

# British Society of Criminology Newsletter

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## Inside

### ***Race Matters***

*Contributions from: Rod Earle, Zoë James, Coretta Phillips, Becky Taylor, Timi Osidipe, Suzella Palmer, Alpa Parmar and Pamela Ugwudike.*

*Plus various news items from the BSC*

## Editor

Lizzie Seal

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# Editorial – Race Matters: An Introduction to the BSC Newsletter

**Lizzie Seal**, *Chair of the BSC Publications Committee*

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In their recently published article ‘Dear British Criminology: Where has all the race and racism gone?’, Phillips et al. (2019) argue that British criminology is institutionally white. They contend that race and racism are frequently significant lacunae in British criminological work. This absence has the effect of damaging the discipline’s analytical power. One pertinent example of how race and racism are ‘missing’ in British criminological research is the lack of attention to whiteness in relation to the perpetration of corporate and state crimes. This lacuna contrasts sharply with the ‘ready racialization’ of (conventionally understood) violent crimes, especially those committed by young people (p.4). The focus of British critical criminology has been largely confined to poverty and economic inequality, without acknowledging ‘the stark realities of racialized criminalization and punishment’ (p.10).

The theme of this edition of the newsletter is ‘race matters’ and it accompanies the recent founding of the British Society of Criminology’s Race Matters network: <https://www.britsoccrim.org/networks/race-matters-network/> The first article by Rod Earle explores how whiteness disguises the benefits of racism to white people. Part of this privilege is entailed by the racialization of crime and punishment and British criminologists need to grapple with – and highlight – this. Zoe James, Coretta Phillips and Becky Taylor highlight the neglect of attention to the criminalisation and victimisation of Gypsies and Travellers against the background punitive and exclusionary policies. This issue gains extra urgency as the most recent Conservative manifesto proposed further criminalisation of travelling communities. Timi Osidipe and Suzella Palmer argue that a public health approach to serious youth violence, which addresses a range of risk factors, has much to recommend it. However, as currently constituted, such policies and practices do not address the impact of systemic racism on BAME young people. Alpa Parmar and Pamela Ugwudike examine how the use of technology in criminal justice not only has the

potential to be racially discriminatory, but is also a means through which race is made and reproduced.

This year's BSC conference was held at the University of Lincoln and the conference journal can be found here: <https://www.britsoccrim.org/pbcc2019/> Mike Levi received the Outstanding Achievement Award for his body of work on organised and white collar crime. We include his acceptance speech in this edition.

Other notable criminological achievements this year include Michele Burman's CBE for services to criminology, exemplified by her work on gender, crime and justice. Andromachi Tseloni, Treasurer of the BSC, won the ONS Research Excellence Award 2019 for her burglary and security research. Congratulations both.

We have two obituaries in this edition: one for Maggie Sumner by Hazel Croall and one for Kit Carson by Fiona Haines and Dave Whyte.

I wish everyone the very best for 2020.

## Reference

Phillips, C, Earle, R, Parmar, A and Smith, D (2019) 'Dear British Criminology: Where has all the race and racism gone?', *Theoretical Criminology*: <https://doi.org/10.1177/1362480619880345>

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The logo for the British Society of Criminology (BSC) consists of the letters 'BSC' in a white, serif font, set against a dark blue rectangular background.The text 'British Society of Criminology' is written in a dark blue, serif font on a light purple rectangular background.

## Papers from the British Criminology Conference 2020

An Online Journal Published by the British Society of Criminology since 1995  
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If you will be presenting a paper at this year's conference the British Society of Criminology would welcome submissions to the 2020 edition of the online journal based on your conference presentation. We welcome contributions from Plenary Papers, Panel Papers and Postgraduate Papers. All submissions are peer-reviewed. The final deadline for submissions is two months after the end of the conference - 7 September 2019. The journal will be published in December 2020.

The journal is available free at: <http://www.britsoccrim.org/publications/pbcc/>

Please submit your paper via email to [info@britsoccrim.org](mailto:info@britsoccrim.org)

### **The small print**

Only papers presented at this year's British Society of Criminology annual conference will be accepted for review. Please indicate the category of paper (plenary, panel, or postgraduate paper). Papers must be written in English and will not have been published already, nor will they be under consideration elsewhere. All papers are reviewed anonymously by at least two referees. Each paper should come with a separate cover sheet containing: the title of the paper; word count; author's full name; affiliation; email address; institutional address; telephone and fax number; an abstract of 100-150 words; up to 5 key words; and a brief biographical note of 25-50 words. The maximum length is 6000 words, including notes and references. Articles must be submitted electronically to the BSC in Microsoft Word (or compatible format), typed in double spacing throughout, and with generous margins on all sides. All pages should be numbered. A maximum of three orders of heading can be used. Essential notes should be kept to a minimum. These should be indicated by superscript numbers in the text and presented at the end of the text. Lengthy quotations should be kept to a minimum. If over 40 words these should be indented, with shorter quotes kept within the body of the text indicated by quotation marks. Where possible, the page number for each quote should be indicated. Tables and Figures should be clearly presented and labelled. Sources and explanatory notes should be included if appropriate. Poor quality artwork will be rejected. Papers should be carefully checked for errors before submission. Authors are responsible to the accuracy of quotations and references, and for obtaining permissions and copyright clearances if appropriate. The Harvard-style referencing system is used within the text – for example, (Hughes, 2007) – with an alphabetical "References" list at the end (typed and double-spaced).

## Themed articles

### Little white lies: Whiteness, reflexivity, race and criminology

Rod Earle, Open University

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I was shocked when I read that the country of my birth was thoroughly tangled up in racism (Pierre 2013). Modern Ghana, I had thought, would have had no place for race. After all, it was the first country in Africa to declare its independence from British colonial rule in 1957, the year before I was born. But Ghana, it turns out, is divided along a colour line that prizes the lightening qualities of whiteness, a lightening that can determine access to jobs, higher incomes, prestige and position, just as it does in the UK. Perhaps it's got something to do with the fact that more than half the population of black Africa live in countries where English is an official language (Appiah 2004). Whiteness seems to be global in its power yet very personal in its meaning, invisibly forging a subjective sense of self and yet also capable of building geo-political alliances spanning history and continents.

Being born in Ghana I've always known I'm not black but my whiteness is not something I see easily in the mirror. If I look away from the mirror, I can see it in the story that took my Irish father and English mother to what was then called The Gold Coast to work in the colonial education service in the early 1950s. My birth certificate from Ghana's capital, Accra, has the words 'Gold Coast' crossed out in several places and Ghana hand written in ink above it. Follow the money, as the saying goes. That golden thread of whiteness breaks, unexpectedly, when I complete the 'place of birth' part of the application form to register for a PhD with the LSE in London in 2006. I get billed an astronomical fee as a foreign student, despite declaring my Irish nationality. 'Accra, Ghana' appears to have overridden the 'Irish' in the 'Nationality' box. And then the simplicity of the correction, my whiteness restored, the fee reduced. The wages of whiteness (Du Bois 1935) is a useful concept here, but no one's life is simply black and white.

