

PRISON SERVICE JOURNAL

September 2017 No 233



Reviews

Book Review

Fragile Learning: The Influence of Anxiety

By David Mathew

Publisher: Karnac Books (2015)

ISBN: 978-1-7822025-9-2

Price: £40

Rapid advances in technology and the resulting ubiquity of the internet have accelerated the development of a society that seems both aggressively fragmented, and yet interconnected to an unprecedented degree. As a result, twenty-first century learners and educators are presented with both challenges and opportunities unique to our time. *Fragile Learning* is a collection of essays attempting to explore, from a psychoanalytic perspective, how learners and educators cope with a range of demands and circumstances against this backdrop of modernity.

David Mathew, with contributions from former University of Bedfordshire colleague Susan Sapsed, seems well placed to make that exploration. A prolific writer, he has published academic, journalistic and fictional works on various subjects including psychoanalysis, distance learning, prisons, and online anxiety. His writing style is fluent and accessible, except for some of the sections dealing with psychoanalytic theories: here the reader is made to work a little harder. Although I have lived in a therapeutic community that uses a psychodynamic approach, I came to this book with limited formal knowledge of psychoanalytic theory. Perhaps the difficult language employed in such passages is to some extent an occupational hazard of engaging with the discipline of psychoanalysis, but I don't think the

language of psychoanalytic interpretation needs to be as dense as it is at times in this book.

The 15 chapters of this book are non-sequential essays not originally intended for publication as a volume, and the book has at times a shapeless, disjointed feel as a result. The material is grouped into two parts, 'Challenges to Learning' and 'Online Anxiety', the latter being much the stronger. The connection of some of the Part 1 material to the stated themes of the book is tenuous at best, the first chapter being a good example. 'Prison Language' examines prison dialect and the functions it serves from a psychoanalytic viewpoint. Mathew was employed at a jail in an educational capacity, but few of his observations relate to the roles of learner or educator. The tone is not a little patronising—reminiscent of some intrepid anthropologist intrigued and delighted by partial acceptance among a tribe, and by unpicking their codes of interaction. Reading this as a prisoner, I felt quite badly stereotyped—or as Mathew would no doubt expect me to say, 'Man was vexed, you get me?' The psychoanalytic explanations for prison slang are interesting enough, but a poor fit for this book. The same accusation can be levelled at Chapter 7, in which we return to the prison. This time, Mathew uses a psychoanalytic approach to explain the anxiety produced by a visitor's non-appearance, and from this he launches an exposition around the future of psychoanalysis.

'The Stable Group' (Chapter 3) is another misfit. It was conceived as an attempt to 'apply both psychoanalytic and psychological theory to group dynamics and leadership' (p.45) observed in a

lively stable over a ten-week period. Mathew reports that this activity serendipitously furnished him with 'a wealth of insights about equine-human interdependencies, and the psychology of human interactions with horses'. Firstly, I suggest that he exaggerates his harvest—the period he observes is so uneventful as to produce musings that border on the inane, such as 'In the absence of palpable tension or anxiety, can this absence itself create and brew up tension and anxiety?' Secondly, both the intended and serendipitous findings discussed are again of doubtful relevance to the stated aims of the book.

These chapters and others in Part 1 feel as though they have been included to boost this volume up to book length. This is a pity as it threatens to detract from better material around them. Chapter 2 considers the anxieties experienced by international distance learning students in challenging circumstances, and Chapter 4 examines the ethical issues in problem-based learning on a Masters programme in Public Health, and the emotions and anxieties provoked by troubling case studies.

If Part 1 feels unfocused and patchy, Part 2 has more to recommend it. In it Mathew tackles topics including cyberbullying, the role of an online learning personal tutor, and how conflict can be harnessed as a tool to stimulate productivity. The ways in which learners and educators interact with the internet, the anxieties those interactions provoke, and the psychoanalytic explanations underpinning these responses inform these chapters. This is thoughtful and interesting work,

but it is hard not to think that the author could have taken the material from the essays of which Part 2 is comprised, and reformulated them into a sustained analysis, with different sections. Instead, these thematically connected pieces sit side by side with no acknowledgement of their neighbours, and the opportunity to build on or interact with analysis from previous chapters is lost. For example, in 'CE-Learning, time, and unconscious thinking' Mathew draws on the work of Klein, Bion, Freud and Lacan in discussing the anxieties bound up in learners' perceptions of time and memory—but also makes psychoanalytic observations about the student/tutor dynamic in online learning. The subsequent piece, 'The role of the online learning personal tutor' could clearly have picked up this thread and developed it; that this does not happen feels like an opportunity missed.

