

CMC review symposium response

The *Ghost Criminology* collection is an attempt to both capture and survey the seeming 'spectral turn' that has occurred within the discipline. The contributors were invited to consider the spectral within their on-going research projects or to explore how it might be applied to the criminological. To be clear, when we refer to this as a *ghost* criminology, we are using this as a conceptual metaphor. This is not an exploration of the supernatural. Rather, it is a means to examine phenomena that hover between presence and absence, visibility and invisibility. It hopes to capture a sense of time experienced as 'out of joint' and the implications that has for the study of crime, criminality and punishment. We employ the language of spectrality and haunting to explore the lingering effects of violence, the traces and atmospheres of sub-cultures, and – in Derrida's phrasing – the secret of kept secrets. Our hope, then, was to provide some initial shape to an emerging sub-discipline of *ghost* criminology. In this we owe a considerable debt to Avery Gordon's (2008) *Ghostly Matters*. It provided a framework to examine individuals and groups subject to violences that excluded them from the disciplinary archives and visual systems. Gordon's (2008) over-arching argument is that Sociology has not contended with its ghosts – the lingering effects of colonial practice, its subjugation of knowledge, and a complicity in patriarchal capitalism. Our aim with the collection was to extend this approach to criminology. It is a means for the discipline to reckon with its past, its inheritance and debts, whilst also providing a means to conceptualise how the future acts on and through the present. In doing so, we have also been drawn towards Derrida's notion of hauntology. In Mark Fisher's (2014) phrasing, hauntology explores how the forces of the no longer and not yet can be felt in the now. To put this slightly differently, Brown (2001, 149-150) phrases it that

[w]e inherit not 'what really happened' to the dead but what lives on from that happening [...] and inspirit[s] our imaginations and visions for the future

In our introduction to the collection – a so-called 'spirit guide' – we differentiate our project from Gordon's by placing a heavier emphasis upon the hauntological and how that might be a useful frame of analysis to examine structural violences of the past and future being felt within the present. In order to give this further shape, we identified three strands of a *ghost* criminology: the (in)visible, the (in)corporeal and dead or haunted spaces. As we set out in the spirit guide and the closing requiem, the goal was to capture something of the sense of the spectral turn and provide the reader with a usable conceptual framework – hence the spirit guide – in order to apply these ideas to areas within and against criminology. We have been delighted and intrigued by how criminologists and colleagues in other disciplines have responded, in addition to the debates and discussions the text has generated with our students. We are grateful to the four reviewers for their thoughtful, perceptive and constructive comments in response to the text. We hope to respond to these within the spirit – if the reader will forgive that particular pun – with which these have been presented and the sense that this is a project whose contours are – as befitting the spectral – purposefully vaporous.

Timothy Morton (2016) begins *Dark Ecology* by considering the nature of time and the relationship between present and future thought. He considers a future that, in essence,

is the present, but 'stretched out further' (ibid.: 1). There is an alternative. However, this requires thinking that is different from the present. If there is a desire to 'change the present – then thought must be aware of this kind of future' (ibid.). This discussion leads, in the pages that follow, into a discussion of the weird and weirding. Taking the Norse etymology of 'weird', Morton (2016: 5) notes its meaning of being 'twisted, *on a loop*'. In addition to its more common usage of 'strange of appearance', it is also associated with destiny and the fates. There are, he argues, '[t]wo kinds of weird: a turning and a strange appearing, and a third kind, the weird gap between the two' (Morton, 2016: 7). We mention this here since it speaks to those elements of a temporality experienced as 'off its hinges' that we note in the book and how it opens us up to new praxis. Both Tea Fredriksson and Emma Russell comment upon the utility of looking at this weirding of time. A framework that takes us outside of a sense of linear, causal time might be a means to think the future anew. It could provide ways in which to imagine a future outside of a present that is shaped by state violence and which stretches inexorably into the future. Emma Russell's observation that we look to the synchronicities between a hauntological approach and queer temporalities is especially useful and has prompted us to examine these links further. Carla Freccero's (2006, 2007) work is mentioned briefly in the collection, and their work explicitly pulls from the language of spectrality, as well as queer approaches to – and lived experience of – time. Utilising the language of haunting and ghosts, Freccero considers how 'the Derridean concept of spectrality [might] reconfigure familial, nucleated, heteronormative temporalities' (ibid., 337). A roundtable discussion – carried out asynchronously via email - on queer temporalities published in *GLQ*, is similarly instructive on this (Dinshaw et al, 2007). Firstly, there is the consideration that 'not all nonlinear chronological imaginings can be recuperated as queer' (ibid., 187). And as we will turn to shortly, there is a risk in seeing haunting everywhere and everywhen. Secondly, the discussants note how the act of writing itself can be used to foster 'an intergenerational quasi-relationality': writers can pass on 'their timely out-of-time thoughts to an unknown future' (ibid.). This is a means of effecting change, imagining new worlds and conducting temporally disrupted (and disruptive) 'conversations' with the future.

