EUROPEAN GROUP FOR THE STUDY OF DEVIANCE AND SOCIAL CONTROL

ESTABLISHED 1973

Coordinator: Ida Nafstad
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An international network working towards social justice, state accountability and decarceration

NEWSLETTER No 11, 2016
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Front image: Hermann Berghaus, Weltkarte in Sternprojektion, 1880
I. Editorial

The title of our annual conference in 2017 is Uncovering Harms: States, Corporations and Organizations as Criminals. The December newsletter is dedicated to this topic through the focus on deaths and the accountability of states. Death, when caused by others a capital crime in most criminal justice systems, goes often unanswered for when caused by states, or where the state could have taken actions in order to prevent the deaths. The deaths we bring attention to in this issue is refugees’ and migrants’ deaths in the Mediterranean and prisoners’ deaths in UK prisons.

Ann Singleton presents the Mediterranean Missing project and its highly disturbing findings, distressingly being the first project that systematically collects data about and responses to dead bodies in the Mediterranean. The project also investigated the impacts of a missing person on those left behind. 3770 refugees and migrants are known to have died only in 2015, most are not identified. States have been strikingly absent in regard to addressing and reacting on these deaths.

David Scott asks the question of whether imprisonment can be seen as a death sentence. The statistics behind such a suggestion is horrifying. Scott points to the fact that every three day in prions in England and Wales a prisoner takes his or hers own life, while nearly one person a day in total have died in the same prisons during 2016. As this is yet another confirmation of prisons being places of harm and death, Scott concludes that these facts question the use of prison at all.

Please save the date for our 2017 annual conference in Lesvos: 7-10 September. More information will come shortly.

Please also pay attention to the invitation from the EG Press to submit a chapter for the upcoming edited collection New Voices/Emerging Thinkers (working title). The collection aims to showcase the work of the group’s postgraduates and early career researchers and/or activists.

We wish you all happy holidays!

In solidarity,
Ida and Per
II. Deaths in the Mediterranean

By: Ann Singleton

The Mediterranean Missing project

Deadly shipwrecks and the bodies of migrants have become the most iconic images of the contemporary refugee crisis at the EU’s periphery. In 2015 and the first half of 2016, more than 6,600 are known to have died attempting to cross the Mediterranean, with an additional number of unrecorded deaths. Although the media and solidarity groups have shed light on the plight of living refugees, and highlighted the shocking reality of shipwrecks, relatively little is known about migrants whose fate is not known to their families. The majority of dead bodies found are buried unidentified. As such, thousands of families in countries of migrant origin remain unaware of the fate of their loved ones.

The Mediterranean Missing research project has sought to understand both the impact on families of having a relative missing in migration, and the law, policy and practice around the identification of bodies of dead migrants in Italy and Greece. Interviews with families of missing migrants from five countries confirmed the huge impact of not knowing the fate of loved ones, with families suffering a range of emotional and psychological consequences. The wife of one Syrian man missing after travelling from Turkey summarised how families are tortured by the ambiguity over the fate of loved ones:

Tell us if they alive or dead. [...] The least they can do is answer us and try to imagine how we feel, and just tell us if they are imprisoned or dead. To just feel what we go through. [...] No one helped me with anything, I just want to get to the bottom of it. It's my right that if he, God forbid, is dead to know and to issue him a death certificate. It's my right to have full legal custody papers over my kids. If he is alive, I want to know where he is and what he wants, I want to help him.

In Lesbos, Greece, and Sicily, Italy, interviews with authorities, civil society and others confirm the presence of a policy vacuum around the issue of the missing, despite the duties on states imposed by human rights law. Investigation of deaths is inadequate, with effective post-mortem data collection and management challenged by the huge numbers of migrants, in some cases sufficiently to compromise future identification. In both Greece and Italy, response is characterised by a policy vacuum, with a large number of agencies with overlapping mandates lacking coordination. Whilst in Italy a dedicated Commission and its partners have demonstrated what can be done with appropriate resources, there is a need to ensure that all the dead benefit from such an approach. A constraint in both contexts remains the lack of outreach to families of the missing, who can provide ante-mortem data to enable
identification, and who should anyway be at the centre of all efforts to address the issue and identify the dead.

