

Howard Journal Online Student Reader

The Howard Journal has a rich heritage and contains a vast array of articles on a wide range of subjects relating to all aspects of crime and punishment, many of which merited serious consideration. The archives contain some exceptional pieces written by the leading names in international criminology; the realization that this endeavor might not be as easy as we first thought quickly dawned upon us.

Reading the report of the League's annual meeting (Available in the first edition of the journal in 1921) takes us back to the time when criminologists were often doctors, practitioners or interested amateurs. One of the editors can remember when there were no undergraduate degrees in criminology or criminal justice in the UK and only a few post-graduate ones. Now many universities boast a number of courses from Foundation Degrees to Masters Level in a range of crime related subjects from theoretical and applied criminology to more specialist ones such as policing, community justice and forensics. The growth of academic criminology has seen a burgeoning interest in all manner of eclectic subjects, and therefore we quickly realized that we would necessarily have to restrict ourselves where the focus of this reader was concerned.

The decision was taken to focus largely on the criminal justice process (specifically the role and functions of the statutory agencies of the criminal justice system) and we selected several headings to group articles together under with this aim in mind. We had to acknowledge early on that this reader would be necessarily selective and would not be a single text that students could rely on. This decision was made easier by the fact that the growth of the subject has coincided with the publication of a growing number of text books and websites to meet the demand for materials for these courses. Our aim was not to mirror these texts and produce a succinct one stop shop for students, but rather to show some of the best that the journal has offered and encourage students and lecturers alike to consider it a valuable resource when studying criminology.

We have given some thought to the articles presented here and they do not simply relate to one topic, but have the potential to be useful on a range of modules and in regards a range of subjects. In many ways this reflects our aim of providing both students and lecturers with appropriate and broad-based access to examples of the best writing in the journal on criminal justice issues over time that relate to their courses - both practical and theoretical. We selected material that we felt was informative, engaging, enlightening and innovative. Some of it is dated, but we feel all that appears here retains relevance and provides more specific reading that will complement knowledge gained from case materials and core text books.

Articles appear here relating to: policing, prisons, probation, victims, offenders, and the media and policy. Clearly the limits of space have restricted our selections, and there is much to commend many other articles that do not appear here. We hope that if students find the following useful they will themselves interrogate the Journals archive for additional material.

Policing

The first two issues of the journal carried small items supporting the work of women officers against attempts to cut them or limit their use to policing prostitution or women and children

and we shall return to such issues in future. But now jump forward to a very contemporary concern, anti-social behaviour.

In their article **Policing Anti-Social Behaviour: Constraints, Dilemmas and Opportunities** Sarah Hodgkinson and Nick Tilley introduce the 'problem' and analyse one Taskforce's efforts and effects. As they note:

the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 introduced anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs), curfews, parenting orders, and child safety orders. The Police Reform Act 2002 introduced interim ASBOs and ASBOs on conviction (or CRASBOs). The Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 saw the most far-reaching expansion of powers to tackle ASB including acceptable behaviour contracts (ABCs), dispersal orders (DOs), fines for parents whose children misbehave, parenting contracts, powers to close premises used for drugs (or 'crack houses'), and powers to tackle noise nuisance, graffiti, fly-tipping, fireworks, airguns, etc.

They found 'mission drift' and innovative uses of the legislation in their midlands town and found:

within the twelve-month period of the Taskforce's operation, there was an overall decrease in the levels of concern in the city, despite increasing numbers of recorded incidents. This finding of a positive change in community perceptions of ASB alongside little, or no, measurable reduction in recorded ASB incidents, is consistent with previous literature.

They set out a number of situational and social interventions but recognise the pressure on the police to tackle the issue in the Government's preferred way.

Turning now to a 'solution' rather than a 'problem' we introduce Les Johnston's look at the deployment of Police Community Support Officers in the Metropolitan Police. Interestingly,

although the main function of PCSOs is to enhance public reassurance, their recruitment is also linked to a second agenda. As a recent Home Office discussion paper stated: 'our direction of travel is clear – towards an engaged, responsive, accountable, truly representative local police service . . .'

