

**Book Review of:**

**Gavrielides, T. & Lyons, B. (2019). *Safeguarding and Empowering Crime Victims Training Manual: Restorative Justice and the Victims' Directive (Restorative Justice Series Book 8)* [Kindle Edition], United Kingdom; Restorative Justice for All (RJ4All) Publications.**

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Addressing what one needs after suffering victimization from crime and wrongdoing has been a primary focus of the modern restorative justice movement since Nils Christie's 1977 *Conflicts as Property* and Howard Zehr's 1990 *Changing Lenses*. Albert Eglash is credited as the first to say the words "restorative justice" in English (Van Ness & Strong, 2015, p. 39). While Eglash was admittedly "offender oriented" and unconcerned with victims' needs, he too recognized the value of victims benefitting from what he called restorative justice<sup>1</sup> (Eglash, 1977, p. 99).

This book, written in easy-to-understand language, is organized as a guidebook for crime victims and restorative justice practitioners. There are six chapters and lengthy appendices that include four case studies with questions applying the safeguarding information presented in the book.

Chapter 1, *Impetus of The Training Manuel*, describes the purpose of the book as

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<sup>1</sup> Eglash promoted his theory of "creative restitution" and when he used the words "restorative justice" in his early writings it did not conform to today's meaning of restorative justice (Zehr, 1990). Later in his life he said he said more about victims and his theory reportedly became more consistent with restorative justice as known today (Mirsky, 2003).

a “training manual [that] aims to provide assistance to crime victims and practitioners focusing on safeguards and best practice when implementing restorative justice” (Loc. 36). Chapter 2, *Definitions and Introduction* describes further that the book is “a self-help guide to participating in restorative justice, including an assessment that is based upon the concerns raised in the EU Directive” (Loc. 89).

The 2012 European Union (EU) Directive established “minimum standards on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime” (European Union, 2012, p. 1). The EU’s Directive is contained in a detailed 27-page document. Article 12 specifically concerns the “Right to safeguards in the context of restorative justice services” (European Union, 2012, p. 19). Restorative justice is defined as: “any process whereby the victim and the offender are enabled, if they freely consent, to participate actively in the resolution of matters arising from the criminal offence through the help of an impartial third party” (European Union, 2012, p. 13).

The training manual or guidebook, which interprets and applies the EU Directive, “is intended to be used along with the accompanying RJ4All training materials and includes information on the rights of victims, definitions of restorative justice, case studies illustrating safeguarding issues and a victim assessment guide” (Loc.44). An appendix in the book provides a helpful and understandable assessment for practitioners to use in helping victims, and also offenders, to assess their readiness for a restorative intervention. The training materials, including the book and an on-line course, meet standards for practitioners to receive credits and certification. The materials are based on “extensive research with victims, offenders and restorative justice practitioners (Gavrielides, 2014)” (Loc. 47).

The research showing the need for the book was conducted in five European countries: the UK, Germany, Greece, Bulgaria and the Netherlands. The research included in-depth interviews, online surveys, quantitative and qualitative surveys, observation, a mini-conference and focus groups. The research showed victims and restorative practitioners needed more information about victims' needs, how best to safeguard them, and how the EU Directive can be practically applied. This book seeks to educate practitioners on the Directive "through the perspective of the victim" while it also seeks to "help the victim empower themselves throughout the process" (Loc. 51).

The book often uses second person references to directly and personally address individuals victimized by crime. Chapter 6, *A Victim's Personal Guide to Restorative Justice*, provides a step-by-step approach for victims to decide whether or not they wish to pursue a restorative process to address their victimization. Victims' rights including the voluntary nature and confidentiality of restorative justice are discussed. Victims' needs are summarized and questions to assist them process their victimization are provided to help them personally decide whether restorative justice would be beneficial for them.

The authors are experienced in working with crime victims. They are knowledgeable and have a comprehensive understanding of restorative justice. Their book provides useful information for victims to decide if they want to pursue a restorative remedy, and they provide helpful information for restorative practitioners to safeguard victims in making their decision about participating in restorative processes. Dr. Theo Gavrielides is an academic with a history of researching, writing about his results, and developing restorative justice programs. Ben Lyon's career began in 1991 as a police

officer who worked with youth. He is an accomplished restorative practitioner. He has also held numerous restorative justice policy-making positions in the United Kingdom.

The four case studies that are provided in the book's appendices are a helpful aid in the application of victims' rights how they can be adequately protected.

A Kindle edition of the book was reviewed, which had some heading and numbering glitches. The table of contents in my Kindle edition incorrectly numbered chapters and the case studies titles and numbers were not provided, but even with these malfunctions in the electronic book the information was easy to obtain, and overall the book was useful. This book can assist both those victimized by crime and restorative practitioners in understanding the best way to safeguard and protect victims. It makes a useful addition to restorative justice and victim advocacy libraries.

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