Revising his first conceptualisation of the 'colour line', Du Bois (1910) asserted the problem of the colour line was the problem of whiteness, and whiteness is complicated. I live with the accumulated benefits of an emergent class system that crossed the Irish Sea centuries ago, went beyond the Pale and spread across the globe (Linebaugh 2019). In Africa, the Irish have always been unequivocally White even when to the English in England they have been a bit less than white, and possibly a bit Black (Ralston 1999). It is some of these personal and political complications of whiteness that I explore autobiographically in this introduction so as to help establish the significance for criminologists of the pulse of Empire that flows so silently through our discipline. Our engagements with criminology are formed through events we have experienced directly but write about infrequently because they are considered 'ultra vires', out of scope for being intimate, private or domestic.

### **No imagination but the nation: Whiteness**

Phenotypical whiteness and structural Whiteness are often conflated and regularly confused. What I see in the mirror is not causing divisions and hierarchies in one of the most iconic states of black Africa, a country where W.E.B Du Bois is buried, that provided a home to Maya Angelou and that made Frantz Fanon a government minister (James 2012). The Whiteness bringing this division and hierarchy to Ghana is functional to the structure of racial capitalism that survives the colonial period. Ghana is no one's Gold Coast anymore thanks to Osagyefo Dr Kwame Nkrumah, but the dreams of his generation of African leaders remain unfulfilled, frustrated by Cold War manoeuvres (Sherwood 2019; James 2012) and the obduracy of racial capitalism.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century Whiteness is assuming a mutely belligerent pose against the dawning realisation that the old martial rules of colonialism, 'Whites rule, non-whites are ruled over', no longer apply. This comes from a recognition that globalisation implicitly 'provincialises' Europe from its erstwhile pre-eminent position as the central and defining colonial force of the planet (Chakrabarty 2000). As a result, the political alliances of Whiteness have entered an unsteady state which brings them more into view and closer to personal experience. The phenotypical whiteness of prominent

political figures, such as Boris Johnson, Donald Trump, Nigel Farage and the British royal family recognisably aligns with the structural Whiteness of their political projects to make both profoundly unsettling.

Asking what we understand by whiteness is important because a central, founding principle of racism is the superiority of the white race, although this goes largely without saying (among white people). As James Baldwin (1998:122) points out '...there is a great deal of will power involved in the white man's naïveté'. Making explicit reference to whiteness challenges the disavowal of race as a prevailing, defining but unspoken feature of white identities (Garner 2007). This disavowal can only be disingenuous because for most of the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries the idea of whiteness was completely mainstream. It was essential, foundational and integral to the major political powers of Europe and the USA. Race was the language of international politics and domestic policy, openly and extensively referred to as an ordinary fact of life. Races, just as much as states or nations, were seen as one of humanity's foundational *political* units and were spoken of as such (Vitalis 2015; Lake and Reynolds 2008). The history of all the various nation states from north America, western Europe, southern Africa and Australasia were underpinned by racial ideas that licensed genocide, dispossession, exclusion and slavery. White frontier masculinities were valorised as representing and embodying the new democratic and utopian spirit of the age, 'liberating' all that came into their Imperial path. Race offered a theory of human hierarchy that licensed the brutality and violence involved in excluding from the fully human all those who were not fully white. The expansion of Euro-imperialism from 1884-1914 – sometimes referred to as the scramble for Africa – could not have been accomplished without it.

From Australia to the United States white men talked (and wrote) at great length and with great conviction, about themselves as a race, as 'white men' building countries for other 'white men' (Lake and Reynolds 2008). This is not a semantic accident or a kind of vernacular innocence. Whiteness, and ideas about the white race, were as explicit as they were central to such forms of transnational community. Whiteness was a widespread, self-styled form of transnational racial identification, an explicit and deliberate mode of subjective identification that crossed national borders and shaped global politics. It has only relatively recently lost its voice and come to be seen as the defining characteristic of political extremism, the atavistic trademark of



the political fringe. This political laryngitis silences its historical and political ubiquity and removes the conceptual handles that might allow us to bury it properly. It was only in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century that the grip of white supremacy began to be loosened and the widespread subjective identifications that propelled it through history became gradually less tenable and less publicly endorsed. This followed the defeat of fascism in Germany and the 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights which repudiated 'race as science'. However, the political implications of replacing the theoretical engine of race with social constructionism did not reverse the historical momentum of race because it has never been primarily propelled by scientific justifications.

The second world war finally, undeniably, exposed the horrific consequences and intrinsic violence of racism to European societies and sensibilities. Nevertheless, Aimé Césaire condemned white Europeans' complicity in the rise of Nazism as 'they tolerated Nazism before it was inflicted on them...because, until then, it had only been applied to non-European peoples' (Césaire 1972: 14), whilst Frantz Fanon described Nazism as 'a colonial system in the very heart of Europe' (Fanon 1967: 33). The legacies of the defeat of fascism are post-colonial but their implications for contemporary anti-racism remain contested and profoundly unresolved as Susan Neiman (2018) makes clear in her provocative juxtaposing of post-slavery USA and post-war Germany. Nowhere is this more obvious and problematic than in the disintegrating political consensus and infrastructure of the United Kingdom. The truth is that nobody's ways of being in the world are innocent of race, least of all white people's in Britain. Nobody's imagined community, their nation or any other form of fellow feeling is free of race.

### **Criminology's poltergeist and Europe's whiteness**

Few people will defend racism but many people continue to misunderstand and underestimate it. Whiteness operates as a form of collectively maintained ignorance for which there are a number of alibis to cover the way white people benefit from the subordinate status of black people. One of these is that racism is simply an individual moral failure, a flaw of personality or character rather than an economic, extractive, exploitative social relationship. Race, according to Avery Gordon (2008), is a haunting presence in our personal lives and social relations because its effects are everywhere felt but nowhere specified: the machinery moves while the engine is

declared dead. Black Caribbean pupils are more than three times more likely to be permanently excluded from school; those who identify as Black or Black British are four times more likely to be stopped by the police than their white counterparts; and in 2016 for young people aged between 16 and 24 years, the White ethnic group had the lowest unemployment rate of 12%, a figure which more than doubles when it comes to young people of Black (25%) and Bangladeshi/Pakistani (28%) backgrounds respectively (Nayak 2018). These patterns that recur throughout the social structure indicate that even as race becomes a discredited concept it continues to structure society. From segregated housing to selective criminal justice, race is experienced like a poltergeist – objects are moved by an unseen, inexplicable force for malign, life-limiting and unsettling effect.

