Date: 28th November 2022

Time: 8.50am to 4.15pm

Venue: Online via Zoom


Public event – All welcome. Recommended for an audience of 18+

Te Taipitopito

Prisons are places where people are contained in high concentrations. They are also places where victimization of physical and psychological violence is highly frequent. The previous symposia, Te Tūāpapa Whakaharatanga and Te Whanake, have reflected the high human, financial, and health costs of violence for the tāne and wāhine who live and work in these sites. Te Taipitopito is the third symposium hosted by Nga Tūmanakotanga that draws together a range of perspectives from across the ‘prison ecology’ and includes local and international voices from industry, academia and community for a dialogue on the causes and control of violence in New Zealand’s prison spaces.
The aims of Nga Tūmanakotanga are to understand and decrease physical, sexual, psychological and structural harm and improve safety and wellbeing for those who reside and work in prison settings in Aotearoa New Zealand. We view prisons as ecologies – spaces where people, resources, and the built environment are interrelated – and that violence is a product of these complex relationships. The theme for this symposium, Te Taipitopito, refers to the different currents within the tide, and invites us to take opportunities to look closer at the detailed content – the ‘guts’ of the issues – and sort out the nutrients from the debris, to further our understanding that knowledge, especially in contexts that are dynamic and often volatile.

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<td>PRISM, an exercise in perseverance since 2008 in New Zealand, reflections and insights on its value and barriers to application&lt;br&gt; Nick Wilson</td>
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NOTE: Programme may be subject to change
Peter Boshier
Chief Ombudsman

Peter Boshier was appointed Chief Ombudsman for New Zealand in December 2015, following a distinguished career as a Judge, and in May 2020 was reappointed for a second five-year term. Born and educated in Gisborne, Peter attended Victoria University of Wellington, obtaining a Bachelor of Laws with Honours Degree in 1975. After a period of practice in Wellington he was appointed as a District Court Judge with a specialist Family Court warrant in 1988. In 2004 he was appointed as the Principal Family Court Judge of New Zealand and held that position until December 2012 when he was appointed a Law Commissioner, a position he held until his appointment as Chief Ombudsman.

Peter has served on the government’s Family Violence Taskforce. He is patron of the White Ribbon Trust and patron of the Dwell Community Housing Trust in Wellington. In 2009 he was made a distinguished alumnus of the Victoria University of Wellington for his contribution to the law. Peter has a long association with the Pacific and was seconded to undertake judicial training there, based in Suva in 2002 and 2003. He has travelled regularly to Pacific Island countries to undertake workshops on family violence and youth justice. He holds the Samoan Matai title of Misa which was bestowed in 2000.

In July 2015, he became the President of the Association of Family and Conciliation Courts based in the United States. He is the first New Zealander to hold this position and did so until July 2016. In 2019, Peter took up the role of incumbent president of the Australasia and Pacific region of the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI). In 2022, Peter took up the role of Second Vice President of the International Ombudsman Institute (IOI).

As Chief Ombudsman, Peter’s focus has been on a faster and more effective resolution of Official Information Act and other complaints, working with government agencies to improve their practices and strengthening his team’s investigation and monitoring of prisons and public mental health facilities.
Using the PRISM paradigm to overcome obstacles and create opportunities for managing institutional violence

PRISM: Promoting Risk Interventions by Situational Management provides a systematic approach for evaluating a broad range of situational risk factors known to influence violence in prisons, hospital, secure and community settings.

Across the last decade and a half, PRISM has been used across many different settings and in different jurisdictions. It has proven to have significant utility and when organisations invest in the process, transformational change can occur. Of course, in real world settings, that buy-in isn’t always easy to achieve. Resistance can be overt, or covert and organisations, like individuals, are at different stages of change and have similar defence mechanisms.

In this presentation, the PRISM protocol will be described and then, with reference to some case examples, the author will share some reflections on how the process can be used to overcome obstacles and create opportunities for managing violence.

Lorraine Johnston
Clinical Forensic Psychologist - Consultant

Lorraine Johnstone is a consultant clinical forensic psychologist who has worked at a senior level across a range of secure settings (prisons, forensic mental health, and secure children’s homes). She has experience working clinically, managerially, in service development roles and in a strategic and advisory capacity. Lorraine has also maintained an active academic role and has published in peer reviewed journals and edited books. She is a co-author of the PRISM protocol and has used the approach extensively.

