

To regard violence as conflict

- **Street violence, family violence and gross national violence as well as mass destruction**
- **as “conflicts” – a specific perspective: “Conflict as property” (Nils Christie 1977)**

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Why Health as a Bridge for Peace?

Armed conflict is one of the biggest challenges facing humanity and directly and indirectly affects health. Violence is a major source of disease.

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Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused or revealed by criminal behaviour. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that include all stakeholders.

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Restorative Justice

- a dialogical and direct way of handling conflicts on the premises of the involved parties
- strengthens the parties and
- the local community
- decreases reoffending

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Restorative Justice

- Practices and programs reflecting restorative purposes will respond to crime by: identifying and taking steps to repair harm,
- involving all stakeholders, and
- transforming the traditional relationship between communities and their governments in responding to crime.

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Some of the programmes typically identified with restorative justice include:

- Victim offender mediation
- Conferencing
- Circles
- Victim assistance
- Ex-offender assistance
- Restitution
- Community service

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Three principles form the foundation for restorative justice:

- Justice requires that we work to restore those who have been injured.
- Those most directly involved and affected by crime should have the opportunity to participate fully in the response if they wish.
- Government's role is to preserve a just public order, and the community's is to build and maintain a just peace.

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Restorative programmes are characterized by four key values:

- Encounter: Create opportunities for victims, offenders and community members who want to do so to meet to discuss the crime and its aftermath
- Amends: Expect offenders to take steps to repair the harm they have caused
- Reintegration: Seek to restore victims and offenders to whole, contributing members of society
- Inclusion: Provide opportunities for parties with a stake in a specific crime to participate in its resolution

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Resolution and remedy to conflicts and injustices in realms as diverse as:

- child abuse
- school bullying
- workplace negotiations
- adolescent and adult criminal behaviour
- the gross violation of human rights
- and international conflict

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Ex. The Norwegian RJ schemes: The Norwegian Board of Mediation

- State paid (MJ) – services are free
- Municipally located
- A service center in each county (NMS)
- 600 lay mediators/facilitators
- 8000 cases per year
- 50/50 civil and criminal cases
- All ages

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COST Action A21: Restorative Justice Developments in Europe

- The main objective of Action A21 is to enhance and to deepen knowledge on theoretical and practical aspects of restorative justice in Europe, with a view to supporting implementation strategies in a scientifically sound way. In order to reach this general objective, a network of researchers has been created to:
- 1) exchange and discuss research needs, methods and results;
- 2) co-ordinate research projects in the respective countries as far as possible and desirable;
- 3) stimulate or support further (common) research projects.

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Restorative justice, violent conflicts and mass victimisation

Large scale violence and mass victimisation have been a reality for many people living in insecure countries such as the Balkans, Israel, Palestine, Cyprus, Northern Ireland, South Africa, Central Africa (DRC, Rwanda, Sudan), East Timor, etc. As a result of some rapid political, economic and social changes occurring mainly as a consequence of the fall of communism (1989), various political conflicts, wars, (inter)ethnic disputes and disagreements on a national or international level started spreading quickly. Consequently, a number of innocent people have been trapped in-between these violent and inhumane conflicts. In these hyper dynamic times where every country is desperately trying to find its place in the 'global village', ordinary people remain the main victims of 'wrong' political agendas. For these and other reasons there was a lot of interest shown by practitioners and academics in the last years to explore the possibilities of restorative justice in dealing with mass victimisation and violent (state) conflicts.

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War is a major source of disease causing:

- death and injury,
- the breakdown of and reduced access to health systems,
- the increased incidence of communicable diseases,
- reduced water and sanitation and disease prevention,
- psychosocial effects,
- malnutrition, etc.

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Specific teaching issues:

- To identify the key-elements in a conflict in general, and describe the connection between conflict, belief-system, intentions and needs
- To explain the role of the mediator, the core values and main focus in a mediation process
- To demonstrate a growing understanding and practice of adequate communication and strategy to achieve conflict transformation, both as a mediator and as a part in a conflict

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The role of the mediator

- Neutral
- Relational - not essential
- Dialogue – dialogicity
- Focussing on the relations, emotions, dialogue

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Different kinds of meetings

- one-on-one meetings between victims and offenders with a mediator or two ,
- a conference includes support people for each,
- a circle includes community members as well as support people.
- multiple options in order to be sensitive to the needs of parties (victims, perpetrators and community) as well as to show cultural sensitivity. For this reason, programmes may combine approaches