Ultimately this book stands or falls on the value of the psychoanalytic approach. To my reading, the approach is unevenly applied. While some chapters include sustained efforts to understand the research material through this lens, in other places it feels reductive and cursory. Where it was followed, I was often left feeling unsure that the psychoanalytic explanations had 1) been particularly convincing, 2) increased my understanding of the dynamic or anxieties under discussion, or 3) had served much in the way of useful purpose. For example, in 'E-Learning, time, and unconscious thinking' I expected the mapping of e-learning experiences onto a psychoanalytic model to conclude by extending the theory to imagine how the delivery of e-learning might be tailored to anticipate and alleviate anxieties predicted by the model. This didn't happen, reducing the purpose of the analysis to little more than an intellectual exercise. Mathew himself

comments: 'Psychoanalysis tells us much about the human condition, albeit largely at the level of metaphor. It is the charge of the educator to employ this knowledge, in order to improve the student experience.' (p. 175). More discussion of how this might look would have been welcome.

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Book Review

Transgender. Behind Prison Walls

By Sarah Jane Baker

Publisher: Waterside Press (2017)

ISBN: 978-1-909976-45-0

(paperback)

Price: £14.95 (paperback)

Sarah Jane Baker, as the book explains (p. vii), is a transgender woman serving a life sentence in a men's prison. She was formerly known as Alan Baker before her transition in 2011 and has spent over 25 years in prison having received a discretionary life sentence for the attempted murder of another prisoner. With a rise of interest in and acknowledgement of transgender prisoners seen through the introduction of Prison Service Instruction 17/2016, this is the first book to detail the experience of being a transgender female in a male prison.

The book is arguably divided into three sections. The first looks at the practical realities of being a transgender prisoner. This includes sections on cell sharing, make-up, clothing for transwomen, change of name and who to inform and applying for a gender recognition certificate. Also covered is advice on toilet use, how to cope with media attention, wigs and hairpieces, gender identity appointments and the use of hormones. In many respects these

short 'chapters' offer a bible for those prisoners undertaking a similar path to Sarah Jane.

The second section then looks at the real life experiences of Deanne (HMP Oakwood), Nicola (HMP Dovergate), Laura (HMP Downview) and the authors own story. These share the many traumatic experiences which these women have had to endure during their transition process. Many have experienced verbal abuse and some physical abuse. Nicola speaks about being 'laughed at, ridiculed and called many colourful names' (p. 79); while Sarah Jane reports a catalogue of physical assaults received from both prison staff and fellow prisoners. The postscript ends with a confession from the author of having performed her own bilateral orchiectomy.

The third section is made up of seven appendices which contain Prison Service Instruction 17/2016; gender identity clinics in England; suppliers to transgender prisoners (for clothes and other items); relevant magazines and books; transgender support groups; specialists in the field of gender dysphoria; and, other key addresses. In short it is a catalogue of useful information to help transgender prisoners circumnavigate themselves through a process where often there is very little external support. For this reason the book is useful for those prisoners facing this journey but I think is also useful for prison staff to try and help them understand the complexities of this process. The author argues that in many cases it is for the Prison Governor to decide on matters such as having female clothing and make up and having an awareness of this book and its contents may help Governors in this position to make better informed decisions.

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Book Review

An Introduction to Life-Course Criminology

By Christoffer Carlsson and Jerzy Sarnecki

Publisher: Sage Publications, London (2016).

ISBN: 978-1-4462-7591-7.

Price: £24.99 (paperback)

An Introduction to Life-Course Criminology is, first and foremost, a reference text which provides detailed explanations for this specific area of criminology. Christoffer Carlsson and Jerzy Sarnecki provide a vast history of the sub-field including the interrelation to, and input from, biology, psychology, sociology and economics and, of course, its deviation from 'traditional' criminology.

