Book Reviews

This book is a significant addition to the growing literature on the formation of penal policy in contemporary societies, combining valuable empirical research with sophisticated theoretical and critical analysis. Its concrete core is the rise and fall of the imprisonment for public protection (IPP) sentence. Created by the 2003 Criminal Justice Act, the IPP always attracted much controversy and was abolished by the 2012 Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act.

Dangerous Politics provides a definitive analysis of this process. It constructs a fascinating historical narrative based partly on documentary materials, but drawing most fruitfully on rich empirical data from over 60 qualitative interviews with key participants, policy makers, practitioners, and pressure groups.

IPPs were intended to keep dangerous violent and sexual offenders in custody as long as they were deemed a risk to the public. Someone convicted of a specified violent or sexual offence not serious enough to get a life sentence could receive an IPP. After they had served their 'tariff' they would have to satisfy the Parole Board that they no longer posed a risk before they could be released. As the book shows, this was the most recent effort to solve a perennial conundrum facing penal systems, raising the most acute ethical and practical issues, turning on the tension between just deserts and utilitarian crime reduction justifications of punishment. How should the system cope with offenders who are deemed, on whatever basis, to be dangerous even after serving a sentence proportionate to the gravity of their immediate offence? The IPP was the latest attempt to achieve the Holy Grail of balancing justice and safety.

Harry Annison skilfully documents why the New Labour government in 2003 believed the IPP was both necessary and defensible, and how it became apparent that this confidence was as hubristic as the many earlier bids to tackle the dangerous offenders' issue. Already by 2008 the Labour government's Criminal Justice and Immigration Act amended the IPP regime. When the Coalition government was formed in 2010 pressure for change mounted, and eventually in 2012 the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act abolished the IPP. This did not apply retrospectively, so IPP prisoners were not released, and their plight remains controversial. There were still around 4,000 prisoners serving IPP sentences in late 2016.

The advent of the IPP is analysed by Annison in terms of a network of complex cultural and institutional changes in the politics of law and order more widely. It was a quintessential example of New Labour's concern to counter the electoral albatross round its neck of being successfully depicted in the late 1970s and 1980s by Conservative politicians and mass media as 'soft on crime'. In line with the celebrated soundbite that paid such dividends to Tony Blair, the IPP was readily represented as 'tough on crime, tough on the causes of crime'. As with much else in New Labour criminal justice it ultimately boiled down to being tough on convicted criminals rather than crime, and tackled causes at best at a superficial level.

Nonetheless, the IPP succeeded in laying to rest the electoral liability of appearing 'soft'. It was also redolent of broader cultural changes in criminal justice politics and beyond. Above all, it embodied increasing concern with risk, taming the future rather than avenging the past. It also chimed in with a growing confidence that smart and tough criminal justice policies could 'work', dispelling the 'nothing works' pessimism of the 1970s and 1980s. Most relevant here was the growth of confidence in new techniques of assessing dangerousness such as the Offender Assessment System (OASys), and of re-habilitative interventions such as cognitive behaviour therapy (as well as a fundamentally chimeric belief in their availability to prisoners).

In a context of decision making desperate to avoid scandals of serious violent reof-fending that would be latched on to by an increasingly punitive media and public opinion, there was a much more rapid build-up of IPP prisoners than originally anticipated. This led to increasing concern about both the resource implications of overcrowded prisons, and the plight of people serving sentences disproportionate to their offences and unable to access the rehabilitative techniques that might dispel fears about their dangerousness. This created a changing climate in which the IPP was first modified and then abolished. As Annison's penetrating interviews reveal, a significant contribution was also made by a shifting team of responsible ministers, for example the advocacy of the IPP by Home Secretary David Blunkett, followed by Jack Straw as the first Justice Secretary who was more open to the evidence about the IPP's problems, and finally Kenneth Clarke as the Coalition's Justice Secretary, who espoused a principled, as well as pragmatic, liberalism. The parties were also fighting their past stigmas, the Tories as the 'nasty party', Labour as 'soft on crime'. By the second decade of the 21st Century this had produced a political cross-dressing in which Labour sought to appear tougher than the rest.