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Restorative processes

- Stressing the need to provide a safe place for victims and offenders to enter a dialogue about what happened in the incident and its impact on the victim and the community
- Five steps in creating such an atmosphere (Mark Umbreit):
 - Separate pre-mediation sessions with each party involved
 - Connecting with the parties while maintaining neutrality
 - Creating a safe place where people can speak from the heart
 - Dialogue between the parties where the facilitator stays in the background as much as possible
 - Non-directive style where the facilitator is emotionally present in the conversation, able to step in if needed, but allows the parties impacted by the crime to speak to each other

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The importance of being victim sensitive

- Professionals and well-meaning volunteers may tend to make decisions about what is right for victims. However, the victims should be allowed to make their own choices about participation, where they feel comfortable in meeting, etc. The four guidelines covered are:
 - Always keep victim safety in mind
 - Allow victims to make choices
 - Offer support to victims
 - Prepare victims

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An anthropological contribution to Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies

- focussing on peaceful societies
- documenting the resocialisation of peoples suffering from atrocities
- looking into gender and age issues

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A small note on the wall at the Martin Luther King Memorial in Atlanta:

"During the Vietnam war, 55.000 American soldiers were killed. 51.000 American women were killed by their spouses or former spouses during the same time period"

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- the relativity of "peace" and "war": there are silent or silenced "wars" going on in most countries in the world against large groups of people because of their skin colour, gender, confession or sexual preferences. This problem is multiplied by the fact that the definitions of "peace" or "war" are not given

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- the relativity of statistics, e.g. when the design of population counts masks significant and important structural features

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- the relativity of who counts as "people": If the poster had included numbers of Vietnamese men and women being killed in the two different battlefields, the homes and the woods or the fields, it had allowed us to make extremely important comparisons

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- I will develop these "relativities" into an epistemological framing of "Peace studies" as an interdisciplinary field, lending from and contributing to social as well as behavioural and human sciences.

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- “Whatever it is that we mean by the word peace, as we strive to understand it, that understanding must incorporate within it some appreciation of non-violence as a way of life demonstrated by many of the world’s peoples ethnographically described by anthropologists.” (Howell and Willis 1989: 117).

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- the problems in defining terms such as peace, aggression, violence or war

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2

- the western mode of thinking in dichotomies such as war/peace, or aggressive/non-aggressive or violent/non-violent, in addition to distinguishing between self and other, subject and object, humans and things may seemingly make an order of things for us

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3

- But just seemingly, because as we try to walk into a field and talk to people about such issues, acknowledging their right to define for themselves and us what they are up to while beating or not beating, while killing or fleeing, while shooting or being shot, we are messed up with ideosyncracies, ideologies, semantic, semiotic and situational interpretation difficulties - our own as well as their own

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Attempts to overcome such difficulties

- the basic triangle of violence
- the relativity of statistics
- whom is given a voice – who speaks out
- the meaning of silence
- thick descriptions of complex interrelationships between state formation and the identities, feelings and expressions of groups of people

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The Bakhtinian concept *dialogicity* is useful for understanding the ritual character of restoration compared to the ritual of criminalisation.

two different organisations of justice:

- one monological in the Bakhtinian sense of “authoritarian” and “closed” and
- the other dialogical, in Bakhtin’s sense of unauthoritarian and “open”

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Some key points:

- there are alternatives to violence and coercion, be that in the private area: such as street violence, family violence (it is possible to be angry or quarrel without beating or killing), or in the public area: such as war - or coercion within prisons or psychiatric hospitals (wars can be omitted by diplomacy, prisoners can work and/or pay back, most people can receive mental aid without coercion)

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2.

- conflicts and the handling of conflicts are cultural acts: conflicts are perceived and handled differently in different social groups along distinctive cultural features, such as language, laws, rules, attitudes and images of right and wrong.

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3.

- conflict handling often takes the shape of a ritual;
- i.e. commonly, accepted and acknowledged behaviour, following a certain pattern and related to or directed towards its symbolic value rather than to its practical utility

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Criminal justice:

- Perpetrators are punished
- Victims and perpetrators (litigants) are treated as opponents or adversaries in a negotiating process by their juridical representatives
- It is supposed that victims want perpetrators to be punished
- It is also supposed that victims receive restoration by the mere fact that defendants are punished
- The satisfaction of victims' needs is not an issue in criminal proceedings
- Judges determine upon what is the best for their victims and perpetrators.

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Restorative justice

- The actor(s) accept the responsibility of the act(s) committed
- The actors and the community, represented by the members of the local board of mediation, may agree upon the harm done
- The possibility of reconciliation increases if there is a direct co-operation and/or confrontation between the actors
- Actors must offer repair of the harm done, in the form of remorse, restoration, restitution and eventually reconciliation.
- Actors are not punished but supported to repair the harm done and to seek help and work on their problems.