Carlsson and Sarnecki open with a comprehensive introduction which promises an in-depth insight. The authors begin with an explanation of Life-Course Criminology (LCC) which assumes little prior knowledge and yet remains stimulating and informative. They are clear to stipulate the distinction between LCC and other areas of criminology, namely that it is interested in the developmental aspects of crime and deviance. The introduction continues to present LCC's attempts to acknowledge the fluidity of criminal careers.

As truly effective social scientists ought to, Carlsson and Sarnecki highlight the involuntary inclusion of their own life-experiences in their work and understand that 'one's biography' can affect and be affected by their ties to 'the social structure of society' (p. 4). With this, the confidence of the reader is established and an effective and capacitating belief of sincerity from the authors help the reader to absorb their detailed explanations.

What may, most obviously, set Carlsson and Sarnecki's text apart from many others is their express concern with the moral constitution of their field. At a very early stage of their book, they make clear their understanding of the responsibilities to the subjects criminologists study and therefore, at least to some extent, represent. They explicitly say that there is a requirement to move away from 'highly abstract concepts that have little or nothing to do with the people and their situation' (p. 4). Although specific lexica will be required in almost all distinct areas of academia, it is worth appreciating the elitist effects of socially commenting on people in a way that, either unintentionally or otherwise, disqualifies those being studied from understanding the interpretations of the researcher. Considering the researcher is likely to require further participation from sub-cultures in longitudinal or subsequent research efforts, the respect shown to those being studied enables subjects to trust such analyses. There is a real sense of remaining loyal to the humanistic responsibilities of 'the social scientist.' Coming from a position of abstract topics to studying the most intimate parts of a 'subject's' sense of self, requires sensitivity and this is quite obviously reflected in Carlsson and Sarnecki's construction.

As a relatively inexperienced theoretical criminologist, it has been possible to alleviate gaps in constitutive knowledge of the field, through reading *An Introduction to Life-Course Criminology*. The authors, for example, have been able to explain the difference between specific study focuses and the use of the term 'General' when applied to theories in an accessible way. One criticism, however, can be made in the earliest, theoretical explanation contained in their text. Where Carlsson and Sarnecki iterate complex topics such as Gottfredson and Hirschi's *General Theory of Crime* (cited p. 32) with

as much detail and ability as they use for Moffitt's review on the taxonomy of life-course persistent offenders (cited p. 41), there is an overt dissimilarity between how the two are portrayed. At particular stages throughout their presenting of opposing methodologies, or the distinguishing of specific schools of thought, there is a highly noticeable weight to the side of longitudinal, fluid and rule based theories—as opposed to those which are 'general'. For example, 'what has been called 'The Big Debate' in criminology' (p. 12) is explained as resting on the Age/Crime curve interpretations for which most criminologists (LCC or otherwise) will be familiar with, however Carlsson and Sarnecki go on to refute that theorists *such as* Hirschi and Gottfredson disagreed, at all, with the dynamic characteristics of theories posited by Moffitt and Sampson and Laub, for instance. This aspect of the review can be regarded as hypercritical, especially when the thought into the construction of their book is so evident. One would hope that the research in which the authors so blatantly knows so much about, would be presented with passion for particular areas which they find fascinating.

An Introduction to Life-Course Criminology is a comprehensive manual for those striving to understand such a complex and human field. What is more, Carlsson and Sarnecki explain these intricate topics in a critically engaging way. The inclusion of disputed questions are balanced and unequivocally detailed, such as the contested claims of genetic risk factors in criminal propensity. They state that Benson's claim that '50 per cent of the variation in antisocial behaviour' being attributable to genetics is 'tentative' and, again, balance the argument with acknowledgement of 'gene-environment interactions' (p.79). Carlsson and Sarnecki continue to

explain some of the biological theory that seems to support such claims, with reference to biochemical and neurotransmitter relationships, which allows the reader to critically engage in their explanations rather than in a didactic manner.