The project summary report (in English) can be found here, and other reports – including Italy and Greece country reports and a report on the needs of families – on the project findings web page.
III. Prison: a death sentence?

By: David Scott

Perhaps one of the most disturbing feature of imprisonment today is the tragically high number of self-inflicted deaths [SIDs]. At 120 SIDs per 100,000 people, prisoners are 10 times more likely to take their own lives than those living in the wider community. On 18th November 2016 the one hundredth (100) prisoner killed themselves this calendar year. This equates to one prisoner taking their own life every 3 days in prisons in England and Wales. The official data also indicates that a prisoner attempts to kill themselves every 5 hours and that a prisoner is recorded as self-harming every 20 minutes. By the 24h November 306 people had died in prison in England and Wales in 2016 (an average of nearly one person a day). All this evidence points to the fact that prisons are places of terrible harm and death.

A history of death

Whilst current explanations of the high number of SIDs have been reduced to prisoner mental health problems and falling numbers of staff, deaths in prison cannot be restricted solely to prisoner vulnerabilities and regressive policy changes. The officially recorded figure indicates that self-inflicted deaths in prison have risen substantially for the last four decades. In 1986 there were 21 recorded ‘suicides’ in prison. This number, however, leapt by over 100% in 1987 to 46 recorded suicides. Official data show that there was another major incline of recorded deaths only seven years later, in 1994 when, for the first time, more than 60 SIDs were recorded. Four years after in 1998 more than 80 people took their own lives. The highest number of prisoner SIDs prior to 2016 was in 2004, when 96 were recorded. Yet
though less people died, because of the lower prisoner population at that time the ratio of death (127.2 per 100,000 prisoners) was actually higher in 2004 than in 2016. Rather than being ‘isolated in the present’ we need to consider prisons within their historical context. When we do this attention is drawn to the fact that there have been large number of prisoner deaths since prisons were ‘reformed’ in the early nineteenth century, indicating how deeply entrenched death is in the everyday workings of prisons.

Alongside the sheer number of SIDs, in recent day’s concern has quite rightly focused on the clustering of six SID’s from 2015 - 2016 at HMP Woodhill, a high security male prison in Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire. Yet sadly this is not an aberration - cluster deaths have plagued prisons for decades. For example, from 1987-89 11 SIDs were recorded at Risley Remand Centre. Five young men aged from 17 to 19 died while on remand at HMP Armley from May 1988 to February 1989, whilst from August 1991 to March 1992 four young offenders, including a 15 year old, took their own lives at Feltham YOI. Six women hanged themselves in a three-year period from 2002 to 2005 at HMP Durham H wing, whilst from August 2002 to September 2003 six women took their lives at HMP Styal. Previous cluster deaths at adult male prisoners include the five prisoners who killed themselves at HMP Whitemoor from 19 November 2006 and 10 December 2007.

To understand why so many people die in prisons we need to think beyond the immediate humanitarian crisis confronting prisons. This means challenging assumption propagated by the media, politicians, prison reformers and the POA that staffing levels and prisoner mental health lie at the heart of the problem.

