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CELEBRATING 40 YEARS ...
I European Group Conference

Critical Criminology in a Changing World: Tradition and Innovation
University of Oslo, Norway
29th August to 1st September 2013
http://www.europeangroup.org/conferences/2013/Index.htm/
http://www.jus.uio.no/ikrs/english/research/news-and-events/events/conferences/2013/CCIACW/

Thomas Mathiesen, Professor of the Sociology of Law at Oslo University will be speaking at this year’s European Group conference in Oslo. Thomas has long been involved with the European Group and was the very first Chairperson of KROM, the Norwegian Penal Reform Association, members of whom delegates will have a chance to meet during the conference. Thomas is well-known as a penal abolitionist. Some of his best known books include Prison on Trial (2006, 3rd edn) and The Politics of Abolition (1974). See http://folk.uio.no/thomasm/
Over 250 people have now registered for the Oslo conference. A list of participants can be accessed here: [http://www.jus.uio.no/ikrs/english/research/news-and-events/events/conferences/2013/CCIACW/programme-and-abstracts.html](http://www.jus.uio.no/ikrs/english/research/news-and-events/events/conferences/2013/CCIACW/programme-and-abstracts.html)


Three different social events will be organised during the Oslo conference can be accessed on the University of Oslo website: [http://www.jus.uio.no/ikrs/english/research/news-and-events/events/conferences/2013/CCIACW/news/welcome-to-oslo.html](http://www.jus.uio.no/ikrs/english/research/news-and-events/events/conferences/2013/CCIACW/news/welcome-to-oslo.html) They include a trip to Blitz, an autonomous youth house dedicated to political activism and underground culture since 198; a meeting with KROM, the radical Norwegian Association for Penal Reform; and a visit to the Center for Studies of the Holocaust and Religious Minorities.

**Accommodation:** For those who would like to stay next to the conference venue, we have made a special deal with Scandic Edderkoppen. You may book the room through the web page [www.scandichotels.com](http://www.scandichotels.com) with the booking code:

BUNI290813. You will then get a room for a special conference price in the period 29 Aug. - 01. Sept. For other accommodation please see: [http://www.jus.uio.no/ikrs/english/research/news-and-events/events/conferences/2013/CCIACW/europeangrouphotelinfo_oslo.html](http://www.jus.uio.no/ikrs/english/research/news-and-events/events/conferences/2013/CCIACW/europeangrouphotelinfo_oslo.html)

Please note that we recommend you to book accommodation no later than mid-June.

A photo exhibition celebrating 40 years of the European Group will be organised at the Oslo conference. If any of you have any photos that reflect the history of the Group, please send these either electronically to [p.j.ystehede@jus.uio.no](mailto:p.j.ystehede@jus.uio.no) or by mail to Per Jorgen, Postboks 6706 St. Olavs plass, 0130 OSLO.

Don’t forget that the conference blog can be accessed here: [http://changingworldoslo.blogspot.co.uk/](http://changingworldoslo.blogspot.co.uk/)
II Comment and analysis

Michael Grewcock discusses the treatment of asylum seekers in Australia

The return of the ‘Pacific Solution’

In early June 2013, a boat carrying up to 60 asylum seekers sank near the Australian territory of Christmas Island, approximately mid-way between Australia and Indonesia. There were no survivors and the Australian authorities declined even to recover the 13 bodies that were found. This callous response underscored the perverse irony of this incident. Since August 2012, the Australian government has implemented a revised version of the off-shore detention and processing regime, commonly known as the ‘Pacific Solution’ that operated between 2001 and 2007. The official justification for this decision was that it was a necessary and humane way to deter refugees from risking their lives attempting informal boat journeys to Australia. The new Pacific Solution has failed to do this but like its predecessor, it has compounded the systemic human rights abuses endured by unauthorised refugees at the hands of the Australian state.

