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Reviews

Book Review

The Working Lives of Prison Managers: Global Change, Local Culture and Individual Agency in the Late Modern Prison

by Jamie Bennett

Publisher: Palgrave Macmillan (2015)

ISBN: 978-1-137-49894-6 (hardback)

Price: £68.00 (hardback)

In the course of 2015 the Inspector of Prisons for Ireland carried out a review of the culture and organisation of the Irish Prison Service.¹ His subsequent report² has a number of resonances for the matters dealt with in this book. The Inspector noted a lack of corporate identity among staff in Irish prisons and a tendency for them to work in separate 'silos'. He described the Irish Prison Service as a remarkably closed organisation with staff being promoted mainly from within the organisation and competency at a lower grade being seen as indicating qualification for promotion to a higher grade. The report commented that while leadership and management are overlapping skills there has to be a distinction between them. The Inspector emphasised the need to underline the unique statutory position of the Governor of a prison and that he or she should lead a cohesive management team, each of whom had the necessary professional competences to manage the department or unit for which they were responsible. He was also concerned at the lack of clarity about responsibilities between different grades of staff:

What was not clear was where the definition of 'staff' ended and where 'management'

began, particularly since all those promoted into the senior grades had come through the ranks. This is an issue which has not yet been finally resolved. To some extent the uncertainty is a consequence of the overlapping middle management structure. It also reflects the fact that staff at all levels in prisons are required to be managers to a greater or lesser extent. (para 6.3)

This comment goes to the heart of the theme of Jamie Bennett's thought provoking new publication: How is a 'prison manager' to be defined and what are the essential characteristics of the role?

The book is based on field work carried out in two Category C prisons in 2008 and 2009 with later follow-up in one of the prisons. The author has written extensively and to good effect in recent years on the work of prison managers, making use of his personal practical knowledge and experience while at the same time applying academic rigour to his research. In this new book he paints a graphic picture of what it is like to manage prisons in England and Wales in the current political climate. He describes the changed demands and pressures which have been placed on those who manage prisons since the turn of the century and places these within the context of wider management theories. He charts changes in Prison Service managerial priorities since the early 1990s from the introduction of corporate objectives, through key performance targets and indicators, to audits and the rating systems so beloved by proponents of 'new public management'. He also discusses at length the more

recent movement from performance management to a focus on the importance of change management. Finally he examines prison management in 'the age of austerity' which he dates from 2010 and comments on the move from a compliance approach to one which is based on risk assessment. He describes how all of these developments have affected the culture of the Prison Service and have altered the manner in which prison managers operate, moving from what he calls a 'welfare orientation' to one of 'economic rationality', which involves a focus on process (what is being done) rather than outcomes (what is being achieved). The emphasis in prison management is now on implementing change through 'mobilisation, transition and transformation' by means of project plans and resource profiles. The task of prison managers is to ensure that these processes are implemented in line with national plans.

Writing in the Editorial of Issue No 222 of this Journal Bennett expressed the view that the 'role of prison managers is to navigate and negotiate between (the) various pressures and constraints, moulding them into a coherent sense of direction... (This) direction is one that is not solely technical nor is it entirely based upon compliance with central dictates, but it is also shaped by individual priorities and a sense of values.' This sums up the core arguments of his latest book and resonates with what Crewe and Liebling have to say in the same issue of the Journal, that one of the challenges for Governing Governors is to 'avoid being drawn too closely into matters of process

1. The author of this review assisted the Inspector of Prisons in his review.

2. Inspector of Prisons (2015) *Culture and Organisation in the Irish Prison Service*. Available at: www.inspectorofprisons.gov.ie

at the expense of moral issues and strategic concerns’.

Whereas the other two authors refer specifically to Governors who have charge of prisons, Bennett draws his definition of prison manager much wider, including what he describes as ‘operational, non-operational, uniformed and non-uniformed managers’, a total of 59 persons (19 per cent of staff) in one of his research prisons and 61 (almost 16 per cent) in the other. This takes us back to the issue raised by the Irish Inspector Prisons: where does the definition of ‘staff’ end and where does ‘management’ begin, particularly if one acknowledges that staff at all levels in prisons are required to be managers to a greater or lesser extent, not least those who work in daily contact with prisoners. The truth may well be that the management skill sets required at different levels and within different groupings are quite distinct. This may be something that the author will wish to examine in more detail in future writing.

The term ‘manager’ began to be used frequently in the prison setting in England and Wales following the absorption of HM Prison Service into the new National Offender Management Service which was intended to introduce, in the words of the Carter Report³ ‘end to end management of each offender’. The thrust of what subsequently became Government policy was that persons in prison (and on probation) should be treated first and foremost as offenders to be ‘managed’ and that all work with them should be seen through that prism. Bennett observes that this has led to ‘a quantification of prisoners’ (page 67) and has acted to dehumanise them, making them ‘business units’. He rightly regards this as a regressive development. Linked to a reduction in the Service’s budget of 24 per cent between

2011 and 2015, managers became increasingly ‘the objects of management at a distance’ and enmeshed by various apparatus of control (page 227). Judging by some of his recent statements the former Secretary of State for Justice has given indications that he wishes to change this emphasis and it may be that the author can take some consolation from the fact that the Minister has stated his intention to give Governors ‘more autonomy overall’.⁴

Dr Bennett ends his book with some personal comments about his experience as a Governor who became a prison researcher and notes with refreshing honesty that ‘by the end of the research, my perspective had shifted and instead I saw myself engaged in a messy set of compromises and challenges regarding values and beliefs...’. That is an observation with which anyone who has attempted that difficult balancing act will agree. Those who research prisons and those who manage prisons will find much food for thought in this book.