So, reassuring the public on issues of anti-social behaviour and even terrorism but also delivering diversity, not an issue that troubled the Met or the League in the early days. It is in discussion of these issues that the article has additional merit as it illustrates the issues of ethnicity, its measurement and the hopes pinned on raising numbers of recruits from minority ethnic groups. All ethnic groups, including white, saw it as an opportunity to 'test the water'.

And the value of 'representativeness' is not guaranteed:

Commentators [...] have drawn attention to the fact that black police officers are sometimes as likely to hold negative stereotypes about sections of the black community as are white ones. As the following illustration shows, this may be no less true for PCSOs: 'The other day three youths were stopped by a PC and a PCSO and we knew one of them had drugs. The PCSO was black and immediately searched the black man and found the drugs. Later, the PC asked the PCSO why he had searched the black man and not the two white youths. The PCSO said: 'Well, you it's always the black man who has the drugs'. (Police inspector, Camden)

Both the problem of ASB and the solution of PCSOs are strongly associated with New Labour. In **Forcing the Issue: New Labour, New Localism and the Democratic Renewal**

of Police Accountability Eugene McLaughlin relates these issues to the ongoing issue of police accountability. Setting out the basics he notes:

The democratic structure of police accountability in the UK is premised on a constitutional settlement which allocates statutory responsibilities and duties to chief constables, police authorities and the Home Office. The Police Act 1964 attempted to balance the operational autonomy of the chief constable in relation to the accountability needs of national and local government. The 'new managerialist' inspired provisions of the Police and Magistrates' Courts Act 1994, which were consolidated in the Police Act 1996...

He argues that beneath the new 'localism' may lie a further centralising matrix but also possibilities.

In 2005 the Journal produced a special edition on the topic of Policing. We included Doug Sharp's '*Who Needs Theories in Policing?*', as it highlights what can be found in that edition but helpfully locates some of the ongoing debates concerning policing historically and theoretically. Also from that collection we have chosen Nigel Fielding's '*Concepts and Theory in Community Policing*' as it discusses this particular, if often ill-defined, form of (or discourse about) policing and the perennial problem of accountability.

One of the severest and ongoing, challenges to the police's legitimacy, and the issue of who they are accountable to came in the wake of the murder of Stephen Lawrence in 1993 and the report of Lord Macpherson in 1999 into the Metropolitan services handling of the case. We provide John Lea's '*The Macpherson Report and the Question of Institutional Racism*' (2000) which focuses as much on day-to-day racism involved in 'stop and search' as the 'institutional racism' identified by the report as contributing to the failure to bring the killers to justice.

Prisons

Anne Reuss notes that her article '*Taking a Long Hard Look at Imprisonment*' (2003) was informed by a desire to 'shed light' on 'the effects of prisons on individuals, and society and other penal/deterrent options which might be considered'. For us, it is an article which does just that, and is an excellent introduction to issues of imprisonment for students new to university and the subject, combining a succinct overview of penal theories with a more general debate about the state and nature of imprisonment.

Picking up a theme found in Reuss work, that the voices of prisoners are little heard as contributors to the evaluation of imprisonment, Steve Morgan's article '*Prison Lives: Critical issues in Reading Prisoner Autobiographies*' (1999) is an excellent introduction to some of the methodological problems that accompany reading accounts written by those convicted of crimes and incarcerated. Prisoner autobiographies are no longer sidelined in academic criminology in the way that they once were, and student readers may well be asked to discuss the issue of reading prisoners autobiographical accounts and to that end alone this article could be extremely useful. However beyond that Morgan's piece begins to lift the veil on imprisonment and allow readers a glimpse of the various ways that individuals make sense of the experiences of custody, and the different background factors that lead to people's incarceration. As a final point, while many of the texts Morgan used to examine the accounts of both 'cons' and 'straights' are now, sadly out of print, they remain available through university libraries and online sites and make good preparatory background reading for

students new to studying criminal justice, in our minds further meriting the inclusion of this article.

Finally on a rather different subject we include Ben Crewe's '*Prison Drug Dealing and the Ethnographic Lens*' (2006) which is based upon qualitative research fieldwork conducted in a medium-security UK prison for men. It examines the issue of prison drug dealing. The article highlights the methodological complexities of undertaking prison research, as well as presenting an informative and engaging piece that shows some of the realities of prison life and criminal activity. Crewe's piece is an excellent step toward challenging the 'insufficient knowledge' that we have about what he calls, 'the ordinary world of the prison' (Crewe, 2006: 349). Beyond that we would expect students of criminology to have to participate in modules on research methods, and Crewe's article provides interesting alternative picture of imprisonment to that which is normally presented.

