the hands of their parties (Gavrielides, 2011). In its modern version, restorative justice appears principally in the form of (direct or indirect) mediation, family group conferencing, circles and restorative boards (Johnstone and van Ness 2011; Gavrielides, 2007).

Since the first articles on restorative justice appeared in the 1970s (Barnett, 1977; Christie, 1977), the writings on its potential have been impressive (Zehr, 1980; Braithwaite 2002; Gavrielides, 2007). Of course, like all other social sciences disciplines, restorative justice is also faced with a number of disagreements relating both to its normative and empirical promises (Gavrielides, 2008; Johnstone and van Ness, 2011). Occasional confusion should be expected with relatively untested concepts that are trying to find their place within our complex, modern societies (Gavrielides and Artinopoulou, 2013).

The intention of this book is to bring to the restorative justice debate a new dimension that is yet to be explored in its own right by Western scholars. This refers to issues surrounding equality and restorative justice both at the normative and empirical levels. Although there have been some studies on issues surrounding race (Gavrielides, 2014) diversity (Albercht, 2010), hate incidents (Gavrielides, 2012), power dynamics among participants and facilitators (Gavrielides, 2008; Charkoudian and Wayne, 2010; Schiff, 2013), gender (Hayden, 2019) and mediators' adequate cultural training (Davidheiser, 2008), the relationship between restorative justice and equaity remains largely unexplored (Hamer, Jenkins and Moore, 2013).

Some argue that one of the reasons that restorative justice was brought back into the modern world of policy and practice is the growing disappointment of our criminal justice systems (Pavlich, 2005). These writings tend to quote the increasing incarceration rates, recidivism statistics, the rising costs of justice and the inability to protect the public from current and new forms of criminality. Therefore, it is surprising why equality strands such as race and gender haven't featured more prominently in the restorative justice discourse. I will call this the 'paradox of restorative justice' (also see Pavlich, 2005).

For example, we now have enough evidence to safely claim that one of the groups that are let down the most by our criminal justice systems is black and other racially under-represented groups (Dorling, 2011). The international literature on disproportionality (e.g. prison population, stop and search, arrests and sentencing patterns), race relations between offenders and criminal justice agents (police, judges, prison and probation staff), the appropriateness of interventions and issues around explicit and implicit racism is rich. Since restorative justice is brought back as a reaction to a failing criminal justice system, a newcomer to restorative justice would expect that its first normative promises and aspirations should have been for those who are let down the most.

The same paradox applies to issues of gender equality. There can be no doubt that violence against women (VAW) has slowly but eventually found its place in many international policies and conventions[1]. Of course, the objectives, enforceability and foci of these international initiatives vary depending on a number of factors

[1] E.g. Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women (A/RES/48/104) adopted by UN General assembly in 1993; Convention on Elimination of All Forms Declarations Against Women (CEDAW), adopted by the UN General Assembly on 1979.

including political, sociological, economical and legal. However, they share one common feature. They are all based on the legal positivistic understanding of delivering justice and very little has been done in terms of policy and research in the area of gender.

Here, is worth pointing out that when it comes to VAW cases, restorative justice is not generally favoured amongst feminist and some victim groups (Stubbs, 2002). In fact, not long ago, the UN and the Council of Europe had issued guidance that prohibited their member states from using mediation, a form of restorative justice, "in all cases of VAW, both before and during legal proceedings" (United Nations 2009: 42; Council of Europe 2009).

Nevertheless, like in the case of race cases, this did not hinder passionate practitioners from piloting conferences, mediation and other restorative programmes most of the times without any government support (e.g., Hudson, 2002; Gavrielides and Artinopoulou,2012). As the evidence of this volume show, restorative justice exists with or without the law and this applies also to VAW, race and other equality related cases.

The restorative process demands power-sharing that is based on the premise that all parties in conflict are equal in the identification of harm, and in reaching an agreement for restitution. Relinquishing power within the current philosophy of adversarial justice and economics is in itself a challenge. Relinquishing power within a system that is challenged by the implicit biases and Trojan horses of race, gender, age, disability and so on is an even more complex matter[2].

As the restorative justice movement aspires to occupy priminent spaces within the justice system, there is a responsibility on behalf of both scholars and practitioners to shed light in contested areas especially those impacting on equality matters. I have argued elsewhere that equality and human rigths are the battle fields where the future of restorative justive will be faught (Gavrielides 2014; 2019). As this volume illustrates, the criminal justice system and the policies, laws, institutions and structures that support it do not exist in a vacuum. They are informed by our subconscious and sometimes overt bias against various social categories. It is also not surprising that those who have been named as fathers and grandfathers of restorative justice are mostly white or male. This should not be read as an attack against the impressive work that has been carried out by passionate researchers, practitioners and campaigners. In fact, it is their own gradual recognition of this gap that inspired this volume.

I was therefore honoured to have worked with the authors of this edited volume as their contributions will truly push the boundaries of restorative justice. I remain hopeful that the movement will continue to engage in dialogue with itself and its adversaries, indeed a practice on which the very essence of restorative justice is founded. I want to acknowledge RJ4All Publications, the publishing arm of the Restorative Justice for All, an international non-profit NGO that I set up in the hope that through education power can be redistributed. I am particularly grateful to the authors of this volume as well as Rita Seneca for their hard work and excellent contributions. Many thanks go to my family and close friends for bearing with me during the long hours of editing, writing and re-writing. Finally, thanks to all those who opposed my ideas or never materialised their promises, as these are the true challenges that help us better ourselves.