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Book Review

Punishment in Europe: A Critical Anatomy of Penal Systems

By Ruggiero, V. and Ryan, M. (eds.)
Published by Palgrave Macmillan (2013)
ISBN: 9781137028204 (hardback)
Price: £58.00 (hardback)

In this interesting collection of papers on European penal systems, Vincenzo Ruggiero and Mick Ryan return to a project started with Joe Sim two decades ago, with the publication of the ground-breaking

book *Western Penal Systems: A Critical Anatomy*.¹ Western Penal Systems contained chapters covering eight advanced industrial countries (the Netherlands, Sweden, England and Wales, Ireland, France, Germany, Italy and Spain). *Punishment in Europe* returns to these countries to explore more recent developments in, among other things, sentencing, prison conditions and community sentences, and discriminatory policies and practices relating to class, gender, race and nationality. It also includes four additional chapters, on Southern (Greece), Central (Poland) and Eastern Europe (Bulgaria and Russia). As the editors suggest in the preface, with its analysis of European rather than Anglo-Saxon countries, and its insistence on Europe rather than the United States as its primary reference point, the book will prove an important contribution to the emerging subject area of comparative penology. In spite of the obvious cultural and historical differences between European nations, it is quite remarkable that the two books remain among just a handful of social science texts to have attempted such a regional focus.

From the outset, the editors quite rightly point to the limitations of comparative analysis. Drawing on the work of Michael Cavadino and James Dignan,² Nicola Lacey,³ and Helen Mills and Rebecca Roberts,⁴ Ryan introduces the volume by explaining that the underlying purpose of the book is

1. Ruggiero, V., Ryan, M. and Sim, J. (1995) *Western Penal Systems: A Critical Anatomy*, London: SAGE.
2. Cavadino, M. and Dignan, J. (2006) *Penal Systems*, London: SAGE.
3. Lacey, N. (2008) *The Prisoners’ Dilemma: Political Economy and Punishment in Contemporary Democracies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
4. Mills, H. and Roberts, R. (2012) *Reducing the Numbers in Custody: Looking Beyond Criminal Justice Solutions*, London: Centre for Criminal Justice Studies.

3. Home Office (2003) *Managing Offenders, Reducing Crime – A New Approach*. London: Prime Minister’s Strategy Unit.

4. Hansard. 27 January 2016. Column 344.

to contribute to the development of a critical, public criminology that challenges the drift towards increasingly harsh and exclusionary penal policies, and works in collaboration with social movements. Ryan warns there 'can be no cherry picking' (p.4) of progressive policies and practices, however, as the penal system of any one country is likely to be shaped by a multiple of both local and structural factors. As such, the contributors to the book were asked to avoid cross-national comparisons, and to focus instead on the national contexts in which their countries' penal systems have developed and operate. Although some countries will have certain things in common, Ryan emphasises, 'in order to prepare the ground for effective strategic interventions, penal systems need to be first and foremost interrogated in their own terms . . . we should focus more on national *peculiarities* rather than across the board *commonalities*' (p.5).

The editors' brief to the authors of the volume was therefore designed to be less prescriptive as to allow themes to emerge from the collection. Criminal justice researchers and practitioners working within a positivist comparative framework might find the lack of symmetry across the chapters frustrating. However, a detailed reading of each reveals numerous commonalities that might form the basis for future comparative study. We learn, for example, that punitive and discriminatory sentencing policies and practices in the Anglo-Saxon world are also features of European nations. As for regimes of punishment, we learn of the persistence of inhumane prison conditions, and the gradual replacement of rehabilitation with incapacitation and public protection in sentencing and punishment regimes, both in prison (for instance, increasing resort to

cellular confinement) and in the community (in particular, the use of electronic tagging). Finally, regarding the underlying causes of European punitivism, we encounter varying degrees of political-economic explanation that again differ little in scope from those associated with analysis of trends in punishment in, for instance, the United States, Canada, New Zealand or Australia, from the replacement of welfare with criminal justice spending, to governments resorting to criminal justice as a means of being seen to be doing something about social problems that, as a result of globalisation, are increasingly out of their control. In the concluding chapter, Ruggiero picks up an area of convergence that might form the basis of progressive reforms: continuing leniency and importance attached to rehabilitation in many countries in the case of minor crime.

The critical audience to which the book is directed will find little of this surprising, but will gain valuable insight into the context in which these western trends are playing out in different parts of Europe. Moreover, in line with Ruggiero and Ryan's rationale for the book, it is not so much areas of European-wide convergence as divergence that makes the book such a fascinating read. Here we discover, for instance, that few other European countries have followed England and Wales in promoting community penalties as sentences in their own right as opposed to alternatives to prison, and that as many countries, including the Netherlands, Spain and again Ireland, have so far resisted as succumbed to the otherwise Anglo-Saxon trend towards prison privatisation. As for the types of people affected by penal policies, we find that Ireland appears to be bucking the trend towards discriminating against foreign-born offenders, and (a

second point highlighted in the concluding chapter) that white collar crimes are taken relatively seriously in countries such as Germany, where prosecutors and the judiciary operate largely independent from executive government, but enjoy high levels of impunity in countries like Italy and Bulgaria, where financial irregularities merge with organised crime. Particularly interesting are regional characteristics such as the legacies of war-time occupation on the (relatively progressive) post-war penal systems of northern Europe, the legacies of communism on the current (relatively punitive) penal systems of central and eastern Europe, and the relative absence of investment in penal institutions, even ideological attachment to particular policies, in parts of Southern and Eastern Europe. Related to this latter point, as Ruggiero emphasises in the conclusion, both punitive and humanitarian tendencies are likely to be held back by absences of public or practitioner consensus, as illustrated for instance in the chapters on Russia and Italy, as well as division or weaknesses in the power of political elites. Though there may be less for a bureaucratic, politically and culturally homogeneous country like England and Wales to learn from these examples, what they do point to in all cases is the potential for spaces to arise where progressive polices may take hold. Finally, readers are likely to be struck by the importance of individual actors/groups of actors and 'paradigmatic moments' in shaping penal policies, for example the role played by collaborative academic-prisoner organisations in countering punitive political discourses in Nordic countries such as Sweden, the murder of the controversially film-maker, Theo van Gogh, by a Dutch-Moroccan Muslim in 2004, which triggered an already emerging moral panic about Islam

and immigration, and conversely the progressive political climates in Russia and Poland that temporarily followed the collapse of the Soviet Union.

