

Ghost Criminology: An Exploration of the Discipline's 'Spectral Turn' (69530)

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The inequalities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the racial injustice brought to vivid focus by footage of lethal state violence and the fires that have scoured continents speak to traumas of the past and future being inflicted upon the living in the present. Drawing upon recent criminological scholarship examining spectrality, as well as Jacques Derrida's notion of hauntology, this paper sets out a framework to explore these harms. This new sub-discipline of 'ghost criminology' is a means to recognise the harms that have been inflicted in the past and trace the contours of their lingering presence. Given the discipline's spectral turn, we can begin to capture those figures, groups and concepts that have been rendered invisible, as well as attend to harms that have persistent afterlives. In this, it is vital that we also attend to the discipline's troubling and troubled past. Criminology continues to be haunted by its complicity in colonialist practice, scientific racism and eugenics. The present itself also demands radical praxis to ensure justice in the intersecting crises of racial injustice, structural imbalance and climate catastrophe. We conclude, then, by conjuring ghosts of the future. In attending to these, we must shape the 'not yet'. We must

imagine a state that does not see its most vulnerable members 'let die' through inaction or subject to the language and rituals of violence. A 'ghost criminology' provides a means of listening to the voices of the discipline's dead, as well as the ghosts of its future.

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