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Ex.: 1000 women for peace

- Balkans:
 - Macedonia and Bosnia/Herzegovina
- Palestine/Israel
- Northern Ireland
- Democratic Republic of Congo

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“ I am not a wall that divides – I am a crack in that wall”

- **Sister Anna Hoares is an Anglican nun who has worked for peace and mutual understanding in all her life:**

“When I first moved to Northern Ireland I saw that people were frustrated. The chasm between Catholics and Protestants came from the political situation. There was a demand for change”.

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a reconciliation process between Protestants and Catholics

- the establishment of holiday camps for children and the education for group leaders from both confessions
- initiating the parent organisation “All children together”
- the integrated ecumenical Lagan College, raising chapels for both congregations as well as a third ecumenical chapel on the college ground.
- “Lagan college’s purpose is to break down barriers of ‘us’ and ‘them’ between Catholics and Protestants by fostering a climate of reconciliation and understanding. Students from both congregations learn how to coexist peacefully with one another

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Palestine/Israel

Nabila Espanioly, an active Palestinian feminist, and clinical psychologist:

“No one can relieve your itchy back like the scratch of your fingers. – Don’t accept the role of the victim. Take active measures to change things for the better. Use your strength.”

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Fighting violence and promoting equality:

- Espanioly works together with both Israeli and Palestinian women to fight violence against women and to promote equal labour rights, which is a much bigger problem for the Palestinian women, due to differences in education, kindergartens, work-permits etc. etc. She established and works in three different Israeli-Palestinian women’s organisations which are promoting peace and mutual help; “Mozavar”, a women’s human rights group, “Women in black”, in Haifa, and the Israeli-Palestinian “Coalition for Women for Just Peace”

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DRC

- “Kongosi Mussanzi has lived a commitment to peace education, peace building and reconciliation with dignity and quiet courage in the face of war and personal death threats. She has acted collaboratively despite incredible opposition. She carries forward her commitment to peace as the only way for her people and country to develop in practical ways with grace and good humour”

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Centre Resource de Conflit (CNC)

- initiated in response to the inter-tribal conflicts taking place in the area between her own tribal group and other groups
- peace education workshops with different groups such as women’s groups, NGO’s, church groups and local political leaders
- trauma counselling with girls and women who were raped during the conflict and established a new course in Trauma and Psychological Healing

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Societies at peace (1989)

- the problems in defining terms such as peace, aggression, violence or war: The western mode of thinking in dichotomies such as war/peace, or aggressive/non-aggressive or violent/non-violent, in addition to distinguishing between self and other, subject and object, humans and things may seemingly make an order of things for us. But just seemingly, because as we try to walk into a field and talk to people about such issues, acknowledging their right to define for themselves and us what they are up to while beating or not beating, while killing or fleeing, while shooting or being shot, we are messed up with idiosyncrasies, ideologies, semantic, semiotic and situational interpretation difficulties - our own as well as their own

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The women's stories:

- remind me of the ritual in the space of the Norwegian mediation and conflict resolution Services:
- 1. establish what happened and how you felt about it;
- 2. tell about your contemporary feelings;
- 3. tell how you would like the future.

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However they have succeeded in creating the content of this ritual on a mass scale. And – they also base themselves on the following common “rules”:

- There are alternatives to violence and coercion, be that in the private or the public area: such as mass violence or family violence.
- Conflicts and the handling of conflicts are cultural acts: conflicts are perceived and handled differently in different social groups along distinctive cultural features, such as language, laws, rules, attitudes and images of right and wrong.
- Conflict handling often takes the shape of a ritual and cross-cultural principles concerning conflicts may be identified and implemented

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A dialogical situation:

- Thus the women seem to have succeeded in what the Norwegian anthropologist Unni Wikan explains as *to go behind the words* and give them the utmost benevolent interpretation - *the principle of interpretive charity* (Wikan 2006). I see the women's stories in a Bakhtinian perspective, the women seem to have developed a long-term *dialogical* situation in their respective societies offered to the conflicting parties. Every dialogue, be it between persons or between persons and texts, will always imply dissimilarity at one or more points. This difference is the key to creativity, to “creative understanding” (Bakhtin 1981) - and diversity makes a country stronger.

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Conflict transformation and mediation in the health sector

Role play:

- You work as peace and health workers in a refugee camp at the outskirts of a gross violence area. The camp has 3.000 people living under extremely poor and difficult conditions. One night there is an outbreak of a quarrel with violent episodes between what at first seems to be two families with more than 20 members. The dispute seems to spread to other areas of the camp the following morning. Role play how you will organise your work and what happens.

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