In all, this book will appeal to a wide audience, from criminal justice practitioners and students looking for data and analysis of the penal systems of individual European nations, to comparative criminology researchers exploring similarities and differences between European penal systems. It will also appeal to activists seeking to understand the conditions under which punitive policies and practices might be resisted, and how progressive penal policies and practices might be translated from one country to another.

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Book Review

Offender Supervision in Europe

By Fergus McNeill and Kristel Beyens (eds.)

Published by Palgrave Macmillan (2013)

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Price: £68 (hardcover) £23.99 (Paperback)

COST (a European Network to encourage cooperation in Science and Technology)¹ was established to drive a bottom up, light touch approach to research methodology within countries of interest from across the EU. It brings together academics from pan-European research backgrounds, with a focus on increasing the mobility of researchers across Europe and to foster the establishment of networks of excellence. COST —

the acronym for European Co-operation in Science and Technology — is the oldest and widest European intergovernmental network for co-operation in research.

The editors of *Offender Supervision in Europe*, are the chair and vice-chair of the COST Action on Offender Supervision in Europe. The introduction of the book brings us up to date on the use of supervision within the penal systems of Europe. It provides a focus on how much more widely supervision is being used than before and while statistics cannot be relied upon fully, Pan-European figures have shown a significant increase in the use of supervision, not just for those at the end of a custodial sentence but also for other more wide ranging considerations such as monitoring unpaid-work, exclusion orders and psychological or substance misuse treatment.

The introduction also tries to define Offender Supervision and importantly questions the primary use of it pan-Europe. Consideration is given to how Offender Supervision has developed and also considers what the authors describe as a 'sub-field' of penology that has not been researched fully. The book argues that the effectiveness and efficiency of Offender Supervision in the community has been considered by researchers but that the real benefits of Offender Supervision have perhaps been neglected by academics. The authors quote Tonry² who demands that research in this area needs to more formally consider its 'normative, primary and latent function, as well as studying its ancillary functions and effects',³ which has been the focus of research historically. This is an

important point and one that the contributors return to throughout.

The book is broken down into four chapters that look at the experiences of Offender Supervision across Europe: first Experiencing Supervision, second Decision Making and Offender Supervision, third, Practicing Offender Supervision and four European Norms, Policy and Practice. This approach picks up the challenge posed by Toney and attempts to provide a wider view of Offender Supervision on the grand scale that is Pan-European.

The second chapter — Experiencing Supervision — provides a consolidation of the knowledge available, from a pan-European literature review, of offender experiences of different forms of supervision and how others: friends, neighbours, employers and importantly families interact with this process. The chapter also considers the perspectives from both the victim and also the public, judiciary, media and politicians. Whilst a comprehensive review was undertaken it is clear that not all European jurisdictions have been represented with some countries, predominately from Southern and Eastern Europe not able to contribute. The overview provides a springboard to further analysis of the perceptions of offenders who are subject to supervision. It is clear from the work presented that the experience of supervision is variable depending on the jurisdiction in which the offender resides. It is also clear that supervision is seen as an 'effective practice'⁴ in the literature review but that more research is required to better understand the perceptions of offenders subjected to supervision of this nature.

The third chapter — Decision-Making and Offender Supervision

1. See <http://www.cost.eu/>

2. Tonry, M. (2006). Purposes and functions of sentencing. *Crime and Justice*, 34 (1), 1-52.

3. p.6.

4. p.41.

— considers not how different countries apply supervision sanctions but rather the practice of decision making around those sanctions. This focuses on three phases: pre-trial, sentencing and release. Each of the three phases considers the legal/judicial process and the empirical issues. The judicial sections consider the main judicial modalities in which the Offender Supervision measures can be applied in the different jurisdictions covered. There is also an overview of the different parties involved in this decision making process — this demonstrates a wide and varying approach to how these types of decisions are made. The empirical section provides an overview of the most important empirical studies on decision making and Offender Supervision in the different European jurisdictions. This analysis provides a wide ranging view on how decisions are made and by who, a clear deferential can be seen and provides the reader with a level of knowledge and sense of scale of this issue. In summary the literature in this area is scarce and is limited to the number of countries examined. The study has led to a broader understanding of the type of factors that influence decision-making in the three phases of the penal system which have been identified.

The fourth chapter — Practising Offender Supervision — could have listed the methodologies employed by different jurisdictions but instead focused on the 'collection and synthesis'⁵ of the available empirical research. There was a specific focus on the roles, characteristics, recruitment and training of practitioners as well as the interaction between practitioners and other professionals. There was also a focus on the delivery, practice and performance of Offender Supervision. The role of technology and the tools deployed in the

delivery of Offender Supervision and finally the management, supervision and regulation of practitioners and their practice. This chapter provides an assessment of the available literature, in summary it is difficult to identify empirical studies which could be said to have an impact on practice and policy. This suggests that there is much more research that could be conducted into this very important area, with a specific focus on the impact that those supervising offenders could have on them and the impact on recidivism rates across the European community. The chapter provides a summary on other future research projects including; a better understanding of practice and to better understand the relative neglect of Offender Supervision discourse within the public at large.

