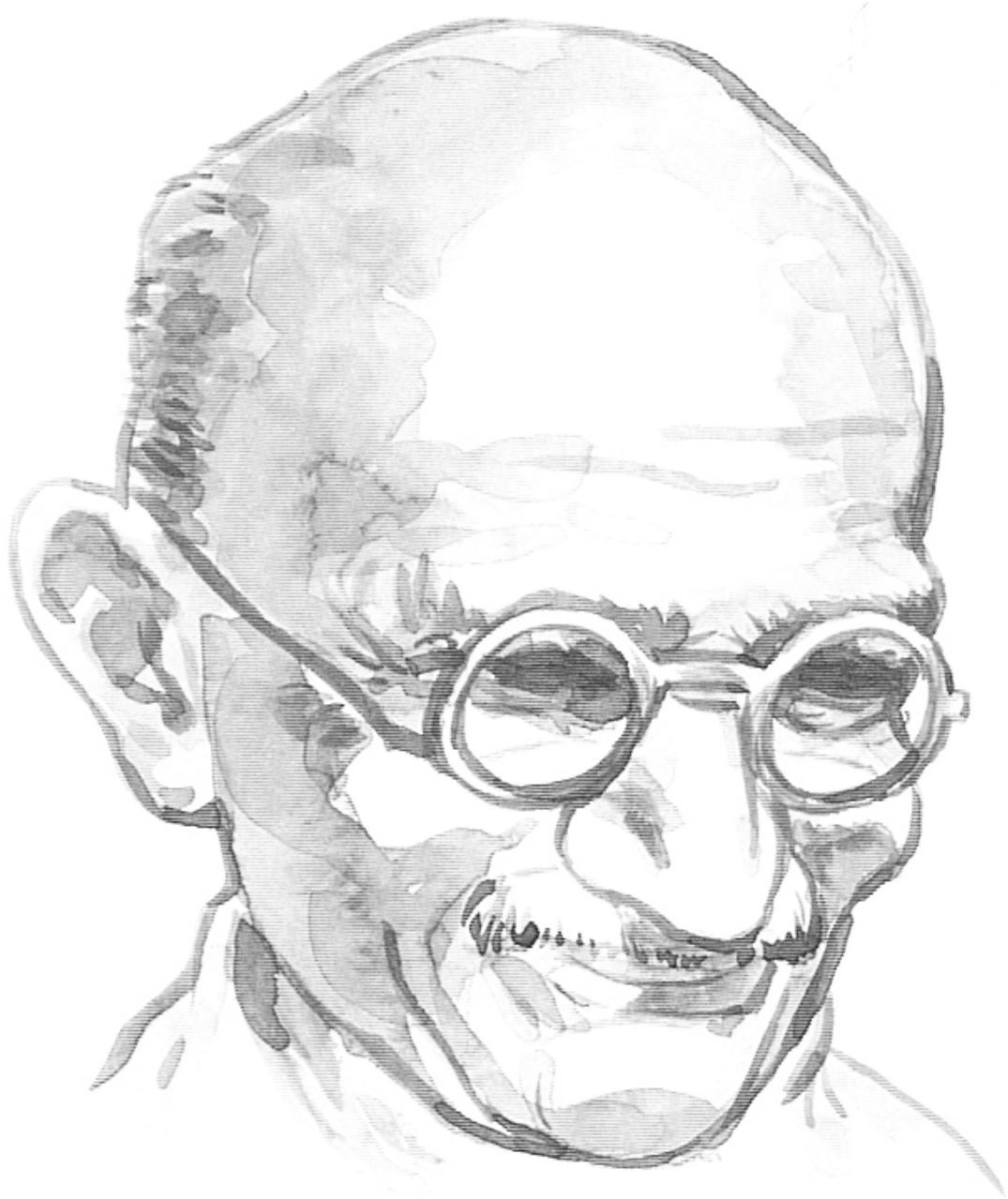


The Gandhi Way



Newsletter of the Gandhi Foundation

No.156 Summer 2023

ISSN 1462-9674

Gandhi Foundation Annual Lecture 2023

Thursday 19 October at 6.30pm

in the Nehru Centre, 8 South Audley Street, London W1K 1HF
will be delivered by the actor, **Paul Bazely**, who is playing Gandhi
in the National Theatre production, 'The Father and the Assassin'.

The above event may be available online also. If so, the link will be sent later.

