

Book Review

The management of change in criminal justice: Who knows best?

Edited by Martin Wasik and Sotirios Santatzoglou
Publisher: Palgrave Macmillan (2015)
ISBN: 978-1-137-46248-0 (hardback)
Price: £65.00 (hardback)

Justice and penal reform: Reshaping the penal landscape

Edited by Stephen Farrall, Barry Goldson, Ian Loader and Anita Dockley
Publisher: Routledge (2016)
ISBN: 978-1-138-19106-8 (hardback) 978-1-138-19107-5 (paperback)
Price: £90.00 (hardback) £29.99 (paperback)

Recent years have seen rapid shifts in penal policy and practice. In broad policy terms, the seemingly inexorable rise of prison populations and increasing punitiveness have abated and there has been the articulation by senior politicians including Kenneth Clarke and Michael Gove of the need for lower use of imprisonment and a focus on more rehabilitative approaches. Inside prisons, organisational changes including changes to regimes, staffing levels and pay structures have left many prison managers feeling that change management has become their central role.¹ These two books, in their own ways, attempt to both reflect and inform these trends.

Martin Wasik, a distinguished professor and judge, and Sotirios Santatzoglou, a teaching fellow at Keele University, offer an edited collection that is concerned with 'the ways in which criminal justice policy emerges, takes shape and is implemented through the activities

of practitioners on the ground' (p.vii). One of the defining features of contemporary organisations are the ways in which they attempt to assert greater control over workers, both through ever more elaborate architectures of surveillance such as targets, audits, information technology and prescriptive policies, but also the ways in which they attempt to use human resource strategies in order to access the subjectivity and identity of employees so as to nurture conformity and self-regulation.² Of course, total control is impossible, even in the most extreme circumstances and therefore the aspirations of contemporary organisations are always destined to be incomplete and inchoate. These centralising ambitions are always moderated by their interaction with both local cultures and individual agency, that resist, adapt and appropriate attempts at control. It is this complex dynamic that Wasik and Santatzoglou are attempting to access.

The chapters in the book are wide ranging, contributors include policy makers, practitioners, researchers and campaigners, covering areas including courts, probation, policing, policy development and youth justice. The chapters are grounded in detailed descriptions and analysis of specific developments in policy and practice. Each is an informed and lively illustration of the tensions that shape criminal justice: individual discretion and central prescription; national standardisation and local variation, and; punitiveness and humanitarianism.

In *Justice and penal reform*, the aim of the editors is to intellectually enrich the drive for progressive change: 'creating social and penal institutions that can contribute to the realization of safer

and more cohesive societies' (p.1). The book is edited by an impressive quartet, including three internationally respected criminology professors, Stephen Farrall from University of Sheffield, Barry Goldson from University of Liverpool, and Ian Loader from University of Oxford. The fourth editor, Anita Dockley is Research Director at the Howard League for Penal Reform, an organisation that has collaborated in the publication of this book.

The editors argue that the financial crisis of 2008 and subsequent recession have offered an opportunity for a new kind of dialogue about criminal justice. This is partly a result of necessity, as mass imprisonment is no longer affordable, but also the popular resonance of punitiveness has waned as crime rates have reduced and other policy matters have become more pressing. The response of this book is to invite rigorous intellectual engagement with some fundamental questions about imprisonment, its form, role and function, and its relationship with wider society. The contributors read like a who's who of international theoretical criminology. Their discussions raise questions about the notions of character that shape our ideal of citizens, as well as the nature of trust and legitimacy in contemporary public services. Most significantly, the contributors locate imprisonment, not in isolation, but in the context of a wider social system. What forms of order and structures of power are prisons reflecting and reinforcing? What forms of social justice are prisons contributing towards or eroding? The argument for penal reform has always been part of a much wider social discourse regarding the kind of world we are living in or creating.