Harry Annison has produced a book that is a major contribution to critical, yet constructive, analysis of penal policy. Especially noteworthy is the quality of the insights gathered by the tricky technique of qualitative elite interviewing, the problems of which are skilfully tackled in an invaluable methodological appendix.

The theoretical analysis draws on some of the most influential social, legal and crim-inological scholars who have sought to understand the dynamics of contemporary 'late modernity'. It is here, however, that I feel there is some room for criticism. The an-alytic framework draws predominantly on cultural and institutional perspectives. This admirably illuminates the ideas and ideologies that informed the political actors who shaped the trajectory of the IPP. However, in essence it focuses exclusively on the political in political economy, perhaps overreacting to a concern to avoid economic determinism. There is almost no mention of writers who have addressed the wider sources of the dilemmas facing contemporary political actors, locating these ultimately in the epochal shift in the political economy during the 1970s from Keynesian welfarism to neoliberal-ism. Yet it was this deeper change that underlay the creation of New Labour's so-called 'third way', which shaped its penal policy. The social inequalities and tensions generated by this have become increasingly apparent, culminating in the political cataclysms of 2016. The implications for penal policy have yet to be seen, but they are unlikely to be hospitable to the humane liberalism espoused in this admirable book.

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Incarceration Nation investigates the origins of mass incarceration in the United States. Where other scholars cite interest group politics and elites addressing racial violence leading up to, and after, the civil rights movement, Enns turns his attention to the electoral connection. Existing research largely overlooks public opinion, arguing that public attitudes are not punitive enough to explain dramatic increases in incarceration over the last half-century. In contrast, Enns's central claim is that changes in support for punitive policy among the public and the responsiveness of politicians explain the rising incarceration rate.

Enns develops a unique measure of public opinion in order to test its relationship to incarceration. His primary measure of attitudes towards criminal justice policy is an index comprised of 33 indicators of public punitiveness across seven surveys, including the General Social Survey (GSS) and the American National Election Survey that covers the years 1953 to 2010. Enns uses the index to measure the relationship between change in public opinion, real crime, and imprisonment. He demonstrates that public opinion responded to rises in crime, but that punitive attitudes were exacerbated by the media, which over-reported violent crime and crimes committed by minorities. Likewise, Enns demonstrates that incarceration followed increasingly punitive public attitudes.

Enns answers scholars arguing that the public followed the lead of elites repackaging overt racism as law-and-order politics after the civil rights movement. He argues that although Barry Goldwater leveraged tough-on-crime rhetoric in his 1964 bid for the presidency, evidence does not suggest the public was responsive to him. Instead, throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, political figures from both sides of the aisle shifted their messaging in response to public attitudes. Throughout the book, he focuses primarily on the Federal level, but demonstrates that aggregate trends hold among the states in his final empirical chapter.

The most innovative contribution made by *Incarceration Nation* is methodological. Past scholarship finding little relationship between public opinion and incarceration describes attitudes as unstable across measures. However, this research used cross-sectional responses at varying time points, where, for example, support for the death penalty wildly differed from beliefs that prisons should be rehabilitative. Enns, instead, looks at change over time, which is relatively stable across measures. The idea that elected officials would be responsive to swings in opinion from year to year is intuitive and grounded in classic theories of political science. Through this methodological innovation he uncovers a relationship empirically overlooked by previous research.