Probation

The year 2007 marked a century of Probation (or more accurately it marked a hundred years since the Probation of Offenders Act was first passed by Parliament). That Act, born out of missionary zeal and religious conviction and a belief in the potential for individual reform introduced probation officers to courts. It also defined the probation officers duties which were enshrining the still well known (though subsequently abandoned) aim that the probation officer was to 'advise, assist and befriend' those who offend. By 1908 763 out of 1,043 courts had a probation officer, and subsequently Probation was to burgeon and prove, time and again, to be one of the most effective and cost effective means of dealing with those who broke the law.

While probation might long have remained one of the least well known (publically at least) of the criminal justice agencies, the service proved its purpose time and again when tasked with an increasing range of functions from working with offenders inside prison or upon release in the 1960's to delivering community service in the 1970s and introduce drug treatment as a means of reducing recidivism in the 1980s probation has long enjoyed a great deal of respect from many academic criminologists. Yet recent years have seen increasing debate about the role the service should play, what it should do, and what its philosophy should be.

Mantle's obituary (for it can be regarded as little else) of the probation service entitled, '*Probation: Dead, Dying or Poorly*' (2006) is a punchy 'Counterblast' article. The piece provides an overview of some of the major developments in recent years that the service has been subject to. Mantle's contribution is as good an overview of the contemporary debates surrounding the role and function of the probation service after the emergence of the National Offender Management Service (NOM's) a controversial merging together of the prison and probation service which fully came into effect with the National Offender Management Act of 2007.

Mantle's attempt to 'pick out some of the nails in probation's casket' (date, page) provides a succinct, but essential bleak overview of the contemporary state of the probation service. We selected it in the hope that it will give readers some knowledge of contemporary probation practice and the changes wrought upon it in recent years. For some such as Mantle himself so profound are the shifts that effectively probation (in its traditional, humanitarian sense) can be said to have largely expired.

Clearly not all academics are willing to accept probations passing yet, and while McNight's (2009) **'Speaking up for Probation'**, shares some of Mantle's concerns, it isn't willing to claim the historic ideals to which the service aspired, or the service itself expired. It arrives at a slightly less pessimistic conclusion than mantle's piece, though McNight clearly recognizes the probation service faces a profound challenge. Both articles clearly share a concern at the precarious position that probation work now occupies after the decade in which the traditional social welfare approach of the Labour Party were discarded in favour of a more deliberately populist and punitive responses to crime.

Victims

Often in popular discourse on crime the issue of victims and stories about victims are a central piece of crime news narratives. Victimization is so often presented in a linear, one dimensional manner, and many people will have extreme pre-existing ideas about criminal victimization and its nature. For that reason we selected an article that contrasts strongly with the punitive victim-driven discourse in UK press reporting associated with organizations like the Victims of Crime Trust. In particular, that organizations discussion of victimization is one which suggests that 'We do so much for offenders and so little for the victims' so as to set the two groups as mutually exclusive and binary.

Yet as Farrall and Maltby demonstrate in their article **'The Victimization of Probationers'** (2003) the 'victim offender overlap' is a real and serious one that meriting criminological attention, and when criminologists seriously investigate the experience of criminal victimization they find that there is often little that separates victim and offender, indeed the two categories are often one and the same. Beyond that their article gives an excellent historical, theoretical overview of the emergence in criminology of a distinct concern with victims and criminal victimization that will be indispensable for student readers.

Media and policy

It was tempting to select articles concerning the media's reporting of crime stories and its coverage of crime related matters (after all the journal has a rich pedigree to choose from publishing seminal work, for example on the construction of the Mod's and rockers by Stan Cohen before it was presented at the National Deviancy symposium or as his *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*). However, we decided upon a slightly different approach here, and instead elected to choose articles that raise more fundamental questions about criminal justice and the proper purpose of criminology, hoping to engage readers with a broader debate about the function and purpose of academic criminology.

