

BOOK REVIEWS

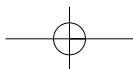
VICTIMS AND VICTIMOLOGY, RESEARCH, POLICY AND PRACTICE. Jo Goodey. Longman Criminology Series, Pearson Longman, 2005; pp. 292; ISBN: 0-582-43779-2

Victimology has recently become something of a buzzword in criminology, criminal justice and social policy over the past year. The United States has produced a number of texts and discourse on the subject but adequate, intelligent analysis on the many diverse issues that affect victimology has been severely lacking in this country until now. With exploration of the subject by Jo Goodey, who has a thorough background in victim-orientated research, a substantial British examination of the subject has been provided.

After years of neglect, victims are finally being recognised for their central role within criminal justice. This text thoughtfully and carefully contextualises this role. Goodey traces the emergence of victimological discourse from Mendelssohn in 1947 and examines the development of relevant philosophies and schools of thought. She brings this right up to date with victim-centred and pressure group led proposals to introduce legislation such as 'Sarah's Law' after the murders of schoolgirls Sarah Payne, and subsequently, Holly Wells and Jessica Chapman. This text reflects the aims towards improvement in policies and government promises being made to increase services and protection of witnesses and victims of crime.

Victimology can be studied under the aegis of a range of disciplines; criminology, sociology, law, social policy etc. This text deals with high profile national and international cases pertinent to the subject area in a comprehensive yet unpatronising manner. This, along with the way it deals with issues such as the fear of crime is particularly useful and beneficial for undergraduate students whose background knowledge of such cases is usually gained from media sources. They have little if any academic appreciation of the ramifications in the new field they are studying. Texts such as these help dispel myths and explain the impacts of specific cases on the criminal justice system and the public perception and reaction to its workings.

This text adequately covers a very wide range of topics within this subject area making it useful for many topics including restorative justice, fear of crime, research techniques in surveys such as the BCS, theoretical backgrounds of victimology and adversarial methods used in the English court systems. Although in some of these areas, greater depth of analysis would be welcome, the book gives readers an insight into the many and complex



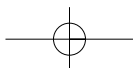
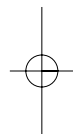
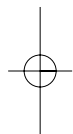
range of issues that the growing field of victimology can encompass. It recognises that victimology is a vastly and rapidly growing, influential area that is coming under increasing focus for criminal justice practitioners, academics and therefore students.

This is a very accessible, comprehensive and clearly written book. It carries no pretensions to be a deeply influential and analytical texts but gives an excellent and broad view of an area with complex themes and diverse impacts.

The particular features of case studies, suggested reading and chapter specific footnotes make it a very valuable, yet reasonably priced text book for students at all stages and levels of ability.

These make the book highly accessible and useful to students, practitioners and academics from a wide range of disciplines. As a lecturer developing a Victimology module it is a very welcome relief to have an all-encompassing textbook that is up to date and relevant to the UK.

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UNDERSTANDING VICTIMS AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE. James Dignan. Open University Press, 2005; pp. 238, pbk., ISBN 0-335-20979-3

In this book, Dignan draws upon his own research into the implementation of restorative justice interventions in the UK since the early 1980s. Although the book is explicitly intended to serve as an undergraduate text, like most of its companion volumes in the series to which it belongs, it takes an ambitious approach and offers a good deal to the more sophisticated reader. While it is up-to-date, it was completed before the passage of the 2004 Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act in the UK, although the author comments briefly on the Bill which preceded it.

Dignan discusses victim policy and academic victimology primarily as a context for his evaluation of restorative justice. He does so in a characteristically thorough way, albeit fairly succinctly, and offers a number of possible explanations for the increased political 'visibility' of victims of crime. Policy on victims is then addressed in terms of a gradual move from a predominantly welfare-based approach towards one based upon 'accommodating' victim perspectives and more recently on a limited attempt at 'enfranchising' the victim. The limitations of both approaches are addressed, and in the conclusion of the first part of the book, the author moves towards consideration of the possibility that restorative justice might offer more hope to victims and their advocates than tinkering with the existing system.

The philosophical and historical roots of the modern restorative justice movement are then analysed. In the process, some of the shortcomings of communitarianism and the other underlying philosophies are touched upon, particularly in relation to their failure to consider seriously the rôle of the victim in relation to restorative justice processes. Specific restorative practices are then described, and each is related to its philosophical or religious roots and to the political and social contexts in which it emerged in various countries. This is an interesting approach, and although one might disagree with some details, the analysis is a stimulating and productive one.

