**Historical Criminology Workshop**

*Forging new conversations and collaborations in criminology*

**Programme**

9.30: Virtual meeting opens

Morning Session

9.50: Introduction to morning session (David Churchill)

10.00-12.00: Working group sessions (working groups 1 – 4)

12.00-12.30: Group feedback and closing discussion

*\*Break for lunch\**

Afternoon Session

1.50 – 2.00: Introduction to afternoon session (David Churchill)

2.00 – 4.00: Working group sessions (working groups 5 – 7)

4.00 – 4.30: Group feedback and closing discussion

5.00: Virtual meeting closes

**Information on Working Groups**

Working Group 1: Mobile Methods and Doing Historical Criminology

**Group Convenors: Esmorie Miller** (London South Bank University), **Alexa Neale** & **Lizzie Seal** (University of Sussex) – [e.c.seal@sussex.ac.uk](mailto:e.c.seal@sussex.ac.uk)

In this workshop we will explore the use of mobile methods in doing historical criminology. The three workshop leaders will briefly talk about their interest in, and plans for, incorporating mobile methods into their research and the rest of the session will be devoted to sharing ideas and experiences among participants. Mobile methods, such as walks, have the potential to unlock understandings of spatiality and sensory experience in ways that other methods cannot. This is especially significant for historical criminologists, whose research is frequently conducted from the analysis of documents. We aim to consider the potential for mobile methods to enhance our historical understanding of sites of crime, victimisation, punishment and social harm. For historical criminologists engaged in contemporary history, mobile methods offer new possibilities for doing oral history. Other relevant issues include the ways mobile methods relate to and intersect with heritage tourism in the form of crime and ghost walks. We will reflect on the differences and similarities between adopting mobile methods in historical research and these commercial examples.

Working Group 2: Police Corruption

**Group Convenor: Paul Bleakley** (Middlesex University) – [p.bleakley@mdx.ac.uk](mailto:p.bleakley@mdx.ac.uk)

A secretive practice by its very nature, police corruption is an area of criminology that often proves challenging for researchers. This is particularly true for researchers working in the contemporary, where the bonds of intra-organisational police culture remain strong and the repercussions for speaking openly and honestly about corruption are severe. Historical criminology, thus, provides a way to work in this sometimes neglected area of criminology by taking a longitudinal view on police corruption, identifying sociocultural and systemic patterns that give rise to professional deviance in law enforcement. The purpose of this workshop is to draw bring together researchers working in different geographical and social contexts that have experienced police corruption. By combining our collective knowledge of how it has manifested in different systems, a better understanding of common patterns can be cultivated. From here, it is hoped that a truly global, historical perspective on police corruption can be developed that illuminates the risk factors and potential intervention strategies. This workshop will, ideally, result in an edited collection being proposed along these lines or (alternatively) a special issue for a relevant journal.

Working Group 3: ‘Advancing ‘Historical Criminology’: Celebrating interdisciplinarity and reflecting on history as *lingua franca*

**Group Convenor: Sarah Wilson** (University of York) – [s.wilson@york.ac.uk](mailto:s.wilson@york.ac.uk)

This working group takes as its starting point aspirations for Historical Criminology’s development through 'Linking past and present in criminological research’ which have recently emerged as #HCNet priorities. This thematic exploration of history as ‘lingua franca’ is looking to encourage interested colleagues to embrace what could persuasively be a key reference point for emerging ‘Historical Criminology’ research agendas. It is suggested that there is significant scope for nascent ‘Historical Criminology’ to engage reflexively with other social science disciplines during this crucial phase in its development. This particular take on proposed future directions suggests that the importance of History for the discipline of Criminology extends far beyond approaching Historical Criminology as a narrow sub-field.

