**The ‘Veteran Offender’: A Governmental Project in England and Wales**

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# **Abstract**

This chapter attends to the discourses that constitute epistimologies about the ‘veteran offender’ in England and Wales. By drawing on some of the key tools offered by govermentality theorists, the ways in which discources have emereged are analysed to determine how narratives function politically and define veteran offender subjectivities and governmental intervention. In doing so, it becomes clear that criminological voices and the voices of veteran offenders remain marginal to the ever evolving debate about veterans, crime and veteran offender policies. In response, the chapter suggests that to bring these voices to the fore a different analytical agenda is required - which is referred to here as ‘veteranality’.

# **Introduction**

Since 2008 a profound change in the *governmentalisation* of veteran offenders has taken place. Acting at the time as the Assistant General Secretary for Napo (2008), Harry Fletcher proposed that there were over 20,000[[1]](#footnote-1) former military personnel serving sentences in the criminal justice system. Working with this new insight and knowledge, all national newspapers reported the problem with provocative headlines such as the Guardian claiming that the team working with Fletcher at NAPO had ‘Revealed: the hidden army in UK prisons’ (Travis 2009). Whilst the criminality of veterans was not a new phenomenon, indeed clusters of academic research can be seen to interrogate this problematic in war and post-war periods (Brown, 2011; Bonger 1916; Cornil 1951; Hakeem 1942; Hamon 1918), this move constructed the violent veteran as a political category and their identification as a distinct problem marked a new departure in terms of criminal justice categorisation and political framing. A series of awareness raising campaigns followed which quickly became accompained by pockets of social scientific research and grassroots inititatives to address this ‘new’ offending category (Tredwell, 2010; Howard League 2011; MacManus *et al* 2013, Murray 2013, 2014). This consciousness led to an announcement on 11 January 2014, by the Secretary of State for Justice, Chris Grayling, that the Ministry of Justice were conducting a rapid evidence assessment (REA) into the rehabilitative needs of ex-Armed Services Personnel convicted of criminal offences resulting in a custodial or community sentence (Ministry of Justice 2014).

To engage with the governmentalisation of subjects is, as Pat O’Malley and Mariana Valverde (2014) explain, to address the relationship between the criminal law and the scienfific knowledge which increasingly shapes it. In a Foucauldian sense, an analysis of governmentalisation should aim to make sense of the ways in which the criminal law and criminal justice policy operate as techniques of govenance and crucially how the law is entangled with other institutions of governance (Foucault 1981). This is an important perspective for those considering the ‘veteran offender’ – not least because to be a veteran is not a criminal offence, a category of diversity for offending populations, nor an official indicator of risk. What is more, in England and Wales, there is still no national policy for managing veterans in the criminal justice system and even the most ambitious of plans are only calling for a ‘skeletal framework’ (Probation Institute 2015). The governance of the veteran offender then speaks to a broader network of power, beyond the law, that assemble to reform him[[2]](#footnote-2) and a a more complex rationalle for his indentification in a criminal justice framework.

Pointing to a complex network of power relationships that bring together the military/civic, political/juridical, family/state, public/private, academics/media, practitioners/commentators in strategic ways, this chapter attends to the discourses that constitute epistimologies about this rather unique group of offenders. It is argued that Foucault’s (1989a; 1989b; 1991) ‘govermentality’ provides significant analytical tools to interrogate how the discources that have emereged function politically to determine subjectivities and governmental intervention. Addressing specifically the ways in which governmentality allows us to take into account the multiple actors involved within the networks of security regimes, it foregrounds the complexities and tensions inherent to any governance project. In doing so, it becomes clear that criminological voices are rarely cited by those charged with the governance of veterans and the lived relalties of veterans who are identified by their military past in the criminal justice system also remian marginal. The chapter ends by suggesting that to bring these voices to the fore a different anayltical framework is required - which is referred to here as ‘veteranality’.