This requires engagement with the felt and lived experience of asynchrony. This would open up the 'concept of temporal heterogeneity' more readily to analysis (ibid.). Jagose, for example, describes 'the experience of being out of time or in time with some moment that is not this one' (ibid., 191). Lizzie Seal's moving response details how mourning pushes time off its hinges. We find ourselves unmoored. We become open to an asynchrony through our affective responses. Dinshaw, in the roundtable, raises an important note of caution though. Whilst a 'refusal of linear historicism' can open the way for the serious consideration of underexplored or new modes of consciousness (for example, by drawing upon notions of haunting and the ghostly), there can be unanticipated side effects: 'Ernst Bloch recounts chillingly the Nazi's deployment of temporal asynchrony in recruiting Germans who felt backward in the face of an alien modernity' (Dinshaw et al, 2007: 178).

This leads us to the ways in which queer temporalities have already informed criminological practice. Berggren et al (2020), for example, use queer temporality theorizing in relation to desistance. They examine the notion of chrononormativity and the ways a which life courses that do not map onto heteronormative life stories are understood as evidencing 'immaturity'. A queer temporality allows for exploration of 'growing sideways'

rather than 'growing up', as well as the importance of 'afterwardness'. This latter term 'refers to how events that are registered at one point only become understood or take on a new significance at a later stage [...] In other words, the past influences the present, while new experiences simultaneously transform the meaning of that very past' (Berggren, 2020: 610-11). The importance of this to life course narratives of desistance is clear. It also highlights temporal stutters that disrupt that chrononormativity or that lead to parallel periods of dead time. There are clear points of connection, then, between the sorts of temporal weirding that we discuss in *Ghost Criminology* and queer temporality theorizing. They point us towards considerations of harm experienced asynchronously or which take on resonance when 'out of time'. These points of confluence also open up avenues for the further elaborations that the reviewers highlight.

Emma Russell notes the methodological approaches unexplored in the collection, but which could further expand the focus of a ghost criminology. There is the scope, for example, for the adoption and adaptation of 'spirit recording'. Ayres and Kerrigan (2020) provide an exemplar for this in their innovative piece that explores hauntology and trauma in the soundscape of a prison. They examine the ways in which Guyanan prisons house trauma and see this passed inter-generationally. It is the soundscape that 'permeates and joins the historical and contemporary prison' (ibid., 6):

'the prison becomes a crypt, built by violence, that contain the spectral sounds of coloniality and its sounds of suffering and control.'
(ibid., 6)

This is joined by work by Herrity (2019) that explores aurality within carceral settings more broadly. We note in the requiem the importance of listening to the voices of the passed/past, and these inventive approaches provide a valuable methodological framework with which to attend to a sensorial world. Ayres and Kerrigan's (2020: 5) approach opens up sonic worlds that are not simply of 'control and violence', but also of 'survival and resilience'.

Turning to Mark Wood's critique, he asks the fundamental question that '[i]f everything is haunted by what came before it, what explanatory value does the notion of haunting have?'. In addressing this, it is useful to briefly summarise the positions taken by Wolfreys (2002) and Luckhurst (2002) in relation to the application of Derrida's hauntology to literary criticism and the 'spectral turn' that occurred within that field. It is helpful to do so since it speaks to some of the questions of vapourishness that we pose in the text and that Wood notes in his critique.