The chief critique that can be made of *Incarceration Nation* is its focus on trends in the aggregate. That public policy followed punitive changes in opinion suggests that politics is uniformly permeable to citizen demands. Politicians are responsive to likely voters, but the cost of criminal justice is displaced to poor minorities, who are unlikely voters. Enns notes this repeatedly throughout the book, arguing that in order to understand the human and civic costs of mass incarceration, scholars should look to the local level, but should turn their attention to the national level to understand its causes. This logic obscures the power structures that support mass incarceration. Referring to the attitudes of median voters as *public opinion* relegates the perspectives of poor minorities who bear the cost of incarceration outside the body politic, which is especially troubling given that one of the costs of incarceration is the loss of civic voice. Enns attempts to address this in part before he develops the measure of change by disaggregating opinion among blacks and whites to demonstrate that race has an intercept effect, but change over time is comparable across races. Yet, the inadequacy of omnibus surveys like the GSS to sample subgroups is well known.

The above critique does not indict Enns's findings, but it does suggest that they are incomplete. Perhaps one of the contributions of the research, then, is that it provides fodder for the next generation of researchers interested in the relationship between

punitive segments of the public, criminal justice, and political power and exclusion. They should build on the research presented in *Incarceration Nation* to disaggregate public opinion, and investigate the connection between the demands of communities targeted by the criminal justice system and their elected representatives. Heeding Enns, they will measure change over time.

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Prison and Social Death J.M. Price. New Brunswick, NJ.: Rutgers University Press (2015) 193pp. $25.95pb ISBN 978-0-8135-6557-6

In *Prison and Social Death*, Joshua M. Price draws on several years of activism and grassroots participatory research related to the health care of imprisoned people in upstate New York. The book provides rich illustration of the tragic realities of medical treatment and other material conditions of prison life that are drawn from his work with the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). It is not, however, merely a case study of the work of the NAACP nor a localised account of a few prisons that are poorly managed and under-resourced. Price draws connections between numerous examples of patently inhumane treatment that are commonplace in prisons and the notion of 'social death'. It is in this connection that Price makes a substantial contribution to understandings of what the use of imprisonment tangibly means – for those directly subjected to it, their families and for societies that demand imprisonment as their favoured form of criminal justice sanction.

The book is divided into three parts and ten chapters. In Part One, comprising three chapters, Price sets out the concept of social death, including its origins and constituent elements. In Part Two, through a further three chapters, the book explores the method and history of 'social death' in the United States, including the roles of racism and legacies of slavery in establishing the normalisation of state violence through the use of imprisonment. In the final section, Part Three, entitled 'Abolition Democracy', three substantive chapters utilise post-imprisonment experiences to examine the social fragmentation, isolation and enduring nature of 'social death' that follows the stigmatised ex-prisoner into the community. The final, concluding, chapter takes stock of what has been brought to light about the use and practices of imprisonment in the narratives and experiences catalogued by Price and the work of the NAACP. Whilst the book ends on a somewhat ambivalent and, perhaps, hopeless, tone, it also concludes with some useful considerations on prison abolition – and the commitment to fundamental social change that abolition would require.

Price's use and exploration of the concept of 'social death' is especially fruitful. He draws on the concept, as defined and explored by Orlando Patterson and his analysis of slavery, and identifies its three aspects: (i) systematic violence; (ii) generalised humiliating treatment; and (iii) 'natal alienation'. Each of these aspects of social death, Price argues, are intrinsic and fundamental features of modern imprisonment.

The term 'natal alienation' refers to severance from ancestors, relatives and children. Importantly for Price's work and interest in health care, the concept of natal alienation, as Price states, 'allows us to explain the implications of incarceration for reproductive health and reproductive justice' (pp.5–6). Price's considerations of the mistreatment of people in prison from pregnant women, to transgendered people, to men unable to

care for their families on the outside are all vividly examined through the lens of natal alienation. Moreover, this concept provides a powerful analytical device for viewing, in stark relief, the experience of not just those imprisoned but also the helplessness and vicarious punishments of their families and communities that result from being unable to protect your loved one from the ravages of the state violence that is imprisonment. As Price notes: 'According to a common sense view in the United States, implicitly upheld by liberal individualism, prison harms only the incarcerated person' (p.25); this book illustrates that this view fails to fully grasp the implications and consequences of the use of imprisonment.