The neglect of the way race produces tangible results from intangible sources restricts the development of ways of resisting and challenging its toxic social presence. Criminological scholarship needs better tools to bridge the gap between the ontological subjectivity of race and its epistemological objectivity; tools that can account for the way it appears as a solid ‘social fact’ in our work, but then disappears as a ‘social fiction’ from our personal lives. As is often the case, Stuart Hall put his finger on it when he reflected on how Marxism morphed into cultural studies in the Birmingham Centre for Cultural Studies in the 1980s:

We had to develop a methodology that taught us to attend, not only to what people said about race but... to what people could not say about race, it was the silences that told us something; it was what wasn't there, it was what was invisible, what couldn't be put into the frame, what was apparently unsayable that we needed to attend to (cited by Rodman 2006, in Smith 2016)

Making race and racism more intelligible involves the generation of narratives that can displace this functional silence, limit the productivity of the ‘invisibility’ of race. This narrative potential is radically under-developed in UK criminology (Phillips et al 2019). What spaces and places are there for focussing on and discussing race in criminology, what special conferences are held, what symposia are convened, what journals are launched, what Special Issues are curated, what teaching curricula are adopted or developed that address the recurring, resilient and pervasive presence of race and its mysteries? Unlike in sociology, and despite the proliferating sub-disciplines of criminology, these have hardly developed at all within British

criminology. This seems like wilful neglect or careless indifference to Stuart Hall's warning that 'it is only as the different racisms are historically specified in their difference - that they can be properly understood' (Hall 1980: 337). Without these specifics in the UK, the prevailing criminological understandings of race and racism risk becoming derivatives of, and defer to, the monstrous scale of the US experience of race, sheltering behind its grotesque penal brutalities (Phillips et al 2019). Exposing and condemning American racism tends to reproduce a deep seated and longstanding habit of minimizing and obscuring racism in Britain by contrasting it to the US, even when its racial disparities in criminal justice are greater than in the US.

### **Getting Africa in the house**

James Baldwin (1998:122) offers a few clues as to how we might begin, so late in the day, to look into our European souls to find an answer:

For the history of the American Negro is unique also in this: that the question of his humanity, and of his rights therefore as a human being, became a burning one for several generations of Americans, so burning a question that it ultimately became one of those used to divide the nation. It is out of this argument that the venom of the epithet Nigger! is derived. It is an argument which Europe has never had, and hence Europe quite sincerely fails to understand how or why the argument arose in the first place, why its effects are so frequently disastrous and always so unpredictable, why it refuses until today to be entirely settled. Europe's black possessions remained, and do remain, in Europe's colonies, at which remove they represented no threat whatever to European identity. If they posed any problem at all for the European conscience, it was a problem which remained comfortably abstract: in effect, the black man, as a man, did not exist for Europe. But in America, even as a slave, he was an inescapable part of the general social fabric and no American could escape having an attitude toward him.

Stuart Hall, lucid as ever, picked up on Baldwin's critical insight that White Europeans might have dodged the bullets that criss-cross the American racial divide, but they provided the guns and ammunition. Hall's evocation of the condition of 'being in, but not of, Europe' (Hall 2003) is richly suggestive of the proximities Europe's white people regularly refuse. Those proximities need a narrative thread as surely as any social fabric (Anderson 2018) and white people in criminology, such as myself, have to start somewhere, and perhaps with ourselves.

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# Gypsy and Traveller Experiences of Crime and Justice: A Neglected Minority in Criminology

Zoë James, University of Plymouth

Coretta Phillips, LSE

Becky Taylor, University of East Anglia

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Criminological interrogations of race have tended to operate within the binary of a black/white paradigm, albeit with an increasing focus on South Asian ethnic groups. A particular myopia has been the material positioning of Gypsies and Travellers, despite their long-standing socio-economic and political exclusion and experiences of criminalization. Historical accounts show that since the arrival in England and Scotland of Romani Gypsies in the fifteenth century, and of Irish Travellers in the nineteenth century, they have been associated with criminal offending. Accusations of palmistry, 'trickery' and sorcery, and prosecution under vagrancy and beggary laws ensured that Gypsies and Travellers faced discriminatory, and sometimes violent, state action well into the modern period (Ripton-Turner, 1887; but see Beier 1974, 1985; Mayall 1988; Taylor 2014). The emerging discipline of criminology was quick to integrate such assumptions: Lombroso believed that for Gypsies, as a biologically inferior savage and atavistic race, crime was 'not the exception but almost a general rule' (1884/2006: 175). Eugenicist understandings later designated Roma and Sinti as asocial criminals leading to their deportation to Auschwitz-Birkenau by the Nazis (Rafter 2008). Gypsies and Travellers have remained entrenched in popular, media and political imaginations as criminal predators, bringing property crime, violence, fraud, tax evasion and anti-social behaviour to settled communities. The stigmatisation and vilification of Gypsies and Travellers has been affirmed and augmented as they have become the subject of increased media scrutiny (Richardson, 2006). Yet despite five centuries of negative and stigmatising categorisation, there is surprisingly no rigorous evidence assessing the validity of claims of elevated rates of Gypsy and Traveller offending. Indeed, the recent Lammy Review (2017) into minority ethnic outcomes and treatment in the criminal justice system noted on its first page both the absence of robust data, and explanations of

why Gypsies and Travellers are significantly over-represented in the prison population.

There are no quantitative data on Gypsy and Traveller patterns of offending (Phillips 2017). Neither cross-sectional nor longitudinal self-report offending surveys have incorporated valid Gypsy and Traveller sub-samples so vulnerability to offending - regardless of whether or not it has been detected by the police - cannot be assessed (McAra & McVie 2010; Sharp & Budd 2005; Wikström & Svensson 2008; James 2014a; Jansson 2006). The risk factor paradigm would predict Gypsies and Travellers to be at greater risk of offending given their youthful age structure, low levels of literacy and educational attainment, higher levels of truancy, school exclusions, unemployment, and ill-health (McAra and McVie 2017; ONS 2014). However, these outcomes are often themselves linked to racism (Deuchar & Bhopal 2013; Powell, 2016). Archival accounts, oral histories of Gypsies and Travellers (e.g. Taylor 2008; Saunders 2000; but see Walsh, 2009), and ethnographic research (e.g. Okely 1983; Cemlyn et al. 2009; Greenfields et al. 2015; cf. Foley 2010) have consistently painted a picture of the oppressive policing of Gypsies and Travellers (see also James 2006, 2007), but less is known about their experiences of courts, probation and prisons (but see Donnelly-Drummond 2015, 2016; HMIP 2014).

Just as significantly, there are no reliable estimates of Gypsies 'and Travellers' criminal victimisation from property crime, fraud, violence, and hate crimes. The annual household Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) includes tiny numbers of Gypsies and Travellers, as evident in the Cabinet Office's 2017 Race Audit, and the CSEW excludes the at least 24% of Gypsies and Travellers estimated to live on sites or to be mobile (ONS 2014). This fundamental omission is particularly concerning given that Abrams et al.'s (2018) national barometer of prejudice and discrimination found 44% of respondents held openly negative views of Gypsies and Travellers, considerably higher than the 22% with unfavourable attitudes towards Muslims, whose vilification has seen them disproportionately the victims of hate crimes (Home Office 2013; see also James 2011, 2014a; 2014b; 2015).