**A Governmental Project**

‘Governance’ is now a well-established concept for writers of security, crime control and social order. Moving beyond reductionist approaches to power that once merely attended to institutional declarations and decisions i.e. politicians and governments, lawmakers and courts, it has instigated new ways for analysing more complex and dynamic relations to address the way in which power shapes the conduct of problem populations. As Trevor Jones (2012: 842) explains, in criminology, the term literally symbolises ‘attempts to promote various collective outcomes’. However, as Jones (2012) continues, whilst criminology started to use the conceptual vocabulary some time ago, the term largely made reference to police policy, and was rather ‘straightforward’ in its analysis of institutional activities. Governance, when considered in this way retained the commitment to uni-directional and top-down understandings of power and the ability to govern populations accordingly. In recent years, debates have moved to consider the privatisation of governance - what is known as the ‘Westminster Model’, which was created by Rod Rhodes (1997) to capture the activities of both state and non-state actors. Whilst this model does go some way in making sense of how veterans are governed by multiple agencies, it is too narrow in design when applied to the problem of the criminal veteran.

Governmentality, encourages us to consider the production of power and how power produces a series of realities about its subjects – a series of truths (Foucault 1989a; 1989b; 1991). Those truths represent ‘a governmental technique (in the Foucauldian sense) to transform ideology into discourse, which then provides the legitimate authority to force through the intended agenda’ (Naughton 2005: 47). This approach can lead to a better understanding of regimes of rehabilitative power. To begin an analysis such as this however it is important to understand what Foucault (1977a interview) had termed previously as the apparatus *(dispositif)*:

What I am trying to single out with the term is… a thoroughly heterogeneous set consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral, and philanthropic propositions… By the term “apparatus” I mean a kind of a formation, so to speak, that at any given historical moment has as its major function the response to an urgency.

A number of scholars have outlined the importance of Foucault’s analytical framework of governmentality for interrogating the governance of problem populations in a more expansive yet intimate way (Millar & Rose, 2008; Dean 1999). Whilst not in any way exhaustive of its possibilities and features it is possible to identify the following broad characteristics:

1. Governmentality is concerned with modes of intelligibility. Namely how does a problem actually appear to be an imperative that demands a political response, and what happens to act upon that problem in ways that reveal distinct truths about the system of rule.
2. Rather than looking for a singular truth to questions of power and authority, governmentality looks to examine the more contested space for rule, exposing sites of shared interest along with divergent claims regarding the best policy solution.
3. Moving beyond concerns with “halls of power”, governmentality gives equal value to both the systemic and subjective nature of diagrams for power. It is the political, legal, social, economic and cultural life of populations which is of concern.
4. Instead of seeing power as being a top-down process, governmentality tries to make sense of the multiple actors involved in regulation of problematic populations, addressing what we might term the “network of power” that brings together in a complex and dynamic way juridical approaches with other models for power.
5. Since governmentality is concerned with the “conduct of conduct”, it must foreground the way power addresses bodies and seeks to shape human behaviours.
6. Given that power is understood here to be a positive process, interventions are understood to be all about the active liberation of certain forms of subjectivity – it points in other-words to a life-politics that gets people to actually reflect upon their own actions and behaviours.
7. With governmental approaches taking the life of populations as being its object, it demands recognising the agency of all involved – from the agencies of rule to those whose subjectivities are being addressed.
8. Hence, since the governmental frame brings into focus the heterogeneous elements that connect populations to different spatial environments, it demands looking at the effects of power in ways that highlight both strategies of coercion and resistance.

Mindful of these characteristics, this chapter will now develop this governmental framework to make sense of the problem of veterans by adding more depth to key stages in the governmental process post-sentencing, along with identifying the “voices” of those who speak on their behalf. The reference to ‘voice’ here is not to simply refer to the circulation of ideas but to attend to those ideas and opinions that inform government policy and public debate, as they appear to be authentic and authoritative. To search for the voice is to make sense of the different discources that constitute the discursive knowledge of this identity and what is driving them. Of course, as the governmentality approach would suggest, such voices are multiple, conflicting and subject to mediation through relations of power. What matters is to identify through the *key stages*, which voices break through to dominate the discursive framing of a particular problem, how they subsequently function in terms of mobilising resources and shaping policy decisions, along with identifying which voices are marginalised and excluded.