For this reviewer, the ability to inform the reader of the subject—for which they obviously have expertise in—in a way that encourages solid social science criticism and responsibility on the part of the audience makes this work a stimulating and exceptional reference book. It is useful in both the bare facts and presentation of conflicting arguments; but, it is more valuable because of the example it sets in applying abstract theories to people. The authors respect the people they, and others, study. One hopes that the need to understand such groups stems from the need to improve the quality of life for society as a whole, and this should be at the heart of every budding social scientist.

Gareth Evans is an independent member of the Prison Service Journal Editorial Board.

Book Review

Convict Criminology: Inside and Out

By Rod Earle

Publisher: Policy Press

ISBN: 978-4-4473-2364-8

(hardback)

Price: £48.00

Convict criminology in the UK is a relatively new phenomenon. At the 2011 British Society of Criminology annual conference a small number of academics discussed the viability of setting up a Convict Criminology Group. In the last five years this group has

gone from strength to strength and has been largely responsible for introducing convict criminology into the UK. As the name suggests convict criminology is 'the study of criminology by those who have first-hand experience of imprisonment' (book cover). It is 'founded on the idea that people who have been through a prison sentence can themselves fashion distinctive contributions to criminology' (p.115). The book under review is the first sole-authored book on the subject and is written by Rod Earle, a Senior Lecturer in Youth Justice at The Open University. In 1982 he served a three-month prison sentence in HMP Norwich.

The book is sectioned into eight chapters, each of which start with interesting narratives which detail either the authors prison experience or the consequences of him having a criminal conviction. For example Earle explains the difficulties of attending an academic conference in the USA; how unlike his colleagues he had to apply for a visa, be interviewed at the US embassy in London and then was detained and interviewed at Atlanta airport. All went well, although the following year, despite applying for the visa in good time, his passport was returned with the visa, one month *after* the conference. Other vignettes describe prison overcrowding and prison work; relationships with other prisoners; how the author recognised one of the prisoners when years later he was researching in HMP Norwich; interaction with the police; and, the aging prison population. The final narrative in the concluding chapter details the facts relating to Earle's conviction.

The book is arguably divided into two parts. The first chronicles the early introduction and later development of convict criminology in the USA and then the origins and experiences of

convict criminology in Europe. The work and experiences of US convict criminologist such as Frank Tannenbaum, Saul Alinsky, John Irwin, George Jackson and Alan Mobley are documented. In Europe Earle traces the influence on convict criminology by academics such as Peter Kropotkin, Louk Hulsman, Michael Davitt, Terence McSweeney, Antonio Gramsci, Victor Serge and Mike Fitzgerald; although the latter never spent any time in prison. These three chapters are interesting and comment on the introduction and rise of convict criminology well.

The second part of the book then covers a number of topics, which although not directly related to the development of convict criminology, are interesting nevertheless. Chapter Five for example looks at the problems and stigma of having criminal convictions and details how the 'spent conviction' provisions in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 have largely been eroded by the Criminal Records Bureau. As Earle argues, 'a criminal record is for life' (p.86). Chapter Six looks at race, class and gender and Chapter Seven focuses on methodologies, epistemologies and ontologies. This latter chapter is important as it documents how convict criminologists with their unique experiences can 'establish a richer dialogue with broader criminological scholarship' (p. 116).

As more 'Learning Together' programmes are taking place in England and Wales, the number of convict criminologists in the UK could soon rise. Such academics are uniquely placed to contribute to criminology in ways which us 'normal' scholars are simply unable to and this book will help with the development of this important field.

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Book Review

Experiencing imprisonment: Research on the experience of living and working in carceral institutions

Edited by Carla Reeves

Publisher: Routledge (2015)

ISBN: 9781138790469 (hardback)

Price: £95.00 (hardback)

While those who live and work in prisons and other penal institutions are frequently discussed in public spaces, including the media, their voices are less often heard directly and unmediated. Equally the experiences of those people and the complex everyday dynamics of the institutions are rarely given the time and attention they warrant. Even within institutions, different groups often do not fully understand their varying experiences and do not necessarily know entirely what is happening in offices, on landings or in cells when they are not present. It is therefore welcomed that Carla Reeves, a criminologist at University of Huddersfield, has brought together this collection of international qualitative and ethnographic research on prisons and other carceral institutions.