More details about the play, which starts its second run on 8 September
can be found at <https://events.nationaltheatre.org.uk>

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Graham Davey

20 August 1935 - 25 April 2023

We deeply regret to announce the sudden and unexpected death of Graham Davey due to a heart complication. He is survived by his wife Valerie and children.

Graham was a long term Treasurer and Trustee of The Gandhi Foundation. He was a member of the Society of Friends and actively supported many organisations that promoted the principles he believed in. Peace and the environment were high among these and living out his beliefs was an essential aspect of his life.

Graham was meticulous in his treasuring but was also involved in all the Foundation's projects over many years. Even more impressive was his personality – kind, thoughtful, sound of judgement. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

A full appreciation of his life will appear in the next issue of *The Gandhi Way*.

The funeral is on Thursday 18 May at 2pm In Bedminster Quaker Meeting House, Wedmore Vale, Bristol BS3 5HX. It will be followed by light refreshments.

Or you can take part in the funeral online at Zoom link –

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87289783896?
pwd=VERFUm55bTlnVGh2SWJuQlI3ZnFHUT09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87289783896?pwd=VERFUm55bTlnVGh2SWJuQlI3ZnFHUT09)

My Gandhian Journey for NHS Justice

Narinder Kapur
n.kapur@ucl.ac.uk

One of the most celebrated instances of injustice which Mahatma Gandhi suffered was when in 1893 he was thrown off a train at Pietermaritzburg in South Africa because of the colour of his skin. These were his thoughts – *‘Should I fight for my rights or go back to India, or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insults, and return to India after finishing the case? It would be cowardice to run back to India without fulfilling my obligation. The hardship to which I was subjected was superficial – only a symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. I should try, if possible, to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process. Redress for wrongs I should seek only to the extent that would be necessary for the removal of the colour prejudice’.*

Not in a million years did I think I would ever find myself having to fight injustice in my NHS job in England, and turning to Gandhi’s struggles for inspiration, but it happened in 2010. Full details of my story are on my website (www.abetternhs.com). I was consultant neuropsychologist and Head of Department at the Neuropsychology Department at Addenbrooke’s Hospital, Cambridge from 2003-2010, and had won awards for my work there. I was an NHS whistleblower at the hospital, and I had repeatedly raised patient safety concerns. I was sacked by a kangaroo court using a legal loophole they called SOSR (Some Other Substantial Reason). They use this when they cannot question your performance or your conduct, and just make up something, such as you cannot get on with your line manager. Even though I later won my case at an employment tribunal, I never got my job back. When I learned that there were similar injustices to mine in the NHS, often disproportionately affecting black and minority ethnic staff, or vulnerable groups such as whistleblowers, I joined forces with colleagues who had similar experiences to mine. We lobbied and we lobbied. In October 2012, I even went on a 5-day Gandhian hunger-strike outside the headquarters of the UK Department of Health, which was across the road from 10 Downing Street, the home of the UK Prime Minister. This did get some media coverage, but there was no sign of change from the government to overhaul the NHS system which had led to my unfair dismissal. If only they had listened to me then, some subsequent tragic cases of loss of life of NHS staff could have been

avoided. In July 2014, along with other staff who had been victimised in the NHS, we met the Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt and his colleague, the chief executive of NHS England, Sir Simon Stevens. To their



credit, they did then set up an inquiry into how whistleblowers in the NHS were treated, and the subsequent report by Sir Robert Francis QC did make a few helpful recommendations, but it did nothing to address the deeply flawed systems and the kangaroo courts which had led to my suffering and that of many others. So, my campaign continued. I kept writing articles in journals such as the *British Medical Journal* and the *Health Service Journal*, drawing attention to the flawed and oppressive HR procedures in place in the NHS, including articles about bringing Gandhian values to science and to medicine (Kapur, 2010, 2013).