**Governmentality: A Tool Box**

Understanding here, as Foucault (1974) suggested, that critical theory is more like a “tool-box”[[3]](#footnote-3) that allows us to conduct an analysis of practices of power, governmentality is employed here through a series of tools that consciously attend to this unique form of criminal justice governance. Those tools are:

* *Subjectification:* For this analysis, subjectification refers to power related questions such as how and why individuals (in this case violent veterans) are constructed as subjects on account of whether their conformity/deviancy fits the normal order of things. New forms of subjectivity are produced and created in a way that allows power to be exercised through the individual and as a result of ascribing attributes the individual becomes a subject (Foucault 1982).
* *Technologies:* Once a problem has been identified, interventions are required which concern the management of the conduct of individuals – they are the means of reform. Technologies point specifically to those who are tasked with the governance of problems (both the governed and the governors), the techniques of intervention (policy and initiatives for example), the studies that provide scientific veracity (risk assessments or cognitive programmes etc), onto the institutions in which these processes come together, namely, the probation office, the prison, the psychiatrist appointment and so forth (Rose and Millar 2008).
* *Teleologies:* This tool encourages us to consider the ends of technologies and the temporal dimensions of power. What is the aim or, to what valorisation are policies wedded? Almost paradoxically, for the veteran offender, this tool also points to a politically motivated start point for analysis for example does the ‘veteran’ label mean that policies are asked to address pre-conscription, military training or warfare instead of the criminal act? Teleologies also more conventionally refer to the desired affect of interventions – what Millar & Rose (2008: 29) identify as those optimistic technologies that emerge to ‘reform reality’.
* *Resistance:* – To consider resistance is to attend to the multiple ways in which subjects resist the processes designed for their conduct. It is also to understand which voices are resisted by the the governmental framework.

The veteran offender is subject to the processes that these tools illuminate - they can be considered the key stages of governance, each create the space in which we come to know them as problem populations. Each stage produce and reproduce veteran offenders as a group, a criminal population, a political category, and ultimately a military subjectivity.

**Governmentality and the Veteran Offender**

What do we realise when we employ these tools to the governmentalistion of the veteran offender since 2008? To begin then we must account for those processes that make “intelligible” the actions upon others to ensure “the conduct of conduct” in the name of desired objectives (Foucault 1991). As new forms of subjectivity are produced and created power is exercised through the individual, and as a result, the individual becomes a subject that is both knowable (i.e. verifiable) and amenable to changes in behaviour. The veteran already embodies a particular subjectivity, upon arrest however and more so upon conviction, he becomes something else – a veteran offender. Each stage of the criminal justice process, through to eventual release, in fact rests upon the imposition of new laws of truth upon the body, each requiring different interventions. For Foucault (1977b) once an offender is sent to prison, they expose the relationship between law and delinquency. A focus on delinquent or deviant behaviour is important, for in consideration of the crime ‘it is not so much his act as his life that is relevant in characterising him’ (Foucault, 1977b: 251). Already marked with certain identities, which derive from the subject potentialities, governmental power as such intervenes upon the subject in order to encourage him to manage and internalise his own conduct and behaviours in relation to previous notions of self-hood (Borch 2015), i.e. a military identity.

According to Foucault (1989a), the very process of governmentality begins with the realisation there is a *problem* to be addressed and how behaviours and subjects become a problem. For the veteran offender, Napo’s (2008) claim that there were currently 20,000 serving a sentence in England and Wales was the first serious attempt to render the problem “intelligible” and through these claims the veteran was reconstructed in the public imagination as a (potential) criminal. Whilst the existence of military personnel in prison was already known (See Emsley 2013), following Napo’s report the criminal veteran became a problem that could no longer be ignored. They need to be governed. This became more urgent as they attracted increasingly sensationalising media attention. For example, The Telegraph (2008) wrote of the ‘thousands of war veterans were locked up’ (Leach, 2008), whilst one Daily Mail Reporter pointed out that that there were now ‘more armed forces personnel serving a sentence in prison than serving in Afghanistan’. Such stories were politically exacerbated as individual cases of violence committed by veterans were published more frequently, offering more detail on the seriousness of their crimes (Cheston 2015; Malvern 2012; Brooke 2012).