One of the aspects of the book that is especially refreshing is that it avoids the tendency of much prisons literature to neutrally title a monograph as a book on prisons but then only focus on white men's experiences. This tendency (of which I myself have been guilty) ignores the significance of Dorothy E. Smith's (and other scholars') ideas about standpoints and institutional ethnography and the implicit expectation that the experience of white men in any given institutional setting is the 'norm' against which other standards are upheld. Price's book, however, includes numerous examples and narratives from the lives of black women that provide a depth of insight into the human experience of imprisonment that is rarely achieved in prison writings. It is, therefore, a useful and most welcome addition to both prisons and abolitionist scholarship that speaks not just to the problems of imprisonment in the United States but to the use of this harmful and violent state practice more widely.

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Imprisonment Worldwide: The Current Situation and an Alternative Future A. Coyle, H. Fair, J. Jacobson and R. Walmsley. Bristol: Policy Press (2016) 112pp. £7.99pb ISBN 978-1-4473-3175-9

Coyle and colleagues provide an in-depth analysis of international prison statistics in the first section of their book, *Imprisonment Worldwide: The Current Situation and an Alternative Future*. The expanse of data reviewed here details the use of imprisonment on a global scale and the disparity between the extent of its usage and its effectiveness.

Arranged in three sections, Coyle *et al.*'s publication itemises worldwide prison data sourced from the World Prison Brief (1989). A comprehensive breakdown of the constituents of the world's prison populations in Section One allows an extensive reflection on the social and moral impact of the prison in Section Two. In this part, *Imprisonment Worldwide* also brings into context the relevant national and international agreements on standards for the treatment of prisoners and the disposal of custodial punishments in a much broader sense. Their third section offers something outside of a critique of incarceration as punishment in the form in which it currently exists. Entitled 'An Alternative Future', this segment draws upon current policy innovations and explores how a new, more effective penological approach can help us to realise a suitable role for prisons.

As one might expect, the current prison climate in the world is bleak. According to Coyle *et al.*, and their analyses of the World Prison Brief data, ten million people make up the population of the incarcerated in those states for which statistics are available. They highlight the international propensity to incarcerate already marginalised or disadvantaged groups. The authors make no attempt to temper the fact that incarceration has had little impact in reducing crime or increasing the sense of security around the

world. This speaks volumes to the depressing nature of quantifying, let alone reforming, long-standing penal traditions.

Coyle and his colleagues establish the purposes of prisons around the world and note how these are distinct from the role the prison plays in shaping those subjected to it, allowing them to highlight the failings of current incarceration models. Indeed, as social reform and criminal justice professionals will be aware, a bland regurgitation of data, no matter how comprehensive this may be, does little to influence effective evolution and reform. This text goes much further, outlining possible alternative futures for criminal justice. It explores the validity of efforts from Justice Reinvestment initiatives (p.126) and demonstrates how the vast, and wasteful, expenses of criminal justice mechanisms may be redirected under the 'Human Development Model' (p.128). *Imprisonment Worldwide* offers considered alternatives to current punishment practices centred on incarceration by suggesting that public spending be refocused towards encouraging community cohesion, rather than simply warehousing the damaged.

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Wild Arabs and Savages: A History of Juvenile Justice in Ireland P. Sargent. Manchester: Manchester University Press (2013) 228pp. £70.00hb ISBN 978-0-7190-8916-9; £29.99pb ISBN 978-1-5261-0725-1