Everything changed in February 2016. I recall getting into a tube carriage at Kings Cross Station in London, having returned from a trip up north, and opening a copy of the London newspaper, the *Evening Standard*. There I saw a story of a young nurse, Amin Abdullah, who had burned himself to death outside Kensington Palace after going through what he considered to be a grossly unfair dismissal procedure. I could hardly believe what I was reading. Like me, he had in fact won an award from his employer for his excellent clinical work. With some detective work, I managed to trace his partner, Terry Skitmore, and we met up shortly afterwards. We then started

our campaign for justice for Amin, which included delivering a coffin, with Amin's picture on the lid, and handing this into the Department of Health HQ



I also produced a video of Amin's story and this can be accessed from my website, www.abetternhs.com. Through his MP, Terry managed to get a meeting with a health minister in the government. For my part, I managed to meet a former health minister, Norman Lamb MP, who also arranged for me to meet that same health minister. I can recall at my meeting saying to the minister, *'I have had many traumatic and distressing experiences in my NHS professional life as a clinician, including working with bomb blast victims in Belfast and young patients with 'mad cow disease' in Southampton, but neither of these was as traumatic and distressing as having to sit through the several days of inquest into the self-immolation of nurse Amin Abdullah'*. I also presented them with documentary evidence of cases of injustice in the NHS, where judges had severely criticised NHS HR procedures. A few days later, an independent inquiry was announced into the death of nurse Amin Abdullah. Terry Skitmore and I were invited to sit on the commissioning panel for the inquiry, and when it reported in 2018, it was highly critical of the HR procedures used. To his credit, the new chief executive of the NHS Trust where Amin worked, Professor Tim Orchard, immediately issued a sincere apology for how Amin was treated, and set about changing the HR procedures at the Trust. A key NHS body that was involved

in setting up the inquiry, NHS Improvement, then set up a further panel to see how widespread was the flawed HR system in the NHS and I was invited to sit on that panel, which produced recommendations that would be operational across the NHS. Imperial College NHS Trust, where nurse Amin had worked, produced a new and much fairer HR policy, and in December 2020, the NHS Chief People Officer, Prerana Issar, herself of Indian origin, wrote to all NHS Trusts asking them to overhaul their HR policy to make it similar to that of Imperial NHS Trust. Key to the new policy was incorporating the basic principles of Plurality (more than one person on the decision panel), Independence (someone from outside the Trust on the panel), and Expertise (having someone of expertise relevant to the individual in question) to panels that made decisions such as dismissing NHS staff.

In 2017, I organized a special conference to commemorate 150 years since the birth of Gandhi, and I organized a conference at UCL with an exhibition and talks on Gandhian principles – the talks can be viewed on this website, www.uclgandhi.com. To coincide with my receiving a Lifetime Achievement Award from my professional body, The British Psychological Society, I published a special article in 2017, *'Gandhi addresses The British Psychological Society'* (Kapur, 2017).

In the past year, 2022, we have continued our campaign on a number of fronts. The RCN Foundation at the end of 2022 made its first Nurse Amin Abdullah awards, the awards being intended to support staff wellbeing in the NHS. Terry Skitmore, a colleague and I provided £15,000 to help get this award off the ground. This is the link to that scheme...

<https://rcnfoundation.rcn.org.uk/Latest-news/RCN-Foundation-launches-wellbeing-grant-in-memory-of-nurse-Amin-Abdullah>. The first awards were made around November 2022. In February 2023, the British Indian Nurses Association (BINA) helped to launch a Petition to commemorate the 7th anniversary of Nurse Amin Abdullah's tragic suicide in February 2016. This is the link to the Petition, which calls for an Independent Inquiry into Injustices involving BME NHS staff. <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/632406>. The Petition has been initiated by Coumar, chair of BINA. We are allowed to have the Petition active for six months, and are aiming to get to the magic figure of 10,000 signatures by July 2023 – if there are 10,000 signatures, the government is obliged to provide a response. Two recent tragic cases have spurred us to press for such an inquiry. One is that of an Indian lady doctor, Dr Vaishnavi Kumar, who committed suicide in June 2022 following NHS workplace issues at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Birmingham. The other is

an Indian-origin consultant anaesthetist who worked in northern England, and who took his own life in 2018 following workplace issues. These are links to a film made about his story. *Five-minute trailer* – https://youtu.be/4UpztMcu_DM. *Full film* – <https://youtu.be/rFbZ7ZBsD3k>. A Petition document was handed into 10 Downing Street by Coumar and Terry Skitmore on February 24, 2023.



Throughout all of this 10-year struggle, I have regularly referred to Gandhi's experiences and writings. Pictures and statuettes of him, together with his autobiography and other books about Gandhi, adorn my office. I have no doubt that the inspiration that I got from his struggles and achievements has helped me to persevere in this struggle to bring about fairness and justice in the NHS.

