

# scottish justice matters

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## POVERTY, INEQUALITY AND JUSTICE



# CRIME, JUSTICE AND SOCIETY IN SCOTLAND FROM THE EDITORS' PERSPECTIVE\*

October 2015 saw the launch of *Crime, Justice and Society in Scotland*. Its editors, **Hazel Croall**, **Gerry Mooney** and **Mary Munro**, introduce the central themes guiding them and contributors to this book.



**THE DISTINCTIVENESS**, and difference from the 'rest of the UK' of criminal justice in Scotland has been all too often neglected in UK academic, media and popular discussion of criminology and criminal justice, which remains largely focused on England 'and Wales'. Our previous 2010 collection, *Criminal Justice in Scotland*, aimed to address this by exploring the claims of Scottish distinctiveness and especially the contention that, paradoxically, post devolution, criminal justice in Scotland had undergone a process of convergence with policy and practice south of the Border. We were also concerned to bring to the fore the essential inequalities of justice in Scotland. In so doing its content reviewed matters such as imprisonment, gender and justice, race and ethnicity, community sanctions and fines, young people and justice, policing, sentencing.

This new book, like many of the articles in this edition of *Scottish Justice Matters*, pursues our concern with social inequalities in crime and criminal justice. However, in starting out, we found ourselves in the very different political context of the referendum on Scottish independence which prompted us to consider the importance of related political discourse for criminal justice.

The new book was not intended to be an update of *Criminal Justice in Scotland* but one which reflected this changing context.

That is why we thought it important to have a chapter on devolution, social policy and criminal justice. Influences on criminal justice policy, also a key concern, are critically examined in a discussion of the relationship, in Scotland, between academic research and justice policy. Significant changes, such as the introduction of Police Scotland clearly had to be taken into account, along with many influences on policy in Scotland discernable from not only UK jurisdictions but from the United States, Europe and Scandinavia. This was especially so in the case of chapters on interpersonal violence, youth crime, policing, electronic monitoring and desistance. Our contributors, all with considerable experience of such policy initiatives and research critically consider the strengths (and weaknesses) of models from elsewhere, along with some missed opportunities and paths not followed.

We were also keen to address what could be seen as omissions in the previous volume such as a fuller consideration of sectarianism, and key areas of concern identified by the SNP Scottish Government such as inter-personal violence, organised crime and victims. Indeed, the Scottish story about victims' concerns and policies was largely untold and deserved particular scrutiny.

All chapters reflect many facets of the importance of social inequality, especially when considering that people going through our courts and prisons are overwhelmingly drawn from places associated with social deprivation. To us it is crucial to recognise that these places contain victims as well as offenders, and to recognise the importance of crimes of 'greed' as well as of 'need'. This is particularly apposite given the considerable furore and calls for 'criminalisation' attracted by the activities of bankers and corporations using complex avoidance schemes to avoid paying UK taxes. While, along with environmental crime, these 'crimes of the powerful' are global issues, their relevance to Scotland and the involvement of Scottish based companies is considerable (see also the environmental crime and justice issue of *Scottish Justice Matters* of March 2015).

In tackling such a range of issues, we have been indebted to the expertise and commitment of our contributors Gill Scott, Richard Sparks, Katrina Morrison, Ross Deuchar, Damien Williams, John Carnochan, Alex Law, Ben Cavanagh, Niall Hamilton-Smith, Simon Mackenzie, Nick Fyfe, Mike Nellis and Fergus McNeill. We hope that this volume, like the last, will disseminate to a wider audience the significance of Scottish criminal justice in its social and political context and foster an understanding of and inform debates on how a 'wee country' like Scotland can develop innovative and progressive approaches to criminal justice – so intricately related to human rights and social justice.

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Croall H, Mooney G and Munro M (2010) *Criminal Justice in Scotland* Willan: Routledge.

Croall H, Mooney G and Munro M (2016) *Crime, Justice and Society in Scotland*. Routledge.

\*There will be a review in the next *SJM*.



# **CRIME, JUSTICE AND SOCIETY IN SCOTLAND**

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AND MARY MUNRO**

ROUTLEDGE  


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