There are a wide range of contributions. They examine prisons, probation and hostels. They address the experience of those being detained, those working within the criminal justice system, and the families of prisoners. They consider a range of developed countries, including United Kingdom, Australia, Portugal, Serbia, Israel, Finland, Canada, Germany, and United States. What the contributions share is an approach that seeks to engage directly with the lived experience of people in the criminal justice system, offering a sense of what it feels like to be within the system, the nature of the everyday social dynamics, and illuminate its entanglement with the wider issues of power and inequality.

The book is divided into three sections. The first is entitled: 'Cultures of imprisonment: stigma, identity and interaction'. It includes work that examines the experience of staff and prisoners. There is a particularly valuable contribution by Jennifer Sloan, who considers how masculinity is constructed and enacted in prisons in relation to work and employment. There is also fascinating work on 'foodways' by Amy Smoyer, showing how women in an American prison use food in order to express themselves, normalise their experience, and build social cohesion. The second section, 'Coping with the pains of imprisonment' includes research on how prisoners deal with a range of problems, including mental health, violence, ageing, and also navigate gender identity in a system designed around the needs of men. The final section is 'The boundaries between the inside and outside worlds', which has some of the most novel work. The chapter on how parents talk to their children about the imprisonment of family members has significance for practitioners, as does a further contribution that analyses and categorises prisoners according to their orientations and attitudes towards prison employment. Two research projects on approved premises, or hostels, including one by the editor, Carla Reeves, open up an area that is not often the subject of such close attention, but is nevertheless a significant pathway for many people being released from prison.

Carla Reeves and the contributors to this book are to be applauded for their shared concern for the human experience of detention. This is a book that has a broad range of material. While inevitably readers will pick and

choose those contributions that are most relevant to them, there is no question that any student, academic or practitioner would find something in this book to interest, excite and move them.

Dr Jamie Bennett is Governor of HMP Grendon and Springhill.

Book Review

Voices from American Prisons: Faith, Education, and Healing

By Kaia Stern

Publisher: Routledge (2015)

ISBN: 9781138819870 (paperback)

Price: £26.99 (paperback)

In this distinctive and provocative text, Kaia Stern sets out to 'dispel three myths' about prisons in America: that 'people in prison are not worthy of human rights', that 'people who work in prison are enemies of prison reform', and that 'our crisis of mass imprisonment is not everyone's problem and everyone's responsibility to change' (p.12). Concerning the latter of these two points, we are told, for example, that a third of Americans have family members that have been imprisoned and have worked in law enforcement. It soon becomes apparent that the author is most interested in the denial of human rights to prisoners. Of central importance to the book is the historical dominance of protestant religious orthodoxy. Rather than reject religion as a path to a just penal system, however, Stern invokes Barack Obama's controversial 2006 call for liberal progressives to recognise the existence of common values, and embrace the potential that less conservative religious beliefs hold for spurring positive social change.¹ Stern explains that her underlying purpose in writing the book is to

1. See <http://obamaspeeches.com/081-Call-to-Renewal-Keynote-Address-Obama-Speech.htm>, cited on p.2. Accessed 11 July, 2016.

draw the religious practices of mercy, love and forgiveness to the attention of secular prison reformers. Religion, she emphasises, is a paradox that 'simultaneously saves and damns, heals and harms, frees and yokes' (p.2).

Stern grounds her critique in twenty years experience teaching theological higher education courses in 12 prisons, and over 400 pages of transcripts from 15 life-history interviews with six former prisoner graduates of the Master of Professional Studies in Ministry programme at Sing Sing Prison, New York. Right from the outset, Stern locates her research within a critical criminological framework that focuses on exposing and challenging the injustices and counterproductive nature of imprisonment through the narratives and standpoints of prisoners. Interviewees were asked to reflect on their early life experiences, their experiences of studying theological higher education in prison, and how their wider prison experiences resonated with the official aim of the correctional department to be safe, stable and humane. The interviews lasted several hours and were otherwise largely unstructured. Stern's experiences of teaching in prison were useful to the extent that it facilitated her ability to empathise and communicate with her research participants. Through reciprocally reflecting on her own 'inside' knowledge of prison in addition to that of the interviewees, Stern adds that she was also in the rare position of being able to 'co-theorize' (p.7) and 'co-create' (p.8) new visions of criminal justice with her research participants.