**Prison staff**

Among traditional prison officer cultures the prisoner is often considered as “inferior” or “lesser”, and so rather the being treated with respect, care and decency, prisoner relationships with prison officers have often been based on indifference and neglect. According to one study, the legitimate terms for prison officers who adhere to a traditional working personality when referring to prisoners can include: Nick Names (Smithy, Jonesy); Second Names (Smith, Jones); 1st names; Prison Number; “Dicks”, “dickheads”, “cunts”, “bollocks”, and “wanker”. The legitimate terms for prisoners when referring to staff were “Boss”, “Officer”, “Mr”, and “Sir”. These forms of address by disciplinarian officers become a means of institutionalising lesser eligibility and informally maintaining a psychic divide. In this same study of prison officers it was found that prisoners were described by officers as:

Negative categorisations justify neglect and lead to the blaming of prisoners for their own dreadful predicament. Those who harm themselves or attempt to take their own lives are labelled by some prison officers as childish and pathetic manipulators whose harming act is part of a ‘general display of attention-seeking behaviour’. Controversy has arisen in the past regarding the apparent complacency of staff and the neglect of prisoners who are experiencing serious emotional difficulties. On March 11 2004 Arif Hussain took his own life at HMP Full Sutton whilst in the jails segregation unit. Eye witness testimonies described how Arif’s “screams of agony were ignored by staff for hours”. When he later repeatedly rang his alarm bell for attention, rather than respond to him the night staff switched it off.

This negative attitude to the lesser prisoner is not restricted to prison officers alone. A prison operational manager in a recently published book by a prison governor is quoted as saying:

Sometimes I think, ‘oh fuck, if the guy wants to kill himself, fucking get on with it’ but when I’m on the shop floor I can’t demonstrate it can I? These guys on dirty protest, I’d like to throw my own bucket
of piss over them myself, but you can’t do that because it’s not humane. Doesn’t stop you thinking it though does it?

The current focus on prison officer numbers is predicated on the assumption that there is now less care for prisoners by staff. But the evidence above indicates that prison officer numbers and prisoner care cannot be easily quantified. Neither is it obvious that close prisoner-prison officer relationships mitigate the harms of imprisonment. A study of self-harm and SID’s of women prisoners in England in 2007 found, perhaps counter-intuitively, that “feeling closer to correctional staff increases a woman’s risk of self-harm and suicide ideation”. This might help explain why the data appears to indicate there is no obvious correlation between historical rates of self-inflicted deaths and in prison officers staffing levels. Certainly, if we explore the data over the last hundred and fifty years in terms of prisoner self-inflicted deaths and prison officer-prisoner staffing ratios we find that in the last four decades there are record rates of recorded self-inflicted deaths at the same time as there have been record high levels of prison officer – prisoner ratios.

Individual pathologies?
The other main reason proposed for the high number of deaths is prisoner mental health problems. ‘Suicide’ risk has for a long time been connected to ‘abnormal’ people with serious mental health problems. The suicidal prisoner is considered to suffer from fear, depression, despondency and hopelessness and a general inability to adapt to prison life. They simply do not have the personal resources to cope with the deprivations of imprisonment. Whilst this argument around mental ill-health is clearly of significance, as an explanation of the actual deaths of prisoners it has proved remarkably limited. The problem is that even if a person who takes their life has mental health problems this alone cannot tell us why they took their life at that specific time or indeed provide any insight into the distinct set of interpersonal dynamics leading up to the act.

It has proved exceptionally difficult to identify the manner in which mental health problems actually relate to suicidal attempts or to differentiate the ‘suicidal’ from the rest of the prison population. One of the key revelations is the evidence of the prevalence of suicidal thoughts among prisoners, with a number of recent studies identifying exceptionally high levels of suicidal ideation (i.e. thoughts about taking own life): 46% of male remand prisoners have thought of ‘suicide’ in their lifetime, and 40% of male prisoners and 55% of female prisoners experience suicidal thoughts in their lifetime, compared with 14% of men and 4% of women living in the wider community.
Whilst many people in prison do have mental health problems, those who commit ‘suicide’ are less likely to have a psychiatric history than those on the outside who take their own lives. There has in fact been a systematic failure of identification by the Prison Service of those who are likely to attempt to take their own lives. Under the current Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork [ACCT] policy only 1 in 4 prisoners who successfully end their lives are identified as a risk of ‘suicide’.