PRISM, an exercise in perseverance since 2008 in New Zealand, reflections and insights on its value and barriers to application

The excitement and interest in PRISM from custody when Corrections first looked into the measure to help with understanding and intervening for prison violence in 2008 unfortunately did not last. This then turned the use of the measure into an exercise in perseverance and promotion by a few psychologists with experience and belief in its approach. This meant instead of regular use and a spread of knowledge and expertise in the measure, it became an exercise in waiting for the right moment, usually when urgent concerns were raised about violence in a particular prison or unit. While it has been possible to use these opportunities to apply PRISM across a variety of prison settings and populations, and to refine the administration and reporting of the measure, we are still looking for an enduring relationship and home for its use. I will share some of my insights and experiences with PRISM and hopes for the future because my experience in Ara Poutama is timing is everything and the complex problem of prison violence continues.
Nick Wilson
Clinical Psychologist – Ara Poutama

Nick Wilson, PhD., PG Dip. Psych. (Clinical) has been working as a Clinical Psychologist for the Ara Poutama (Department of Corrections) in New Zealand for the last twenty-five years. His current role is as Principal Advisor, Psychological Services working for the Office of the Chief Psychologist with responsibility for developing intensive youth interventions, provision of specialist training and research in the area of risk assessment, management and treatment. Nick has a long-standing specialist expertise in the assessment and treatment of criminal psychopathy and lectures at New Zealand universities on forensic risk assessment and treatment issues, as well as the management of institutional violence. Nick has carried out research into the area of risk assessment with youth and adult offenders, with violent and sex offences, as well as the evaluation of treatment programmes. In recent years he has been involved in the development of dynamic risk and protective asset assessment measures used by probation officers and prison case managers, as well as improved suicide assessment in probation and prison settings. Nick has also been involved for several years in developing better mental health services for those placed in prison and continues to be involved in clinical practice with those in the care of Ara Poutama.

Exploring the prison ecology: University research projects

Since the inception of Nga Tūmanakotanga, a number of smaller projects have been conducted to contribute to the larger conversation of prison violence in New Zealand. We are proud to support the work of graduate researchers at the University of Waikato and the University of Canterbury.

Nicola Brenan-Tupara
Abi Clarke
Liam Membery
Codifying the prison: The connections between violence, gangs, prison codes, and masculinity

Prisons are seen to be designed both structurally and behaviourally to control those who society deems as violent or in need of reform. The need to control behaviours and actions, specifically if those actions lead to violence are important, and that it is up to the state and its actors to enact that control. However, with the growing number of prison gangs and gang members, the impetus on control has become that much more, as gangs are seen to increase violence within prisons due to their codes of conduct to control members and the broader prison population. However, what is missing from the discussions of violence, control and prison gangs is a specific prison masculinity that privileges those who can embrace violence to gain power, control, and respect. This presentation focuses on the Canadian context of Indigenous men and women who have been incarcerated and are also members of street gangs to highlight how they used a hyper-masculine performance as a shield within prison settings. Their narratives also highlight how this performance is not just regulated to those who are incarcerated, but to the prison guards and officials as well.

Robert Henry
Assistant Professor, University of Saskatchewan

Ass. Prof Henry’s research focuses on violence, trauma, identity, and how it is impacted by health and justice systems, with a focus on street gangs and street lifestyles. Much of his research consists of using an Indigenous research framework focused on relational accountability. Working with Indigenous ex-gang members and collecting life narratives using visual research methods, he examines how their notions of identity are impacted with their involvement within multiple social systems and how it maintains colonial control over Indigenous bodies. He has published two manuscripts with Indigenous men (Brighter Days Ahead, 2013) and women (Indigenous Women and Street Gangs: Survivance Narratives, 2021) who were involved in street gangs on the Canadian Prairies. He has also co-edited and published in the areas of settler colonialism, Indigenous health, Indigenous justice, Indigenous research ethics, Indigenous street gangs, and Indigenous community-engaged research.