The decision to return to off-shore detention and processing was not a complete surprise. As I have discussed elsewhere (Grewcock 2013), the Labor governments since 2007 have sought to shift frontline responsibility for Australian border policing to other states in the region, particularly Indonesia and Malaysia. The catalyst was provided by the Expert Panel on Asylum Seekers appointed by the government in June 2012 following the deaths of at least 90 people when two boats sank within days en route from Indonesia to Christmas Island.¹

The Expert Panel released its report in August 2012 (Expert Panel 2012). The government embraced its recommendations as a means of breaking a long-standing impasse with the opposition conservative Coalition over an earlier forced transfer agreement with Malaysia (Grewcock 2013). Within days legislation was rushed through parliament enabling the Australian government to forcibly transfer to Nauru or Papua New Guinea any asylum seeker arriving in an Australian territory by irregular maritime means after 13 August 2012. In May 2013, this was extended to the entire Australian mainland. As a result, unauthorised refugees entering Australia are now liable to indefinite detention on either Nauru or Manus Island (PNG), while their claims for protection are being assessed. If they are not transferred, they are still liable to mandatory detention (which has operated since 1992) on Christmas Island or the Australian mainland but are otherwise not ‘in Australia’. These Kafkaesque measures have been implemented in accordance with the Expert Panel’s animating principle that asylum seekers should gain ‘no advantage’ by ‘circumventing regular migration arrangements’ (recommendation 1). In practice, this means that those who arrive by boat are subject to very lengthy delays in having their claims processed and are positively disadvantaged in relation to family reunion and other matters.

These punitive measures have plainly failed to deter boats in the short term. Approximately 39,500 asylum seekers arrived by boat between 1 September 2008 and 30 April 2013 but over 20,000 have arrived since August 2012.² Statistics in this article are drawn from information provided by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee, 27 – 29 May 2013.

¹ See also Kevin (2012); and Weber and Pickering (2011).
² Statistics in this article are drawn from information provided by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee, 27 – 29 May 2013.
transferred offshore. Instead, they are subject to a range of detention measures on Christmas Island and the Australian mainland. Approximately 8,300 of the 39,500 are in detention; 2,800 are in community detention; and 10,300 have been released from detention and are living in the community on bridging visas. As at 27 May 2013, 430 asylum seekers were being detained on Nauru and 302 on Manus Island.

Those who arrived after 13 August and who have been released on bridging visas are still subject to the ‘no advantage’ principle. They are only eligible for a special assistance payment based on 89 percent of the normal welfare benefit rate and do not have the right to work. As of 30 April 2014, over 5,000 people were in this position – virtually destitute, with little means of support and facing the prospect of waiting years to have their protection claims processed.

Under the original Pacific Solution, the offshore detention centres were widely condemned as sites of organised human rights abuses, particularly in relation to the physical and mental health of detainees (Grewcock 2009). There is little reason to believe the experience will be different this time round. For those currently detained on Nauru and Manus Island, ‘no advantage’ already translates into an indefinite period in limbo with limited access to lawyers, the media and civil society. Refugee status determination did not commence on Nauru until 19 March 2013 and has yet to commence on Manus Island. No decisions have yet been made on the Nauru applications and it remains unclear what the timeframe for resettlement for successful applicants will be, especially given the backlog of at least 5,000 claims lodged prior to 13 August 2012.

As sovereign nations, both Nauru and Papua New Guinea are outside the jurisdiction of the Australian Human Rights Commission even though the centres are funded by and operate at the direction of the Australian government. Media access is similarly restricted although journalists from the Australian Broadcasting Commission (ABC) and Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) have been able to obtain footage of both centres using hidden cameras with the assistance of disaffected centre staff. Detainees have also managed to publish online some accounts of the conditions in the camps and a handful of independent observers have been allowed access.

These accounts raised immediate concerns about the lack of infrastructure and general environment but while there is clearly a need to improve the physical conditions under which detainees live, it is the indefinite nature of immigration detention and the uncertainty of the determination process that makes detention inherently criminogenic. Australia’s mandatory detention system has inflicted high levels of stress and mental illness on detainees. One reflection of this is the systemic self-harm that continues across the whole detention network (Commonwealth Ombudsman 2013).

Since Nauru and Manus Island re-opened, there have been at least a dozen serious suicide attempts (mostly by hanging) with at least 3 individuals making multiple attempts. While suicide in such circumstances must reflect a level of personal despair, it is also a political act.

