

Justice and Penal Reform: Re-shaping the Penal Landscape



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In the aftermath of the financial crisis of 2008, Western societies entered a climate of austerity which has limited the penal expansion experienced in the US, UK and elsewhere over recent decades. These altered conditions have led to introspection and new thinking on punishment even among those on the political right who were previously champions of the punitive turn. This volume brings together a group of international leading scholars with a shared interest in using this opportunity to encourage new avenues of reform in the penal sphere.

Justice is a famously contested concept and this book takes a deliberately capacious approach to the question of how justice can be mobilised to inform new reform agendas. Some of the contributors revisit an antique question in penal theory and reconsider the question of what fair or just punishment should look like today. Others seek to make gender central to understanding of crime and punishment, or actively reflect on the part that related concepts such as human rights, legitimacy and trust can and should play in thinking about the creation of more just crime control arrangements.

Faced with the expansive penal developments of recent decades, much research and commentary about crime control has been gloom-laden and dystopian. By contrast, this volume seeks to contribute to a more constructive sensibility in the social analysis of penality: one that is worldly, hopeful and actively engaged in thinking about how to create more just penal arrangements.

Justice and Penal Reform is a key resource for academics and as a supplementary text for students undertaking courses on punishment, penology, prisons, criminal justice and public policy. This book approaches penal reform from an international perspective and offers a fresh and diverse approach within an established field.

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