The penultimate chapter addresses 'Evaluating restorative justice from a victim perspective: empirical evidence'. Here, the author's experience as an evaluative researcher is a considerable strength: eschewing the sentimentality of some other writings about restorative justice, he subjects the claims of RJ initiatives to rigorous analysis using the published research. Most of the relevant material is accurately and succinctly summarised, with a welcome emphasis upon the implications for victims. Surprisingly, however, he does not refer to some of the critical literature on the difficulties of evaluating restorative approaches to youth justice in the UK (see for example Jones, 2002; Wilcox, 2003 and also Wilcox, this issue). There are also some gaps in the analysis of the research relating to Community Reparative Boards in Vermont, although this makes little difference to the accuracy or the general thrust of the author's analysis. The chapter concludes cautiously:

restorative justice works for victims in some ways and in some circumstances, but the research evidence is thin and more needs to be done.

The book concludes by building upon the research evidence to consider more broadly the limitations and potential of restorative justice for victims in particular, in the light of experience and of legal theories. Importantly, the needs and rights of 'non-standard' victims who do not conform to the 'ideal type' are highlighted here.

Disappointingly, the only references to Northern Ireland relate to the statutory introduction of a form of family group conferencing, and there is little discussion of the part informal, non-statutory and community-based restorative justice might appropriately play. Only passing references are made to other societies in transition such as South Africa, where RJ has played an interesting part in criminal justice reforms. There is also very little in the book about the victims of corporate and state crimes, although it has to be said that this is not a well-researched area.

Overall, however, this is a useful and thought-provoking book. It will serve both as an introductory text and as a work of reference, and it effectively challenges some of the assumptions commonly made about the likely benefits of restorative justice for victims of crime. If widely read, which it ought to be, it will stimulate questioning and discussion among the advocates and practitioners of restorative justice and those who work with victims of crime.

References

- Jones, D. (2002) 'Questioning New Labour's Youth Justice Strategy: A Review Article', *Youth Justice* 1(3): 14-26.
- Wilcox, A. (2003) 'Evidence-based Youth Justice? Some Valuable Lessons from an Evaluation for the Youth Justice Board', *Youth Justice* 3 (1): 19-33.

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JOINED-UP YOUTH JUSTICE: TACKLING YOUTH CRIME IN PARTNERSHIP. Ros Burnett and Catherine Appleton. Russell House Publishing, 2004; pp 176; £17.45, pbk. ISBN 1-903855-32-2

Ros Burnett and Catherine Appleton have taken on the ambitious task of providing, what they call, the 'bigger picture' of youth justice reform, since the inception of Youth Offending Teams under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. This book utilises in-depth ethnographic research they conducted over a two-year period within a single Youth Offending Team (Oxfordshire YOT). As identified by the authors, there have been few research opportunities available which allow such an in-depth look at the development and operation of joined-up working practices within this environment (also see Holdaway et al., 2001; and Bailey and Williams, 2000).

It is this approach to the topic that gives this book a very different perspective of youth justice, the perspective from those individuals living and experiencing the changes first hand. Of specific interest is the authors' use of personal narratives from practitioners responsible for the development and delivery of youth justice services. Therefore, it is not surprising that the authors indicate that this read is 'intended for contributors to, and users of, youth justice services ... readers are likely to be experts in one or more of the procedures and services that make up youth justice' (page1). It would be difficult for anyone with little knowledge or awareness of youth justice literature or practice to recognise and understand the many issues being presented within the text. As a result this book should be acknowledged for its new direction, approach and insights into a diverse and complex area of study while recognising the need to be read as a supplement to personal experience and/ or wider reading (also see Burnett and Appleton, 2004).

Overall, the book covers a wide range of diverse topics, complex processes and innovative developments within the field of youth justice and multi-agency practice. However, the book lacks sufficient descriptive narrative to link the different aspects of the story together and provide the necessary information to guide a new reader through the vast changes existing within the Youth Offending Team environment. As the reader progresses through the different sections of the book (or stages of the story), the content resembles an adapted report (utilising headings and subheadings), where issues and ideas are highlighted and briefly discussed, without providing the additional detail and broader context needed to fully comprehend their significance within the broader discourse of youth justice. This is why the knowledge and experience of the reader becomes essential, requiring them to make the connections and links to the information being presented.