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5 This is a very conservative estimate based on reports from the Refugee Action Coalition, http://www.refugeeaction.org.au/; and private communication with refugee advocate, Ian Rintoul, 10 June 2013.
Saeed, a detainee who attempted suicide on Nauru in late November 2012, posted the following online:

*I am not hopeless from life the worst conditions, bad situation of Nauru detention center and injustice law of Australia compels me to attempt suicide.*

*We hope from the Australian government that they will treat all the asylum seekers the same.*

*Please save our lives and future and not let us go crazy. Take us back to Australia [sic].*

Such desperate responses provide insight into the sustained protests by detainees on Nauru and Manus Island that began within days of the first transfers. These included conventional political protests, such as demonstrations where banners bearing slogans such as ‘we are not criminals’ and ‘Nauru the same as Guantanamo’, were raised. Detainees wrote desperate letters to the Australian government and created websites to publicise their plight. Others refused to eat and stitched their lips together. In September 2012, a prolonged hunger strike commenced on Nauru that at one stage involved approximately 300 people. One Iranian asylum seeker, Omid Souresheh, refused food for 52 days, by which time he was suffering kidney failure and was described by a nurse witness as looking “like somebody in the end stages of cancer ... he was totally wasted away.” He was then secretly flown to Brisbane, where his condition was stabilised before being returned forcibly to Nauru five weeks later.

The treatment of Omid Sorousheh reflected the uniformly punitive responses to detainee protests. These have ranged from internal camp sanctions imposed by camp operators to criminal charges. Following one protest on Nauru in September 2012, 10 detainees were charged with riot and wilful damage. In defending the charges, the detainees have effectively mounted a constitutional challenge to the validity of indefinite detention on Nauru. At the time of writing, the outcome is unknown but if the men are convicted, recent amendments to the *Migration Act 1958* enable the Immigration Minister to deny them protection visas.

It remains to be seen whether the number of refugees seeking unauthorised entry to Australia declines in the short to medium term. But a decline will not validate the government’s deterrence strategy, especially given the expanded resettlement program of 20,000 per annum recommended by the Expert Panel (recommendation 2) has yet to be implemented. For over 20 years, Australia’s border policing regime has rested on mandatory detention, forced transfer, off-shore processing and removal. For successive Australian governments, the rights to corral, detain, restrain, forcibly move and otherwise restrict the movements and decision-making capacities of refugees supersede any commitments to human rights. This was evident in the government’s mute response to a report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Human Rights (JPCHR 2013) that highlighted multiple breaches of Australia’s formal human rights obligations arising out of the new arrangements.

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8 See http://naururefugees.wordpress.com/; and the Facebook site: http://www.facebook.com/ASYLUMSEEKERSINNAURU.

9 Quoted, ‘No Advantage’, *Four Corners*, 29 April 2013.

However, forced migration is a complex phenomenon that cannot be policed out of existence. Instead, the resources devoted to off-shore processing could fund a significantly expanded resettlement program and facilitate safe travel to Australia for those stranded in the region seeking protection. Similarly, the resources devoted to maintaining detention centres could be used to support refugees in the community. This necessarily will require a sharp break from the official paradigm of border politics in Australia, particularly the criminalisation and punishment of unauthorised movement. It will also save lives; prevent systemic abuse; and acknowledge the humanity and rights of refugees.

References


Author Biography

Dr Michael Grewcock teaches criminal law and criminology at the University of New South Wales, Sydney. His major areas of research are border policing and state crime. He is a member of the Editorial Board of the Journal, State Crime, and the Editorial Advisory Group of the Howard Journal of Criminal Justice. He writes regularly on issues related to Australian border policing and is a Chief Investigator on the Australian Deportation Project, http://artsonline.monash.edu.au/australian-deportation/.

Linda Briskman and Scott Poynting discuss the aftermath of Woolwich*

*This article was originally published on the openDemocracy website on 12th June 2013. See openDemocracy.net

After Woolwich: when racist thugs and tabloid media combine

In the aftermath of Drummer Lee Rigby's murder, state and tabloid targeting of Muslims fuels hate crime.

Two hundred Islamophobic incidents in Britain since the killing of Lee Rigby make a nasty spike from a measurable and worrying base level of anti-Muslim attacks raising fear of sustained targeting of Muslim communities. On Saturday night, after a suspected arson attack on an Islamic boarding school, children were treated for smoke inhalation. Metropolitan Police chief Bernard Howgan Howe said that uniformed police officers would be posted at other potential targets across the London. The fears are well founded; the targeting has been long since happening. The spike is a symptom. The Woolwich atrocity was only the pretext; it was not the main cause.