The fifth chapter — European Norms, Policy and Practice — considers how a pan-European approach to key aspects of punishment seems to have developed. With a rejection of the death penalty, a consistent approach to prisoners' rights and the Committee for the Prevention of Torture seen as a strong monitoring body, this chapter considers the extent of punishment and supervision enforced outside prison, which is the community sanctions as sentences and supervision measures before or instead of trial. As expected this chapter raises more questions than it answers. The chapter does provide a view from the Council of Europe who have disseminated a set of standards for this type of supervision, with a promise from the authors to further explore if this is the case. It also demonstrates that there is significant confusion over a pan-European approach to commonality in a criminal justice arena. It will be interesting to see how this work is followed up.

In conclusion this book provides a good introduction to the pan-European challenges to providing consistency to the supervision of offenders. The deployment, management and policy development are complex when 503 million citizens from 28 member states are subjected to one system that varies so widely. The book demonstrates the rapid scale of the development of offender supervision but it highlights significantly the issues that academics and researchers need to grasp to understand fully the impacts on the person and on wider society, the likelihood of reducing recidivism rates, especially as supervision is seen as a cheaper alternative to custody. This book would be suitable for those studying this field and those who are interested in the development of Offender Supervision, it also provides an insight for practitioners on what might be coming to the UK in the near future.

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Book Review

Preventing Violence in Australia: Policy, Practice and Solutions

By Andrew Day and Ephrem Fernandez (eds.)

Publisher: Federation Press, Australia (2015)

ISBN: 9781862879942

Price: \$69.90 (Australian) £30 (\$65 Australian dollars)

The book neatly describes its own purpose: for all of those who are interested in understanding and preventing violence in Australia (book cover). In reality the book is a broad collection of essays from leading academics in Australia and New Zealand examining the whole spectrum of violence which takes place in the home, in the

5. p. 98.

workplace, schools, Aboriginal communities, in the context of alcohol and substance abuse, mental illness, amongst youth, from a victim and perpetrator point of view and just about every other dimension one might consider. Whilst the writers are commentating on Australasia and its many faceted communities much of the work is relevant to the Western World in general.

The book is a rare attempt to draw together the various disciplinary and professional perspectives on how we might approach the task of preventing violence in one particular part of the world. Amongst the experts in violence prevention are forensic, clinical and developmental psychologists, criminologists and sociologists, social workers, specialists in public policy, law, and education. Important lessons are presented with relevance to almost any community. Whilst violence may seem a perpetual if not unstoppable aspect of human behaviour, the book not only offers hope in terms of drawing out what is current best practice it also explores some myths around the subject. The first three chapters focus on putting into context violence from the perspective of victim and perpetrator, and for society as a whole. For example homicide rates have been falling in Australia for more than three decades and seem to have settled at a level common to most European countries at about 1.2 per 100,000 population, albeit territorial differences exist with Northern Territory reaching 5.7. As is true with the rest of the world violence is largely a male phenomenon, particularly serious violence; males constitute 80 per

cent of the perpetrators of homicide and 60 per cent of the victims in Australia. Australia like many of its comparator countries with distinct Aboriginal populations has around 5 times the homicide rate amongst this group.

There is a fascinating chapter which follows the unique work of the Australian Homicide Project (AHP), which conducted interviews with 302 homicide offenders across all states over a three year period. Amongst the snap shop information: more than a quarter of perpetrators killed an intimate partner, a similar number killed a complete stranger. The median age of both perpetrators and victims was about 34 years. Perpetrators were likely to have unusually high scores in relation to attitudes to spousal abuse, trait jealousy and insecure attachment style. About 15 per cent of perpetrators had mental health issues in the 12 months prior to the homicide, and astoundingly 17 per cent of perpetrators who later killed an intimate partner attempted suicide in the 12 months prior, with 14 per cent having separated from their partner in the month just prior to the homicide. As with many crimes, alcohol and drugs play an important part: 81 per cent of strangers and 54 per cent of intimate partners died whilst the perpetrator was under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Equally victims were almost as likely to have been reported by the perpetrator as also using drugs or alcohol at the time of the homicide. Not surprisingly more than 80 per cent of perpetrators indicated no prior plans to kill the victim

A later chapter examines the close connection between alcohol and violence per se and looks at the

attempts of legislators to try and control for this particular risk factor, concluding that licensing restrictions, pricing and opening hours do in fact impact on alcohol consumption and its indirect impact on violent incidents. Interestingly female perpetrators of violence showed a 49 fold increase in risk whilst under the influence of alcohol in one study.¹ A further study² showed that blood alcohol content at 0.19 or higher, significantly increases levels of violent behaviour amongst men compared to men consuming moderate amounts (0.11 or less).

A further chapter examines the complex issue of indigenous family violence in the Torres Strait Islands. Again the impact of alcohol here is highly relevant and attempts by authorities to control this issue. The Torres Strait Islands are a series of very distinct almost unique communities that bridge the ancient anthropological and physical gap between Australia and Papua New Guinea. The islands have developed diverse and equally complex traditions to deal with personal conflict and violence. One study by Colman Brunton³ observed the use of elders as peace makers deriving their practice from a tribal tradition where aggrieved parties came together in a semi-mock public fight in front of families and relatives where blows were exchanged in a ritualistic manner but rarely resulted in serious physical injury. The islands in question report unusually low homicide rates compared with other aboriginal groups. This type of Restorative Justice is based on the principle of kinship, with the ultimate aim of restoring balance to the community by allowing parties to express a range of emotions,

1. Eronen, M (1995) 'Mental Disorders and Homicidal Behavior in Female Subjects'. *The American Journal of Psychiatry*, 152(8), 1216-1218.
2. Murphy, CM, O'Farrell, TJ, Fals-Stewart, W & Feehan, M (2001) 'Correlates of Intimate Partner Violence Among Male Alcoholics Patients'. *J Consult Clin Psychol*, 69(3), 528-540.
3. Colman Brunton (2014) Mornington Island Restorative Justice Evaluation, Draft Topline Pilot Fieldwork Results, [prepared for The Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, Canberra], Colman Brunton National Data Collection, Social Policy and Evaluation Research, Brisbane, View 23/04/14 [restricted circulation]. [Final Report pending, subject to approval by Dept of PMC].

seek restitution (sometimes monetary) through acts of acknowledgment of wrong doing by the perpetrator. Mediators made sure the proceedings were appropriately balanced and order maintained. Mediators were chosen because of their relative position or standing in the community. Expressions of anger and sadness were important parts of the process. The project and study concluded that the most effective method of reducing family and community violence was through investment in and strengthening of communities rather than external interference.