[2] Taking white and African Americans as an example, Robinson points out that there is a wide gulf between perceptions on the issue of racial discrimination in the United States. This phenomenon is called perceptual segregation and posits, "black and white people tend to perceive allegations of racial discrimination through substantially different perceptual frameworks" (Robinson, 2008: 1106).

ISBN: 978-1-907641-51-0

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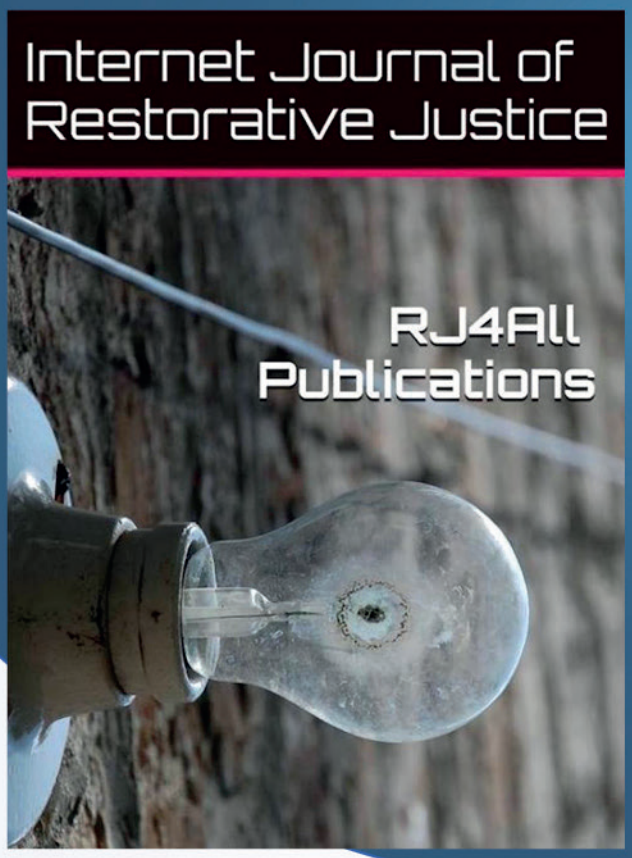
ISBN: 978-1-907641-51-0

Internet Journal of Restorative Justice ISBN: 978-1-907641-45-9 |
Journal ISSN: ISSN (online): 2056-2985



THE INTERNET JOURNAL OF RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

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The Journal's primary aim is to push the boundaries of restorative justice by publishing scholarly and peer-reviewed articles of the highest standard from many areas of expertise including but not limited to restorative practices in schools, neighbourhoods, organisations and businesses, family matters and (youth) care, the criminal and juvenile justice systems, prisons and the community.

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The Editor-in-Chief is **Professor Theo Gavrielides**.

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- Inform and influence criminal and restorative justice policy at national and international levels.
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- Enable junior researchers to publish alongside leading names in restorative justice, and encourage a dialogue between various generations of academics.
- Increase awareness of restorative justice and help address misconceptions about its potential and limitations.
- Enable those with limited resources to access scholarly and peer-reviewed articles on restorative justice including students, practitioners and the public.

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PUBLICATIONS

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Restorative justice was brought back into the modern world of policy, research and practice in response to a growing disappointment from our criminal justice systems especially in relation to how it treats vulnerable groups such as those experiencing discrimination due to their race, gender, age etc. Therefore, it is surprising why equality hasn't featured more prominently in the restorative justice discourse. This is what the Editor calls the 'paradox of restorative justice', and the battle field where the future of restorative justice will be fought.

This edited collection of papers written by leading equality and restorative justice scholars aims to bring to the restorative justice debate a new dimension that is yet to be explored in its own right. This refers to issues surrounding equality and restorative justice both at the normative and empirical levels. Through an evidence-based approach, case studies from around the world are presented to develop a narrative and a practical tool for considering equality matters when applying or thinking about restorative justice. Particular emphasis was given on gender and domestic violence, Indigenous peoples, gender equality and prisoners.

Dr. Theo Gavrielides is the Founder and Director of The IARS International Institute and the Restorative Justice for All institute; Adjunct Professor at the Centre for Restorative Justice of Simon Fraser University and a Visiting Professor at Buckinghamshire New University. He has published extensively in the areas of human rights, restorative justice and youth justice.

"This is an important and timely collection... It traverses a great diversity of specific and crucial issues from restorative practices in prisons to deinstitutionalising the stigma of criminal conviction.

Perhaps the single most impressive feature that distinguishes this collection from others on restorative justice is that it corrects the usual focus on North America, Western Europe and the Antipodes with learnings from Central and Southern Europe. Many of these Central European and Mediterranean lessons are profound ones that can greatly enrich the predominantly North Atlantic restorative debate.

Prof. John Braithwaite, Australian National University

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ISBN 978-1-907641-51-0

RRP £9.99