As Paul Sargent notes in the preface to his book *Wild Arabs and Savages*: 'there has been no attempt to write a complete history of juvenile justice in Ireland' (p.vii). While no history perhaps can aspire to 'completeness' (particularly one which comes in at under 200 pages of main text), there was clearly an opportunity here to bring together the findings of researchers working in this growing field, in order to provide an overview of developments in Irish juvenile justice over the last two centuries. The timing for such a project is undoubtedly propitious. The Irish youth justice system has recently been the subject of root and branch reform following the passage of the Children Act 2001; a law which effectively swept away a legislative and regulatory framework which still bore the stamp of the previous Children Act, passed nearly 100 years earlier in 1908. That law, in turn, had its ideological and institutional roots in the middle years of the previous century, when the country's first reformatories and industrial schools had been founded. Those two institutions, established respectively in 1858 and 1868, and managed principally by religious (mainly Catholic) organisations, would constitute the principal Irish response to troublesome and unruly youth until the late 20th Century. The result, Sargent demonstrates, was that '[w]ithin the context of the Irish juvenile justice system, the state was to a large extent absent from the practicalities of regulating children for most of the twentieth century' (p.6); though it should be added that the incarceration of juvenile offenders in government-run penitentiaries, gaols, borstals and other penal institutions throughout this period clearly represents an exception to this 'absence' of State involvement.

Although subtitled *A History of Juvenile Justice in Ireland*, this book is not intended, the author explains, as a 'traditional' history, but should be seen rather as 'an attempt . . . to unsettle the taken-for-granted nature of the [current] discourse on juvenile crime and

273

map previously unmapped territory' (p.viii). Seen in this context, that is to say above all as an attempt to *historicise* and *contextualise* recent Irish debate and policy making in the field of juvenile justice, *Wild Arabs and Savages* makes a major contribution, and should be required reading for professionals (and future professionals) in this field. Sargent chooses not to follow a chronological treatment (except in the introductory second chapter), preferring to explore the changing contours of official and specialist discourse and policy over the last century-and-a-half from a number of different perspectives. He considers, in turn, the emergence and shifting fortunes of the 'problem' of juvenile crime and disorder and the institutional and non-custodial remedies proposed to deal with them (Chapter 3); the shifting 'rationalities' of intervention in this field and the techniques or 'technologies' mobilised to generate valid knowledge on the subject, distinguishing (following Nikolas Rose) between 'disciplinary' and 'pastoral' approaches (Chapters 4–5); before turning finally to the relationship between these interventions and forms of knowledge, and overlapping concepts of childhood identity such as 'the delinquent child', 'the deprived child' and 'the at risk child' (ch. 6).

The book is particularly strong on the period between the 1970s and 1990s, when the century-old Irish model of reformatory-based and industrial school-based juvenile justice policy began to be called into question by academics, voluntary groups and in a series of parliamentary inquiries, beginning with the Kennedy Report (1989). These years saw the increasing recourse to new forms of psychological, criminological and sociological expert knowledge among specialists in the field in order to justify intervention, while the older discourse which had pervaded the reformatories and industrial schools, focusing on the risk posed to children of the poor by proselytism and 'immoral' influences, lost ground. The period was also characterised by a proliferation of initiatives on the part of the Garda, the courts, and probation and youth workers, in order to 'divert' offenders, or those considered at risk of offending, from institutionalised care and detention, towards community-based solutions. That being said, Sargent emphasises that up until the final decades of the 20th Century, the industrial and reformatory schools (though by now known by other names), still largely under the control of the voluntary sector, and dominated by Catholic religious organisations, continued to play a key role in Ireland's juvenile justice system. Only with the new legislation of 2001 would these institutions be brought systematically under State control.

Sargent's focus on the immediate background to the legislation of the early 2000s means that the coverage of earlier developments is inevitably rather uneven. The book does provide a useful starting point for those new to the history of Ireland's juvenile justice system; noting the major laws, institutions and actors linked to the debate on the country's 'troubled' and 'troublesome' youth in the 19th and 20th Centuries. However, those looking for a detailed treatment of the country's reformatories and industrial schools, of the different organisations responsible for running them, and of the relationship (or lack of it) between the latter and the agencies of the State, will need to look elsewhere. So will those interested in the various juvenile penal institutions in place in Ireland during the 19th and 20th Centuries, only mentioned in passing in the book. Another notable absentee in *Wild Arabs and Savages* is the voice of the young people themselves. The use of such evidence is fraught with methodological problems, but can provide a valuable corrective to top-down administrative history, whether Whiggish or revisionist.