This working group will explore how those pioneering Historical Criminology can draw important affirmation from how a number of social science disciplines are also reflecting on their own relationship with the discipline of History, and doing so in ways which have identifiable similarities with the current vista for Historical Criminology. It is hoped that presenting this proposition, together with mindfulness of the known ‘barriers’ which can limit scholarly engagement with different disciplines, will stimulate discussion of these wider possibilities attaching to more sustained engagement for Criminology with the discipline of History. In looking to highlight the possibilities for research agendas which are genuinely cross-disciplinary, this thematic approach will look to explore how different social science disciplines are reconfiguring their relationship with history. The organiser has close knowledge of such developments in Law, Management and Organizational Studies (MOS) and Business History, and eagerly welcomes those familiar with other disciplines and interdisciplinary fields (e.g. Sociology, Geography, Economics, Anthropology, Heritage Studies, Memory Studies, etc.). The goal of this working group’s discussions will be to explore how history might play an important role in encouraging conversations between several disciplines, and how this might enrich Historical Criminology’s developing remit specifically.

Working Group 4: The Not Yet Dead God of Atonement

**Group Convenor: Aaron Pycroft** (University of Portsmouth) – [aaron.pycroft@port.ac.uk](mailto:aaron.pycroft@port.ac.uk)

This session will explore the historical relationship between theology and the practices of justice and the ways in which Judaeo-Christian atonement theory is used in contemporary penal settings to support both harsh penal measures *and* rehabilitation. This antinomy will be explored through the lens of criminology as peacemaking supported by insights from the anthropology of Rene Girard and Marc Auge.

Working Group 5: Crime-Related Dark Tourism: An Exploration

**Group Convenor: Hannah Thurston** (University of Brighton) – [H.Thurston@brighton.ac.uk](mailto:H.Thurston@brighton.ac.uk)

Stories about crime and punishment continue to captivate audiences all over the world. It is maybe not surprising then, that tourist sites with some claim to crime/criminals are likewise becoming increasingly popular. As storied spaces these ‘dark’ sites are highly diverse. They include, for example, **25 Cromwell Street** the now infamous home of Fred and Rose West; **The Angola Prison Rodeo**, hosted by Louisiana State Penitentiary and **The 9/11 Memorial and Museum** in New York City. More generally, the list might also include **narco-related tourism** in Latin America; visiting **active war-zones** throughout the middle east; attending the site of **an assassination or mass murder**, and some forms of **gravestone tourism**. Even a **ghost-walk** on a city break might be considering a form of dark tourism.

Similarly, de-commissioned cells are also being repurposed to perform more touristic functions. You might be enjoying the **theatre** in Valparaiso, attending a **wedding** in Somerset, staying at the **Four Seasons** in Istanbul, or drinking a **cocktail** in Canterbury while also being in a former cell. Add to this every **memorial**, **museum** or **tour** dedicated to crime, punishment, or policing and we begin to see that from **Auschwitz** to **Alcatraz,** crime-related tourism is big business.

While many of the stories being told in these sites are set in the past, they nevertheless give special meaning to people, places, and practices in the present. The aims of this group then would be to:

***Explore the ethical questions associated with crime-related tourism.*** Should sites be able to display personal items without permission? Whose story is remembered and whose is forgotten? Can it ever be ethical to make a profit from the suffering of others? What are the implications of souvenirs, gift shops, photo-opportunities?

***Explore the power of ascetics*** ***in crime-related tourism.*** How is noise and image used within these storied spaces? How is space used to communicate meaning? What symbolic function do specific objects perform?

***Explore the cult of the celebrity*** ***within the context of crime-related tourism.*** How do sites remember famous people? In what ways do these sites celebrate violence acts and violent people? Who is awarded celebrity status? Why? And how is that status communicated? Can an understanding of the ‘true crime’ genre be beneficial?

***Explore identity politics*** ***within crime-related tourist sites.*** How are national narratives presented within dark-crime sites? How might an understanding of heritage extend our analyses? Who ‘belongs’ within these sites? Do they construct symbolic communities? What and who do these sites promote as the ‘solution’ to crime problems?