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Tree Planting in Memory of Bruce Kent

4th March 2023 saw about 150-200 people gathered on the north side of London's Finsbury Park athletics track to plant a walnut tree in memory of Bruce Kent. In the spirit of Bruce himself it was a joyful if somewhat chaotic event bringing together numerous strands of his most varied life.

Kate Hudson was there on behalf of CND head office, accompanied by Jeremy Corbyn. Bruce's widow, Valerie Flessati, spoke on behalf of the Movement for the Abolition of War along with a representative of the Friends of Finsbury Park. Like Bruce himself they all managed to bring humour into the serious topics they were talking about. Pax Christi, London Catholic Worker, the London Peace Pagoda, and the United Nations Association were but five organisations I recognised as being present after a quick survey of the crowd. The Diocese of Westminster Justice & Peace Commission was also represented. Welsh language poet Mererid Hopwood of Aberystwyth University came all the way from her home country to deliver a poem she had composed just for the occasion (see below).

That said it would perhaps be incorrect to describe it as a crowd as there was no 'them and us' as everyone was chatting as friends and all were invited to add soil as a collective team effort to plant the tree.

Initially it had been announced that the tree to be planted would be grown by Jeremy Corbyn. Unfortunately, when pruning his olive tree Jeremy damaged the hornbeam he was growing for the purpose so once that has recovered it will be planted elsewhere in Finsbury Park. It seems somewhat ironic that the tree being grown to commemorate such a consummate peace campaigner should be damaged by an olive branch.

William Rhind



Apostle of Peace

We watched the mind behind
the bright brow
think now is the time
to chime the bell of peace.

We witnessed how
the prophet of the periphery
strode out,
carrying the blue of the sky in his eyes,
beating the path of peace
with tall conviction -
a height that hid the bracken, bramble barbed bite
that burnt the skin of feet.

We borrowed Bruce,
and learnt how hope
is not a crossing-of-fingers,
not a wish,
but a will
that lingers past the longest night,
until it blasts a beam through the seam of darkness,
lifting the heaviest fright
now made light by love.

So, today,
what d'you say?

Shall we unsigh our souls,
throw away the chains,
and follow the path he lent us,
until peace reigns?

For the mind behind
the bright brow
knew
that the time
is
now,

and that

...

'we bloody well ought to get on with it!'



Mererid Hopwood reading her poem Apostle of Peace, with Kate Hudson in the centre of CND banner and Jeremy Corbyn on right

On page 8, William Rhind and Jane Sill with the tree behind

General Events 2023

Mon. 15 May	International Conscientious Objectors' Day at Tavistock Square, London 12 noon
Sat 17 June	38th Annual Celebration of the London Peace Pagoda, Battersea Park 2pm
Sun 6 August	Hiroshima Day at Tavistock Square 12 noon
Wed 9 August	Nagasaki Day Peace Walk from Westminster Cathedral to the London Peace Pagoda followed by a lantern lighting ceremony at sunset. londonpeacepagoda@gmail.com

The Perpetual War Alarm

Brian Martin

There is an alarm in Australia about a Chinese military threat. This is a typical feature of the war system.

21 Apr 2023 – From a European perspective, Australia is remote geographically and would seem to be an unlikely place for there to be fears of impending war. Australia is an island continent, has a stable government, is a major exporter of natural resources and a tourist attraction, and has no neighbours showing imperial ambitions. The country would seem to be as safe as anyone could hope. Yet for the past couple of years, there has been a drumbeat of alarm about the possibility of war. With what country, you might ask. The answer is China, Australia's biggest trading partner.

Watching war fever being drummed up in Australia gave me an eerie feeling. Last year I was finalising work on a book about how alarms about war are created and maintained. I was seeing my own analysis displayed in real life, with frightening consequences. The culmination came in March with the “**red alert**” stories in the *Sydney Morning Herald* and *The Age*, the most strident war-mongering I had seen for a long time. These two newspapers, the most respected in the country, put five experts in a room for a day. They came up with a prediction of war with China in the next three years. (Incidentally, why didn't they pick five peace experts and put them in a room for a day?)

My book is titled ***Persistent Panics: The Wars on Drugs, Crime, Terrorism and War***. My aim was to see patterns in these four “wars.” To do this, I drew on two bodies of social theory, those to do with moral panics and scientific controversies.