Sargent explicitly eschews any attempt at explaining the reasons for the changes in Ireland's juvenile justice system charted in his book; neither, he says, is he 'interested here in whether these developments are positive or negative in terms of rights or outcomes' (p.197). It could be argued that these choices by the author necessarily limit the book's capacity to 'unsettle the taken-for-granted nature of the [current] discourse on juvenile crime' (p.viii). At various points, he seems implicitly to endorse the Foucauldian premise

(also seen in much of the British criminological literature on New Labour's 1998 Crime and Disorder Act and its aftermath) that the new consensus in Ireland on 'joined-up' youth justice represents a significant widening of the criminal justice net, blurring the boundaries between justice and welfare, and drawing ever larger numbers of young people into the system. Largely absent for most of the period covered by this book (though with the proviso noted earlier), the Irish State today has, Sargent, argues, 'assumed a central role in the government of children and young people. In terms of inspection, advocacy, diversion, detention, care and protection, the umbrella of the state is widening at an increasingly fast pace' (p.196). Presumably, Sargent would wish to argue that the pace of 'governmentalisation' in Ireland is increasing at an *alarmingly* fast rate, but that is an issue which he urges his 'unsettled' readers to ponder and pursue elsewhere. That this book will undoubtedly encourage many to do just that is in itself a major achievement.

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Social Work with Sex Offenders: Making a Difference M. Cowburn and S. Myers. Bristol: Policy Press (2016) 208pp. £21.99hb £17.59pb ISBN 978–1447301196

The fairly recent media publicity surrounding the sexual exploitation of children and young people has left many professionals feeling deskilled and uncertain in terms of working with those who might seek to abuse. Social workers working within the community are in a particularly difficult position. Many are required to make formal assessments of risk of future sexual offending and need to ground this in solid practice stemming from empirical research, and yet few have been afforded the opportunity of formal training in this very important area. Malcolm Cowburn and Steve Myers's book makes a worthy contribution to addressing this issue.

The book is broken down into seven chapters: the first four dealing with the criminal 'landscape' of sexual offending; the last three with social work practice and assessment issues.

Chapter 1 discusses the societal view of perpetrators of sexual abuse as being outcasts, somehow 'other' to the rest of us and how this leads to moral panic on one hand and denial (both societal generally and more specifically in the case of the perpetrator) on another. Neither view is particularly helpful in terms of working positively and openly with an individual to assess levels of future risk. Chapter 2 looks at theoretical perspectives with regard to sexual abuse and presents current thinking on the multifactorial influences that cause people to commit such offences. This is not presented in a way which would allow a perpetrator to have an excuse – *'it's not my fault, I was the victim of ...'* – but in a way that allows the worker to reflect on the fact that sexual abusers were made, not born. By the same token, it also looks at reasons why an individual may desist from offending, which to my mind is more interesting and made me consider my own practice. How do we assist people to reflect on their past and consider even the possibility of change? The authors help us to do so throughout the book by providing very useful reflection points with questions to guide our thinking. Chapter 3 develops this theme further by considering how, as a society, we choose to deal with those who have committed

275

sexual offences and examines how such offenders are managed within the prison and probation system. The authors tell us that there is a variety of ways in which such matters are dealt with, from Sex Offender Treatment Programmes within prison (dependent on whether offenders will have enough time in prison to complete a course) to community-based formal and informal interventions. They develop this further in Chapter 4 by considering the role played by our multi-agency partners in not simply monitoring, but actively working with, and alongside, sexual offenders to support them within the community. Again, the authors offer reflective challenges to the consideration of the development of policy and procedures.

