

Book review

Forensic Psychology, Crime and Policing: Key Concepts and Practical Debates

Corteen, K., Steele, R., Cross, N. and McManus, M. (Eds). (2023) Policy Press ISBN- 978-1-4473-5938-8 Review DOI 10.1108/JFP-08-2024-082

This book is a trailblazer in criminal justice understanding – it is likely to be a go-to book for anyone interested in or contemplating a career within the Criminal Justice System (CJS). The breadth of the book is outstanding – as can be seen from the contents page – it just keeps on giving. The book is made up of five parts: forensic psychology, crime and criminal justice, police and policing, investigation and a concluding section.

Chapters within the book are wide-reaching in both scope and depth yet are “bite size” of around 10 pages each which makes them easily accessible to the reader. Examples include forensic psychology and court proceedings, crimes and the powerful, policing and non-verbal communication and investigative interviewing. At times some of the detailed content specifically around the inclusion criteria for OBP’s within the CJS might not always be accurate this does not distract from the level of detail provided overall within the book.

The book charts the history of the CJS and describes how the CJS sits within

and reflects the society for which it serves. It explores the definition of crime and early community “policing” tactics from which modern-day policing practises are developed. As well as the development of the courts and prison system. At points throughout and specifically in the concluding section the book focuses on modern-day practice in charting the impact and consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on practice within the CJS.

Specifically in relation to forensic psychology, the book highlights how the profession has “impacted the everyday running of the Criminal Justice System and the process that it depends on” (p.9) noting especially how the profession has never been so in demand as it is today (see Chapter 15 especially).

Whilst at times critical of the CJS, it also acknowledges the immense pressure the system is operating under, and the outstanding work practitioners are completing within it. With that in mind, it does not appear to oppose or criticise the CJS but instead to be a “critical friend”, providing helpful and on the most part well thought through suggestions for improving practice.

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