The longest chapter in the book is titled “The war on war.” As everyone knows, war is a major social problem. What is the solution? Amazingly, the dominant approach is to prepare for war, rather than promote peace. Euphemisms partly obscure this, by reference to “defence” though many preparations for defence can also be used for attack.

Let's proceed through a bit of the analysis of war as a persistent panic. In a moral panic, there is an alarm raised about some group or practice that threatens social values. There have been moral panics about rock music, the drug ecstasy and stranger danger. Most of these emerge suddenly and then fade away. But some alarms do not fade away: they are persistent.

In a moral panic, there is something real going on, and it is defined as a threat. Chinese militarism is real, and it is a potential threat to Australia. But

the threat is exaggerated. The last time the Chinese military engaged in a war was in 1979, against Vietnam. The idea of a Chinese invasion of Australia is fanciful.

Another feature of fostering war alarm is polarisation, the creation of an us-and-them mentality. Everyone in Australia is encouraged to think of themselves as part of “us” and the people in China as “them.” Then there’s another step: glorification and demonisation. “We” are encouraged to think of “ourselves” as great and good, while “they” are portrayed as the epitome of evil. There are stories about Chinese militarism — which may or may not have a core of truth — but no equivalent stories about Australian militarism. Or perhaps the thinking goes like this: Chinese militarism is bad because China is a danger but Australian militarism is okay because Australians are peace-loving people.

Chinese Invasion?

In a moral panic, there is something real going on, but the alarm is greatly out of proportion to the danger. Let’s look at the danger of the Chinese military invading Australia to take over the country.

From the Chinese military’s point of view, there is a danger from Australia, most prominently the US spy base at Pine Gap that is crucial to US nuclear war-fighting operations aimed at China. The top priority for a Chinese attack would be Pine Gap. After this would be other US military and intelligence bases. What can be done to reduce the danger of a Chinese attack? Easy. Get rid of US bases.

What next, from the Chinese point of view? Access to natural resources is important. So how about selling iron ore to China? Any sane strategist would realise that it’s cheaper and easier to buy natural resources rather than try to take over the country. Similar thinking applies to Chinese tourists being able to visit Australian beaches and Chinese students being able to attend Australian universities.

These ideas indicate the complete disjuncture between the alarm about a Chinese invasion and the actual danger. In reality, the war alarmists are preparing the ground for Australian participation in a war against China. The reason is not obvious. Chinese expansionism? There is just one Chinese foreign military base, while there are some 800 US foreign military bases, including ones near Chinese borders, for example in Japan and South Korea.

The genius of those who can be called “threat entrepreneurs” is to drum up an alarm about a potential threat when there is little evidence of actual danger. This is the classic configuration of arms races: each side builds up its military

might because of the opponent's, neither side acknowledging that its own arms are part of the spiral.

In the case of Australia, there has been a succession of enemies justifying war preparations and war-making, including Japan, North Korea, Soviet Union, Vietnam, Indonesia, Iraq, Afghanistan — and now China. The enemy may change, but there is always an alarm. To explain the persistence of military alarms, I turned to a different body of theory.

Scientific Controversies

Consider vaccination, fluoridation, nuclear power, pesticides. Over each of these issues, there are scientific facets, with evidence presented for and against a particular measure. What is distinctive is how these controversies persist over decades. The debate over fluoridation of public water supplies to reduce tooth decay in children got going in the 1950s and continues today, with much the same arguments. Several of the features of long-running scientific controversies apply to war as a persistent panic.

What about new evidence? You might expect that significant new evidence about, for example, the hazards of fluoridation, might lead to a shift in the debate. But no, this almost never makes a difference. Campaigners tout evidence that supports their views but ignore or discount contrary evidence. The same applies to war panics.

In 2021, the Australian government signed an agreement with the governments of Britain and the US, called AUKUS, to obtain nuclear submarines. Proponents of AUKUS dismiss contrary evidence, such as that future technology will make nuclear subs easy to detect or that the US has vastly more foreign military bases than China. Proponents do not seem to be bothered by the fact that the nuclear subs will not be delivered before the war with China predicted to occur within three years. Inconvenient facts are simply ignored.

Another sort of evidence is that it might be better not to have an army. The example of Costa Rica is instructive: it abolished its army in 1948 and since then has been far more prosperous than its militarily armed neighbours. However, the Australian government hasn't sent a delegation to Costa Rica to learn from the country's experience. Some lessons are not sought.