The heart of the book, and the most useful insights from a practitioner standpoint, are those provided in the three final chapters which look at the practical aspects of assessment. This is the area in which workers are most likely to feel ill-equipped. The authors introduce the use of actuarial assessment which, again, is not something traditionally discussed on qualifying courses. They are quite right however to make it clear that using such actuarial assessment requires specialist knowledge and expertise. They go on to discuss static and dynamic factors in reoffending and how these can be used to inform the assessment.

All chapters consider not only the practical aspects of working with such offenders but also how this may impact emotionally on the worker. They discuss how it may feel to sit with someone accused of horrific crimes against a child or a vulnerable adult and discuss their past behaviours. The importance of maintaining a professional attitude and remaining objective, and being mindful of social work values and ethics is highlighted throughout.

Although this book is aimed at social workers generally, given the authors' professional background it does lean strongly towards those working in a probation or youth offending context rather than those working within the community who also routinely carry out such assessments. That being said, it provides useful and very positive discussion about social work values when working with those whom society perhaps finds most abhorrent.

Cowburn and Myers's style of writing makes this book extremely accessible and the thought-provoking reflective exercises throughout will make it an extremely useful addition to the library of not only practitioners, social work students, and academics, but also to wider partner agencies and policy makers.

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This book covers such a wide range of topics, from the international drug trade to the influence of the Murdoch press, that its subject matter is not easy to define – which is rather the authors' point. Their ambitious aim is to move beyond the various definitions of 'state crime' to embrace other forms of social harm and 'immorality' by states and corporations within a single comprehensive framework. The book does not actually provide what one might call a General Theory of Nastiness, but gestures, rather vaguely, in its direction.

If the book has a single unifying theme, it is the old idea that the love of money is the root of all evil, reformulated as the claim that neoliberalism is the root of all immorality – by the powerful, at least. Certainly many, if not all, of the crimes and harms that the authors select for analysis can plausibly be ascribed to neoliberalism – the state terror of

the Argentine junta in the 1970s and the police violence of the 1984 miners' strike being prime examples. But there are at least two problems with their argument.

First, it is rather obvious that while neoliberalism has many crimes and harms to its name, so do most other political ideologies that have been implemented by governments. Only social democracy and centrist liberalism seem to have notably better records. This raises the question of whether there is something uniquely nasty about neoliberalism, or whether any programme by which states use coercive power to reshape economic and social life is liable to generate serious crimes and harms.

Second, the nature of 'immorality' and its place in a social-scientific analysis of crime and social harm is theorised very inadequately, even for a book that is no more than a rough sketch of a comprehensive theory. To understand immorality, and especially to understand it sociologically, you first need to understand morality. Is it an aspect of social solidarity, apt to be corroded by greed as Durkheim so memorably argued? Is it (as I would argue) a matter of certain moral postulates, in particular a fundamental equality of moral worth, being fundamental to the 'self-understanding' (in Habermas's phrase) of democratic societies – and incompatible with the forms of social exclusion that neoliberalism engenders? Or is it, as Bauman (1989) argues in *Modernity and the Holocaust,* something 'pre-social', an impulse or capacity which immoral social systems (including, one could argue, neoliberalism) distort or destroy? The authors' failure to discuss these questions or the classics of the sociological literature which address them leaves them with something reminiscent of the once fashionable moral philosophy of emotivism: for 'neoliberalism is immoral', read 'neoliberalism – boo!'.

This book is, in short, a very rough, unfinished outline of an extremely ambitious project. To be blunt, a lot of it has the feel of a work in progress, not yet ready for publication. That does not apply to Chapter 4, a refreshingly clear analysis of the complex nexus between states, the drug trade and 'narco-terrorism', which could be a useful addition to some reading lists. But it is tempting to speculate that what seems like the premature publication of the book as a whole is a product of the unhealthy pressures within the academy – pressures which are, no doubt, themselves among the harms of neoliberalism.

Reference

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