As knowledge about veteran offender’s circulated, so the category soon became normalised i.e. part of everyday discussion, and thus animated the calls for more scientifically validating insight into their problems through various modes of knowledge production. Just as Foucault (1977a) reminded us above, subjects must be understood before they can be improved. A surge of research thus emerged to make sense of these offenders and their crimes. But, whose voices then have come to represent the ‘criminal veteran’ and in turn allow state authorities to intervene? Although, in reality these voices are extremely difficult to separate as they feed into one another it is important to discuss them separately to illustrate their different purposes, objectives and methods. Without over simplifying, the research that emerged was dominated by two distinct voices - the *political* and the *psychological*. It should be pointed out here that whilst there are tensions between these approaches, in reality, these voices are extremely difficult to separate as they feed into one another.

The *Political Voice* has been instructive in constructing the veteran offender as a criminal problem. What is meant by the ‘political’ in this context refers specifically to the state and non-state actors that raise awareness of the violent veteran in ways that ultimately limit any serious critique of war. Crucially, from the Ministry of Defence (DASA, 2009; 2010) and Ministry of Justice (Lyne & Packham 2014) onto non-government organisations, veteran charities and lobbyists, multiple actors have shown their concern with the violent veteran as a problem population that has to be understood through a domestic frame. Once the problem is agreed in these terms, in-so-far as a consensus is reached that there is a problem of domesticity which needs to be addressed in one way or another, these voices are then in the business of suggesting the most appropriate and necessary forms of intervention. Such voices then place the criminality of veterans onto an agenda. Suggestions of what that intervention should look like and where it should be focused, do however often conflict with one another.

The *Psychological Voice* refers to those attempts to quantify the veterans experience and add intellectual weight to policy by foregrounding questions of mental health and welfare. To date these projects have provided the political voices with criminogenic pathways for the veteran and solutions of how to (re)shape and improve him by specifically addressing individual pathologies (MacManus *et al* 2013). As such, this discourse provides ways of knowing the violent veteran through statistical designs (Dandaker *et al* 2003; Greenberg *et al* 2011; Iverson *et al* 2005; MacManus *et al* 2013; van Staden *et al* 2007) and quantifiable notions of the ‘self’ as a psychological category, (Sherman 2010; MacManus & Wessley 2013) as the empirical truth about the veterans is established. What we might term the “pathologisation of the veteran” reduces violence here to matters of individual deviancy. Mental health concerns thus replace any political critique as concerns about military experience are turned back upon the soldier in the form of personal failure in one way or another. It is interesting to note that many of the studies, which shape opinions, actually draw upon research conducted in the United States and speak of “individual triggers” ranging from personal experiences of war-time trauma, onto issues such as substance abuse, along with the lived outcomes such as homelessness, parenting and marital breakdown (Jaycox & Tanielian 2008). The violent disorder of veterans is not assumed to be normal for military personnel. It is something that goes undetected. Like all pathologies, it lurks in the dark.

The third stage concerns the publication and dissemination of research findings. It is upon these findings the truths that formed. The largest part of the research conducted has functioned to make sense of the complexity of this lived experience by reducing this problem to a series of quantified probabilities that are amenable to prescribed correctional policies. The problem must be manageable through intervention in order to be considered a problem in this context at all. What matters here is the ways in which these findings have assumed the position of authority, and through them a series of truths or what Millar & Rose (2008: 15) term ‘formalised knowledge’ proves attainable. The first truth to emerge in this context was that veterans criminal profile was a violent one and this can be attributed to both the political and psychological voice. For instance, the first national inquiry into former armed service personnel by the highly influential Howard League for Penal Reform found no evidence that military experience makes an individual more likely to end up in custody than members of the general public. The violence must be attributed to something other than militarism. The report did find however that those with military experience were twice as likely to be convicted of a sex offence as civilians and more likely to engage in violent offending more generally (Howard League 2011).

Following on from this, a study published in the Lancet found that young men who have served in the armed forces in Britain are three times more likely to be convicted of a violent offence than their non-combatant peer group. The report concluded that of their sample of 2,700 young men under 30 with military experience 20.6% had a violent conviction and that the figure was 6.7% for their civilian counterparts (MacManus *et al* 2013). Both projects also suggested that veterans struggled with family relationships, accommodation, employment, finances, substance use and of course mental health fed into all of this as well as military culture. Based upon these findings veterans’ criminogenic pathways are established that are very similar to criminogenic pathways generally (Minitsry of Justice 2013). Whilst this call for better rehabilitation might be seen as progressive as premised on the understanding that some veterans struggle to reintegrate, criminological works were sparsely cited from this report. This follows a very familiar pattern, as McGarry and Walklate (2011) note, dominant representations of the problems posed by veterans are overwhelmingly explained in terms of mental impairment, which is often framed as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). A similar narrative was (re)produced and reinforced through this REA; adding further scientific validation to psychological approaches in explaining the persistence of veteran crimes. And of course, ways we can address them.