The evolvement of gangs in New Zealand – recent trends and policy responses

Gangs have been evolving in NZ since the 1950’s, from the milk bar cowboys to the 501 outlaw motorcycle gangs. Since that time, gang communities have been perceived in stereotypical ways by media and justice agencies that has contributed to ongoing tensions between these groups and social institutions. This presentation discusses the changing gang scene in Aotearoa, the policy responses, and its implications for violence in prisons.
Harry Tam
Co-director, H2R Research & Consulting Ltd

Harry Tam is a co-director of H2R Research & Consulting Ltd, a company established to facilitate the engagement and mobilisation of hard to reach Māori communities to improve their social and economic outcomes. For nearly fifty years Harry has worked with indigenous ethnic gangs and other hard to reach communities throughout the country and in the prisons. In 1990, Harry was awarded the 1990 Commemoration Medal for services to New Zealand.

Harry has also worked as a senior public servant for nearly twenty years, providing policy advice to the government on a range of portfolios including youth, penal policy and criminal justice, housing, labour market, drugs and alcohol, and family violence. Harry has been a guest lecturer on indigenous ethnic gangs in New Zealand at Victoria University.

A rehabilitative environment approach to reducing prison violence

Correctional agencies across Australia are committed to providing prison environments that ensure the safety of staff and incarcerated peoples by minimising the potential for prison violence. The prevalence of prison violence can vary markedly both within and between prisons and a significant amount of this variation can be explained by the characteristics of the prison environment. Within the NSW correctional context, a rehabilitative environment approach has been developed and implemented with the aim of reducing the risk of prison violence and improving reoffending outcomes. In this paper, we articulate the theoretical and operational frameworks that have been used to guide the design and delivery of rehabilitative correctional environments that create the conditions necessary for enhanced safety and also provide an empirical framework that has been used to examine the relationships between the multiple environmental elements and the prevalence of violence.

Jennifer Galouzis
Assistant Commissioner, NSW Corrective Services

Jennifer Galouzis is the Assistant Commissioner, Offender Management and Programs, Corrective Services NSW, Australia. Jennifer is also a current PhD candidate with the University of Melbourne and her thesis is titled ‘A rehabilitative prison environment and the possibility of therapeutic prisons’. Jennifer’s research interests are in the social and cultural climate of prisons and the measurement of prison performance. She has published papers in the areas of violence, sex offender treatment and risk of re-imprisonment.
Reducing prison violence within New Zealand: A gang harm reduction lens

An insight into the relationship between our gang whanau, both within our community and our prisons. Cynicism is paralysing, we need to become courageously optimistic with a new way of thinking. Addressing the wellbeing harms in our communities requires a coordinated response, combining community development, prevention, and law enforcement. This includes building relationships with our community partners as well as members of gang communities who are seeking genuine change and are committed to living offence-free lifestyles.

Damian White
Bay of Plenty Gang Harm Reduction Coordinator, NZ Police

Served 13 years within the New Zealand Army and was awarded MNZM for his service. Damian White has had an extensive 20 year career within the New Zealand Police and most recently initiated the Gang Harm Reduction Capability within the Bay of Plenty and is now leading the Gang Harm Reduction Project, in the role of Constabulary Lead Drug & Harm Prevention within the Resilience to Organised Crime in Communities work programme.

Armon Tamatea
University of Waikato

Armon (Rongowhakāta; Te Aitanga-a-Māhaki) is a clinical psychologist who served as a clinician and senior research advisor for Ara Poutama/Dept of Corrections (New Zealand) before being appointed senior lecturer in psychology at the University of Waikato. He has worked extensively in the assessment and treatment of violent and sexual offenders, and contributed to the design and implementation of an experimental prison-based violence prevention programme for high-risk offenders diagnosed with psychopathy. Armon is the research lead for Nga Tūmanakotanga and teaches in the post-graduate clinical psychology programme in the School of Psychology. His research interests include institutional violence, psychopathy, New Zealand gang communities, and exploring culturally-informed approaches to offender management. Armon currently divides his professional time between research, teaching, supervision, and clinical practice in the criminal justice arena.

Nga Tūmanakotanga gratefully acknowledges the support of our funder