economic conditions for all children inclusively; which embraces diversion from formal justice interventions for the bulk of young people and employs a child-appropriate approach for those few for whom formal intervention is required; which embraces abolitionism; and which reverses the demonization of particular groups of young people through the depoliticization of youth crime and through encouraging tolerance.

However, as with most critical criminological analyses that expose the reality behind the rhetoric – or which provide, as *Youth crime and justice* does, 'reflective interpretation[s] of how any discordance between "evidence" and policy formation might be conceived' (p. xi) – one is left wondering just what ought to happen next if more concordance is the aim. In light of the increasing mediatization of youth crime and the political cynicism and opportunism that shape the contradictory responses to it in most of the countries in these books, how could such a principled youth justice be achieved? How can youth justice be depoliticized? Criminologists are often better at providing well-reasoned critique than at offering politically achievable alternatives. Goldson and Muncie themselves mention the importance of informing the public to correct the 'skewed reading of public opinion' (p. 225) upon which much of the political rationale for a punitive youth justice is premised. This is a useful start, but it is certainly time we had a more comprehensive consideration of these pragmatic issues of implementation. Perhaps then even a third slice of the salami is in order, one which would focus on just how to contest and engage with those forces driving populist-punitive youth justice and how to implement principled alternatives. In the meantime, however, these two remarkable books teach us a great deal and give us plenty to think about.

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Dynamic security: The democratic therapeutic community in prison, M. Parker (ed.). Foreword by J. Gunn. London & Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2007. 288 pp. (including index). ISBN-13: 978 1 84310 385 1, ISBN-10: 1 84310 385 0.

Dynamic security is a collection of essays about different aspects of the theory, practice and management of prison wings, which operate a democratic therapeutic community (TC) regime.

A prison-based TC forms a unique prison environment, different from that found in mainstream prison wings in many ways. It hosts prisoners who have volunteered to live there for a period, which ideally will not be shorter than 18 months. The prisoners, or as they are called in TCs, residents, participate in intensive group psychotherapy sessions as well as taking part in larger 'community' meetings in which decisions about the everyday running of the wing are made in a relatively democratic manner.

Most of the contributions to the book are based on experience from prisons in England, and particularly HMP Grendon, where many of the contributors to the volume have worked or are currently employed. The book's 20 chapters are divided into six sections. The first, 'Theory: Origins of criminal behaviour' is not directly related to TC work but rather provides an overview of social (Murray, Cheliotis and Maruna), psychiatric (Ormsby) and psychological theories (Day) of crimes. The second section discusses the history of prison-based TCs. The most valuable contribution to this section, in my view, is Newell and Healey's detailed presentation and exhaustive summary of the historical development of TCs in the UK.

One minor but significant omission from the book's opening chapters is a general explanation of what a TC *is*, in the most basic terms – its daily routines and activities, the roles of residents and staff and other features. The book appears to be targeting a wide audience, including those who have no prior knowledge or experience of TCs. Yet, without a basic description of what a TC is, such an audience might find it difficult to gain an in-depth understanding of the later chapters.

Those who are familiar with TCs, especially those who work there, would find the third section 'Method and practice' and the fourth section 'Psychodynamic aspects: Inside forensic therapy' more useful. These two sections focus on the clinical aspects of TC work, including aspects of risk assessment and supervision of group therapy. Some of the general theoretical aspects and models which form the basis for the clinical work in TCs have been described elsewhere in the literature, but the chapters here provide a unique focus on specific aspects of TC work, such as issues arising while working with drug users, as well as issues related to working in special environments (e.g. working in TCs for Young Offenders). Most of the authors of these sections are therapists, psychologists or psychiatrists. Their presentation of clinical examples and case studies helps clarify their theories and make them more accessible to those readers and practitioners without any clinical background.

The next section, 'Managing the TC' helps to illuminate some of the changes that have taken place in the operation of prison-based TCs over recent years. The contributors to this section – as well as Clark and Lees in their chapter regarding the auditing process, which could easily be included as part of this section – emphasize the fact that TCs today are no longer independent or autonomous 'medical-oriented' units that operate outside the framework of the Prison Service. Grendon and other TCs currently operate within a 'What Works' framework that focuses on reducing re-offending through accredited, evidence-based interventions, and are subject to rigorous and structured annual auditing. While they still use psychodynamic formulations of risk assessment and 'dynamic security' measures, these are applied as *an addition to* rather than *a substitute for* more empirical risk assessment formulations and more conventional security procedures.

However, the symbiosis between TCs and the hosting prisons, as Roland Woodward explains, is neither simple nor easy to achieve. Prisons and TCs are 'highly incongruous

cohabitees, a partnership destined to conflict' (Genders and Player, 1995: 120). Such an assertion is strongly endorsed by several of the contributors to the volume. Peter Bennett's account of his first days as Governor of Grendon reveals the huge difficulties that emerge in the attempt to bridge the gap between the different, sometimes conflicting, expectations and views of residents, TC staff and non-TC staff, regarding what a prison-based TC should or should not be. Additional evidence for this can be found in the chapter by Legget and Hirons, and Stewart and Parker's discussion of the establishment of the first women's TC at HMP Send.

The final section of the book includes the testimonies of four prisoners about their experiences in prison-based TCs. All four see their stay as a very positive experience that has changed the course of their lives and helped them conceive of more hopeful directions for the future. Other than these qualitative accounts however, the book explicitly avoids discussing the sensitive issue of TCs' effectiveness in reducing reconviction rates. As the editor explains, research about the effectiveness of TCs has already been widely published. This is a legitimate editorial decision, which could be supported on several grounds.

Given this decision, however, a more extensive discussion about the impact of TCs on different aspects of the lives of prisoners and staff while *in* the prison could have been expected. After all, TCs have presented themselves as alternatives to conventional prison regimes, with an emphasis on the special relationships they encourage between residents and staff and the more humane cultures that they establish. Even if such a discussion might not be consistent with the current 'What Works' terminology, it might still be worth exploring and could have provided some lessons for the rest of the prison system. To be fair to this volume, this last point is the focus of another, recent publication, to which some of the authors in this book also contribute (Jones, 2006). It is also covered, to some extent, by Mackenzie's interesting chapter about the TC for 'lifers' at HMP Gartree.

This book is part of the worthwhile series 'Community, culture and change' which is dedicated to issues related to TCs. My one comment to the Series' Editors is that the contributors to this book, as well as to previous volumes in this series, are all strong advocates of prison-based TCs. Perhaps, in future publications, more critical observers could help identify the limitations or more problematic aspects of prison-based TCs.

Overall, *Dynamic security* is a valuable and significant contribution to the literature that discusses this unique, alternative prison regime.

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Penal populism, John Pratt. London: Routledge, 2007. 210 pp.

The best academic writing in criminology has always drawn on a number of established (and related) disciplines, history, politics and sociology, to name but three. John Pratt