



# Restorative justice practices and community building: two of a kind?

**Inge Vanfraechem**

EFRJ, Leiden

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# Outline of the presentation

- Community, society and state in restorative justice
- ALTERNATIVE
- Community (building) in ALTERNATIVE
- Questions to be addressed

# Community, society and state in RJ (1)

- Starting-point: Vanfraechem (2007) -> update of the literature in the last decade
- Community (1)
  - Local community:
    - Neighbourhood
    - Including volunteers in mediation (Crawford 1997)
    - Youth offender panel members (Rosenblatt 2014): often not linked to the local community

# Community, society and state in RJ (2)

- Community (2)
  - Community of care
    - Conferencing (Zinsstag & Vanfraechem 2012): support for victim and offender, but also having their own say
    - Limited empirical research
    - Bolivar (2011): limited support for victims

# Community, society and state in RJ (3)

- Community (3)
  - Feeling of connectedness (McCold & Wachtel 1997): ? -> to be explored (network society?)
  - From micro- to macro-community: PMC in Europe (Weitekamp 2013, 2016) - ‘everyone who is not harmed by the specific offense, but influenced by the cumulative effects of crime in general’

# Community, society and state in RJ (3)

- Society

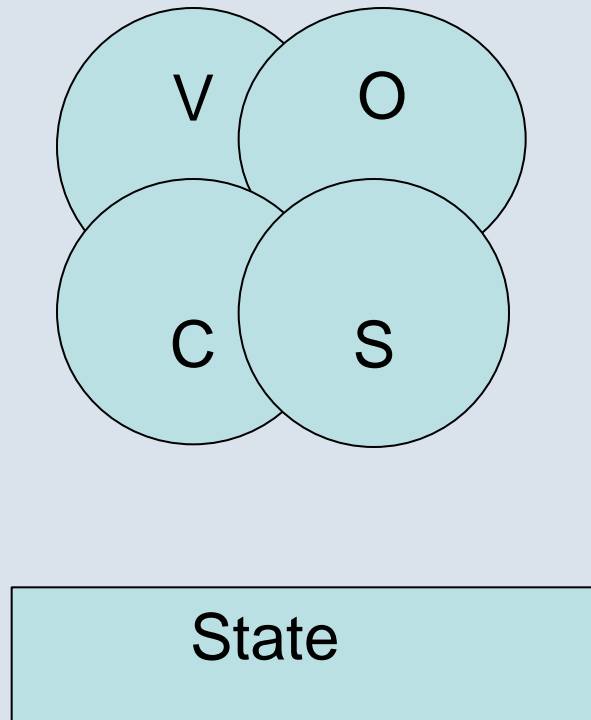
- For me: society instead of macro-community - police or prosecutor denouncing the crime and thus including societal concerns in the RJ process
- Representation through involvement of professional actors

# Community, society and state in RJ (4)

- State
  - Creating necessary conditions
  - Ensuring equal access
  - Assuring acceptable outcomes
  - Providing a RJ system
  - Funding

# Community, society and state in RJ (5)

Update McCold & Wachtel (1997)





# ALTERNATIVE (1)

- European FP7 project (2012-2016)
- Developing alternative understandings of justice and security through RJ approaches in intercultural settings
- Theoretical and action research

# ALTERNATIVE (2)

- Partners: NOVA, EFRJ, IRKS, Foresee, VDS and UU (LINC coordinator)
- AR in Austria, Hungary, Serbia and Northern Ireland

# Community(building) in ALTERNATIVE (1)

- Activities to lay the ground for RJ:
  - Workshops and trainings,
  - Learning groups,
  - Restorative teams,
  - Non-violent communication,
  - Filming,
  - Community conferences

# Community(building) in ALTERNATIVE (2)

- But activities have a meaning in itself:
  - Breaking the silence,
  - People learning communication skills,
  - Trainings in schools

# Community(building) in ALTERNATIVE (3)

- Community and justice as doing: towards a more dynamic view on community ?
  - Communicative action
  - Justice through encounter
  - Recognising different opinions

# Questions for debate (1)

- Dealing with crime -> dealing with conflict
  - Not all conflicts are sent to CJS
  - Even when they are, CJS cannot deal with underlying issues and conflicts
  - Importance of linking RJ to social justice
  - Dealing with groups rather than individuals

# Questions for debate (2)

- RJ -> RJ approaches -> RP
  - RJ as linked to CJS
  - RJ approaches:
    - Broadening up to RJCIS: restoration of communication, restoration of trust, restoration of cooperative action for justice
    - Community building or RJ?
  - RP: schools, restorative city, business, .... (but: depends on how you view justice)

# Questions for debate (3)

- RJ as prevention or curation?
  - Mostly, RJ is seen as happening after a crime or conflict
  - But what about a restorative culture as a prerequisite to implement core RJ practices?
  - Exploration in Verrekijker