

ROTARY DISTRICT 5440 PEACEBUILDER NEWSLETTER
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INNOVATIONS IN PEACEMAKING—WHAT HAS WORKED?

William M. Timpson, Bob Meroney, Lloyd Thomas and Del Benson, Fort Collins Rotary Club
Lindsey Pointer, 2017 Rotary Global Grant Scholarship Recipient

In these newsletters of the Rotary District Peacebuilders, we want to invite readers for contributions and ideas, suggestions and possibilities for our efforts to promote the foundational skills for promoting peace, i.e., nonviolent conflict resolution, improved communication and cooperation, successful negotiation and mediation as well as the critical and creative thinking that can help communities move through obstacles and difficulties. **The Rotary Foundation has six priority areas: (1) Promoting peace; (2) Fighting disease; (3) Providing clean water; (4) Saving mothers and children; (5) Supporting education; and (6) Growing local economies. It has been argued by staff at Rotary International (RI) that long with promoting peace, “sustainability” is another cross-cutting priority that connects with all the others.** RI has directed efforts in these six areas to enhance local and global impact and staff indicate that their most successful and sustainable projects and activities tend to fall within these areas: See the RI website: <https://my.rotary.org/en/learning-reference/about-rotary/our-priorities>

If you would you like to respond to one of the pieces in this newsletter, check out our blog www.rotarypeacebuilder.com and join the conversation! If you would like to contribute to a future newsletter, visit www.rotarypeacebuilder.com/submit/. The topic for next month's newsletter is on “Unarmed Peacemakers.” Future issues are looking at the following: **July:** Are Humans Inherently Aggressive or Violent? **August:** Preemptive War and its Impact on Peacebuilding.

Robert N. Meroney

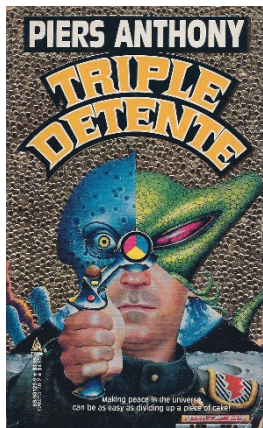
NOTE: Bob Meroney is an Emeritus Professor of Fluid Mechanics and Wind Engineering with a long career at Colorado State University. He has been an active member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club and regularly researches a range of topics on modern life, issues and politics that serve to spark deeper conversations among friends and colleagues. If you have questions or ideas, you can contact Bob: Robert.Meroney@ColoState.EDU.

**AN UNUSUAL SCIENCE FICTION STORY ABOUT WAR AND PEACE:
AN INNOVATIVE PEACE BUILDING SOLUTION THAT MIGHT WORK IN THE FUTURE**

I just read a book titled *Triple Dètente* (1974) by the major science fiction writer Piers Anthony¹ that considers the conundrum of how to achieve peace among three aggressive

¹ Piers Anthony has published 166 works between 1956 and 2013. He is an English American author born in 1934 and now age 84. In 1980 he won the Phoenix lifetime achievement award, he has received four Hugo Awards given to the annual best SF, one Nebula award granted by SF Writers of American annually, one British Fantasy award for best British SF members, eighteen Locus Awards polled by readers of the Locus Magazine over 18 years, the Balrog award, the Dilmar Award and a Gandalf Award, and a New York Times bestseller twenty-one times over.

intelligent space faring races who are pressed by overpopulation to compete for resources, but in their competition could destroy each other completely. Initially, each race was preparing to invade another planet to acquire enough resources for their own species to survive, but the ensuing conflict was likely to destroy all.



The solution to conflict was the decision that the three all surrender their another where Race 1 conqueror of Planet 2, the conqueror of Planet becomes the conqueror Each group imposes a autocratic dictatorship planet and enforces policies that reduce



imminent diplomatic nations would planets to one becomes the Race 2 becomes 3, and Race 3 of Planet 1. benevolent but on the subject draconian population,

protects the environment, distributes resources fairly, and results in long term peace and benefit to all. Of course, each race is convinced they have been unfairly subjected to slavery and loss of freedom. The author describes the solution as a fair division of cake among competing children. Essentially, one person cuts the cake, and others choose the slices. He tackles some big issues. Population control, how large super-powers can live with each other, and the ethics of a greater-good or justice. One could argue the story is an unusual example of the application of restorative justice.