Sarah Reed, who died in HMP Holloway in February 2016: Source dailymail.co.uk

**The pains of imprisonment**
There is one further explanation of SID’s that has not been fully explored in the media or in contemporary policy but o which appears to fit much better with historical and contemporary evidence: prison through its daily workings systematically generates death. Life in the prison place should be seen as a humiliating and unsafe experience perpetuating fear and loathing on a daily basis. Dividing prisoners between ‘copers’ and ‘non-copers’ provides only false assumptions about who may be suicide prone. Most prisoners only just about cope. The real pains of imprisonment are not to be found in the given quality of living conditions, relationships with staff or levels of crowding, but in the denial of personal autonomy, feelings of time consciousness, and the lack of an effective vocabulary to express the hardship of watching life waste away. Deaths in prison should not be considered as aberrations or malfunctions of the system but rather located in the daily processes of imprisonment itself.

Adaptations to imprisonment are not a permanent state of affairs but open to erosion, meaning that even small changes in the prison world may reignite underlying
difficulties a person has in coping with life inside. Coping mechanisms for everyone, irrespective of the numbers of prison officers or the extent of prisoner mental health problems, are tenuous. Coping and non-coping with prison life are matters of degree that fluctuate over time and all prisoners are vulnerable to suicidal ideation. There is no let-up in the deadly harms generated by the prison place, but at certain points some prisoners (perhaps virtually all) feel they can no longer face them.

A suicide attempt may then be a frantic and desperate attempt to ‘solve problems of living’. If the response to this situation is hopeless and there is an explicit or implicit expectation that the individual will take their life, this negative communication may erode any sense of hope and facilitate a suicide attempt. SIDs then should be conceived as a social problem where those who take their own lives are responding to given temporal, spatial and emotional contexts of the prison place.

**Beyond reform**

We will not find a solution to the current problems of SID’s by employing more staff or updating failed policies of the past that focus on risk. Indeed, the large number of different policies and procedures over the last 50 years indicate just how badly the Prison Service is failing to protect people in prison.

Interventions should be directed at helping people vulnerable to suicidal ideation to develop new meanings and alternative strategies that can help them take their lives forward. Central is the nurturing of hope and the prison is the very last place to try and do this.

The most rational solution then seems to be for the adoption of social policies that can provide immediate humanitarian support to people who are suicidal and the diversion away from prison for wrongdoers who are especially vulnerable to the development of suicidal ideation. Given the high numbers of both SIDs and prisoners with suicidal thoughts, this raises key questions regarding the use of imprisonment at all.
IV. The 45th European Group Conference 2017

Uncovering Harms: States, corporations and organizations as criminals

Save the Date!
September
7–10 2017

The 45th European Group Conference will be held in Mytilene, Lesbos, Greece

More information to come
V. Invitation to contribute: EG Press: New Voices/Emerging Thinkers edited book collection project (title to be confirmed)

At the Annual European Group Conference in Braga this year we discussed putting together an edited collection aimed at showcasing the work of the group’s postgraduates and early career researchers and/or activists. Holly White and Samantha Fletcher have offered to coordinate this venture and we are now calling for expressions of interest to be submitted to both Holly and Sam (contact details below) on or before 12pm (UK time) Friday 6th January 2017.

Who can contribute?
As previously stated the edited collection/book aims to provide a platform to showcase the work being done by postgraduates and early career researchers and/or activists. We appreciate however that terms like postgraduate and early career researcher are quite ambiguous with scholarly and/or activist career trajectories and progression taking many different forms. Essentially we are not operating with any formal restrictions on who can and can’t contribute so if you are unsure - just ask us and we can have a chat. All contributors should ensure they are familiar with the ethos and aims of The European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control, the details of which can be found under the About Us section of the website: www.europeangroup.org.