The criminological notion of minority ethnic groups being 'over-policed and under-protected', so readily applied to black and Asian communities, needs to be considered with regard to Gypsies and Travellers (Bowling and Phillips 2002; Holloway, 2005; cf. James 2014a). Their experiences of offending and victimisation

need to be understood within the historical context of economic instability, political exclusion, and social marginalisation. Archival research and oral histories have demonstrated how Gypsies and Travellers have faced poverty, harassment and the ongoing threat of eviction with both their nomadic and settled lifestyles having been criminalized in an often brutal fashion. State power has long been evident in the use of bye-laws, injunctions against landowners, special constables and various surveillance mechanisms operating to circumscribe the nomadic lifestyles of Gypsies and Travellers seen to corrupt essentialist notions of place and belonging (Kabachnik, 2010; Mayall, 2004; Taylor, 2008).

By the 1960s it had become clear that Gypsies and Travellers were facing a calamitous mix of tightening legislation and profound socio-economic change, which fundamentally destabilised their relationship with sedentarist society (Clark & Greenfields 2006; Kabachnik, 2010; Porter & Taylor, 2010; Taylor 2008, 2014). Economic shifts saw the precipitous disappearance of many mainstays of Gypsy and Traveller livelihoods, with both the rise of a consumer 'throw-away culture' and harvesting mechanisation which hit many particularly hard. At the same time, mass suburban housing encroached on traditional stopping places while new, often discriminatory, planning controls and the 1960 Caravan Sites Act led to the eviction of Gypsies and Travellers from land they owned. Yet by the 1980s, official sites only partly met the shortfall in stopping places. Located as they were away from residential areas, sites were often near other stigmatised spaces such as waste sites, motorways and often constructed as gated and fenced 'ghettoes', they sent a strong signal from majority society and the state that Gypsies and Travellers were a neither welcome nor a 'normal' part of the population (Sibley 1981; Halfacree, 1996). All these changes translated into a hardening of attitudes and a widening gap between Gypsy and Traveller communities and majority society (Taylor 2014). When combined with the removal of the requirement for local authorities to provide official pitches, and further restrictions for mobile Gypsies and Travellers from the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994, this proved disastrous for Gypsies and Travellers (James, 2006; Porter & Taylor, 2010).

Given the historical weight of endemic racism towards Gypsies and Travellers then, it is timely to consider whether Gypsies 'and Travellers 'contemporary lives are lived in light of this past, through what Burt et al. (2012, 2017) conceptualise as 'racialised



world-views 'known to elicit offending in the case of African Americans (see also Unnever & Gabbidon 2011; cf. Belton 2004). This occurs as young people learn that deferred gratification does not lead to rewards for 'people like them', that the world is often hostile, and that social rules are applied unequally in society (Vanderbeck, 2005; Powell, 2016). This can promote impulsivity, immediate gratification, hostile views of society, and disengagement from conventional norms, all of which often precede criminal offending.

The recently ESRC-funded multi-disciplinary research project *Gypsy and Traveller Experiences of Crime and Justice Since the 1960s: A Mixed Methods Study* will provide the first systematic, quantitative, qualitative and historically grounded account of the crime and justice experiences of Gypsies and Travellers in England. The key objectives will be to understand, since the 1960s, Gypsies 'and Travellers' direct and vicarious perceptions and experiences of criminal victimisation, hate crimes and offending over their lifetimes, including whether subjective perceptions of racism and discrimination play a part in offending. It will also examine the impact of the pains of criminalization, policing, punishment and imprisonment on Gypsy and Traveller individuals and communities. To do this, the study will utilise a non-experimental mixed methods research design comprising: a crime victimisation and self-report offending survey; community and prisoner oral histories; archival analysis of material in public records offices and specialist collections; and interviews with professionals working with these communities, in two urban and two rural areas of England (<http://www.lse.ac.uk/social-policy/research/projects/gypsy-and-traveller-experiences-of-crime-and-justice-since-the-1960s>)

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# Serious Youth Violence in Britain: Is the Public Health Approach the Solution?

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That serious youth violence has increased significantly in Britain is self-evident. Its gravity as a national emergency is disclosed in different official and research reports (see, e.g. Grimshaw and Ford, 2018; HM Government, 2018; McNeish, Scott, and Ludvigsen, 2018; The Youth Violence Commission, 2018; The Centre for Social Justice, 2018; House of Commons, 2019; LGA, 2019). As it has been evidenced that urban areas across Britain are the worst affected, the county line narratives about young people's involvement in gang related violence and drug crime makes it more disconcerting (HM Government, 2011; Wigmore, 2018; Allen et al., 2019). The ethnic dimension, in the matter of young black males overrepresented as victims and offenders, is widely recognised (see, e.g. McNeish, Scott and Ludvigsen, 2018; Haringey Council, 2019; House of Commons, 2019; YJB, MOJ & ONS, 2019). Of late, young girls are appearing in statistics on serious youth violence (HM Government, 2011). These emerging trends calls for proactive and pragmatic policy responses and interventions.

Involvement in youth violence is attributed to an interplay of a number of factors at personal, community and society levels including but not confined to family breakdown, poverty, school exclusion, gang membership, poor mental health, problematic neighbourhoods, child criminal exploitation (CCE), child sexual exploitation (CSE) exploitation by criminal groups, poverty and victimization (Waddell, 2015; McNeish, Scott and Ludvigsen, 2018; Haringey, 2019). Whilst these risk factors in themselves are valid, there is a tendency to ignore the negative implications deriving from poorly conceived public and social policy responses as the focus tend to be more on the individual rather than the state's culpability. It is therefore not surprising that a number of reports on youth violence focus on these risk factors, with rather limited attention to government's actions and inactions. Indeed, a comprehensive analysis of serious youth crime has to include, for instance, the impacts of austerity measures on social provisions at local and national levels in particular and public sector services in general (see, e.g. Davies, Becket,

and Wyatt, 2019; House of Commons, 2019). This point is often raised by voluntary organisations that work on a day to day basis with affected communities and families as they see the direct impact of government cuts to services.