From this methodological and epistemological position, the first chapters of *Voices from American Prisons* explore the historical role played by religion in: the consolidation of prison as a principle means of dealing with social problems; the shifting priorities given

to rehabilitation but more often isolation and retribution as the principle aims of punishment; and the creation of 'an institutionalized apartheid' (p.19), two thirds populated, for example, by people that earned less than \$2,000 in the year before they were imprisoned. We learn that traditional religious ideology has predominated on the whole, and with it the belief that wrongs can be righted and wounds healed through demonising offenders, and that individuals should be held personally responsible for their troubles and for their redemption. At the same time, however, religious ideology 'also contains the seeds of transformative possibility' (p.50). In place of the Augustinian notions of original sin and Calvinistic notions of predestination and total depravity that have come to dominate the American penal system, Stern encourages prison reformers to learn from the Abrahamic scriptures, which 'taught us through prophetic example to align ourselves with the isolated and condemned' (p.49). The current tragic state of American prisons, Stern concludes, is a crisis of religion as much as human rights.

The remainder of the book is dedicated to the voices of the six interviewees themselves. Following an overview of her interviewees' experiences of imprisonment at Sing Sing and other American prisons, the author focuses on the means by which the Master of Professional Studies in Ministry programme helped them to survive psychologically. Throughout the text, Stern quotes extensively from the former prisoners' accounts of pain and struggle, the first of which she organises along the classic themes of dehumanization, isolation and social death that students of American prisons will already be well acquainted. Where the book is likely to stand out most for Stern's targeted secular audience is in the themes she

draws from her interviewees' accounts of overcoming the pains of imprisonment. Principle of these are the themes of peace, personal integrity and service. The results of the programme cited in the book are certainly impressive. Of the 159 graduates released since the programme started in 1982, just 18 had returned to prison.

Voices from American Prisons should appeal to all researchers and prison practitioners interested in learning about the historical and contemporary influences of religion on prison and resistance to prison in the United States. It should particularly appeal to scholars interested in developing inside perspectives and collaborative ethnography, although some like the current author will wish the book had utilised the former prisoner voices to develop as much as illustrate existing theories. *Voices from American Prisons* will also particularly interest university teachers, again including the current author, that are involved in developing higher education courses in prison. In this case, some readers may question the general lack of attention that Stern gives to the benefits of prison higher education in itself until the concluding chapter. Had Stern's broader analysis of prison higher education come earlier in the book, the book's intended audience might have gained a stronger understanding of the specific benefits of religious education. Finally, some prison reformers will be left questioning why the book did not move beyond the matter of (religious) education as a path to transforming people's reactions to the pains of imprisonment onto transforming prison conditions themselves.

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Book Review

Key Concepts in Crime and Society

Edited by Ross Coomber, Joseph F Donnermeyer, Karen McElrath and John Scott
Publisher: Sage
ISBN: 978-0-85702-256-1
Price: £20.99

The Key Concepts series of books are billed as a valuable tool for students. Sage is a leading academic publisher and a reliable choice for both introductory and more in-depth resources. The contributors for the *Crime and Society* book in the series are all established academics with varied and extensive knowledge of western criminal justice, having undertaken research and academic work across the United Kingdom, Australia and United States of America.

Key Concepts in Crime and Society is an introductory level book with an average of four pages covering each topic. It serves as a good reference aid to be dipped into and prompts thought. The authors state their aim is to provide a critical analysis of each topic; a challenge to achieve whilst remaining informative and retaining an introductory tone. They meet the challenge well. In particular, the sections on 'prisons' and 'alternatives to imprisonment' provoke thought about the success of crime reduction initiatives and the challenges which arise from various aspects of society. Similarly, sections such as 'race/ethnicity and crime' and 'sex work' succeed in prompting thought about sensitive moral concerns and explaining complex issues whilst remaining concise and introductory.