While criminology is now extremely well established in U.K universities, there can be a great deal of variance in how the subject is thought, and what is regarded as the right and proper role of criminology. This has been shown in no less a forum than the British society of criminology conference, and perhaps highlighted most explicitly at the last annual gathering, where this year the conference convened under the title 'Mirror' or 'Motor'?, before explicitly asking 'What is criminology for?'

One obvious answer is provided by David Downes, who notes in his article '*What the Next Government Should Do About Crime*' that, 'criminology is well informed by both theory and evidence to offer governments important leads on how to address problems of crime and criminal careers more effectively', Yet as students will note, the articles previously presented in this reader are written by criminologists, and those pieces are often highly critical of government policy.

Moreover, the government (for example in the case of probation or mandatory prison drug testing) is often far from receptive when it comes to the advice provided by criminologists and instead seems to make policy based not on evidence but on perceptions about potential public popularity. If further evidence were needed to prove that assertion, then we feel Downes writing will provide it. Downes' article is now over ten years old, but there is still much to commend it. The piece first appeared in the Journal in 1997 produced and published just before Tony Blair's New Labour government won a landslide general election in the May. It was clearly intended to impart some criminological advice to the incumbents and the tone of the article is optimistic (indeed, it is easy to forget now the mood of optimism that accompanied that election triumph and the general feeling that things could change, and change for the better). However, we now find ourselves over a decade on and once again stand close again to a general election. Yet now, there is perhaps far less to be optimistic about and when it comes to the advice of criminologists - unfortunately in government - no one seems to have been listening.

As Downes notes employment opportunities are the key pre-condition for both immediate and lasting reductions in crime, and yet just a decade on we have near 3 million unemployed and a real, indeed growing concern about long-term youth unemployment. The seeds of discontent have been sown, and we will likely reap the crop of higher crime rates in just a few years time. Moreover, New Labour has failed dismally to reduce inequality and exclusion that Downes suggested was a priority. Indeed quite the opposite; we are now an even more polarized society than when they took power in 1997. So too the prison population is higher than ever. Indeed, what is most stark about Downes excellent piece is how spectacularly his

recommendations have been missed, on almost every one the government has moved in the opposite direction.

So then, what should criminology be for? How can good sense prevail when it comes to crime? Groombridge is one of the few to have explicitly furthered this debate in relation to the public face of criminology. His article provides students with a picture of the place of academic criminology in UK national press coverage, and also outlines a debate about the proper function of criminology. '*Criminologist's Say*' engages in debate about the need for a well informed public criminology and the enabling conditions ever make such a shift a possibility.

Finally we selected an article that focuses upon the academic criminological community, Soothill and Peelo's innovative '*Constructing British Criminology*' (2008). It examines the way in which current, practicing criminologists perceive the historical development of their discipline specifically considering the texts which influenced them as individuals and academic criminologists. Soothill and Peelo note that in this task they were not seeking to establish 'tablets of stone that summarise all they [students] need to know', but rather through a desire to see criminology as a subject 'as a dynamic, evolving study' (Soothill and Peelo, 2008: 482).

This is a message that we would hope students will be receptive to, criminology is a fluid subject that is never finite and one of the skills that is expected is keeping ones knowledge base contemporary. Yet we also urge readers to see this article as an invitation, for within it are mentioned a plethora of fantastic works, which without exception are still of immense relevance. They are still worth tracking down and reading, as part of an 'intellectual journey through the terrain of crime' (Soothill and Peelo, 2008: 482) as such voyages of self directed inquiry will ultimately bring their own rewards (however for those student readers of a more instrumental persuasion, it is also likely to assist students in improving their grades). However, beyond that, Soothill and Peelo's article may give students new to criminology a good impression of the eclectic and diverse constituent components that concern scholars of the subject, and some historical grounding by way of knowledge of some classical criminology texts. It is engaging with those texts, and articles the likes of which appear in this journal that comprises a large part of the journey into academic criminology.

For every considered and informed academic piece there are more widely read tabloid stories of 'pampered prisoners' from the usual suspects at the redtop's, voicing their dismay over any proposals which they deem to be liberal, soft on crime, or contributing to unsympathetic to victims. Over the last decade, criminal justice policy has arguably pandered far too readily to populist rhetoric about the need to 'get tough', and we hope at least that after reading the articles here student readers might arrive with a more balanced picture of the realities of contemporary criminal justice practice.

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