1. Bennett, J. (2015) *The working lives of prison managers: Global change, local culture and individual agency in the late modern prison* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
2. Parker, M. (2002) *Against Management: Organization in the age of managerialism*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

There is more at stake in criminology than crime and criminal justice alone.³

These books take different approaches to exploring the issue of change in the criminal justice system. Wasik and Santatzoglou focus on practice, using detailed case studies in order to reveal common threads and theoretical dimensions. Theirs is an approach that reflects the state of things. In contrast, Farrall, Goldson, Loader and Dockley start from a theoretical perspective, attempting to enrich and enliven the intellectual, policy and public debate. They are attempting to guide and inform alternative futures. Together, these books offer a fascinating contrast in approaches, but both ask awkward and difficult questions, agitating in the reader a discomfort in the status quo and a desire for a different kind of change.

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Book Review

Imprisonment Worldwide: the current situation and an alternative future

by Andrew Coyle, Helen Fair, Jessica Jacobson and Roy Walmsley.

Publisher: Policy Press (2016)

ISBN: 978-1-4473-3175-9

(paperback)

Price: £7.99 (from publisher)

The book has three sections: 1) Trends in imprisonment and numbers worldwide; 2) Ethical considerations for imprisonment and how this impacts on those in custody; and, 3) Alternative approaches and proposals including justice re-investment approaches. Throughout the book, information is collated and summarised in a series of infographics making it easy to read

and assimilate the potentially complex variations and differences. For example graphs of changing rates of imprisonment between five European countries over the last 35 years — show remarkable differences: Finland has steadily fallen over the entire period whilst England and Wales has steadily increased (see p.53).

The book is a major contribution to the knowledge of those currently debating prisons and the use of imprisonment, whether from an academic, policy, practitioner, campaigner or lay perspective, making it also a valuable teaching resource for courses in criminology and related subjects. The final chapter reminds us that (potential) solutions are unlikely to be 'simple' (p. 131) nor found exclusively within the criminal justice system, and perhaps more importantly prisons are unlikely to (the authors use the word 'never') be a place of reform. I enjoyed reading the book through and then coming back to look for more details, trying to understand what the many differences were worldwide and why these occurred. Of course no publication can completely explain the reasons 'why', but this one nevertheless provides a significant body of evidence to help us on this journey.

Steve Hall is a former prison governor currently living in New Zealand.

Remote control: Television in prison

By Victoria Knight

Publisher: Palgrave Macmillan

(2016)

ISBN: 978-1-137-44390-8

(hardback)

Price: £68.00 (hardback)

Television is such a central feature of everyday life that it is no

longer considered a luxury but instead is an unexceptional, even essential, part of our domestic worlds. Over the last 20 years, this has also become true of prison life. The systematic introduction of television in prisons started in 1998. It was initially a reward for 'enhanced' prisoners who demonstrated a high level of compliance with prison regimes, but since then it has become part of the 'standard' privileges, only to be removed from those who demonstrate poor behaviour. In this book, Dr. Victoria Knight, a senior research fellow at De Montfort University Leicester, examines the ways in which television is viewed by prisoners, how this shapes their social world and their inner emotional experiences.

The book draws upon research conducted in an adult male category B prison, including structured diaries of television viewing along with interviews with prisoners and staff. As well as becoming normalised, television has, in fact, become a dominating aspect of the experience of imprisonment. The diaries collected in this study show that prisoners will spend over sixty hours a week watching programmes, more than double the national average.

One of the primary policy justifications for the introduction of television was the way that it reinforced the incentives and earned privileges scheme (IEP), which offered graduated privileges reflecting compliance, good behaviour and positive work towards release. This approach aimed to extend the use of soft power over prisoners. This book reveals that in unforeseen ways the effects have been more extensive.

The social effects have included a retreat from public spaces into the private space of the prison cell, a pattern that has also been discussed in the community outside. Within shared cells, interpersonal dynamics have altered as these relationships require careful negotiations around

3. Loader, I. and Sparks, R. (2010) *Public criminology?* London: Routledge.