The REA is very explicit in terms of what its “key findings” set out to address through various degrees of moderation, as the prevalence of psychological   
and personal needs are all too apparent. Prioritised here are issues of mental health, which considers a number of distinct yet interrelated problems such as depression and suicide, PTSD, adjustment and identity issues. These are accompanied by concerns with drug and alcohol abuse that are seen to exacerbate the problems. Most revealing here are the endorsements given to the report on the British Governments website which accompanies the official press release. Discourse thus continues to emerge about the violent veteran which comes to know him through various forms of statistical designs that specifically address mental faculties or issues (Dandaker *et al* 2003; Greenberg *et al* 2011; Iverson *et al* 2005; MacManus *et al* 2013; van Staden *et al* 2007). To approach criminality from a position of ‘the self’ frames the convicted veteran as vulnerable in such ways that suggests their position is a product of their individual experience of war.

The fourth stage points to a series of interventions or technologies that are created in response to the pathologisation of the veteran’s violence. For Rose & Millar (2008), both the accumulations of those individuals who come together for the conducting of conduct and the techniques and power they require are imporant. Namely, subjects are present (both the governed and the governors), as are techniques of intervention (policy and initiatives for example). To facilitate this, risk assessments are a pre-requisite, and of course the institutions in which these come together in the governance process (i.e. the probation office, the prison, the psychiatrist appointment and so forth). Yet, as explined above, despite the growing concerns and the politicisation of veterans’ crime, there is no national model for dealing with veteran offenders. As a result the technologies are specific to locations and often ad-hoc in nature created by well-intentioned practitioners from a grass-roots position (Murray 2014) that rely on polictical voices to allow phsycological voices to aid in their practice with the veteran offender.

The fifth stage is one of delivery – notably its privatisation. In May 2013 the government announced that they were going to ‘Transform Rehabilitation’ (MoJ 2013). In summary, this agenda split the National Probation Service of England and Wales into two. The management of offenders in the community and the involvement of probation services in prisons were as a result of this agenda to be divided between the National Probation Service (NPS) and 21 Community Rehabilitation Companies (CRC’s). The punishment of veterans (and all offenders) was effectively commoditised, for as of November 2014 the business of governance was now a contract to be won (Burke 2014). Offenders were thus to be managed according to the risk that they posed within a public/private governmental frame. High-risk cases would stay with the NPS and medium and low risk cases were now a business. While the significance of these public/private relations are yet to be fully understood, how veteran’s risk would be considered in this setting given the complexities regarding the veterans label has been pointed to (Murray 2013; Murray 2014a; Murray 2014b). Millar & Rose (2008: 29) state that to evaluate policy through a framework of governmentality requires more than assessing the policies (green papers, white papers, academic proposals and so on). It is also to consider the ‘eternal optimism that a domain or society could be administered better or more effectively, that reality, is in some way programmable’. This demands a consideration of the policies *teleology* insomuch as the governance of problem populations is not simply concerned with the here and now, but gestures towards future behaviours. As mentioned above, do veteran offender initititives aim to rehabilitate from the expereince of combat or from the point of criminal behaviour? Added to this, if the veteran is different than a civilian upon entering the criminal justice system – is the aim for them upon leaving also different? To be a good veteran perhaps instead of a reformed offender (a civilian).

**Forgotten Voices and Veteranality**

Whilst some of the most insightful criminological work goes beyond discursive representations of criminality to explore more purposefully and empathetically the very people that discourse represents (McGarry & Walklate 2011; McGarry *et al* 2012; Walklate & McGarry 2015) - altogether absent in those voices that constitute epistemologies of the veteran who commits a crime are criminological voices. Another omission it would seem are the voices of veterans themselves. The consequences of this are profound. What is missing at the outset is a narrative that is less concerned with veterans as an “object” to be studied at a distance, but as political subjects with a sense of agency. It is the voices of individuals who are implicated that are of importance, moreover how those voices disrupt our understandings of their position in society. A criminological analysis of war then can add significantly to discourses of veterans crimes quite simply by employing a criminological analysis proper and giving voice to violent veterans. This can start with an analysis such as the one presented above that asks how the veteran has been presented and governed. To begin with, one might ask what critical theoretical literature might mean for understandings of the violent veteran and to note that discources have emerged without reference to the state’s role in the construction and subsequent management of this political category. Furthermore, it produces an understanding that is blind to what Foucault (1969) termed ‘subjugated knowledge’ – the marginalised experiences that can be found through an investigation of how veterans see themselves in these terms.