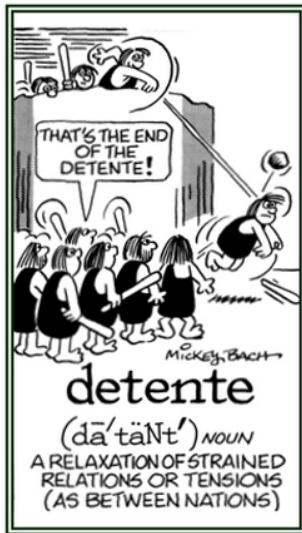
The book spends a lot of time examining how to achieve peace through a process where all sides may suffer but all sides also gain.



A similar destructive dilemma exists today related to the impasse of nuclear weapons. After World War II, multiple nations have developed nuclear arsenals: United States, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, France, India, Pakistan, China, North Korea, and (possibly) Israel. The potential for mutually assured destruction (MAD)² has resulted in a seventy-year standoff during which no large military confrontation has occurred between major world powers. The presumption is that given no nation can “win” a nuclear war, it is not to anyone’s interest to engage. Some political scientists have christened this period the “long peace.”³ Such a period of relative peace between major powers has not been documented in human history since the Roman Empire.

² MAD: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutual_assured_destruction

³ Long Peace: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long_Peace



Recall that *détente* is a word which describes the easing of strained relations, especially in a political situation. In the past it has been used to describe the end of the Vietnam War, the SALT arms treaty, and many other situations where conflict has been lessened or avoided.

Lindsey Pointer

NOTE: Lindsey Pointer has been working on the use of restorative principles in the criminal justice system. She is a restorative practices facilitator, trainer and researcher and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Restorative Justice at Victoria University in New Zealand with support from a Rotary Global Grant Scholarship and the Fulbright Program from the U.S. State Department. If you have questions or ideas, contact Lindsey: lindseypointer@gmail.com

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: AN INNOVATION IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE THAT WORKS

The criminal justice system is in dire need of innovation. The U.S. has the highest incarceration rate in the world. With less than 5% of the world's population, U.S. prisons house about 22% of the world's incarcerated adult population ([Roy 2013](#)). 95% of prisoners are eventually released and two out of three ex-inmates re-offend ([Prison Fellowship](#)). Restorative Justice offers a promising solution to mass incarceration and high rates of recidivism. Re-offense rates following a Restorative Justice process are decreased to 10% and the participant satisfaction rate (for victims, offenders, and community members) is consistently above 95% ([RJ Colorado](#)). Through the process, damaged relationships are healed and the community is strengthened.

The following excerpt from an interview with Longmont Public Safety Chief Mike Butler explains how it was frustration with the ineffectiveness of the mainstream criminal justice system that led him to integrate restorative justice in his police department. This work has been accomplished in partnership with [Longmont Community Justice Partnership](#) and has provided an innovative and highly effective model for integrating restorative justice with police work. This model is one that has been replicated by other cities, and that will hopefully continue to gain traction in the coming years.

Q: Why did you decide to integrate restorative justice into the Police Department?

A: Having worked in the criminal justice system for as long as I have and seeing the results over a period of time and its effectiveness or lack thereof and believing there are other forces out there that could be brought to bear that could have more impact on keeping our communities safe. There had to be a better way of figuring this out. It all started with “this isn’t working, something is amiss.” We came to work and lived with a level of ineffectiveness and no one was asking questions. We just keep doing what we’re doing, going down a path of insanity.

Q: How did you begin the process of integrating a Restorative Justice program?

A: I began talking to elected officials, officers, and school officials, writing briefings, and having conversations with everyone. Then eventually I had to pull the trigger and say we’re going to try something new. You know you’re going to get push back when you introduce something different from what people have been trained and taught to do.

It was conviction, finding champions, conversations, beginning the development of awareness and a different level of consciousness of what’s possible. Slowly, it became more institutionalized. It wasn’t something I could force. It’s one conversation, one gathering, and one person at a time. No magic bullet out there, it’s just the work and staying with it.

Q: What advice would you give to Restorative Justice Organizations hoping to partner with police in their communities?

A: I would bring in other police departments who have gone down that path. Find a department where they’ve had success and say these folks are police folks they know how to talk to other police folks. We have gone to police departments at their request to say here is why we did it, and here are the results. If you know anyone with leverage who could champion this, have this conversation with them. Everyone wants results and data; have it at the ready.