Clearly, government policy interventions are not producing the right results, as the offending and victimization rates remain high. For example, the cross government report on ending gang and youth violence (HM Government, 2011) and more recently the Home Affairs Committee report on Serious Youth Violence (House of Commons, 2019) both pointed out policy issues such as short termism, inadequate funding and resources and manpower. As stated in the House of Commons Report, *'over the last decade, many of the ties that bind communities together have been severed, from youth workers and neighbourhood police officers to community safety teams and safer school officers'* (p68). The Serious Violence Strategy 2018 is assuring in content in terms of attempting to balance prevention and effective law enforcement with measures such as early intervention, tackling county lines and misuse of drugs, support for local communities and partnerships, and law enforcement and the criminal justice response (HM Government, 2018; Pepin et al, 2018). A critical look at the strategy reveals the lack of understanding of the new trends and patterns emerging in youth violence. For example, the strategy does not specifically address issues of ethnicity and girls. Whilst it is mentioned in the report that these issues are outside its scope, it would have been useful to provide a direction on what is been done or to be done in relation to young black males and girls. Indeed, the statistics on serious youth violence and the criminal justice system responses to it show that the balance between welfare and justice has not been struck and this remains a persistent problem within youth justice system.

A public health approach to serious youth violence is now popular (Grimshaw and Ford, 2018). This is perhaps in response to the failure of youth justice policies and strategies. The public health approach is based on the idea of treating youth violence as a disease (Local Government Association, 2019). Following its success in Glasgow (the Violence Reduction Unit) there have been calls for it to be rolled out in local authorities across Britain (LGA, 2019; House of Commons, 2019). The benefits of this approach are immense, and it offers some practical solutions to youth violence such as the participation of new actors and practitioners, focus on

preventative measures, evidenced based interventions, long termism and targeting at risk populations and communities.

The public health approach is particularly useful in view of the evidence of the link between mental health and serious youth violence (Bereseford and Wood, 2016). Though the relationship between serious youth violence and mental health in England and Wales is considerably under researched, current and proposed interventions tend to be geared towards Cognitive Behaviour Therapies or Systemic Intervention Therapies that when taken together fit the public health paradigm which advocates holistic interventions. Theoretically, this seems a sound model for reducing violence amongst young people as well as treating the symptoms. While on the one hand cognitive behaviour therapies designed to deal with issues such as anger management, decision making, moral reasoning and social skills training, set out to change the mind-set or behaviour of the young person, on the other hand the systemic interventions are aimed at tackling the dysfunctional social environments associated with youth violence, such the peer group, neighbourhood, school and the family (Madden, 2013). In the former the young person is tasked with taking personal responsibility, the latter seeks to address a range of known external risk factors, forming a holistic approach.

However, much as the public health model in its current form should be seen as part of the solution considering the complexities around youth violence, the call for it to be adopted across local authorities in England and Wales may be premature. There are contextual issues that needs to be considered such as target population size, ethnicity, evidence and other practical considerations that accompany public policy implementation. An immediate concern is that, albeit well intentioned, current policies and practices particularly those focussed on crime control are limited in their scope because they fail to sufficiently acknowledge the impact of systemic racism on BME groups and in this instance, on young black males. The Royal College of Psychiatrists (2018) acknowledges the longstanding perception of racism and discrimination experienced by African and African Caribbean people within the mental health services, with concerns that the discrimination occurs in both their diagnosis and their subsequent treatment. Due to the significant proportion of young black males engaged with gangs and serious youth violence in some parts of the



country, this needs to be a priority for both policy makers and practitioners. An effective way to overcome this is to ensure that the policies put in place allow for interventions that are culturally appropriate, and within the mental health sector, these have been found to be particularly effective when working with BME groups (Thyer et al, 2010).

Although working with disaffected young people comes with a range of challenges across all sectors engaging young people, particularly with the mental health services this appears to be a barrier to reducing their involvement in violence (Madden, 2013; Farran, 2014; Public Health England, 2015). In her review of the available literature on mental health interventions for gang involved young people, Madden (2013) found that the relationship a young person has with their practitioner can help overcome this barrier. Further to this, Finnegan et al's (2010) review of existing evidence on mentoring and peer mentoring demonstrates the most effective practitioner-client relationships are those that involve matching by race, gender or, more significantly, by background. Developing an empathetic understanding of the lives of young people involved in violence and the challenges that they face is therefore essential to building trust. Certainly, former offenders are in multiple ways well placed to have that empathetic understanding (they have 'been there'), and because they are seen by current gang members as having been where they currently are, are more likely to be receptive to forming key relationships which can then lead to them accessing services. Services across all sectors themselves need to demonstrate an awareness and appreciation of how BME groups view and experience their services to address the issue of trust.

The usefulness of a public health approach as discussed above are such that some aspects of serious youth violence can be tackled effectively through this method. However, considering the scope of serious youth violence a comprehensive approach would be more appropriate in the sense of reviewing government spending, investment in affected communities and families (including culturally appropriate interventions) and perhaps a national youth policy strategy (as mentioned in The Youth Violence Commission Interim Report 2018). We acknowledge that at the time of producing this paper some funding promises have

been made and the effectiveness of this strategy would have to be considered in a few years from now following the evaluation of the interventions.

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26/11/2019

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# Criminological Codes: Race, Technology and Crime

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Recognition of the importance of race in criminology is something that few would challenge. However, over recent years, criminological research that centralises knowledge about how race shapes and is shaped by criminal justice practices and whether criminological theory adequately attends to exploring race has arguably received less attention. It would be wishful thinking to attribute this to the idea that race is no longer relevant or that racism is sequestered in the past. Rather, egregious examples of racial stereotyping are frequent and its reality underscored by fatal outcomes in the criminal justice sphere. The deaths of Rashan Charles and Edson da Costa in 2017 in police custody are stark reminders of the increased likelihood of the use of force and restraint used against black people in England and Wales.

As scholars who examine the connections between crime and society, the need for criminologists to reflect on race and its intersections with gender, class, and generation are as important as ever. Part of this reflection involves understanding how race (re)emerges in different forms across time and space and to remain vigilant towards monitoring its continued effects. There is much work to be done in this regard and innovative criminological scholarship that asks questions about where, when and how race matters, requires support and creative space in order to flourish. One such area is race and technology. Whilst critical examination of the racializing design and effects of technology in criminal justice practices have received significant attention in US scholarship (Benjamin, 2019; Ferguson, 2017; Hannah-Moffat, 2018), less has been said about the criminological technologies and race in the British context. Surveillance and other forms of technology have, of course, long been used in the British criminal justice system. In police stations for example, technology is engrained within the 'booking in' process: fingerprints are captured electronically, closed circuit televisions are omnipresent, databases detailing

offending and personal histories of suspects are accessed as a matter of course, a person's immigration status is ascertained in real time via joined up databases and algorithmic risk assessments about individuals are made in order to establish the risk they pose for future offending and re-entry to police custody. Our own work in this area has shown that while technologically framed criminal justice procedures may appear to be evenly applied to all suspects, in reality their application is very much determined by discretionary and racialized decision-making processes. So, although technology may be lauded for its seemingly objectivity and aims to democratize encounters between the police and the public, the reality is that because of technology racialized decision-making steps are masked and harder to attribute and make people accountable because the decision-making can appear to be placed onto machines and databases rather than humans (Parmar, 2019). In probation, risk prediction technologies have been revealed to be racially coded at their creation. An individual offender's profile is compared with a dataset of typically criminalized populations and the creators of risk technologies select the predictors of risk which can include criminal history, procriminal attitudes, criminogenic peers, deficiencies in education and employment and so on. These social factors are shaped and influenced by race and over-policing, for example. Therefore, Black and Minority Ethnic groups' risk of recidivism is over-emphasized whilst appearing to be race-neutral (Ugwudike, forthcoming).