Above, we learned from Foucault’s (1977a) interview a way to understand the apparatus. Importantly for our new concerns is that he continued to note that the appartaus shapes ‘the said as much as the unsaid… it is also always linked to certain limits of knowledge that arise from it and, to an equal degree, condition it’. To attend to relations such as these and those knowledges that are limited – the ‘unsaid’, perhaps requires a different analytical framework. While “veteranality” was first coined to make sense of how the problem of the violent veteran resisted traditional processes of governance and how veteran offenders have become an offending type which means their crimes are overwhelmed by their military past (Murray 2013; 2014) – implicit in this theorising is a concept that speaks to the framing of the violent veteran as they appear as a distinct problematic population within the domestic sphere in a way that requires further exploration. It should also be pointed out that veteranality is not simply an application of governmentality to the problem of the violent veteran. There are a number of qualified differences that make it a very distinct framework for understanding modes of governance.

1. Overcoming some of the criticisms of governmentality as it appears too broad and generalizable, veteranality focuses on the specificity of the governance of the veteran community. It therefore offers a more nuanced and focused analytical framework that addresses specific problems as they appear to specific populations. Invariably, whilst the framework is used to deal with veteran offenders, there is nevertheless the potential to develop its use onto further problem categories such as the governance of veteran homelessness, veteran suicide and veteran substance abuse, for example.
2. Whilst veteranality builds upon the governmentality concerns with seeing populations as a problem to be solved, it nevertheless points to a very specific ontological category that overwhelms the normal functioning of the state. Indeed, the veteranality framework not only tries to make sense of problematic behaviours as they relate to normal civilian standards; it is further concerned with the ways in which military subjectivities also overwhelm all aspects of civil society – especially the criminal justice system and its mandates for punishment and rehabilitation.
3. Whereas the governmentality literatures have increasingly been influenced by the discourses of risk and its scientific modes of verification and assessments, again veteranality marks a notable departure here in terms of knowledge production. That is to say, there is an epistemological specificity to veteranality, which is premised on the belief that its subject matter is already embodied with the risks associated with being a (former) military subjectivity and how this informs potential behaviours.
4. Veteranality thus points to very specific occupational types whose position in the public imagination means their problems always transcend their actual job status or position in a society. Not only does this imply that the veteran community is always inscribed with experiences of being part of the military, even for those who have been dishonourably discharged, what matters is a return to the preferred image of the veteran above and beyond any civic status. Veteranality thus points to a very unique system of rule, whose outcomes aim to address the problems associated with the experience of war, without ever bringing into question the political decision to go to war or the integrity of the military.
5. Central here is to “give voice” to veterans by allowing them to narrate their own experiences prior, during and after war. As violent veterans expose the limits of juridical approaches to their crimes, so they add further empirical weight to the claims that times of war and peace are less easily demarcated and set apart. Embodying the normalisation of violence in new security terrains, their testimonies present significant challenges and demand a thorough rethinking of the violence of warfare in the 21st Century. A job for criminology.

The veteran undoubtedly occupies a complex position in the public’s imagination. This is notably pronounced when the "war hero" is contrasted with the former soldier who engages in violence and criminality during peacetime. Amid this inherent tension between the stigmatic identity of being an offender and the traditional celebration of the veteran, it is clear that the need to understand the life of veterans has never been more pressing. A subsequent and logical outcome of this is a transformation in the narrative of the veteran offender, who struggles to make sense of the increasingly arbitrary limits of political space (or indeed that there are no limits to now be understood). This presents a new problem – one that reinforces a central argument of this chapter that the complexity of the lived experience of war and violence cannot always be understood in conversations on policy or psychiatric assessments. If we envisage violence on a continuum where distinctions between *legitimation* (war) and *illegality* (crime) are a result of the tensions in modern liberal societies (Foucault 2007), setting them apart is to suggest the ability to neatly demarcate ontological differences (Degenhardt 2013; Murray 2015). One day the hero, the next day the offender! But, if the subject of that violence refuses to recognise these separations; any governance of them is bound to be theoretically and empirically flawed. More than revealing new ways to understand the criminogenic needs of veterans, subjugated knowledge’s also point to alternative ways to ‘support’ them in rehabilitation.

