



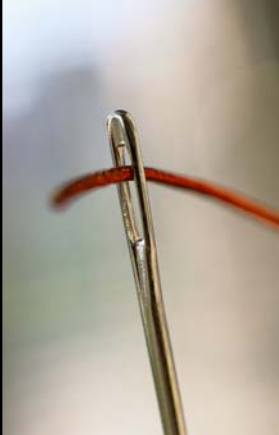
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"A Vital Christian Presence in Social Work"

**COMMUNITY AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: THREADS OF TENSION
BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE**

Tomi Grover


**Presented at:
NACSW Convention 2007
March, 2007
Dallas, TX**



Community and Restorative Justice: Threads of Tension between Theory and Practice

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Tension between theory and practice can be a conundrum for many disciplines



These are *weighty* issues
Threads or ropes?

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Learning Objectives:

- Identify contributors of scholarly work on Community and Restorative Justice and the current publications being utilized by faculty, students and practitioners in the field.
- Articulate examples of current restorative practices of government agencies, faith and community-based organizations will be included.
- Discuss macro-level concepts and micro-level models in practice relevant to social work.
- Illustrate options for capacity building within communities, networking and opportunities for further education.

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Why are we having this conversation?

Crime & Violence.

It doesn't exist in an isolated realm of dark alleys, prisons or "other" areas of town.

It's a fact of life that affects every community, every congregation, everyone.

In your own church, you'll find not only victims of crime. You'll find those who commit crimes, former offenders, and their families. You'll find police, legal professionals, others in the criminal justice field, as well as their family members and friends.

In addition to physical wounds and emotional or financial loss, there may be feelings of violation, anger, fear, hatred, worry, sorrow, guilt, shame or simple stress. Each one looks to the church to provide ways to deal with the pain that crime and violence brings.

What we have been doing is NOT working very well in most places.

Texas spends more than \$7 million *per day* to incarcerate and supervise offenders in our state.

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Definitions:

- Restorative Justice
- Community Justice
- Theories of
- Practices of

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Restorative Justice

Restorative justice is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused or revealed by criminal behavior. It is best accomplished through cooperative processes that include all stakeholders. <http://www.restorativejustice.org/intro>

Stakeholders?

Victim, Offender, Law Enforcement, Judiciary, Corrections, Parole/Probation, Community & Family members

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Community Justice

- ❑ The building of partnerships between community supervision agencies and the community
- ❑ Expanding the "client" definition to include the victims of crime, the family of the offender, and the community itself
- ❑ A focus on places so that agencies can take into account important local differences in neighborhoods
- ❑ Preventing problems between the community and the client rather than reacting to them
- ❑ Adding Value to community life

What is Community Justice? By David Karp and Todd Clear

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Theories and Practices


- ❑ The ideas and philosophies which can include public policies, justice principles and academic studies
- ❑ The grassroots, hands on, how-it works. The actual practice with real people, in real situations and communities

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Theory and Practice

Kite flying
What does it take for the kite to fly?

If Theory is the kite --
Practice is the grassroots efforts...




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Macro thinking w/micro practices


Understanding the big picture goals for systemic changes (theory)

Practicing at the client level both intervention, prevention that provide for practical assistance that meets the larger goals



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Grounded?



Theory without practice is "grounded"

Practice without a larger theory and the principles of restorative justice can be ungrounded

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Who are the kite makers?

Selected Bibliography

Other key contributors – weblinks


Finding resources...

Studies in progress...



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Examples of grassroots practices



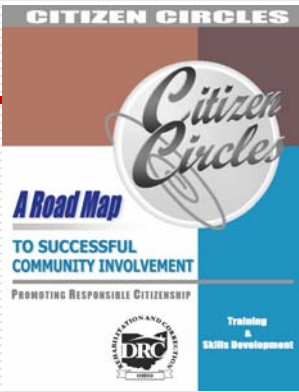
- Ohio
- Texas
- Minnesota
- Washington State
- New York
- Australia
- United Kingdom
- and Elsewhere in the world

www.restorativejustice.org

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Programs to watch:

Citizen Circles create partnerships that promote positive social interaction and accountability for offenders upon release. Circle members address risks that contribute to criminal activity by taking ownership over the solution. It is an opportunity for citizens to communicate expectations for successful reentry and help offenders recognize the harm their behavior has caused others. Offenders are able to make amends and demonstrate their value and potential to the community.



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Citizen Circles It takes a community to successfully transition offenders home...

Ohio inmates are offered faith-based options.

Citizen Circles has partnered with *Stand in the Gap* – a family model, spiritual mentoring program

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Others models:



Perpetual Help Home (PHH) is an effective faith-based organization providing housing for female ex-offenders. The board and staff have been very deliberate in creating a restorative justice program. The philosophy has been to identify groups/individuals impacted by crime and create programs facilitated by PHH residents as a process of restoring "harm" their criminal actions created, even if only symbolically.


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Elements of success:

- **Ex-Offender Family Restoration** – Staff work with residents to attempt to restore damaged family relationships.
- **Criminal Justice Professionals** – Residents provide baked "goodies" and prayer support to criminal justice professionals as a "thank you" for the work they do.
- **Center for Peace** – Micro-enterprise run by residents providing mediation services including: Juvenile VOM, Circle Dispositions (pre-adjudication), Juvenile/Peer Mediation, Juvenile/Parent Mediation, and Adult Probation VOM for victims of crime and their offenders. These programs exist within traditional justice systems of juvenile and adult probation, local courts and in cooperation with the local district attorney.

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Theories in practice



The Office of Community and Restorative Justice at the University of TEXAS at San Antonio is focused on two restorative justice efforts.

- 1 - is an effort to expand the use of restorative processes to improve success rates for the formerly confined by removing barriers to employment, housing and other services and increasing support systems.
- 2- involves a new model - indigenous neighborhood restorative justice. This refers to neighborhood development of localized processes to strengthen informal social controls within neighborhoods by providing restorative processes to provide feedback on problem behaviors within the community.

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It takes everyone –
keeping good tension . . .



Yes, this is a kite!

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Steering changes...



National Restorative Justice
Conference in Kerrville, Texas on
June 24-27, 2007.
www.restorativejusticenow.org
Featuring the best in academic
theorists and models of best
practice.

Academy of Criminal Justice
Sciences – developing a section of
RJ for both academics and
practioners

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Flying high and riding in the winds
of change!



For more information or to follow-up on one of
the models please contact me at
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