No book of this kind can avoid a discussion of what works to prevent violence, and so several chapters are dedicated to this theme. Australia like the rest of the Western World has experienced general declines in rates of crime, but less so violent crime. Toumbourou et al.⁴ explain this in terms of the different dynamic for Youth Violence. Australia seems to have seen a greater rise in Youth Violence and subsequent victimisation of the same group. The comparison is put into perspective: in the USA the rate is 400–500 per 100,000 youth population aged 15–24 compared with Australia's 711–880 per 100,000 in 2009.⁵ Part of the difference is explained by large declines in the USA which has not been matched in Australia and might be explained by rates of alcohol use in Australia⁶ relative to the USA. Four principle reasons are given for this difference: community inequality; family conflict and parenting risk factors; school risk factors; and alcohol availability and early age alcohol use. In all four areas Australia has seen a significant worsening in recent

years; recommendations are made for improvements and initiatives in all areas drawing on international best practice and local initiatives that have been found to work. One of the main conclusions is the lack of a cohesive national response; particularly for youth is a major deficit in Australia.

Two chapters worth noting examine New Zealand's (Chapter 10) experience of treating the seriously violent in custody and the disappointing lack of continuous support from New Zealand Authorities to fully complete the research associated with evaluating the effectiveness of such programmes which have suffered from a stop-start approach over the last 30 years, despite some strong lessons and promising results. The second (Chapter 14) is the inevitable examination of domestic violence against women — now a key (if not the biggest) driver of crime in both Australia and New Zealand. Despite significant growing awareness of the subject, helped by campaigns such as 'white ribbon', the chapter concludes that 'treatment for perpetrators are still in their infancy and evaluation results are mixed' (p. 214).

The final two chapters focus on future policy and opportunities using local and international examples with some useful illustrations for policy makers that highlight cost benefits of some sample early intervention programmes. One programme stands out: The US Nurse Family partnership (NFP) home visiting programme aimed at mothers which is reported to reduce crime by 38.2 per cent.

Overall I found the book accessible, succinct and well structured, allowing me to expand my knowledge in this important

area. The book is particularly relevant to Criminologists at Undergraduate level and above, but would also help practitioners and programme developers working in this space.

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Book review

Youth and Crime (4th Edition)

By John Muncie

Publisher: Sage

ISBN: 978-1-4462-7486-6

Price: £28.99

Youth and Crime aims to create an informed readership who can delve beyond the headlines of the almost constant information flow about young people and crime. It recognises that politics, intervention initiatives, the media and academics can provide a myriad of conflicting or misleading information about the propensity, severity and attitudes to crime of young people. Overall, however, the aim of the book is more about exploring adult reaction to how young people and crime is depicted in society, as opposed to the experience of young people per se. The author goes as far as stating that the most serious harms to society are not afflicted by young people at all. Yet despite this there remains parts of young people's behaviour that are singled out as significantly problematic. The key grey area regarding young people appears, according to the author, to be whether young people who engage in particular behaviour require a social welfare or criminal justice based response from society.

4. Chapter 4.

5. Australian Bureau of Statistics (2012a) *Crime Victimisation, Australia 2010-2011*. Catalogue Number 4530.0. Australian Bureau of Statistics, Canberra, Australia.

6. Toumbourou, JW, Hemphill, SA, McMorris, BJ, Catalano, RF & Patton, GC (2009) 'Alcohol Use and Related Harms in School Students in the USA and Australia'. *Health promotion international*, 24(4), 373-382.

To highlight this, Professor John Muncie notes in his preface how each edition of this book has been rewritten during a different period of significant tension and national focus on how to manage young people that are engaged in criminal behaviour. The first edition in 1998 was released as the first secure training centres (for 12 to 15 year olds) were opened and there was concern about persistent young offenders. The second edition was released just as the Antisocial Behaviour Act was being given royal assent in 2003 and the third during a panic about hoodies, gangs and knife crime in 2008. As this edition is released, the country is experiencing a period of austerity and there seems to be less political focus and public furore around young people and crime.

The book comprises of ten highly detailed chapters. They are deliberately and explicitly set out as a series of lectures which will be familiar and comfortable for the academic and student readership. They include cross references to other chapters and a web based resource, study questions and 'boxed' pieces from original sources. The chapters cover the history and representation of youth crime, academic theories of youth crime, young people as victims, youth cultures, social policy and strategies towards youth crime and international comparisons.

The most interesting and challenging chapters include the first on representations of youth crime. The author's main argument in this chapter is that both youth and crime are social constructs that are perpetually changing, driven by an irrational fear of adults that is promulgated by media interests who use youth crime as a mainstay of their regular output. Not shying away from controversial topics, an analysis of the media furore surrounding the James Bulger murder is given early in the chapter. The chapter demonstrates how the

more unexpected and violent an incident is, the more likely it will provoke high profile and more news coverage, which in turn, encourages a widespread view that all young people pose a significant risk to society. This despite the fact that a child murdering another child is extremely rare. John Muncie quotes the estimation that there are only likely to have been 33 similar cases since 1748. However, the juxtaposition of childhood innocence and childhood evilness is just too tempting to the influential media and uncritical masses that consume it.