**Outcome:** Work towards a special issue of a relevant journal (e.g. *Crime, Media, Culture*).

**Participants:** Anyone interested in crime-related tourist sites is encouraged to take part.

Working Group 6: Path Dependency, Crime and Social Responses to Crime

**Group Convenors: Thomas Guiney** (Oxford Brookes University) & **Henry Yeomans** (University of Leeds) – [H.P.Yeomans@leeds.ac.uk](mailto:H.P.Yeomans@leeds.ac.uk)

Much criminological research concentrates on making or assessing the case for certain reform. Much other criminological research concentrates on explaining instances in which notable reforms are made. However, less attention is usually given to explaining the stasis or puzzling lack of change which is manifest in many legal or policy areas, often in spite of the existence of considerable empirical evidence or expert consensus that reform would be beneficial. It is widely agreed, for example, that prison is an ineffective punishment yet it is still the favoured form of punishment for serious offending in almost all Western countries. Similarly, the prohibition of drugs is broadly upheld despite its widely documented failure to adequately control drug use and sometimes inflammatory effect on other social problems, such as racial inequality. There is a pronounced ‘stickiness’ to some laws, policies, institutions and practices which enables them to consistently resist significant change.

This session will explore the use of path dependency as a potential explanation for much of this stickiness. Instances of continuity, of course, could be explained in a synchronic way as deriving from, say, lack of political interest or strong counter-lobbying. But they can also be examined as dynamic processes, as the ongoing production and reproduction of a given social arrangement that unfolds through historical time (Clemens, 2007). Events in one historical context can constrain actions at later points in time by, for example, creating precedents, vested interests, embedded working practices or entrenched popular opinions. Deviating from the existing path can thus become much more challenging and costly than simply continuing with things as they are. In this way, path dependency has become a useful tool in some social science fields for helping to reveal how and why history matters generally, as well as for explaining specific continuities or durabilities within social arrangements (Pierson, 2004). Despite a few exceptions, its use within criminology has been more limited.

This workshop will explore the relevance of path dependency to a range of criminological topics and its potential as a new avenue for criminological research. It will involve open discussion of key ideas and key texts with a view to scoping out the potential for more criminological research in this area. Participants from any discipline or background are welcome, whether they are familiar with path dependency or not. Indeed, while this introduction has been consistent with the institutional focus of most existing social science studies of path dependency, those interested in how events in the lives of individuals or families may shape future propensity to offend (or reoffend) are encouraged to participate. There will be space to push the boundaries of both what path dependency constitutes as a concept and what it might contribute to criminology as a diverse field of research interests.

(References: E. Clemens (2007) ‘Towards a Historicized Sociology: Theorizing Events, Processes and Emergence’, *Annual Review of Sociology* Vol.33, 527-549; P. Pierson (2004) *Politics in Time: History, Institutions and Social Analys*is, Princeton University Press.)

Working Group 7: Protection

**Group Convenor: Francis Dodsworth** (Kingston University) – [f.dodsworth@kingston.ac.uk](mailto:f.dodsworth@kingston.ac.uk)

Protection is a dynamic that figures in many social, political and organisational relationships, but is rarely analysed on its own terms. The aim of this theme is to bring together scholars working across periods and disciplines to see if there is scope for the development of a new thematic area of study around protection. We would be particularly interested in thinking about and comparing the kinds of sources available for study of the subject and the potential for constructing cross-disciplinary and cross-periods syntheses and analyses. Our aim for the session would be to map interests, resources and perhaps most importantly get a sense of the questions in people’s work that this subject intersects with or addresses. The ideal outcome would be to build up a schematic of our knowledge of the area as it stands at the present, and where might be productive to go with it.

Potential areas for discussion include, but are not at all limited to:

* The place of protection in social relationships (gender, class, commerce)
* Protection and power (state formation and legitimacy; health and responsibility / responsibilization)
* Agencies (organisation, technology, technique, training, weaponry)
* Roles (affects, identities, office holding and status)

Some areas of obvious interest are the fields of gender, class, law, military studies, policing, self-defence, the state, sovereignty, politics, public health and the history of the emotions. There are also obvious intersections here with the histories of crime and policing, but also with state formation, the civilizing process and governmentality, amongst others, but this list is meant to be suggestive not exclusive.