It comes down to conversations, relationships, conviction, bringing in people from other police departments. There’s not a lot of magic. It’s just a matter of conviction, staying with it, going at it again and again. You can say that with just about any process or change.

There are police departments on bended knee right now trying to figure out how to make different relationships with their community. More than ever, they are wanting to figure out new ways of doing business. Will we just be the hammer that comes down on people? Or can we be something else in our community? That question looms big now more than ever. The ground is fertile, the time is ripe, the window of opportunity is big now, so jump on it. Now is time to bring all these things into play.

William M. Timpson

NOTE: Bill Timpson has been on the faculty at Colorado State University in its School of Education for many years and a member of the Fort Collins Rotary Club where his focus on sustainable peacebuilding in Burundi, East Africa, has been supported by two Global Grants. What follows is adapted from his 2009 book, 147 Tips for Teaching Peace and Reconciliation, co-authored with an international group of peace scholars that included Ed Brantmeier, Nat Kees, Tom Cavanagh, Claire McGlynn and Elavie Ndura (Madison, WI: Atwood). If you have questions or ideas, contact Bill: william.timpson@colostate.edu

CREATE “SPECT-ACTORS” TO EXPLORE NEW INSIGHTS

Augusto Boal (1979, 1992, 1995) described various ways in which actors could use the experiences that audience members had with conflicts and problems to generate material for the “performance” on that day and offer new ideas about peace and reconciliation. Spectators would become “spect-actors.” Every “show” would be fresh, real and relevant. There would be no written scripts, just what the actors are able to coax from those attending. The struggles, challenges, hopes and dreams of audience members themselves become the focus for improvisations. Scenes are “acted out” by actors—used primarily to jump start a scene—and recruits from the audience. Whoever volunteered the issue gets to see other perspectives and possibilities. Everything is innovation!

Using the ideas and techniques of Augusto Boal, a lesson on peace education and nonviolence might look like the following: First, students (or any audience member for that matter) are invited to suggest problems for the group. According to Boal, these should be real and complex. With everyone’s input, new and different solutions will be explored in a variety of ways. For example, someone might want to work on a conflicted relationship that threatens to turn violent. A parent might want to help a child confront a bully at school. Someone else is frustrated with the sensationalized media coverage of crime.

Then, the one with the “issue” or “problem” chooses individuals to play particular roles. The parent in the example above might pick someone to be the student and someone else to be the bully. The “scene” would be set and the action begun. Note that having participation from people with some acting experience can be helpful to get things going. At any point, however, anyone from the audience can yell “STOP” and jump into any of the roles. After each run through you want to ask the person with the problem: “What was new? Was it believable? What did you learn?” Again, the goal is to give the person with the issue multiple and different perspectives along with some new ideas for resolution. The action is usually fast so you have to make sense of it all on the fly. Everyone gets involved. It’s relevant and the audience is both cast and crew.

In Brisbane, Australia, Rotary has established one of its Peace Centers where students from all over the world are fully funded for two years to study peace, reconciliation and conflict resolution. This statue of Gandhi challenges them and everyone else to take more initiative, to be “spect-actors”, so that their lives better match their values.



PEACE LITERACY PLANNED FOR FORT COLLINS

Paul K. Chappell is an international peace educator and serves as the Peace Literacy Director of the Nuclear Age Peace Foundation. He graduated from West Point, was deployed to Iraq, and left active duty as a Captain. He is the author of the seven-book Road to Peace series about ending war, waging peace, the art of living, and our shared humanity. The first six published books in this series are *Will War Ever End?*, *The End of War*, *Peaceful Revolution*, *The Art of Waging Peace*, *The Cosmic Ocean*, and *Soldiers of Peace*. Lecturing across the United States and internationally, he also teaches courses and workshops on Peace Leadership and Peace Literacy. Chappell grew up in Alabama, the son of a half-black and half-white father who fought in the Korean and Vietnam wars, and a Korean mother. Having grown up in a violent household, Chappell has forged a new understanding of war and peace, rage and trauma, and vision, purpose, and hope. He will return to Fort Collins from June 11-13 to lead a series of workshops for school counselors, teachers, parents and community. Emerging from a century of almost continuous warfare combined with the Rotary Foundation's commitment to promoting peace and this current year's focus on literacy, this topic of peace literacy is especially compelling for U.S. citizens, in particular. His website is www.peacefulrevolution.com.