

International Journal for Crime, Justice and Social Democracy



Chief Editors' Introduction

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The last edition of the journal for 2016 is truly global, with authors from Norway, United States, England, Australia, Mexico and Canada. Articles deal with issues in these countries as well as in Africa, China, Europe, South America and South Korea; many articles also have global relevance. This trend is consistent with the increasing internationalisation of knowledge that is occurring as a result of open-access free to publish and download publishing journals. While the ten articles vary greatly in focus, they fit with the journal's emphasis on the intersections between crime, justice and social democracy.

The first article, 'The Metamorphosis of the Victim of Crime', is authored by internationally distinguished scholar, [Sandra Walklate](#), Eleanor Rathbone Chair of Sociology at the University of Liverpool, now also a Professor of Criminology, Monash University and Adjunct to the School of Justice, QUT. The article, based on a keynote address to the *2015 International Conference of Crime, Justice and Social Democracy*, explores how the victim has morphed into something natural, self-evident and almost inevitable. The idea of victimhood now stretches across a vast array of local and global events and contexts – from mass migration, to domestic violence, to terrorism, and beyond – to inform cultural, political and policy responses to victimisation. Walklate argues that trauma creep, which conflates the victim with trauma, has had widespread consequences for criminal justice policy, diverting the lens of victimisation away from tragedies, such as that of Aylan Kurdi a three-year-old boy washed up on the beach of Turkey after fleeing Syria by boat with his family. Walklate concludes that the trauma narrative – one promoted by a positivist strand of victimology – has consequently diverted attention away from seeing victimhood through pain and narrowed it to a 'western centric' lens.

'Democracy and Vigilantism: The Case of Michoacán, Mexico' is authored by two scholars from la Universidad Michoacana de San Nicolas de Hidalgo, México: [Jerjes Aguirre Ochoa](#) and [Casimiro Leco Tomas](#). This is the first article this journal has published about Mexico. It is a powerful read, strongly recommended for anyone interested in how drug cartels and corrupt officials undermine democratic institutions and, in the process, create violence. The article is based on original qualitative analysis of Mexico's *Tierra Caliente* ('Hotlands'). These are areas where drugs are produced and trafficked by Mexico's organised crime gangs, usually with collusion or protection through institutionalised links with politicians and criminal justice organisations. The authors argue that the institutionalisation of corruption poses a great threat to democracy in Mexico by creating the conditions for vigilantism. In the absence of confidence in the democratic right to state protection, vulnerable citizens have formed self defence forces. The authors conclude that '[i]n the absence of substantial improvements in the quality of Mexico's democracy, especially at the levels of state and municipal government, the emergence of other forms of vigilantism and ongoing violence are foreseeable.'

'Homegirls, Hoodrats and Hos: Co-Constructing Gang Status through Discourse and Performance' is co-authored by [Abigail Kolb](#), Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at Clayton State University, and [Ted Palys](#) an internationally acclaimed professor from Simon Fraser University Canada, known especially for research involving qualitative methodology. Their extensive expertise is brought to bear in this original piece of research based 'on semi-structured interviews with 24 formerly gang-affiliated Chicana women'. Little is known about how Chicana female gang members negotiate boundaries and how these negotiations interact with broader social gendered norms. This article fills that void, adding new original innovative knowledge to studies of girls and gangs.

'Free Trade Agreements, Private Courts and Environmental Exploitation: Disconnected Policies, Denials and Moral Disengagement' is authored by [Nigel South](#), a distinguished professor from the University of Essex and pioneer of green criminology. In it, he argues that '[a]lthough there is strong scientific consensus that climate change and environmental degradation are occurring, there is also a significant body of opinion that is sceptical about, or denies the validity of, evidence for this'. The article examines how the drivers of economic growth and new transnational trade agreements are undermining a sustainable future on a global scale, with significant implications for north-south relations and global warming.

[Cassandra Cross](#), a rising star from the Crime and Justice Research Centre, Queensland University of Technology, presents an original analysis based on interviews with 21 victims in 'They're Very Lonely': Understanding the Fraud Victimization of Seniors'. Cross argues that two discourses, both based on deficit models, are prevalent in the understanding of seniors who become fraud victims; one blames them and presents them as 'greedy and gullible' and another removes their agency by seeing them as 'weak and vulnerable'. The article analyses the implications of these discourses for the victims and their access to victim support. It concludes that a third discourse, that their victimisation is primarily because they are 'old and lonely', cuts across these two deficit discourses.