This challenging and persuasive style, where the social norm is turned on its head, is replicated throughout all of the chapters. Most powerfully this is presented in a convincing chapter regarding young people as victims. It highlights the abuse and violence young people are exposed to going beyond normal comparisons to include national and international neglect, such as child trafficking and soldiering. There are also two chapters on the welfare and justice responses to youth offending. These chapters highlight society's apparent obsession with punitiveness, despite most legislation over a significant period of time putting the welfare of the child at the centre of all intentions. The chapter also explores how the welfare response comes under fire from across all political persuasions, whether that be the criticisms of 'too soft on crime', misusing 'treatment' to restrict liberty or denying full 'due process' in normal justice procedures.

In conclusion, this book does achieve its aim of providing a sound basis for a critical readership of the information available about young people and crime. The book is very well set out to appeal to academics and students in particular, but the compelling style of writing, coupled with extensive references and examples for wider sources

throughout the book ensure that it will also appeal to practitioners.

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Book Review

Different Crimes Different Criminals. Understanding, treating and preventing criminal behavior

By Doris MacKenzie, Laure O'Neill, Wendy Povitsky and Summer Acevedo.

Publisher: Elsevier, Anderson Publishing (2006)

ISBN: 9781593453343

Price: £31.99

Different Crimes, Different Criminals opens by explaining its title is in recognition of the differences that exist among offenders and their crimes. As anyone who works in the Criminal Justice sector can confirm, our clients are far from a homogeneous group. The book is written on the premise that there is no singular classification system or theoretical perspective to adequately describe all types of crimes and criminals, and this message is clear throughout the book. Each chapter discusses offender characteristics, theories dominating the relevant research and aims to provide a critical analysis of the material. Although the foundation of the book is to highlight differences, each chapter is written in a reassuringly familiar format, allowing the reader to easily dip between different chapters or sections if they so wish. This is particularly helpful given the size of the book (over 300 pages) and makes the content more accessible to the reader.

Chapter One sets the scene and explains how the book grew out of a graduate course entitled 'Psychology and Crime' where students were asked to

Select one type of crime or criminal, and examine the literature. They were asked specifically to: (1) discuss the characteristics of the offender who commits this type of crime; (2) report on the theoretical perspective that is most helpful in understanding this type of offender; (3) review the research on prevention and/or treatment of this type of offender, and (4) evaluate research on effectiveness of treatment and prevention programs. (p. 2).

It is reported that the essays submitted were so 'outstanding' a decision was made to combine them into a book. Helpfully the chapters formed were also reviewed by experts in the field in order to ensure accuracy. In addition the book has been successfully edited to enable it to become more than just a selection of essays; it is a helpful resource and collection of information.

The book is predominantly founded as a criminology resource, however it takes a multi-disciplinary perspective by reviewing sociological, psychological and biological theories and research. It is split into six main sections: (1) relational crime, (2) sex crimes, (3) youth crimes, (4) complex motivations, (5) special offender population and (6) the conclusion reviewing what has been learnt and the future of criminology. Within these sections exist a series of essays, each given its own chapter. Within 'relational crime' chapters explore infanticide, domestic battery and stalking; within 'sex crimes' chapters explore child molestation and rape; within 'youth crime' chapters explore violent juvenile offenders, juvenile drug offenders and gangs; within 'complex motivations' chapters explore serial murder and arson and within 'special offender population' chapters explore violent offenders with schizophrenia and white-collar crime. The chapters in the book

were chosen by the editors as they are varied and of current interest to criminologists. Some chapters chosen, however, are possibly more focused towards the lay person and general public, for example Chapter 10 'serial murder'.

What I liked best about this book is that although it is predominantly an academic textbook, it is also user friendly and contains special features; such as 'In The News' examples, case studies and helpful boxes separate from the main text with breakdowns of theories or classifications, tables of the relevant research and even advice on what to do if you are a victim of certain crimes. The result is an easy to read book, peppered with examples. However, this does not dilute the information contained within the text, which takes a serious viewpoint on many topics. For example, promoting the need for evidence based treatments and evidence based decision making with Criminal Justice settings.

Although each chapter covers a different area there are some common themes throughout the text. For example, in reporting on evidence based treatment approaches, a general theme is that treatment based upon cognitive behavioural theory is frequently seen as most successful, several offender characteristics are common across chapters, and likewise for the theories explaining criminal behaviour.

As a UK based reader one point that must be noted is that this book was written and edited in the USA, and it is clear throughout it is based on the US Criminal Justice system. Examples used, terminology and studies referred to are predominantly American. Some information is, however, easily transferable to other countries and cultures, such as the UK. However, due to differences within Criminal Justice systems this is not true for all the content. Therefore, whilst the

book is an interesting and informative read, not all of the information contained is relevant to a UK Criminal Justice setting. This should not deter readers, but is important to note.

The overall message of the book is that whilst there may be some similarities between different crimes and criminals there are also many differences, urging that 'theories of crime and criminal behaviour, as well as prevention and treatment strategies, must be designed with an awareness of the wide variety of different crimes and different criminals' (p. 8). Parallel to this, authors acknowledge the 'ongoing discussion in the field of criminology over the specialization of offenders and whether individualized treatment programs are necessary based on crime type' (p. 313) and comment that they 'do not take a stringent stance on offender specialization' (p 314). The message of this book is not groundbreaking, but serves as a good reminder to those working in the field or a good introduction to those who are interested in this area.

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Book Review

Offending and Desistance — The Importance of Social Relations

By Beth Weaver

Publisher: Routledge (2015)

ISBN: 978-1-138-79972-1

Price: £90.00

Since the turn of the century, the study of how offenders move away from criminal behaviour and activity to an ultimately offence free lifestyle, or desistance, has been enjoying a surge of academic and political popularity. Acting as catalysts, the seminal works of

Shadd Maruna¹ and Laub and Sampson² have encouraged criminologists to research and scrutinize the termination of delinquency; rather than adopting the more traditional approach of the observation of the onset of crime. This shift in focus has led to some very interesting research projects and has helped academics and those in the criminal justice sectors to begin to understand the processes that offenders go through when they do eventually desist. These studies vary in subject and methodology, ranging from the study of life sentenced offenders in the community, the cultural aspects of desistance, the desistance of female offenders and (more rarely) the desistance of sex offenders.