Another vital feature of war as a persistent panic is belief systems. Most people believe violence will always triumph over opponents that do not use violence, and therefore think violence is necessary for defence. However, there is a lot of evidence showing that nonviolent action — aka people power or civil resistance — **can be effective** in overthrowing ruthless dictators.

Threat entrepreneurs do not mention this evidence, and ignore it when others raise it.

Think of **this option**. Rather than building up the Australian military and thereby posing a threat to others that fosters an arms race, what about building up the capacity of Australians to use methods of nonviolent action, both within Australia and to undermine the willingness of foreign populations to support aggression, and to support greater freedoms in China and elsewhere? This would not cost a lot and has the capacity to trigger a virtuous cycle of greater people power. But it's not on the agenda. It clashes with the deep-seated belief in the power of violence.

Not incidentally, Australian governments are clamping down on nonviolent action by citizens, for example climate protesters. Rather than building the capacity for nonviolent resistance to aggression and oppression, governments seem to be trying to weaken this capacity.

Conclusion

In writing *Persistent Panics*, I came to a more pessimistic conclusion than I anticipated. The war system is deeply entrenched in most parts of the world, serving governments and arms manufacturers, with little prospect of being dislodged or superseded. There is a perpetual panic about foreign aggression, with little acknowledgement that military preparations perpetuate the problem of war.

There are some hopeful signs, including the great increase in awareness of the power of nonviolent action and experience in using it. But understanding the dynamics of persistent panics offers an important lesson: the problem of war is not going away soon, and certainly not going to be solved by more military spending. Activists need to think long-term and understand what they are up against.



Brian Martin is emeritus professor of social sciences at the University of Wollongong, Australia. He is the author of 22 books and hundreds of articles on dissent, nonviolent action and scientific controversies, and is vice-president of Whistleblowers Australia. Website: <http://www.bmartin.cc> – Contact: brian_martin@uow.edu.au

This article originally appeared on **Transcend Media Service (TMS)** on 24 Apr 2023.



Kid at Dean Castle Park, Kilmarnock
by Jane Thomas

New Peace Journal

The *Journal of Pacifism and Nonviolence* is a new academic journal published with Brill from 2023, led by [Alexandre Christoyannopoulos](#) (Loughborough University), [Ned Dobos](#) (UNSW Canberra) and [Molly Wallace](#) (Portland State University), and by a wider international board of experts in the field. Two issues per year of up to around 150 pages each will be published to begin with.

The journal is designed to foster rigorous research on a range of themes, including:

- the varieties of approaches to nonviolence and pacifism;
- accusations against pacifism;
- tensions between pacifism and nonviolence;
- theories and practices outside the Global North;
- the multiple consequences of violence;
- violence and nonviolence in political thought;
- the relationship between violence/nonviolence and gender, race, and other social identities;
- the religious roots of pacifism and nonviolence;
- the place of violence and nonviolence in popular culture;
- practical nonviolent policies of governance;
- predominant assumptions concerning violence in IR;
- the threshold characteristics of 'violence'; and
- methodological challenges in the study and pedagogy of nonviolence and pacifism.

The journal is interdisciplinary, peer-reviewed, and committed to methodological pluralism. It welcomes research employing either theoretical or empirical methods, whether rooted in the study of politics and international relations, or, for example, in anthropology, art, communication and media studies, criminology, economics and political economy, geography, history and historiography, law, literature and languages, philosophy, psychology, religious studies, or sociology.

The first issue consists of an editorial explaining why 'pacifism and nonviolence' followed by 10 invited contributions from leading experts considering the question: why is it time to take pacifism and nonviolence studies seriously? A couple of special issues are currently being planned, including on nonviolent civilian agency in armed conflict, and on pacifism and Islam. Several papers are also under review on an eclectic range of topics.

For more information, including how to subscribe, see <https://brill.com/view/journals/jpn/jpn-overview.xml>. The journal can be followed on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/jpacnv> and on LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/journal-of-pacifism-and-nonviolence/>.