While it would be tempting to see these hate crime attacks as prompted by the Woolwich crime itself, along with irrational imputation of the blame to whole Muslim communities, and an ugly urge to vigilantism, this would be wrong. Experience suggests that it is media targeting and blaming of Muslims (and others mistaken for them by hate crime perpetrators) that provokes surges in anti-Muslim racism, violence, vilification and discrimination. State targeting does likewise.

When ‘our brave lads’ were part of ‘the coalition of the willing’ in Iraq, over two decades and hundreds of thousands of deaths ago, there was an upsurge of anti-Muslim hate crime in countries of that coalition. Many of the mainstream media dutifully shoved microphones in the faces of ‘Muslim leaders’ in such countries, demanding that they declare their loyalty to their country of residence, and foreswear any criticism of the militaristic adventure or sympathy for those being slaughtered. No such declaration of fealty, of course, was ever enough to allay suspicion and labelling as a ‘fifth column’.

After the 9/11 attacks in the US, spokespeople from Muslim communities all over the world repudiated this violence against innocent civilians by a handful of perpetrators; this disavowal and condemnation, of course, could never be sufficient for either the tabloid media or populist politicians eager to buy support with Islamophobic rhetoric in ‘western’ countries. Much of the media colludes with the vengeance of prominent ‘ex-Muslims’ with a score to settle and their followers, among whom are well-known people who travel the world to propagate anti-Muslim vilification such as Ayaan Hirsi Ali and Geert Wilders. The insidious Q Society which brought Dutch politician Wilders to Australia shares his vitriol against Muslims and are appointing Q Citizen Lobbyists for every electorate in Australia before the September election in their quest to ‘uphold Australian values’. This will surely not go unnoticed by the media.
Every crusading campaign in the media against supposed Muslim militants or misfits was matched by a surge in hate crime on the streets. The experience of these effects has been reported by Muslim communities on several continents.

In the wake of the Bali bombings of 2002, which killed 88 Australians anti-Muslim violence erupted including fireballing of an Islamic center and vandalism of a mosque. Following the 7/7 transport bombings in London, anti-Muslim hate crime peaked again, as local Muslim communities were subjected to suspicion by media targeting, and the social ‘permissibility’ of Islamophobic violence was demonstrated by police and security raids against many innocent people. In Britain incidents such as assaults, arson and racist graffiti became commonplace.

This permissability was emphasised by the introduction of draconian anti-terror laws often designed to show that strong action was being taken, and highly publicised and demonstrative police and security actions that –whatever the official rhetoric to the contrary – in effect signal to hate crime perpetrators-in-waiting that scapegoating Muslims is acceptable. Outlandish, minority, dissenting views – hitherto regarded in the mainstream as perhaps unpleasant but to be tolerated for the sake of civil liberties – became widely represented as dangerous, seditious and intolerable. Every door-breaking dawn raid by armed police, with approbation from the media, served as a powerful model for hate criminals.

So now with the Woolwich killings, columnists from the Wall Street Journal to the Sydney Morning Herald berate ‘Muslim leaders’, the Koran and Islam generally for engendering such violence. We see a friend of the alleged killer arrested immediately after revealing on the BBC that the British security services had attempted to recruit, and been spurned by, one of the perpetrators. Was he arrested for being a friend or for the revelation? Is it plausible that a plotter of terrorist mayhem still at large would reveal his intentions on global television? We see a man arrested in Australia under the highly unusual charges of ‘threats against a Commonwealth official’ since the rhetorical call for revenge against soldiers of the ‘war on terror’ is so ideologically charged, prompting the headline, "Sydney man arrested after allegedly posting hateful material against Diggers". The page has since been removed from the Herald but is available here. Just a few nights ago Australian commercial television presented a program titled ‘Islam to rule over Australia’, likely to fuel already pervasive fears.

The English Defence League, like perpetrators of anti-Muslim street crime generally, is not known for nuance and rationality. Tabloid shrieking for crackdowns encourage the EDL and their ilk to see ‘retribution’ through rough justice as justifiable. If recent history is any predictor, the populist media will continue to shovel their share of responsibility onto the shoulders of innocent communities.