As the digital age advances and makes its mark in the design, prediction and meting out of criminal justice practices, the need to explore its racializing features is all the more urgent. Our respective research projects on racial technologies have been greatly helped by looking across to and gleaning information from other disciplines such as social studies of technology, the philosophy of race and computational studies, where discussions about race and technology are growing apace. We suggest that understanding criminal justice spaces not only as sites of racism but also as places where race is made, reproduced and embedded through mundane technological tasks is important for generating knowledge about the new ways in which race and criminal justice intersect.

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# Commentary on the Outstanding Achievement Award, BSC 2019

Mike Levi

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Long before the advent of zemiology as a proclaimed master narrative of criminology, all my working life has been concerned with boundaries and their appropriateness: organised crime, white-collar crime, money laundering, tax avoidance/evasion. Boundaries are useful because of what they tell us about our own and others' stereotypes. My doctoral work – shortened to a still very long book *The Phantom Capitalists* - was partly about how different streams of the same activity – defrauding business creditors - were identified and proceeded against differently when they were committed by gangsters like the Krays and Richardsons, by professional fraudsters, and by businesspeople who only turned to fraud when business times were hard, as they may well do after Brexit. These opportunities for fraud are always there: but the dynamics of seizing opportunities can shift.

In recent decades, I have been much concerned with the anti-money laundering transnational legal order, which has been developing rapidly to incorporate all crimes great and small: there is thus a broad spectrum of political constituencies to whom it appeals, from left to right and from Green to climate change deniers, many of them less interested than they should be in the empirical aspects of 'what works'.<sup>1</sup> This presents dilemmas over how to differentiate the laundering of organized crime funds from other sources of criminal income, which include tax evasion, grand corruption, environmental crimes and the financing of terrorism – all of which can sometimes involve committing 'organized crime' offences. For example, the funnelling of perhaps billions of dollars allegedly stolen from the Malaysian sovereign wealth fund in the global 1MDB scandal (some of which, ironically, was used to fund the well-received fraud movie *The Wolf of Wall Street*) was well organized. It is simply that the principal people involved – allegedly the then Malaysian Prime Minister, his wife and step-son and their entourage, on trial there in 2019, plus former senior Goldman Sachs staff and a Malaysian entrepreneur who has not yet been found - would not be viewed (at least then) by many respectable elites or by many police as 'organized crime actors'. We might extend this boundary problem to the 'diesel-gate' falsification of emissions, primarily by the Volkswagen Group. Arguably this involved several actors planning how to commit crimes and get away with them over a long period of time for the pursuit of profit and power: criteria that meet the UN Transnational

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<sup>1</sup> Levi, M., Reuter, P. and Halliday, T. 'Can the AML/CTF System Be Evaluated Without Better Data?' *Crime, Law and Social Change*, 69(2), 307-328. <https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fs10611-017-9757-4.pdf>; Halliday, T., Levi, M. and Reuter, P. (in press) 'Anti-Money Laundering: An Inquiry into a Disciplinary Transnational Legal Order, *The UC Irvine Journal of International, Transnational and Comparative Law*.



Organized Crime Convention 2000. Yet notwithstanding the criminal aggravated fraud charges in 2019 in Germany against the former chief executive officer and 4 managers of VW,<sup>2</sup> many readers would balk at the idea of labelling senior executives of major corporations as ‘organized criminals’, though others might complain if we did *not* so label them for their intentional deception.<sup>3</sup> In countries with jury trials, this raises questions about jury decision-making and the impact of ethnic, religious and/or social prejudice in both directions (for and against defendants) on their adjudication processes, and how we can reduce the impact of such prejudice on the narratives that we tell ourselves about ‘what happened’. Prosecutorial conservatism in anticipating jury reactions remains a live practical issue in fraud as well as in violent/sexual crime cases. (Prejudice is not restricted to countries with jury systems.)

Whether the deaths from the dangerously ill-designed Boeing 747 Max will lead to criminal charges remains to be determined but – zemiologists take note - no-one can seriously argue that the designers and top management *wanted* people to die in plane crashes, even if it was a foreseeable consequence of their decisions, especially with the hindsight that they may or may not have had. The subsequent losses from the plane’s grounding (\$7.3 billion by July 2019) and from future civil litigation (incalculable at present) may lead us to conclude that the allegedly reckless implementation was economically foolish; and it arguably makes little difference to the dead and perhaps to their families what the Board *intended*. But my plea is that we take account of civil and administrative penalties, and the business careers of those involved in the scandals – when we analyse the impacts of white-collar crimes on *all* the parties. Note also that unlike cheating on diesel emissions and employing slaves or minors, plane crashes are hard to conceal.

The very considerable rise of fraud – especially online fraud - as a mode of crime commission in contemporary societies has muddied the classical distinction between organized and white-collar crime. To some extent, the demarcation issue is our stereotypes of social class and status. The investigative media exposure of Operation Laundromat and subsequent European scandals such as Danske Bank and Swedbank in 2018-19 shows cross-ties between politicians in the former Soviet Union, organized criminals, professional crime enablers and bankers in the Baltic States, and international finance centres including London and New York. Although such linkages may have little impact on the laundering of the proceeds of drugs or human trafficking, the volumes of money involved are huge and this poses both practical and cultural/ideological questions about political and policing boundaries of the term ‘organized crime’.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/04/15/business/winterkorn-volkswagen-emissions-scandal.html>

<sup>3</sup> Levi, M. Theoretical Perspectives on White Collar Crime. In Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Criminology and Criminal Justice, ed. Henry Pontell. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780190264079.013.266

These are only a few of the many issues I have been fortunate enough to research in my lifetime, and I am aiming to continue to do so for some years to come! I am grateful to the BSC for this honour, and long may the diverse and challenging traditions of British criminology flourish.

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## Maggie Sumner (1949-2019)

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Maggie Sumner died in October 2019 after suffering for some years from multiple sclerosis and cancer. She was a keen and committed criminologist and teacher, with particular interests in critical criminology, prison policy, women and prison, youth crime, probation and crimes of the state.