Austerity, Wealth and Taxation

George Paxton

We in the UK have heard much of ‘austerity’ in recent years and too many have experienced the consequences of it. The assumption made that ‘we are all suffering’ as a result can however quickly be dispelled by a little thought. For those on low incomes the inability to pay for basic necessities (housing, food, heating) without getting into debt can lead to despair and ill health. With rather high inflation caused by the Ukraine war, among other things, difficulties have been encountered by some households previously comfortably off. But for those with above average incomes it only requires a cutting back on what are not really necessities. For those like myself, a child or youth in the 1940s /1950s, they can see the enormous rise in the standard of living during their lifetimes. There is something to be said for the widening of opportunities this has brought but it definitely has a down side. Our economists and politicians and entrepreneurs have persuaded us that an ever expanding economy is needed. Nothing could be further from the truth – it can lead to individual discontent but also to an impossible strain on the environment on which we, other animals and plants, depend.

In this article I want to focus on one aspect – income and wealth inequality, mainly in the UK. Inequality, in many of its aspects, has been growing in recent years, the opposite of what is desirable for a happy society. At the present time, banks (eg Barclays, HSBC, Lloyds-TSB, Nat West, Standard Chartered), fossil fuel corporations (they are subsidised by the government), and digital corporations are increasing profits which were already high – and many individuals likewise. Yet, absurdly, taxes on the rich are lower than on many ordinary workers. One of the factors is that tax on income from wealth is lower than tax from employment. Taking into account all taxes plus growth in the value of their wealth, the effective tax rate for the poorest households is just over 40%, while for the richest it is merely 18%. The present taxation system also favours big companies, such as Amazon which pays very little tax, rather than small businesses.

It is not just the individuals who are disadvantaged but public services with governments claiming they cannot afford to put substantially more into them. The health and care section has been noticeably neglected over a long period in spite of the obvious fact of the increasing age of the population requiring more health expenditure and in addition increasing treatment options due to medical research.

We need a new outlook on taxation, instead of regarding it negatively we should regard it as a good if public services are improved as a result. A significant number of the super rich have expressed the wish to be taxed at a

higher level. The organisation Tax Justice UK has estimated that six wealth tax reforms would raise £50 billion per year. My own feeling is that much more than that could be raised if we take a different attitude to taxation and inequality.

It is also possible to introduce new taxes. For example the EU has recently voted to introduce the world's first Carbon Import Tax based on the amount of carbon dioxide emitted when a product is manufactured. This will encourage decarbonisation of the manufacturing process and benefit the environment.

Since the start of the Covid pandemic the world's richest 1% increased wealth by £21 trillion. The UK's richest 1% is now worth £2.8 trillion making them wealthier than two thirds of the UK population combined.

But we who admire Gandhi must remember that we should not rely only on political action. We can contribute to improving society and the environment through lifestyle choices.

“Who is my neighbour?”

Discussion of *Fratelli tutti*

(the encyclical on fraternity and social friendship by Pope Francis)

Third Wednesdays 2 to 3.30 p.m. Hinsley Room, Morpeth Terrace, SW1

May 17	11.30 a.m. Group visit to the National Gallery to see the St Francis of Assisi exhibition (charge)
May 17	Chapter 5 “A better kind of politics”
June 21	Chapter 6 “Dialogue and friendship in society”
July 19	Talk by Archbishop Emeritus Kevin McDonald
Sept 20	Chapter 7 “Paths of renewed encounter”
Oct 18	Chapter 8 “Religions at the service of fraternity in our world”

Westminster Cathedral interfaith group

For more details contact John Woodhouse woodhousesopten@btinternet.com

To find the Hinsley room stand in front of the cathedral. Go to your right past St Paul's bookshop and St Vincent de Paul school. Look for a fence covered in ivy beyond the playing field. The gate will be on your left.

Pilgrimage to Sevagram

The founder of Nipponzan Myohoji, Buddhist order, The Most Ven. Nichidatsu Fujii, left Japan in 1930 with the aim of returning Buddhism to India.

In 1933, Fujii Guruji visited Wardha, Maharashtra state, in order to meet Mahatma Gandhi. In this first meeting, Gandhi immediately adopted Fujii Guruji's drumming and chanting NAMUMYOHORENGEKYO as the opening of the Gandhi Ashram prayer. This continues to this day.

Wardha Peace Pagoda celebrated its 30th Anniversary on 15th February 2023. To mark this, a one week Peace Pilgrimage took place leaving from Tendai school Buddhist Temple, Zenjorin at Pauni, and passing via Nagpur en route to Wardha Peace Pagoda, finishing at Sevagram Ashram.