With this book, Beth Weaver has significantly bridged a gap in the knowledge of how offenders begin, persist and desist from crime, whilst linking together the concepts of social relations, structures, the role of the individual, reflexivity and agency in this process. By adopting a life course methodology, Beth has explored the lives of six men who formed part of a notorious Scottish gang called 'the Del'. This unique exploration takes the reader through each of the men's histories and she affords every one of them a chapter in their own right. This allows for a full account of their story and a detailed analysis of every journey from onset to desistance. The reader is absorbed into the *underworld* of the gang and the men come alive on the pages as their individual personalities ring through and it becomes clear that the route of moving to an offence free life is a very individual one. Beth's use of splitting up the gang into their individual parts helps the reader to understand this individuality and it

makes the stories told all the more effective. *Offending and Desistance* really demonstrates how difficult it is for people with entrenched criminal behaviours, who come from deprived areas and who have to move away from their own town with the intention to create a clean slate for themselves, really is. Some of the men succeeded in their quest to move on whilst others were not so successful.

Ultimately, Beth Weaver's book has contributed more than just stories to the literature of desistance, as she set out to reveal 'the role of a co-offending peer group' (p.2) in the desistance process. Her conclusions show how the dynamics within the gang (trust, co-operation, looking out for each other, support etc) can be mirrored when they want to shift their lifestyle choices and move away from this type of life. The relationships they had whilst they offended acted as bonds in the desistance process. Weaver agrees that all of the men supported each other in different ways, at different times and to differing degrees, but the reciprocation of this support meant the men responded as a collective rather than individuals. This aspect of her work is purely inspirational, as she has introduced each man separately and then brings them together in the end. This allows the reader to appreciate how their individual lives, their own identities and their own journey's could not have been so, without the others. Each identity is shaped by each other, each interaction and every negative or positive experience affects the development of desistance and each case is unique. Even in a group as close as 'the Del', Beth Weaver's book allows practitioners to appreciate the difficulties people face when they want to work together to desist.

The unique nature of this book's methodology and the findings within, make it a useful addition to the desistance literature and is a must for those with an interest in this area. It is essential reading for criminology academics, criminal justice managers, students and those who want to understand more about desistance from crime and its multifaceted nature. Those people who work in the probation service, resettlement services or in a face to face role with offenders would also find it useful, as the book helps to give another side to the offender journey; a side which is rarely looked at and so often misunderstood.

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Book Review

Reconceptualising Penalty: A comparative perspective of punitiveness in Ireland, Scotland and New Zealand

By Claire Hamilton

Publisher: Ashgate (2014)

ISBN: 978-1-40-946316-0
(hardback)

Price: £70.00 (hardback)

One of the big issues in international criminology over recent years has been that of punitiveness. In particular, an identified global trend towards more emotional and expressive political and media discourse about crime, an expansion of prison populations, lengthening of prison sentences and even the intentional harshening of conditions and impoverishment of regimes. This has variously been

1. Maruna, S. (2001). *Making Good: How Ex-Convicts Reform and Rebuild Their Lives*. American Psychological Association: Washington DC.
2. Laub, J.H. and Sampson, R.J. (2003). *Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives: Delinquent Boys to Age 70*. First Harvard University Press: Harvard.

described as 'new punitiveness',¹ 'penal populism',² 'the punitive turn'³ and even a 'culture of control'.⁴ Much of this work has taken a grand, macro-level perspective, shaping the contours of broad developments and themes. The 'lonely prophets'⁵ who have developed these ideas have sought to alert students, practitioners and others of the potentially illiberal nature of contemporary reform in crime and justice.

In this book, Claire Hamilton of Queen's University, Belfast offers an alternative perspective, attempting the ambitious task of building an empirically based framework for understanding punitiveness and applying this to a comparative study of three relatively small, developed nations: Ireland, Scotland and New Zealand. In doing so, she draws upon seven different aspects of criminal justice in which punitiveness can be observed: policing; procedural protection for defendants; use of imprisonment; juvenile justice; prison conditions; post release controls; and, death penalty. By taking such a wide, multi-dimensional view, a range of different policies and developments can be seen, which are sometimes conflicting and contradictory in their direction of travel. Hamilton also explores the distinctive features of each jurisdiction that may account for some of the variations in practices. These include factors that increase the risk of punitiveness including: political structures and practices; the role of expert and evidence-based policy; the history of race relations; and, national media characteristics. She also examines protective factors that ameliorate punitiveness,

including legal cultures and membership of the European polity.

Overall, this book offers an important expansion and corrective to the current body of work on punitiveness. Its first particular contribution is to offer a detailed, comparative, empirical account of the spread of punitiveness in criminal justice. This moves the subject area beyond macro-level theory into a more grounded account of practice. The second achievement is to give a proper emphasis to the importance of local history and culture. Global trends, including those in the criminal justice field, do not sweep away all that has gone before creating a homogenised world, but instead broad international trends interact and intersect dynamically with local practices. It is this process which is vividly brought to life in Hamilton's work.

This book will be a valuable addition to the field for those with an academic interest in the globalisation of criminal justice or in the 'punitive turn'. For the more general reader, this offers a means for critical reflection on developments in policy and practice, with all of the complexity and contradictions, opportunities and threats that entails.