Maggie obtained her first degree from Sheffield University in 1970 and went on to work for the Probation Service. She obtained an MSc from the University of

Wales at Aberystwyth where she studied from 1974-77, after which she worked at the University of Liverpool. She joined the National Association for the Care and Resettlement of Offenders (NACRO) in the mid 1980s, where she led a research team and raised funding and support for committees on the Resettlement of Offenders and Race and Criminal Justice, each involving senior personnel from Government departments and professional associations. She was also involved in a series of international comparative seminars, funded by the Monument Trust, on Judicial issues which brought together Judges and prosecutors from across Europe and Canada and which involved real life case studies and sentencing. She became a member of the senior management team and played a strong role in the development and vision of NACRO. In the mid 1990s she was appointed Principal Lecturer and Subject area leader in socio-legal studies and criminology at the University of Westminster, where she set up a popular criminology programme, and subsequently became Head of Department for Social and Historical Studies before retiring in 2011. She was an active participant in seminars of the British Society of Criminology, London branch, BSC conferences, the European Group and the European Society of Criminology.

Maggie's career, research and publications reflect her strong, critically informed interest in and knowledge of many aspects of Criminal Justice Policy, encompassing theory and practice. Her Masters thesis was entitled 'Prostitution and images of women: a critique of the Victorian censure of prostitution'. While at Liverpool University she co-authored an article in the Probation Journal on the implementation of the Criminal Justice Act. At NACRO, she headed a team working on policy and action reports following the Woolf Report of 1996, in particular addressing the issue of the imprisonment of women which the report was felt to have neglected, resulting in the publication of 'A really fresh start for women' as well as the research referred

to above. She also secured funding from the Wates Foundation to supervise a resettlement survey in 10 prisons, involving prisoners and staff, resulting in the setting up of a resettlement centre and advice line. At the University of Westminster, the curriculum reflected her concerns with social research, social inequalities, criminal justice and crimes of the powerful. She contributed to both *The Sage Dictionary of Criminology* (2001) and the *Sage Dictionary in Social Research Methods* (2006).

Maggie was strongly committed to her students and to developing innovative teaching methods. At Westminster, she pioneered a programme in work experience for criminology students, and played a major role, with colleagues across Britain and the United States, in the development of the IEE (*International E-communication Exchange*) project. This highly original and much praised programme involved students communicating across universities on a range of criminal justice topics to enhance their understanding of international issues and developing independent learning skills through e communications. Along with colleagues, Maggie played a key role in encouraging other universities to participate in this venture and attended conferences and delivered papers on the project.

Sadly Maggie was unable to enjoy her well deserved retirement to the full. She dealt with her illness bravely, at one point subjecting her experiences in a care home to sociological analysis and preparing a talk on the processes of institutionalisation, dehumanisation and the corruption of identity, applying classic sociological notions of total institutions and the 'pains of imprisonment'.

She was a highly valued colleague and those of us who were fortunate to have met and worked with Maggie at different stages of her career will most of all remember her keen interest in and astute critical appreciation of many criminological issues, her wry sense of humour, her warm, friendly and supportive character and her great companionship - particularly when having a break from the more serious business of academia.

(I have been greatly assisted by memories shared by Maggie's colleagues).

Professor Hazel Croall, 2019

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## Emeritus Professor W.G. (Kit) Carson (1940-2019)

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Kit Carson, a hugely important figure in criminology and the sociology of law, passed away on November 23, 2019. Perhaps best known for his book *The Other Price of Britain's Oil*, his work made a major impact on criminology and the sociology of law. Looking back on reviews and responses to the body of work he produced, the most common word used to describe his contribution is seminal. His history of the growth of policing in Scotland, his research on the significance of the 19th Century Factory Acts to legal thinking, the unnecessary deaths and injuries suffered by offshore oil workers, his critique of communitarianism are all described by his peers as seminal. *The Other Price of Britain's Oil*, an almost ethnographic account of the incredible risks faced by oil workers in the North Sea, presaged the 1988 Piper Alpha disaster that killed 167. In the aftermath of the disaster, his work was taken up by and influenced workers leading the struggle for safety rights and trade union rights. Some of them, too, regarded his book as seminal. There is no greater accolade an academic could receive.

Kit emigrated to Australia from the UK in 1982 taking up a Chair in Socio-legal Studies and in 1989 was appointed the Inaugural Director of the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Dean of the School of Social Sciences (1985-1988) and as Deputy-Vice Chancellor at La Trobe (1991-1995). He was Vice Chancellor at Auckland University between 1995 and 1998. Kit returned to Melbourne in 1998 and continued to shape higher education. He worked as a consultant across the higher education sector assisting both institutions and government ensure the rigour and integrity of the higher education system. He was no academic snob, arguing that significant insight and education could be gained through either University or the post-secondary (TAFE) system, albeit with each having a different role to play. The caveat, however, was in ensuring the integrity of the educational system itself. The scandals in private post-secondary education in Australia in recent years attest to the problems he saw with education and research institutions driven by profit or hollow accolade rather than purpose. Kit was active as a volunteer in the Country Fire Authority essential work in country so prone to fire. Here, his intellectual acumen combined with a sense of adventure and purpose. He argued for the importance of communication and collaboration in the face of a fire threat. He was highly critical of shallow appeals to community values but lived and argued that fighting bush-fires was so much more than 'putting the wet stuff on the hot stuff', it required strong teamwork and planning at the community level and not individual heroism. The back room of communication was fundamental to ensuring the damage from fire was as contained as possible. His final published contribution, an opinion piece in the Sydney Morning Herald and The Age on September 29th 2017, was an erudite, passionate and historically informed argument for a 'yes' vote in the Australian plebiscite on same sex marriage.

His determination in the face of so many serious health challenges and conditions over the years was hugely inspiring and will never be forgotten by those who knew him and were close to him. He waged a sustained physical battle for many years,

made all the more impressive by his refusal to obey the strict instructions of his doctors not to drink. As Kit said himself, “you can take the boy out of Ireland...”

Kit will be especially missed by scholars of white-collar and corporate crime. But his contribution to the world was far from ‘narrow’ or ‘niche’. As the world faces an ecological crisis that needs radical action, there is no better analysis of the human catastrophe of fossil fuel production than *The Other Price of Britain’s Oil*. And there is no better understanding of the failure of law to protect us in his articles on the Factory Acts.

The relevance of his conceptual approach will endure, as new scholars discover his work in the years to come. This is something for which we should be truly grateful after this sad day has gone. Thanks, Kit.

Fiona Haines and David Whyte, 2019

## Regional and Network Events

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**North East Branch** (in association with the BSC Green Criminology Network)

January 16, 2020 – Northumbria University

### **Green Criminology in the Anthropocene**

In the context of widespread, human-induced environmental harm criminology – as the discipline primarily concerned with questions of deviance and social control – finds itself particularly relevant. As such, this one day symposium aims to spark debate in criminology about how best to respond to contemporary and emerging environmental crimes and harms at a time when existing responses appear ineffective.