Ross McGarry and Sandra Walklate (2011) and The Howard League Report (2011) first brought the voice of the veteran into criminological imaginings – veteranality encourages research to draw on this and subsequent publications (Walklate and McGarry 2015) to question the political rationalities that claim that this behaviour is a by-product or unintended consequence of a military experience. In order to truly assess the process of subjectification that frame the violent veteran in a particular way, one must be aware of its limits. It is essential in fact to understand that power relations within any governing regime are often contested and subject to various forms of resistance that cannot be simply reduced to rational forms of enquiry. Rose (1996: 139) states:

Within a genealogy of subjectification, that which would be infolded would be anything that can acquire authority: injunctions, advice, technologies, little habits of thought and emotion, an array of routines and norms of being human – the instruments through which being constitutes itself in different practices and relations. These infoldings are partially stabilised to the extent that human beings have come to imagine themselves as the subjects of biography, to utilise certain ‘arts of memory’ in order to render this biography stable, to employ certain vocabularies and explanations to make this intelligible to themselves.

Hadot (1992) suggests the need to exercise a necessary caution when considering *techniques of the self.* The self is not simply transformed into a trans-historical object; instead individuals understand and relate to themselves in many different and conflicting ways. Giving voice to veteran’s demands giving a forum for them to express counter-views that challenge the imposition of fixed identities. It is to harness their power of memory, to take seriously how they understand and narrate their plight, whilst looking for continuities and displacements in their language and stories. Why is it that violence remains so prevalent in their discussions? How do they struggle on a daily basis to reassert a sense of dignity and pride that has been seemingly denied them? Can they simply switch off from being a soldier because the tour of duty has come to a bureaucratic halt? And what might their testimonies reveal about the tensions between politics and law in the 21st Century?

# **Conclusion**

This chapter has shown how the experiences of the veteran continue to be reduced to psychological studies, which in turn, have a profound impact on the way they are approached as a problem in terms of criminal justice policy. This has proved limited in terms of policy and provision and academic debates. Nevertheless, there has been a notable increase in the interest concerning the legacies of war by criminologists. My aim with this chapter has been to connect these concerns with those literatures, which allow us to rethink the governance of veterans as an offending category. By using the tools that Foucault’s (Foucault 1989a; 1989b; 1991) governmentality thesis offers, the chapter has traced the development and construction of veterans as a governmental problem before proposing how this interpretation can begin to foster a narrative between criminology and veteran policy. The chapter detailed its use of governmentality, and why it is fitting for understanding and interrogating the governance of veteran offenders. By drawing together the key tools of governmentality, the veteranality framework was outlined to illustrate how it offers a specific departure in terms of its focus, ontological and epistemological concerns. To that end, while representations of the veteran and criminality illustrate conceptual truths that allow for a legitimate government intervention, they are inadequate for dealing with the problem of the veteran today. Problematising such governance demands a dedicated analytical framework. In some sense, veteranality is an extension of governmentality, however what is striking is that the veteran transgresses the limits of traditional techniques of governmentality in a way that is yet to be properly considered. As the British veteran identity continues to renegotiate its place in a society that more frequently contests it value and purpose – their bodies are sites of contradiction, upon which contradictory interventions have been formed. Challenging this appears both important and necessary if the issue of veteran violence and their rehabilitation is to be taken seriously.

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1. These figures have been contested, a debate I have had elsewhere – see Murray 2014. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. To date male veterans who commit a crime have been the focus of criminal justice policy. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Foucault (1974) stated: ‘I would like my books to be a kind of tool-box which others can rummage through to find a tool which they can use however they wish in their own area... I would like [my work] to be useful to an educator, a warden, a magistrate, a conscientious objector. I don't write for an audience, I write for users, not readers. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)