[Yinzhi Shen](#), who grew up in China and now works at the State University of New York, has written an article for the journal about the 'Development of Restorative Justice in China: Theory and Practice'. The article investigates the reasons for the 'souring popularity' of restorative justice principles and programs in China. Shen reviews the major debates between restorative justice and indigenous restorative justice practices, known as 'criminal reconciliation' or, in Chinese, *Xingshi Hejie*. Little is known about these practices indigenous to China as much of criminology, published in English, has focused on issues of specific concern to countries in the global north. This article fills that gap by providing a major review of these programs in China. It makes a great addition to the redemptive project of southern criminology (Carrington, Hogg and Sozzo 2016).

'Contesting and Contextualising Cites: Wildlife Trafficking in Colombia and Brazil' has been authored by two well-known pioneers of green criminology, [David Rodríguez Goyes](#) from the University of Oslo and Antonio Nariño University, Norway and [Ragnhild Sollund](#), also from the University of Oslo. The article is based on a qualitative empirical study undertaken in Colombia and Brazil. The article analyses the effectiveness or otherwise of legislation implemented in these two countries to prevent wildlife trafficking. Their article directs much-needed attention to species and environmental justice. This is essential reading for those interested in green criminology.

Interest in victim's rights has been a global issue, with many jurisdictions across the world establishing victim agencies and victim rights charters (see Walklate (2016) in this issue). [Tyrone Kirchengast](#) from the Faculty of Law at UNSW, investigates 'Victims' Rights and the Right to Review'. The article discusses 'the Proposal for a Directive of the European Parliament and of the Council, (2011) 2011/0129 (COD) 18 May 2011 establishing minimum standards on the

rights, support and protection of victims of crime ... as applied in the Killick case'. The article investigates the implications for a victim's right to review during the pre-trial phase, the right to private prosecution, access to counsel, and adjunctive and extra-curial rights from declarations or charters of victim rights.

Little is published in English about patterns of crime and victimisation in South Korea. Hence the originality and significance of [Ben Brown's](#) article on 'Fear of Crime in South Korea'. In this article Brown, from The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, United States, presents original survey findings about the fear of crime in South Korea. The survey asked questions about offense-specific fears, perceptions victimization, and risk avoidance behaviours. The study found that gender was significantly associated with concern about crime, supporting the findings of key studies about gender and victimisation in western countries.

In 'Where Do We Stand? An Exploratory Analysis of Confidence in African Court Systems', [Francis Boateng](#) and [David Makin](#), both scholars from the United States, present their original research on 'the factors influencing public confidence in the court systems of five African nations; namely, South Africa, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Mali and Zambia'. This is the first article published in our journal to examine courts and the criminal justice system in Africa. The findings, based on frequency measurements and regression analysis are comforting in that they conclude that, while the rates of confidence vary, there remains a high level of public confidence in the courts and criminal justice systems across these five African nations.

This year has been another strong performance for the journal. This edition marks four years of publication. Last year the journal underwent successful evaluation for inclusion into Scopus and Web of Science data bases. This year the journal was re-evaluated by the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and given the gold seal of approval. This is testimony to the high quality of the articles, the editorship, the reviewing and the international readership of the journal and its growing international reach. The journal has now surpassed 210,000 abstract views and 142,000 full pdf downloads. Google Analytics reports that the majority of downloads are now international, with reach across the global south and north (with the exception of Russia). By being open access, free to download, and free to publish, this journal supports the democratisation of knowledge, a core goal of southern criminology (Carrington, Hogg and Sozzo 2016). It is also bridging global divides through its truly international reach. We are grateful as ever to our distinguished International Editorial Board and all our anonymous reviewers and look forward to another year of publication. We acknowledge the high standard of work undertaken by a team of copy editors and translators, Brodie Evans, Margaret Pereira, Jess Rodgers and Charlotte ten Have, led by Journal Manager Alison McIntosh. The first volume in 2017 will be a Special Edition on *Southern Criminology*, which will again showcase a range of international work from high profile and emerging scholars.

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Reference

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