

BOOK REVIEW

John Walliss¹

Drew D. Gray, *Crime, Policing and Punishment in England, 1660-1914* (Bloomsbury, 2016) ISBN 9781441117656, 393pp, £22.99pb.

The last decade has seen the publication of several texts providing introductions to the field of crime history. Routledge's *History of Crime in the UK and Ireland* series covers the period 1688 to 1945 in England and Wales in four excellent monographs. Sage Publications and Willan have also published their own introductory texts, *History and Crime* (currently in a second edition, 2014) and *Crime and Justice 1750-1950* (2005). These books stand aside older texts, such as David Taylor's *Crime, Policing and Punishment in England, 1750-1914* (1998) and Clive Emsley's *Crime and Society in England 1750-1900* (currently in a fourth edition, 2010). Drew D. Gray's *Crime, Policing and Punishment in England, 1660-1914* thus joins an already bustling market of introductory texts competing for the attention of the introductory reader.

Crime, Policing and Punishment covers a broad period and does so thematically. The book is divided into two main sections. The first, Key Themes in the History of Crime, begins by introducing the history of crime and punishment as well as some of the key sources for studying in the field. It then explores the topics of violent crime, property crime, gender, juvenile crime and media representations of crime and criminality. The latter chapter is particularly welcome, not least as it is a topic that is not covered in any real depth in any of the other competing texts. Property crime and gender both receive two chapters, focusing on the nature and causes of property crime and women as both offenders and victims. The second section of the book turns to the evolution and development of the English Criminal Justice System. The chapters here cover the emergence of the magistracy and the modern police force, as well as changes in punishment regimes; the growth of incarceration and the concomitant decline in physical punishment (most notably with the decline of the Bloody Code) and transportation. Another chapter deals with changes in prosecution in English courts, from one where the victim was central to one where professionals increasingly took a central role.

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Crime, Policing and Punishment is a well-written, accessible book, providing an excellent introduction to the field of the history of crime and punishment. In contrast to the other books mentioned in the introduction, it is also supported by a companion website. At the time of writing this is not currently online, although when it is, it will include an extended bibliography and seminar exercises. The latter will make it even more useful as a classroom text and is a particularly welcome aspect of the book.