Author biographies

Linda Briskman is Professor of Human Rights at Swinburne University of Technology

Scott Poynting is Professor in Criminology at the University of Auckland
http://www.artsfaculty.auckland.ac.nz/staff/?UPI=spoy289
Constructing Crime in an Era of Globalization

For three decades, research has documented how media representations in the entertainment and news arenas have created a social reality of a world full of danger and risk, populated by stereotyped “others.” A flood of mediated images emanating from our televisions, computers, books, newspapers and magazines, movies and even popular music instructs us on the seemingly natural order of the social world. The irony is that our fears, prejudices, stereotypes, and pervasive impulses toward meanness and retribution are less than real. They are created images offered to us as news and entertainment by a handful of immense and very motivated global corporations inextricably bound to state power.

As we entered the 21st Century the power of the media has reemerged as a compelling and urgent concern. The combined forces of deregulation, diversification, corporatization and globalization have created the perfect storm in mass communications. Today five massive transnational corporations dominate all five media platforms in all corners of the world. Globalization, corporatization and diversification have served to create a global network of heavily interlocked media corporations dominated by five transnational media conglomerates: Time Warner/ CNN, Disney/ABC, NewsCorp/Fox, NBC/GE and CBS.

The Perfect Storm

The World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) began pushing for media privatization around the world as early as 1995 resulting in the denationalization of media distribution and production. Mergers, acquisitions and takeovers in the media industry were facilitated by this neo-liberal push to deregulate and privatize.

In addition, the media giants have been integrating both vertically and horizontally. Horizontal integration has seen the largest media companies moving into all forms of media: television and cable; music and radio; print; film and the Internet. Vertical integration has seen those same companies acquiring different stages of the production and distribution system.

Technology also opened the door to increasing concentration of ownership. The digitalization of information allowed the integration of different kinds of media and communications technology creating one digitized network composed of telecommunications, the Internet and the mass media.

The result of all of this is that (1) media ownership is highly concentrated; and (2) a few massive media conglomerates are able to deliver a wide diversity of products over all five communications platforms.

Today, the corporate boards of directors of the five largest media multinationals are populated by representatives of the most influential banks, venture capital firms, and other corporations central to the financial industry, such as insurance and real estate companies and financial services corporations. This is important for a number of reasons:
These transnational media conglomerates are in and of themselves vital cogs in the networks of financial capital. According to the *Financial Times*, they are among the world’s largest companies when measured by market capitalization.

It was an enormous flow of capital from banks and venture capitalists that funded the mergers and acquisitions which created these media giants. These media corporations are a major source of financial capital. They are all integrated into transnational networks of finance capital, being able to both attract significant investment and provide the capital to other smaller corporate entities. These five immense media giants serve as the nodes through which finance and media interact and become mutually dependent.

In addition to the disproportionate representation of finance capital on the boards of directors of the five multinational media giants there is also a disproportionate representation of other media and communications technology companies. This representation of ostensible competitors means three things:

The media monoliths can operate together in exploiting markets and technologies.

The dominant media conglomerates can exercise even greater political influence in protecting their holdings and their power.

The integration of finance and media is even deeper than an initial survey of seats on the board directors would indicate. In fact, the boards of directors of these five media giants become incubators for the creation of even greater flows of finance capital.

*Table 1: Seats Held on the Boards of Directors of the Five Largest Media Corporations by Finance Capital and Media, Technology and Telecommunications Companies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Media Corporation</th>
<th>Total Number of Seats on Board of Directors</th>
<th>Seats Held by Finance Capital* Companies/Percent of all Seats</th>
<th>Seats Held by Media, Technology and Telecommunications Companies/ Percent of all Seats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABC/Disney</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>8/ 36.4%</td>
<td>2/ 9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBS</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>15/ 37.5%</td>
<td>8/ 20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNN/Time Warner</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12/ 37.5%</td>
<td>4/ 12.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fox/NewsCorp</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5/ 23.8%</td>
<td>7/ 33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NBC/GE</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>11/ 27.5%</td>
<td>9/ 22.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>51/ 32.9%</td>
<td>30/ 19.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Finance Capital Companies include banks, brokerages, financial services, insurance, investment and venture capital firms.
The Global Media Empire

The expansion of the major transnational media corporations leads to four major conclusions:

- The largest media conglomerates have both a global reach and considerable local holdings around the world.
- Media ownership and control is becoming more concentrated and is organized around networks of production and distribution.
- Today’s media giants are dominant in all aspects of the media: publishing, television, film, music and the Internet.
- Each of the five largest media transnational corporations are inextricably linked to the networks of global finance and interlocked with other networks, including technology, research, advertising and politics. They bring together finance, culture and power, and in doing so have accumulated enormous social, political and economic power for themselves.