What would contributing include?
Contributions would take the form of a 2000 – 2500 word summary of the authors PhD research (or other form of research/activism if applicable) followed by a 1000 word extended biography. The extended biography could include other research work (both current, former and projected), ongoing activist work and future aspirations. Once we have confirmed the contributors we would work on a template that is agreeable to all so that there is consistency in the presentation of the collection, but also so that the collection is suitably flexible to meet everyone’s needs. Whilst we (Holly and Sam) are happy to take on the editing of the book, in the spirit of the European Group if those contributing written chapters also wish to be involved in the editing of the book we could make this more of a cooperative endeavour whereby if you contribute a written chapter you could also peer review and edit a chapter – however, there would be no obligation for contributors to do any editing. We’re using familiar language like ‘peer review’ and ‘editing’ however, essentially this would be a process of opening a dialogue exchange with a fellow member to discuss the chapter in a comradely way.
Further to this if anyone is interested in learning more about the production process which currently resides with John Moore who is doing an amazing job but it is a lot of work for 1 person alone and we do need more people to support this and learn the skills of production. If you are interested in being part of the editing team then please also let us know if you can spare a day to learn about and be involved in the production too.

**What language can I write in?**
Chapters for the published version of the book will be in English however we would welcome the submission of your chapter in more than 1 language so that we might host copies of your chapter in a language other than English on the European Group webpage.

**What else do I need to know about the book?**
Contributors should be aware that the copyright on all chapters will be European Group/the authors so both parties can use the material freely in the future. Whilst there will be a print version of the book for sale each contributor will receive an electronic copy of their contribution that is theirs to do with as they wish with no embargo on sharing it on personal or work profiles.

**What would be the timeframe for the book?**
In order to help you consider if you could contribute we are proposing the following timeframe:

- Expressions of interest on or before 12pm (UK time) Friday 6th January 2017
- Contributors will be confirmed and contacted via email with the full and final template: Monday 16th January 2017
- First draft submission to be completed by Monday 27th February 2017 (6 weeks)
- Editing and discussions from Monday 27th February 2017 through until Monday 3rd April 2017 (6 weeks)
- Proposed date to go to press: June/July 2017
- Proposed date for publication, launch and sale: August 2017

We look forward to hearing from you
In solidarity
Holly ([holly.white2@go.edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:holly.white2@go.edgehill.ac.uk)) and Sam ([samantha.fletcher@staffs.ac.uk](mailto:samantha.fletcher@staffs.ac.uk))
VI. Justice, Power and Resistance

The Journal of the European Group for the Study of Deviance and Social Control

Volunteers needed

Justice, Power and Resistance – Journal Subscription and Distribution Coordinators needed

To help manage the production of the Journal we need two volunteers:

A Subscription Co-ordinator to manage the Journal’s subscriptions, ensuring all requests are responded to, subscribers invoiced, payments recorded and the subscription list kept up to date. This person could be based anywhere as long as they have internet access.

A Distribution Co-ordinator to ensure that the Journal is distributed to all subscribers. Initially we anticipate this will be one person and UK-based. This role will involve taking delivery of all the copies of each edition, packing them into envelopes and using the subscription list provided by the Subs co-ordinator to address the envelopes and post the journals out. All the costs of postage and packaging will be reimbursed by EG Press (in advance if necessary).

For further details or to volunteer please get in touch with David (D.G.Scott@ljmu.ac.uk); Emma (bell.emma@neuf.fr) or John (jmmoore911@outlook.com)

Justice, Power and Resistance – Reviewers wanted

Future editions of the Journal will have, we hope, a lively and vibrant review section. However, this needs you, the members of the European Group, to contribute reviews. We are looking for a diverse range which will include the traditional academic book review but will also hopefully include reviews of a wider range of cultural events – films, fiction, poetry, plays, festivals etc. From 500 to 1550 words (possibly longer for review essays on more than one thing), these should be critical, engaging and informative.
If you are interested in writing a review, please contact the review editor – John Moore (jmmoore911@outlook.com) in the first instance to discuss your ideas and proposed review. We will try and get you copies of any books you particularly want to review. Also, if group members who have recently published material would like it to be reviewed, please let us know and we will see what we can do.