The book is, perhaps unnecessarily, split into three sections; the origins of theoretical and social concepts, different types of crime, and responses to crime. It should be read with the introductory tone in mind so as to prompt further reading and ensure issues are not

misunderstood. This is particularly important with reference to theories such as deterrence and social control where there would be specific benefit of deeper exploration. In a practical sense, definitions are documented throughout the chapters and the contents is easy to follow but the lack of an index and glossary seems odd for a reference book of this nature. References are provided but links to further up-to-date reading would add value.

Although clearly written with students and academic courses in mind the book would prove useful too for managers and keen prison and probation staff as a reference point for key themes which transect our work. Wouldn't it be a great starting point if our new and existing prison officers, for example, were encouraged and enabled to explore 'key concepts' in their work through reading and research? With officer focused initiatives in areas such as safer custody and the 'five-minute intervention' developing at pace such resources as the Key Concepts series might be a complimentary resource for inquisitive criminal justice practitioners at all levels. Topics such as specific types of crime, gangs, prisons, alternatives to imprisonment and policing may prove particularly relevant.

This is a sound choice for an introductory guide to *Crime and Society*. One would be hard pressed to identify any topics missed. The book introduces influential criminologists and sociologists, approaches to research and practice, and provides both historical background and modern insight into current issues and practices. The authors also manage to refer to, and distinguish between differences across continents whilst remaining succinct and clear.

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Book Review

Dangerous Politics: Risk, Political Vulnerability, and Penal Policy

By Harry Annison
Publisher: Oxford University Press
ISBN: 978-0-19-872860-3
Price: £65.00 (Hardback)

A title like *Dangerous Politics* might be more suggestive of a John Grisham thriller than an academic publication, but with *Dangerous Politics*, Harry Annison has written a thorough and informative account of the construction, system wide effect and then eventual demise of the Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) sentence in England and Wales—and it also happens to be an accessible and compelling tale to follow.

It draws on over 60 in-depth interviews with key policymakers, to help tell the story of the development and impact of this indeterminate preventative sentence. In so doing, the book looks at the interplay between government, the Civil Service, the judiciary, civic society and indeed all the many and varied factions which directly and tacitly shape policy development. The book helps illustrate the extent to which law making happens, not in a theoretical world of omniscient political masters, but in a real world of flawed and human interactions, media influences and a tumultuous mix of other agendas which all play their part.

This book may be well placed to take advantage of a post E.U. Referendum spike in interest in the process of political decision-making and policy formulation. Indeed parallels between the Referendum and some key aspects of the IPP story: an under-represented public voice, a disregard for the views of academic experts and strong tabloid media pressure; suggest that the themes explored in *Dangerous Politics* really transcend the story of the IPP to speak to factors still extant and thriving in British political life today.

Dangerous Politics is also a comprehensively researched study of the penal and criminological issues around the concept of sentencing for public protection. Risk based practice and assessment of risk are examined here in depth as is the role played by prisons and what they can and can't do by way of rehabilitative intervention.

Throughout the book there is a rich range of quotations from some of the key actors that had involvement with the IPP that give a real sense of originality and proximity in the narrative. For academics and students in the field of criminology the description provided in the appendix to the book, which details the technique of 'elite interviewing', is also an instructive element for those interested in research methodology.

The approach taken in *Dangerous Politics*, of looking at one specific sentence in depth and over a time period which crosses political administrations, allows Annison to really focus in on how different aspects of the IPP interact with a changing environment. This vividly illustrates the ideological and practical influences that were at work. The book provides a clear sense of how criminological and penal theory and practice meet and interact in the sometimes opaque world of governmental policy development. Even for those more familiar with that world, *Dangerous Politics* provides a thorough case study of the introduction of a new sentencing measure, which illustrates, among other lessons, the importance of self-reflection by those involved and the need to be very conscious of which voices are 'in the room' and which are not, as policies are developed.

Dangerous Politics starts by setting the IPP in context, looking at the penal landscape and criminological literature of the time. It then examines the creation of the IPP, looking at the key drivers and the relationship with the Third Way

political ideology. There then follows a dissection of the response to the IPP from concerned actors (from practitioners to parliamentarians). Further sections look at the judicial response to the IPP, the amendment of the IPP and the final abolition of the measure, before drawing out connections to the relevant criminological, legal and political literature.