This centralization of corporate ownership has the power to control, stifle and marginalize diverse expressions of culture, politics and criticism of the media itself. A small group of media giants controls what we see, hear and read. The introduction of new technologies, such as the Internet, has not only failed to provide a check on this power, but has in fact strengthened the influence, and consequently the power of these media conglomerates.

Telling the Story: Hegemony, Power and the Media Monoliths

In his compelling study of the media, hegemony, and foreign policy, The Pen and the Sword, Calvin Exxo describes hegemony as the sum of “society’s stories.” What happens when the power to construct and disseminate those stories rests in the hands of a small number of global conglomerates?

There is no doubt that media is used as a blunt instrument to influence politics, set agendas, and construct the parameters by which crime and other social problems are considered and debated. It is only necessary to look at NewsCorp/Fox and its despot-in-charge, Rupert Murdoch to understand the danger.

Murdoch has used his media holdings, including the FOX network, HarperCollins publishing, the New York Post, and myriad television stations, as political weapons. The political biases of his British holdings in supporting Margaret Thatcher were so egregious that his own journalists went out on strike in protest. The New York Post has been equally belligerent in its support of Republican Mayoral candidates Ed Koch and Rudy Giuliani. Murdoch’s media empire funds, produces and distributes the conservative magazine, The Weekly Standard. When Murdoch’s NewsCorp/Fox Corporation started a 24-hour news network, FOXNews, Roger Ailes, Ronald Reagan’s media adviser and the executive producer of Russ Limbaugh’s radio talk show, was selected to head the project. Of course, FOXNews has become the preeminent media force for ultra-conservative political commentary, which is described by the network as “entertainment,” rather than actual news.

These media giants have conspired with the state in socially constructing deviance. In 1997 the major television networks entered into an agreement with the Office of National Drug Control Policy to insert anti-drug messages into their prime-time entertainment programs. The Office of National Drug Control Policy reviewed and approved scripts and previewed...
footage for over 100 episodes of *ER, Beverly Hills 90201, the Drew Carey Show, Chicago Hope, 7th Heaven, the Wayans Brothers, the Practice and Sports Night.*

The media giants have collaborated closely with the military. The military assists with advice on military equipment and the realism of action scenes. The price for this cooperation is that the military be presented in a positive light, with portrayals of war-time heroism and the power of modern weaponry highlighted in the films. Films such as *Top Gun, Armageddon, Air Force One, A Few Good Men and Blackhawk Down,* all involved negotiations over scripts in return for military advise. Not surprisingly both the Department of Homeland Security and the CIA have followed suit with similar agreements involving script approval.

The corporate media has also been a cooperative partner of the military in reporting the news. During both U.S. invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, corporate media news outlets agreed to restricted battlefield access and censorship of stories. The military was given unprecedented control of news and images from the war zone. Civilian casualties were deemed to be not newsworthy and any criticisms were dismissed as supporting terrorists.

**Buying Hegemony**

The immense concentration of media power in a few transnational corporations has changed the battle over common sense in society. Of course, people are free to view films and news reports, and read magazines and newspapers, with a critical eye. We are still allowed oppositional framing of the story being told. But in an era of communication where almost every image, sound and word, is delivered by a corporate elite oppositional framing becomes more and more difficult. It is not just the speed and variety of messages which inundate us, it is the built in norms and practices of corporate business in those messages which threatens to overwhelm us. By purchasing the power to control virtually every platform everywhere, the corporate media has turned and entertainment into a virtual political catechism.

