

pharmacotherapy to treat high-risk sex offenders or the fact that there are a number of successful community SOTPs. While it is true that the prison SOTP has been discredited there are now two replacements, Kaizen and Horizon which are based on the Good Lives Model, rather than on cognitive behavioural theory. There are also a number of other prison programmes that are running including healthy sex programmes and living skills programmes and some, which have been adapted for deaf prisoners and those with learning disabilities. While these important programmes and risk management strategies do not offer any kind of guarantee, many are effective and work so that the vast majority of children are protected from predatory sex offenders. This is the more sensible conclusion and the one, which in my opinion, Tim Tate should have reached.

The second book in this review is written by Charmaine Richardson, the wife of Ray Wyre when in died in 2008. Entitled *Pick up the pieces: A Survivor's story of life with Ray Wyre*, it covers the abuse that Richardson suffered as a child at the hands of her Grandfather and her life with Wyre. It also connects with the first book reviewed here, in the sense that it talks about the Black case, the childhood that Black had and to some extent the impact of the Black case of Wyre. Other chapters of the book cover the language, which we should use with children, the work of the Gracewell Clinic and the author's own work as a counsellor. For a book that is only 136 pages, however, it tries to cover a lot and because of this very little is covered in any detail.

While the book is interesting and does to some extent compliment the first book discussed here, it has a very similar negative tone. An example of this can be found on page 77 where the author

argues that since Wyre's death: *'there are no more dazzling conferences bringing people together to share their knowledge about child sexual abuse'*. In the United Kingdom, there is the work and events put on by organisations such as the National Organisation for the Treatment of Abusers (NOTA), Barnardo's and the NSPCC. In addition, other international organisations, which run annual conferences and workshops, include the Association for the Treatment of Abusers (ATSA), which is based in North America and the Australian and New Zealand Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abuse (ANZATSA). In 2018, this statement is incorrect. In summary, I would recommend the Murder of Childhood book, but I think only as a piece of history and as an account of the Black case.

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#### Book Review

#### **On prisons: A gaoler's tales**

By Danny McAllister

Publisher: Danny McAllister (2018)

ISBN: 978-1-911195-72-6

(paperback)

Price: £9.99 (paperback)

This new book by distinguished prison manager Danny McAllister, offers personal reflections on the experience of leading prisons. The book loosely covers McAllister's 27 year career, from his initial training following a successful first career as an army officer, through postings at various prisons, including as Governor of HMP Brinsford and HMP Whitemoor, then onto his roles as an area manager and Director of High Security Prisons. The book also has chapters on overseas work in Sweden, Netherlands, Germany, Hungary, Kosovo and Libya.

Many people working in prisons today will have worked with McAllister and will have admired his many qualities as a senior leader. Those who were not fortunate enough to have had that experience, will get a sense from this book of his exceptional operational leadership and expertise. This is brought to life most vividly in a chapter titled 'Bad day at the office', which describes the riot at Bristol prison in 1990, one of many that took place during that summer as disorder swept through the system. This is an extraordinary story of calmness and courage under fire, told with simplicity and without glorification. Many managers will also take much from McAllister's descriptions of the everyday challenges of prison management. His approach is characterised by bringing a sense clarity and orderliness, to a world that is more often than not messy and complex.

There is also much in this book that will interest more general readers who may never have worked in or even set foot in a prison. In several chapters, including one on 'legends', McAllister writes lively pen pictures of prisoners. These diverse and memorable characters bring to life the wide range of people that are encountered in prisons, their lives and struggles. At times, including in the chapters on suicide and segregation units, their pain and distress is also laid bare. These descriptions, along with introductions to the range of incidents that prison managers encounter, will offer an accessible insight to the uninitiated.

There is also much here for the academic researcher. In recent years, prisoner autobiographies have started to be recognised as a potential resource, albeit problematic, for accessing and exploring the prison experience. They can authentically represent the realities and complexity of everyday

prison life in an accessible form. Similar claims could equally be made for the small body autobiographical writing produced by prison staff, including this book. McAllister is modest in his claims for the book, stating, 'My experiences, and my reflections, are not those of a criminologist, a lawyer, a social worker or a psychologist. I was none of those things. I was a gaoler, and these are gaoler's tales'. Herein lies the value of this book for the academic. By drawing upon a wealth of experience and

representing the perspective of a successful prison manager, this book offers an insight from deep within the world of prisons. There are many experiences recounted that reveal elements of the craft of prison management. In addition, a number of the chapters, including an assessment of 'do-gooders' such as independent monitoring boards and the inspectorate of prisons, a discussion of the impact of sick absence, and the morality of private prisons, are interesting not only as a contribution to particular debates,

but also because these are articulating a perspective from within the occupational culture.

Danny McAllister's tales have something for everyone, including readers with no experience wanting to find out about prisons, professionals on the inside wanting to develop their craft, or those researching prison work exploring the institutional culture.

**Dr. Jamie Bennett** is Governor of HMP Grendon and Springhill



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