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Book Review

When the Innocent are Punished: The Children of Imprisoned Parents

By Peter Scharff Smith
Publisher: Palgrave Studies in Prisons and Penology, Palgrave-Macmillan, New York (2014)

ISBN: 978-1-137-27090-0

(hardback)

Price £61.75 Kindle edition,

£65.00 hardback

Against a background of penal populism the impact of incarcerated parents on their children has been largely overlooked. Thus, Scharff-Smith, a senior researcher at the Danish Institute for Human Rights makes an important contribution to knowledge on this issue. The main focus of the book is on Denmark, yet, other jurisdictions are occasionally mentioned including the UK, Norway and Sweden. Throughout, Scharff-Smith fills the gaps in our awareness on this topic, redressing the silences surrounding children, their rights, and how they cope physically, emotionally and mentally with the imprisonment of a parent.

The book is divided into three major sections (comprising 17 digestible chapters in all): Prison, Society and Prisoner's Children; Children of Imprisoned Parents: their Numbers, Problems and Human Rights, and, Prisoner's Children: From Arrest to Release of Their Imprisoned Parents; followed by a further section containing a brief conclusion.

In the first section (Prison, Society and Prisoner's Children) comprising of Chapters 1 — 3, the author evokes the anguish of children witnessing the arrest of a parent. The experiences of children when visiting parents in jail are also explored (Chp 1). The focus of chapter 2 concerns the human rights of these children, imploring that their best interests should be given paramount importance. In chapter 3 a brief historical perspective is given as to prison and its destructive effects on families. Overall the

1. Pratt, J. Brown, D., Brown, M., Hallsworth, S., and Morrison, W. (eds) (2005) *The new punitiveness: Trends, theories, perspectives* Cullompton: Willan.
2. Pratt, J. (2007) *Penal populism* Abingdon: Routledge.
3. Muncie, J. (2008) *the 'punitive' turn in juvenile justice: cultures of control and rights compliance in western Europe and the USA in Youth Justice* 8 (2) p.107-21.
4. Garland, D. (2001) *The culture of control: Crime and social order in contemporary society* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
5. Loader, I. and Sparks, R. (2011) *Public criminology?* Abingdon: Routledge.

chapter is concerned with the impact of stigmatisation on prisoners' families, an issue (states the author) begging further research which could perhaps lead to changes around sentencing policy.

Section two covers chapters 4–6. In chapter 4 Sharff-Smith reveals that we do not know how many children have parents in prison, yet, this issue could easily be amended. The author states that if we knew, then changes could be made to sentencing policy that could better fit the best interests of these children. Chapter 5 is concerned with the fact that in many cases (though not all) the incarceration of a parent has profound negative consequences for children, one example being behavioural problems. In fact, it is made clear that, as numerous prisoners have low levels of education, suffer from mental illness and have drug and alcohol issues and the majority are from the lowest income groups, many of the children of those incarcerated find themselves in a 'problematic family situation' (p.58). Moreover, several of these children are from single parent families (often with little or no familial support) prior to a parent being jailed and will then find themselves placed in care as a result of a parent's incarceration. In this section it is also revealed that when the children of prisoners experience separation from a parent it can affect them in a range of ways varying from beneficial (dependent on circumstances) to traumatic. However, 'Gender is believed to be a factor in how children handle parental imprisonment' (p. 59) and aside from the observation that in general children feel guilty for whatever their parents have been jailed for, boys are more likely to act up and show distress thereby attracting attention/help more easily whereas for girls, the opposite may be true, resulting in depression and anxiety. Scharff-Smith also underlines a surprising aspect of the Norwegian, Danish and Swedish

criminal justice systems (surprising given their alleged liberal stance) being that during the remand period solitary confinement is the norm 'for 22–24 hours every day, with minimal access to psychological, meaningful social contact...[exposing] people to a number of negative effects, including anxiety, depression...' (p. 61) therefore contact between children and 'parents can be extremely difficult.'

Chapter 6, one of the more substantial parts of the book, explores the rights of children and the impact of three specific processes on the children of incarcerated parents (specifically focussing on the rights of the child) beginning with arrest, followed by sentencing, finishing with an investigation into the impact of actual imprisonment. Articles within the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as other declarations, charters and conventions concerning human rights are examined here. Overall, the main thrust of this chapter is that diversion from prison be practiced to serve the best interests of the child and their primary care giver (usually a female, thereby underlining arguments around the pains of imprisonment for mothers).

Section three comprises the largest section of the book incorporating 10 chapters. In chapter 7 the author begins to focus in more detail on the arrest of parents through the eyes of children, police, and social services. Protocols relevant to arrests and the ways in which trauma can be reduced for children during these occasions is discussed. Chapter 8 explores the stress and disruption to families and individuals caused by remand imprisonment and uncertainty arising for all involved due to the situation, especially regarding long-term remand. Chapter 9 then investigates post sentencing issues, yet, this chapter is extremely brief and doesn't appear to add much to what has

already been stated in earlier chapters. In chapter 10 a range of potential problems concerned with children visiting parents in prison are explored; for example: safety, difficulties around transport, length of visits etc. The remaining chapters focus on the following issues: maintaining contact (especially via home leave for prisoners), use of mobile phones, texting and the internet (chp 11); what happens when visits do not take place (chp 12); when contact is undesirable (chp 13); the situation when dad or mum returns home (chp 14); children residing in prison with parents (chp 15) and, prior to a conclusion, the impact of penal populism on the children of imprisoned parents (chp 16).

Whilst thought provoking and insightful this research may have benefitted from investigation into the children of marginalised communities such as the Roma which (alongside other members of Gypsy Traveller communities across Europe) are known to be over represented in prisons. Moreover, throughout there is some repetition of facts without acknowledgement of this by the author/editors. Nevertheless, these shortcomings do not diminish the overarching argument here that if we continue to ignore the experiences of the children of incarcerated parents then as a consequence of what is referred to by Sharff-Smith as administrative exclusion we risk damaging children's perceptions of the State, justice and legitimacy. Moreover, these children remain 'forgotten victims': overlooked within societies that appear to place support for punitive measures against offenders above and beyond concerns for the best interests of the children concerned in this scenario.

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