**The event is free to attend, but please register your attendance. Tea, coffee and lunch will be provided.**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/green-criminology-in-the-anthropocene-tickets-80633606287>

**Southern branch** (in association with the Mannheim Centre London School of Economics)

January 22, 2020, LSE (Wolfson Theatre)

### **The Official History of Criminal Justice in England and Wales**

Paul Rock (LSE), with special guests

Chair: Tim Newburn (LSE)Wales Branch

**Southern branch** (in association with the Mannheim Centre London School of Economics)

February 12, 2020

LSE (NAB 1.07)

### **Living in hostile environments: Illegality assemblages and everyday experiences of ‘illegality’**

Nando Sigona (University of Birmingham)

Chair: Coretta Phillips (LSE)

**Welsh branch** (Co-organised by the Centre for Crime, Law and Justice)

February 19, 3.30pm

***Emotion, race and gender in cases of partner-murder in England and Wales, 1900-39***

Dr Lizzie Seal – University of Sussex

Abstract: This talk examines eleven capital cases of men of colour sentenced to death in England and Wales for intimate murders of white British women, 1900-39. It argues that such cases enable analysis of the prevailing emotional norms of this era and the ways in which these were shaped by race, gender and class. Perceptions of intimate relationships as legitimate or illegitimate – judgments about who should feel what about whom – related to understandings of citizenship. In revealing the emotional norms at play in cases of murder, it is possible to illustrate how the criminal justice system governed through emotion.

Bio: Dr Lizzie Seal is Reader in Criminology in the School of Law, Politics and Sociology at the University of Sussex. Her research is in the areas of historical and cultural criminology. She was Principal Investigator on ‘Race, Racialisation and the Death Penalty in England and Wales, 1900-65’ [Leverhulme RPG-2016-352], 2016-2018 and is currently PI on ‘Reforming British Law and Policy on the Global Death Penalty’ [British Academy IC3\100170]. Lizzie is the author of four monographs, most recently (with Maggie O’Neill, 2019) *Imaginative Criminology: Of Spaces Past, Present and Future*, as well as numerous journal articles and book chapters.

Any questions please contact the regional convenor, Roxanna Fatemi-Dehaghani [Fatemi-DehaghaniR@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:Fatemi-DehaghaniR@cardiff.ac.uk)

**Southern branch** (in association with the Mannheim Centre London School of Economics)

March 11

**Constraints and opportunities in transnational drug markets: A social network analysis of cocaine and heroin supply to Europe**

LSE (NAB 1.07)

Giulia Berlusconi (University of Surrey)

Chair: Mike Shiner (LSE)

**Wales Branch** (Co-organised by the Centre for Crime, Law and Justice)

Wed 11 March, 4pm

**A room with a view? Material conditions and the ‘representational’ inside police detention**

Dr Layla Skinns, University of Sheffield



## Abstract:

In a recent Trip Advisor review of a police custody block in South Yorkshire, the reviewer gave it only half a star and complained that “it was nothing but four walls and a mattress”. This illustrates how material conditions matter to those arrested and detained by the police whilst an investigation is conducted and a decision is taken about what to do next with the case. The purpose of this paper is to examine the ‘representational’ quality of these material conditions of police custody. Whether detainees have access to natural light and are detained in facilities which appear well maintained conveys to detainees something about how they are perceived by police authorities, by the state and by wider society, meaning that if a custody facility appears well looked after it suggests to detainees that their treatment is likely to follow suit. These ideas are examined using findings from a five-year ESRC-funded mixed-methods study of ‘good’ police custody which showed that detainee experiences of different types of dignity – linked to feelings of equal worth, autonomy and public decency – were significantly informed by their experiences of the material conditions of police custody. These arguments are also grounded in prison studies research and theorisation. As a result, I also reflect in my presentation on the boundaries between police studies and prison studies, and the possibilities and limitations of greater dialogue between scholars in each field.

Bio: Layla Skinnis is a Reader in the Centre for Criminological Research, School of Law, University of Sheffield, having formerly worked and studied at the Institute of Criminology, University of Cambridge and the Institute for Criminal Policy Research, King’s College London. She has a longstanding interest in police and policing, in particular in how policing agents use their authority. A key focus of her research has been on police detention, in England and Wales, but also in other parts of the Anglophone world. In this setting, she is interested in police powers and their relationship with the law, police cultures and police discretion, and furthermore, how this impacts on equality and on state-citizen relations. She is also interested in how the public – particularly detainees – perceive the police, which links her research to discussions about police legitimacy and ‘good’ policing.

Any questions please contact the regional convenor, Roxanna Fatemi-Dehaghani [Fatemi-DehaghaniR@cardiff.ac.uk](mailto:Fatemi-DehaghaniR@cardiff.ac.uk)

## Wales Branch

April 23, 2020

### **‘Public Criminology Through Public Education’**

This interdisciplinary event brings together academics from Criminology, Arts & Humanities, Education, and practitioners from the Criminal Justice System to share innovation in learning and teaching. The event is joint-funded by the British Society of Criminology Learning and Teaching Network and the Welsh Branch of the British Society of Criminology, and hosted by Swansea University’s School of Law. The day focuses on the role of Public Criminology from a Public Education viewpoint, more specifically:

Higher Education's role in facilitating desistance from offending.

The potential of co-production between academics and young people engaged in education to reduce future offending

The impact of public education programmes in bringing about change to policy and practice

The presentations will provide practical examples of teaching practice in Public Education, with speakers sharing how they have reconceptualised Public Criminology. As such, the day will appeal to those interested in the role of Criminology and its ability, through learning and teaching, to make a difference to individuals and society. The event will also be of interest to those new to teaching, postgraduate research students wishing to develop their skills in this area, and those looking to develop Impact Case Studies.

### **Call for Abstracts**

We are also inviting submissions, which showcase other innovations in learning and teaching. If you wish to submit an abstract, please email Debbie Jones before January 31 2020 with the following:

Title, 200 word abstract, short author bios, and details of any social media accounts to be shared.

The event is free and lunch will be provided – book your place online.

Please email any queries to:

Associate Professor Debbie Jones, Department of Criminology, Hillary Rodham Clinton School of Law, Swansea University

Associate Professor Mark Jones, College of Arts & Humanities, Swansea University.

Dr Anthony Charles, Department of Criminology, Hillary Rodham Clinton School of Law, Swansea University

**Southern branch** (in association with the Mannheim Centre London School of Economics)

May 13, 2020, LSE (Alumni Theatre)

### ***Young Men's Experiences of Long-Term Imprisonment***

Rachel Tynan (Goldsmiths)

Chair: Johann Koehler (LSE)

**Southern branch** (in association with the Mannheim Centre London School of Economics)

June 10, 2020

***From King's Cross to Soho: Innovative approaches to studying  
gentrification, gender, sex work and space***

Erin Sanders-McDonagh (University of Kent), Lucy Neville (University of  
Leicester) and Magali Peyrefitte (Middlesex University)

Chair: Janet Foster (LSE)

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