I and Ciriaca (an Italian Peace Pilgrim) participated in this Pilgrimage and were able to spend the 15th night at Sevagram Ashram where we attended evening prayers at 6 pm and also morning prayers which began at 4.45 am.

Wardha Ashram is a living jewel for these modern times. Bapu's Kuti is like a Japanese Tea ceremony hut. It has a simple beauty. On the walls, there is inscribed OM, alongside relief works, including Palm Tree, Peacock and Charkha designed by Mirabehn.

When Mirabehn was 8 years old, she lived in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea and would walk across Albert Bridge with her beloved pet dog, Rags, to

Battersea Park where she would play with Rags. Now we have the London Peace Pagoda in Battersea Park.

With palms together in prayer, Bhikkhu G.Nagase
Vidarbha region including Nagpur is the birthplace of the famous sage,
Nagarjuna Bodhisattva (C.150 - C.250 CE).



Exploitation of Wildlife Abroad

A Bill has been passing through the usual stages at Westminster to end within the UK the domestic sale and advertising of practices abroad where wildlife is cruelly exploited. The Bill has passed all stages in the House of Commons and is now due for Second Reading in the Lords.

By discouraging the use of animal facilities that have welfare standards lower than those the UK, it will encourage members of the public seeking events and holidays with an annual content to use only those with welfare levels in line with those in the UK. It will therefore offer a lifeline for many endangered species and steer the market towards ethical and safe tourism.

Asian elephants, for example, suffer extreme cruelty across SE Asia, starting with their unlawful capture from the wild (their protective mothers often killed in front of them), then brutal 'breaking of the spirits' called pajan, by isolation and starvation, then stabbings and beatings.

In Thailand there are 2,800 tourist elephants and these are increasing to meet demand. Over 1,200 companies in the UK currently promote almost 300 overseas 'attractions' where unethical activities are practised.



The global population of Asian elephants has crashed from millions in the 19th century to barely 40,000 today. These creatures have been called the 'megagardeners of the forests': pruning trees, fertilising soils and dispersing trees in ecosystems which are the lungs of the Earth.



Paul Bazely – 2023 Annual Lecture



Paul Bazely as Gandhi in 'The Father and the Assassin'

Martin Polden (June 23rd.1928 - April 5th.2023)

Martin Polden, one of the first trustees of the Gandhi Foundation, died on April 5th at the age 94.

Martin was the solicitor responsible for helping to draw up our Articles and Memorandum, and getting us charitable status – all for free.

Originally I introduced Martin to Surur Hoda, one of the founders of the Gandhi Foundation, and to Lord Richard Attenborough who invited him to join the new board of trustees. Martin served on the GF board for a great number of our early years and was a formidable source of practical wisdom.

Martin was a great human rights activist who had, at one time, been the Beatles' solicitor.

Later Martin and I, together with environmental scientist Professor David Hall from Kings College, set up the Environmental Law Foundation (ELF). From then on environmental justice became Martin's main focus. In 2006 Martin was awarded an OBE for 'Services to Environmental Law'.

ELF is now a charity which assists local communities in protecting their environments from pollution, developers and other environmental threats. The board of trustees consists of environmentalists, barristers, solicitors, and environmental scientists. The charity also teams up with the post graduate legal departments of many universities to give hands-on casework.

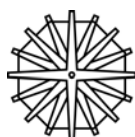
Martin's breadth of vision, sharp intellect, and sense of humour will be sorely missed by all of those who knew him.

Diana Schumacher OBE

(Founder member and former trustee of The Gandhi Foundation)



Martin Polden and Diana Schumacher being greeted by the President of the ELF on the 25th Anniversary of its foundation. Charles is passionate about protecting the local environment and minority groups.



The Gandhi Foundation

The Foundation exists to spread knowledge and understanding of the life and work of Mohandas K Gandhi (1869-1948). Our most important aim is to demonstrate the continuing relevance of his insights and actions for all of us.

Founder President: Richard Attenborough

President: Bhikhu Parekh

Patrons: Navnit Dholakia, Denis Halliday,
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The Gandhi Way

Articles, book reviews and letters of a specifically or broadly Gandhian nature will gladly be received by the Editor. Maximum length 2000 words.

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The deadline for the next issue is the end of July 2023

Printed on recycled paper using vegetable based inks and 100% renewable energy
by www.hillingdongreenprint.co.uk

Tel: 020 8868 7852