The book has been divided into ten chapters, although there appears to be three clear themes presented: a brief contextual overview of youth justice; delivery of new interventions for young people (whether identified specifically within current legislation or developed within working environments); and a summary of the progress achieved within Youth Offending Teams and the lessons learned during these early stages of

development and consolidation. Within these chapters the reader can find a total of ten summary 'boxes', each providing a very clear and concise overview of information relating to: key developments in youth justice, legislation chronology, initiative descriptions, court disposal descriptions, government performance measures, etc.

Chapter 1 provides a very brief overview of the book's intention and purpose before describing the content of the remaining nine chapters. Unfortunately, the book suffers from an editing mistake that begins on the first few pages of the introduction and continues throughout the duration of the book. Specifically, the chapters and summary 'boxes' have been incorrectly numbered (likely a reference to an earlier draft of the text). This results in the reader being incorrectly referred to important sections of the book that fail to relate to the discussion being presented, leaving the reader to find the actual material being sought.

Chapters 2, 3 and 4 provide the first main theme of the book, that relating to the broader overview and context of youth justice services. Chapter 2 provides a very brief overview of the historical debates which exist within youth justice literature and practice during the 20th century before turning their attention to the developments within youth justice since the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Chapter 3 considers two key stages of development of the youth justice service: the formation and the consolidation of the Youth Offending Team. Within this chapter specific emphasis is given to the establishment and management of joined-up services, collaborative funding, appropriate leadership and direction, and boundary setting. Chapter 4 looks more directly at the individuals working within the Youth Offending Team environment and the transition of their work towards this new inter-agency approach to youth justice. The authors discuss the adoption of a new practice culture, emphasising team co-operation, evidence-based practice, a case-management approach, and continued emphasis on welfare needs and rights.

Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 provide the second main theme of the book, that relating to the delivery of a range of new interventions, whether they are legislation driven (as in chapters 5, 6 and 8) or practitioner driven (as discussed in chapter 7). Chapter 5 considers interventions aimed at offenders just entering the criminal justice system. The authors identify the full range of interventions aimed at the prevention of offending, although specific emphasis is only given to final warnings and referral orders. The discussion focuses on the development of joined-up practices, the application of restorative justice, and the engagement of the victim into these new criminal justice practices. Chapter 6 pays particular attention to the court procedures and practices that continue to operate within the magistrates' court and that are currently being adapted in response to changes being introduced under the new youth justice reforms. Again, the authors provide a very brief overview of the full range of dispositions available, before looking more generally at magistrates' power and flexibility in decision making, concerns regarding court efficiency, and developments impacting court culture. Chapter 8 considers those interventions aimed at the most serious and persistent offenders involved in the youth justice system, the

detention and training order and the intensive supervision and surveillance programmes. The authors are specifically interested in the application of joined-up working, to create what is anticipated to become a 'seamless' sentence within youth justice.

Chapter 7 is the most comprehensive chapter within the book, providing a much more detailed and meaningful discussion of the development and delivery of practitioner driven initiatives which address young offending behaviours. The chapter systematically describes a range of projects, the problems encountered during their development and delivery, and the lessons that were learned. The projects include: skilled parenting, mentoring, education, employment, mental health, reparation, driving, drug abuse, sex abusers, etc.

Chapters 9 and 10 provide the third main theme of the book, a summary of the progress being made within youth justice during these early stages of development and consolidation. Chapter 9 considers whether youth justice has been a success since the introduction of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, paying particular attention to reducing reconviction rates, addressing the 13 key performance measures introduced by the Youth Justice Board, and acknowledging the reality of joined-up working as reality and not rhetoric. Of specific interest is the discussion asking 'what kind of system is it?'. Burnett and Appleton, acknowledging the numerous critiques (both positive and negative) regarding the new youth justice system, recognise and emphasise the importance of those individuals at the front line of development and delivery within Youth Offending Teams. It is these individuals who have the very influential role in deciding what the answer to this question will be. Chapter 10 concludes with an overview of the main themes highlighted throughout the text and a brief list of the key learning points for each of these themes. These themes include: developing a multi-agency organisation, the core services, and the specialist projects.