Dangerous Politics can be commended as an insightful and meticulously thorough consideration of the history and experience of the IPP. For those keen to understand the recent history of this part of the justice field it lets the reader see not just what happened but offers an intelligent analysis of why the IPP developed as it did, and as such it provides some potentially valuable lessons to inform future sentencing policy.

Graham Robertson is Head of Strategy and Policy in the Scottish Prison Service.

Book Review

The Routledge Handbook of White-Collar Crime and Corporate Crime in Europe

Edited by Judith van Erp, Wim Huisman and Gudrun Vande Walle, with the assistance of Joep Beckers
Publisher: Routledge International Handbooks (2015)
ISBN: 978-0-415-72214-8
Price: £65.00

This extremely impressive, detailed and contemporary collection of essays provides a fascinating and excellent commentary on a wide range of white collar and corporate crimes within the European Union. This edited collection presents a 'who's who' of critically acclaimed experts from a vast array of different backgrounds. The book is cleverly divided into five parts. The first part

of the edited collection entitled: 'Defining and measuring white collar and corporate crime in Europe' contains a selection of excellent chapters that provide an in-depth commentary on the definition of white-collar crime and its extent. This part of the collection provides a captivating discussion of the threat posed by financial crime and attempts to calculate its extent within the European Union. This is one of the most difficult questions that many academics and economists have attempted to accurately determine and a good attempt is made here. The second part of the collection is entitled: 'Historical perspectives on white-collar and corporate crime in Europe'. These three chapters present an excellent discussion of the origins of white-collar crime research in Europe, the association between corporate involvement in the Holocaust and the enforcement of white-collar crime. The third part, and most detailed section of the edited collection, is entitled: 'Contemporary white-collar crime and corporate crime in Europe'. This contains no less than thirteen chapters that investigate the impact of white-collar and economic crime in a very impressive array of European Countries including Hungary, Croatia, Germany, Iceland and Belgium. This section of the edited collection emphatically illustrates the threat posed by white-collar and corporate crime across Europe and the discussion of the 'landmark cases of white-collar crime in Europe' from pages 276 to 360 was very interesting and extremely original as many of the existing texts that have been written in the area have tended to concentrate on cases that have originated in either the United States of America or the United Kingdom. The discussion of landmark cases in the European Union concentrates on the development and discussion of six fascinating case studies that range from professional football, real estate fraud and corruption. These case

studies provide a detailed and refreshing review of a series of important white collar crime cases, clearly illustrating the threat this matter poses not only in the European Union, but also to individual Member States.

The first three parts of the edited collection cleverly lay the foundations for the fourth part entitled: 'Responses to white-collar crime in Europe'. I felt that this section was extremely refreshing as the majority of white-collar and corporate crime literature has tended to concentrate on responses in the United States of America and the United Kingdom. The first chapter by Paul Almond provides an interesting and fascinating discussion of the corporate homicide liability in the United Kingdom and European Union. This is followed by a chapter by Anthony Amicelle which concentrates on how France deals with tax transgressions, this is very timely

given the publication of the Panama Papers in 2016 and the increased action from the international community towards tax crime. The chapter by Joe McGrath discusses the enforcement and prosecution of white collar crime in the Republic of Ireland. This again, is an extremely topical aspect of white collar crime, more so, since several studies have questioned why in more developed economies such as the United Kingdom and United States of America, we have seen a decline in the use of prosecutions for white collar criminals and an increase in the use of financial penalties. This section of the edited collection also contains chapters that discuss whistleblowing within the European Union and the culture on company anti-corruption programmes. The penultimate section of this part discusses the response of law enforcement agencies to several white collar crimes including insider trading and money. The final section

of the edited collection: 'Anglo-American reflections on white-collar crime in Europe' provides an interesting commentary on white-collar crime in Europe and from an American perspective.

Each of the contributors and the editorial team have produced an extremely readable and carefully researched edited collection. Each of the chapters are meticulously researched and the writing is of the highest quality. This edited collection could become the definitive work on the subject areas of white-collar crime and corporate crime in Europe. This will be of great use to policy makers, law enforcement agencies, practitioners and students who are studying white collar crime.

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