

Discussion following Dr Hilary Cremin's paper

The discussion focused on the role of parents, the role of community and ideas about structural causes of harm.

Questioners included Carol Holliday, Richard Hendry, Belinda Hopkins, Helen Holman, Brian Steele, Peter Smith and Brenda Morrison.

Q. What is the role of parents in restorative justice?

CH We need to include the reality of the social structures that children live in. We need to recognise that the operation of the school system is often unfair and penalises those already disadvantaged. There are lots of structural issues that complicate the restorative encounters in school. e.g. differing definitions of 'shame' within different communities.

RH Issue of morality in schools is complex. There are tensions between pupil and staff views.

HC Coleen's (*McLaughlin*) paper on the Iraq war (*In Pastoral Care in Education*) and school children's responses to it, raises real citizenship issues for young people.

BH (told a story about a head teacher raising her/his voice when snowballs were thrown in the playground – and a 5 year old commenting on the HT's tone of voice).

Q. But what happens when that child moves on to another phase of education where some adults may see such a comment as rude?

BM. Who creates 'harm'? Useful to think about Australian situation; the Aboriginal /colonised cultures. There is a big question about colonization for young Aborigines. The encounter model, with white police, in a police building makes us think about the boomerang effect. Nuances make a huge difference; Who? What? Where? How? Structural questions are very important.

Q. (HH) Whose morality? – I have been made to reflect on what goes on in my school and how we do outreach to parents. Different location of schools will influence use of RJ. Most of RJ in my school is done by YR11s; their reality, their morality. They take the lead in bringing about cultural change across school. Transformation comes through this. It's a web...difficult to

unentangle, confused at present...There are tensions with other agendas; 'standards-driven agenda.

HC. It's useful to think of this in terms of humanism and humanistic values. The 1980s held a child-centred view of education to be important, where education worked to bring out what is unique in the child. At the end of the century we moved towards a view where the child has to fit in. We now have disparity across communities about the role, the place of children and where they need to be. There is a need to rescue the idea of humanistic education. RJ provides a space for the generation of morals in communicative discourse.

Q. Winners write history. We bring baggage of terminology into school, e.g. victim, offender. What do we do?

HC Teachers need to be empowered to respond but have hands tied because of accountability culture.