It was the intention of these authors to provide the 'bigger picture' of youth justice reform, since the inception of Youth Offending Teams under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. Unfortunately, the reader may feel let down by this book as it fails to provide the comprehensive discussion needed to allow the reader to fully appreciate the intriguing and insightful research findings being introduced. The book presents as a missed opportunity for these authors.

References

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THE USE OF PUNISHMENT. Seán McConville (ed.). Willan Publishing, 2003; pp.278; pbk; ISBN 1-84392-033-6

The Use of Punishment, edited by Seán McConville is a collection of essays that were commissioned by the H.F Guggenheim Foundation of New York. This book seeks to bring together a variety of perspectives about the use of punishment. Evidently all of the ten contributors are well accustomed to thinking about the use of punishment in their professional roles. As a consequence, the potential audience would benefit from some initial knowledge in this area; this book is not for the novice reader into penal theory. The collection of essays comprises eight responses to the use of punishment ranging from theological, psychological, political and economical perspectives. This helps to reinforce and remind its reader that punishment is an unquestionable assumption in everyday life. Moreover, it also demonstrates the number of different practices and academic disciplines that are in constant deliberation about the value and role of punishment in the social world. Most of the additions have extensive literature reviews, which provide a useful springboard for further reading in the specific areas.

Alan Duce's chapter (1) provides a theological discussion based on historical and ethical perspectives navigated by the Christian faith. Duce, a prison chaplain himself highlights a number of dilemmas the faith forces upon him and others working in a prison environment. He warns of the 'misunderstandings about prison chaplaincy', such as having to deal with compromise, being forced to make judgements, and being one-sided. This is especially vivid in his analogy with victims. Prisons have dedicated religious orders who work in the interest of the prisoner, there is no such equivalent for victims of crime.

Huesmann and Podolski's chapter (2) sets out a useful summary, with a review of relevant literature of the psychological effects of punishment. There is an emphasis on children, rather than on adults. They illustrate how pervasive punishment is in the socialisation of individuals, which reiterates how key punishment and reward is in shaping our behaviours.

Mark Fleisher's chapter (3) outlines the findings of a longitudinal ethnographic study of a youth gang called the 'Freemont Hustlers' in Kansas city, USA. The sample in this study is diverse in terms of gender and ethnicity and which raises some important questions about gang membership and participation. This study realises the costs and benefits of the use of punishment in these young people's lives and evaluates some non-punishment interventions.

Marcellus Andrews' chapter (4) discusses the impact of economics on penal policy in USA. Andrews' emphasis here is the use of prisons as a mechanism for controlling crime. In particular Andrews argues that the cost and financial burden of running and maintaining prisons need to equal the benefits for crime control and reduction. Like Fleisher, Andrews recognises the remuneration of imposing and creating this type of crime control.

Richard Sparks' chapter (5) examines the relationship between public discourse and crime and punishment, in particular public insecurities about crime are vivid. Sparks talks about the 'problem of modernity' with specific focus of the impact of the media on the public's awareness of crime and punishment. Sparks argues that punishment is central to contemporary discourse, rather than that of welfare. Those interested in risk and crime would find this section of the book useful too.

Nicola Lacey's chapter (6) begins to extend debate between a communitarian approach to penal theory and practice. Lacey contemplates the usefulness of theory in practice orientated issues, such as the exclusion of victims from the penal process. The flaws of such approaches are expressed in the utopian view of community, in that the penal system is and can be accessed by all.

Young and Hoyle's addition (chapter 7) maps the 'birth' and prospective emergence of restorative justice. The authors provide a useful definition of a complex process and also a succinct summary of the development of restorative justice. Restorative justice is neither mainstream nor widespread and evidence suggests that there are pockets of restorative justice operating in society and not necessarily located to the criminal justice system per se; i.e. in schools with pupils. This section also, and I think usefully, identifies gaps in the provision and occurrence of restorative justice, in particular that youth justice appears to have been the pilot for restorative practices. Young and Hoyle wisely advise their readers to acknowledge the 'punitive bite' to restorative justice.

The final chapter (8) by the editor, Seán McConville discusses the philosophy of punishment, with meticulous emphasis on morality. This focus links significantly to Duce's chapter on the Christian approach to punishment. In addition McConville maps the evolution of punishment through a disciplinary journey from classical law, criminology, to social action. The future of thinking about and making punitive sanctions is evidently grounded into human consciousness and action and will therefore evolve and morph through both theory and practice.

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