Don’t be shy – your Journal needs you!

**Justice, Power and Resistance – activist contributions wanted**

We are keen to publish accounts of activism from members in our new journal. These pieces can be short (1,000 to 1,500 words). The aim is to keep members of the Group informed about activist activities and the issues they are concerned with in the hope of forging new support networks. The European Group has a long history of connection to such activities and these links ought to be reflected in our journal.

If you are interested in submitting an account, please contact David (D.G.Scott@ljmu.ac.uk), Emma (bell.emma@neuf.fr) or John (jmmoore911@outlook.com)

**Justice, Power and Resistance – Proof Readers wanted**

We are looking for Group Members to volunteer to proof-read papers prior to the production of our journal. This is not intended to be part of the review process – that should have already been completed – but a final attempt to spot any spelling or grammatical errors. It is also a chance to read the papers before publication.

We will need you to keep to deadlines, so if you volunteer to be on our panel please be prepared to say no to any requests you are unable to turn around within the required timescale.

Hopefully, if we get a good panel of people, the task will not be too onerous.

For further details or to volunteer please get in touch with David (D.G.Scott@ljmu.ac.uk), Emma (bell.emma@neuf.fr) or John (jmmoore911@outlook.com)
VII. News from Europe and Around the World

Germany
For more information about any of these events, please contact our national representative in Germany: contact@bettina-cummerow.de

1) Workshop an der Universität Marburg am 17. Januar 2017 zum Thema: Brexit and the Future of European Criminal Law


4) Tagung der Bundeszentrale für Politische Bildung

Noch stehen Teilnehmendenplätze – zumindest in begrenztem Umfang – zur Verfügung. Weitere Informationen sowie das umfängliche und facettenreiche Programm finden Sie bitte hier: www.bpb.de/rechtsextremismustagung

5) Bundestagung der Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Freien Straffälligenhilfe (BAG-S) vom 21. bis 22. März 2017 in Rostock zum Thema: Resozialisierungsanspruch und Wiedereingliederungspraxis


10) Tagung am ZiF der Universität Bielefeld vom 22. bis 23. März 2018 zum
Great Britain

Open posts
Lecturer in Criminology and Social Policy
Loughborough University - School of Social, Political and Geographical Sciences
Location: Loughborough
Salary: £34,956 to £46,924 per annum (grade 6 or 7).
Hours: Full Time
Contract Type: Permanent
Placed on: 28th November 2016
Closes: 4th January 2017
Job Ref: REQ16846

This is an exciting opportunity to join the Department of Social Sciences at Loughborough University, part of the School of Social, Political and Geographical Sciences. The Department is recognized nationally and internationally for its excellence in research, teaching and enterprise.

Applications are invited from outstanding candidates with research and teaching interests in any area of criminology and social policy, but we particularly welcome candidates with an interest in: comparative criminology; policing; social welfare; cybercrime; hate crime; social justice; violence or probation. The candidate must have experience of teaching and will be expected to help lead teaching and contribute to other areas of the curriculum as required, including the delivery and development of BSc and MA degree programmes. The lectureship will commence 1 February 2017 or as soon as possible thereafter.

Informal enquiries should be made to Professor Stephen Case, Department of Social Sciences, by email at s.case@lboro.ac.uk

Norway
New Orleans – honoring migrant. Photo: P.J.Ystehede

Please feel free to contribute to this newsletter by sending any information that you think might be of interest to the Group to Ida/Per at: europeangroupcoordinator@gmail.com

Also feel free to contribute with discussions or comments on the published material in the newsletter

Please submit before the 25th of each month if you wish to have it included in the following month’s newsletter. Please provide a web link (wherever possible).

If you want to subscribe to the newsletter, do not hesitate to send a mail to europeangroupcoordinator@gmail.com