**Author biography**

Dr. Gary Potter is a professor in the School of Justice Studies at Eastern Kentucky University. He has authored eight books and published in numerous journals. His primary areas of research are the social construction of crime and organizational crime.
III European Group News

Call for volunteers

The European Working Group on Punishment, Prisons and Detentions is looking for a secretary as of 1st September 2013. If you are interested in carrying out this role, please get in touch with Monish. Students are welcome to apply!

If you are interested in creating a new working group, please get in touch with Monish or myself before the Oslo conference. Hopefully this issue can be discussed then.

If anyone is interested in helping out with maintaining the European Group website, please get in touch with Emma or Monish.

We are also looking for volunteers to maintain our youtube channel. Please get in touch with Emma of Monish if you are interested.

Call for papers

In order to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the European Group and commemorate Stan Cohen’s life and work, we’d like to bring out a special edition of our newsletter in September. If any of you would like to contribute a short piece (1000-1500 words with 3-4 references), please get in touch with Emma or Monish. It would be great if completed papers could be sent to us by mid-July.

Media

For those of you who have never been to a European Group conference before, the following blog by John Moore may give you a feel for what these events are like. See http://whose-law.blogspot.co.uk/2010/05/european-group-conference-2005.html If anyone else would like to share their experiences, please get in touch with Emma or Monish.

Those looking to find out more about the Group should also consult our youtube channel: http://www.youtube.com/user/EuropeanGroup?feature=watch

IV News from Europe and the world

The following international research network may be of interest to Group members:

Punishment & Social Control Collaborative Research Network (CRN)

Collaborative Research Networks (CRNs) were formed at the 2000 Annual Meeting of the Law and Society Association (LSA) in Miami to facilitate international research collaboration in selected topics for presentation at the meeting in Budapest in July 2001. The CRNs met twice at the meeting in Miami Beach. They have continued their work, primarily by electronic means and by organising sessions at subsequent Law and Society Association meetings. CRNs bring together scholars from all parts of the world. The chief objective of the Punishment & Social Control CRN is to bring together seasoned and younger scholars from multiple disciplinary fields and perspectives who are engaged in studying the regressive impacts of formal and informal punitive and social control regimes on community life, within carceral institutions, and implications for governance. We also invite those involved in studying the progressive impacts of rehabilitation and restorative programs across these various spheres of inquiry. Finally, we invite scholars interested in the ways formally and informally organized groups engage in acts of contestation and resistance from a multitude of perspectives. We also hope the CRN will serve as a vehicle for organizing cross-disciplinary and cross-national research, discussion, and debate on this ever important and growing agenda of research and to create opportunities for alliances with social justice and human rights organizations. Specifically, we want to foster dialogue and collaboration between
scholars passionate about understanding (1) the closed environment of carceral institutions (prisons, hospitals, and other private and public enclosures) ; (2) the ramifications of formal and informal social control practices on the geographies and experiences of individuals, families, communities, and societies; (3) the history and contemporary (or dialectical) forms of penal oppression on socially aggrieved groups across axes of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and ability and; (4) the consequences of increased technological capabilities and growing surveillance regimes on current punishment and social control regimes.

CRN Website:  http://punishmentandsocialcontrol.weebly.com/index.html
Join our Facebook Group Page:  https://www.facebook.com/groups/CRN23punishmentandsocialcontrol/

Co-Organizers
Mary Rogan, Dublin Institute of Technology, IRELAND
Ben Fleury-Steiner, University of Delaware, USA
Hadar Aviram, UC-Hastings College of Law, USA

Australia

Media
'Detention Centre: Stories from Australia's Detention System': an interactive documentary that seeks to reveal what life is like inside an immigration detention centre. It also examines the history and future of immigration detention in Australia, including dynamic data visualisations, and compares our system with others around the world. See http://www.sbs.com.au/detentioncentre/#chapter/introduction

EU

Report

Spain

Calls for Papers

The research group on Delinquency and Criminal Justice (http://www.ecrim.es/) at the University of La Coruna will be hosting a conference entitled Beyond Neoliberalism? Politics and Punishment in Contemporary Societies on 3-4th October 2013. In recent years, a prominent piece of academic literature has analysed the transformations in the field of punishment through the lens of what has been called neoliberalism. Several theoretical perspectives, such as the governmentality studies, or a variety of analyses on post-welfarist punishment, have highlighted the influence of economic policies and the neoliberal mode of government on the recent evolution of penal policies. These theoretical frameworks appear to be especially relevant to face the current challenges of the field of punishment and social control. Yet, a crucial historical event has further strengthened the interest of this sort of analysis. In effect, the study of punishment from the perspective of politics and political economy has gained momentum with the beginning of
what has been termed the Great Recession. The conference is focused on this theoretical field, and it aims to reflect on punishment both in relation to and beyond neoliberalism. Therefore, we will consider contributions on a wide range of issues that encompass the broad theme of Beyond Neoliberalism? Politics and Punishment in Contemporary Societies, particularly on the themes of:

- Politics and Punishment
- Political Economy of Punishment
- Neoliberalism and Criminal Justice
- Great Recession and penal policies

Please send abstracts of no more than 250 words to dcastolinares@gmail.com by 15th July 2013.

The 6th International Surveillance & Society conference hosted by the University of Barcelona and supported by the Surveillance Studies Network will be held on Thursday 24th - Friday 25th April 2014 in Barcelona.

Contemporary surveillance is characterised by ambiguities and asymmetries. Surveillance results from different desires and rationales: control, governance, security, profit, efficiency but also care, empowerment, resistance, and play. Furthermore it can have both positive and negative outcomes for individuals and these may lead to intended or unintended consequences. Surveillance is never neutral. Surveillance is always about power and that power is increasingly asymmetric. Surveillance practices are also changing and as ‘smart’ surveillance systems proliferate utilising and generating ‘Big Data’ new forms of ambiguity and asymmetry arise.

If you wish to present a paper or just attend without presenting, please register with the conference by sending an email to ssn2014barcelona@surveillance-studies.net as soon as possible before the 31st of July. Please title the Email "SSN Barcelona 2014" and include the following information:

- Name
- Country of residence
- Institutional affiliation
- Institutional address
- Telephone number
- Email address

For paper givers a 300 word abstract will be required by 25 September 2013 and can be submitted on the following website:

https://www.easychair.org/conferences/?conf=ssn2014barcelona

United Kingdom

Reports

The right-wing think-tank Policy Exchange has published a report recommending the replacement of the current prison estate with just 12 titan prisons (described as ‘hub prisons’ in the report). The report can be downloaded here:


Richard Garside, the director of the Centre for Crime and Justice Studies responds here:

http://www.crimeandjustice.org.uk/resources/building-new-prisons-how-about-no-prison-all

The latest statistics on prisons in the UK can be accessed here: http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/Publications/Factfile.

Call for papers

*International Human Rights Law in Refugee Status Determination*: Comparative Practice and Theory*, Institute of Advanced Legal Studies, London, 13 and 14 November 2013. This 1½ day conference brings together leading experts to reflect comparatively on the practical and theoretical impact of international human rights law upon refugee status determination. Three panels will explore comparative practice from around the world and one will be addressed to broader cross-cutting thematic issues. For the final thematic panel, we are keen to receive additional contributions, particularly on the following broad topics and their implications for our understanding of the scope of refugee definitions: sexual and gender identity; combatants and military service; permissible limitations to rights (such as the freedom to manifest one's religion); and internal protection/flight alternative.

If you wish to propose a paper to be presented on this panel, please submit a short abstract of up to 300 words to bruce.burson@justice.govt.nz and david.cantor@sas.ac.uk by Friday **5 July 2013**.

Call for External Examiner

External examiner required for MA Transnational Organized Crime at Staffordshire University. Information about the MA TOC can be found here: http://www.staffs.ac.uk/course/transnational-organised-crime-tcm4217533.jsp

USA

Report

A critical report on immigration detention in the USA is available here: http://www.sfaa.net/committees/humanrights/HRSJIssueBriefing4.pdf

Essay

Interesting essay by Henry Giroux on the development of the warfare state in the USA. See http://monthlyreview.org/2013/05/01/violence-usa#.UcnCFlERH8I.facebook

News

An ACLU lawsuit highlights the problems of private prisons. See http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/jun/13/aclu-lawsuit-east-mississippi-correctional-facility
A **BIG THANKS** to all the European Group members for making this newsletter successful.

Please feel free to contribute to this newsletter by sending any information that you think might be of interest to the Group to Emma/Monish at:

`europeangroupcoordinator@gmail.com`

Please try to send it in 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).