Debates concerning the non-specificity of the spectral emerge as each disciple engages in reflections upon their spectral turns. For example, Wolfreys (2002) sees spectrality as being located outside of the dyad of life and death. Rather, it occupies a third position: 'emerging between, and yet not a part of, two negations: *neither, nor*' (original emphasis, Wolfreys, 2002: x). This establishes the figure of the spectre and the act of haunting as being disruptive. It frays the edges of concepts and categories. When the spectre returns it does so - owing to Derrida's notion of the supplement - as a repetition but with a difference. Luckhurst's (2002) critique of this - perhaps the most clear and forthright

in relation to literary criticism - is aimed at an approach that sees haunting practice everywhere. Every text, every location is haunted. Encountering spectrality everywhere can lead to it having a 'universalizing or flattening effect' (Murray, 2012: 67). Further, he notes, that there is little apparent appetite for resolution or putting the dead to rest. Rather, there is simply a constant search for the next pun to put towards a 'textual reading machine', be it a cryptomimetics, spectography, Gothic spectro-poetics or phantomistics (Luckhurst, 2002: 536).

Recounting this critique is to suggest that this discussion about the development of a specific theory of ghost criminology follows on from these debates. Mark Wood notes that if the spectral is a floating signifier, then what does it mean to call something haunted. We find ourselves drawn back to Murray's (2012) understanding of Wolfreys' work. Specifically, Wolfreys' understanding of hauntology - and other Derridean terms - is that it is not a fixed concept. Rather, it is 'always maintaining a polysemy as they refuse to become ossified in a standardized critical fashion'. So, in generating a *ghost* criminology, we would hope to echo this whilst also acknowledging Luckhurst's and Wood's critique. One approach would be to embrace the multivalent, vapourishness of the spectral and its disruptive structure. Additionally, we must do more than simply attend to the voices of the dead, but seek resolution with them. A means of achieving this, as with many of the contributions to the collection, is to focus upon the local and situate the haunting practice as an emergence of the spectral. This goes some way to alleviate the flattening effect of simply seeing the spectre everywhere and everywhen. Otherwise, we run the risk of being left, as Jameson (1999: 58-9) argues in his critique of *Spectres of Marx*, at either end of two unsatisfying poles:

To forget the dead altogether is impious in ways that prepare their own retribution, but to remember the dead is neurotic and obsessive and merely feeds a sterile repetition. There is no 'proper' way of relating to the dead and the past.

Having started the collection with a '(spirit) guide' we end it with a 'requiem'. This seemed fitting for a project that places an emphasis upon communing with the past/passed. It also leads us to our intentions for the development of a *ghost* criminology. Emma Russell describes reading the collection for its capacity to advance abolitionism in and against the discipline. This might remind us of Morton's framing of imagining - of *making* - the future anew. So far we have tended to focus upon the past/passed. There is still much scope for thinking spectrally of the future, of considering what time being 'off its hinges' might entail for the discipline. We can think both of futures extinguished by present and past harms, as well as futures anticipated and shaped there as well. Campbell's (2022) contribution in the collection, drawing upon Barad's quantum-inflected critique of Derridean hauntology, is a useful marker for this kind of exploration of the temporal. There is an importance, also, to consider the ways in which the ghost can be used in and against criminology. One way to do so is to heed Haraway's (1994) call to use the 'less-deadly versions' of tropes to understand the social world. Utilising the spectre as a conceptual metaphor can lead us down a path whereby we simply repeat the damaging practices of the past without effecting restitutive and rehabilitative change in the present. We need to be mindful of an 'endless 'dancing around a wound'' (Cameron, 2008: 389).

We need also to be mindful that the current project has focused upon Eurocentric conceptualisations of the spectre and spectrality. We have drawn upon the literature of continental philosophy and anglo-phone social theory. Lincoln and Lincoln (2014), in their call for a critical hauntology, make the case for attending to those figures and voices ghosted by the academy. Notably, we must attend to considerations of the spectre of and within the global South. What does it mean to encounter the ghost when it is central to an ontology and not a play on words or conceptual metaphor? What does it mean to consider the ghost-*qua*-ghost (Kwon, 2008)?

Finally, we envisage Ghost Criminology as being exploratory in its focus, with an emphasis placed upon imaginative engagement with the active presences of the past and future within the present. To be clear, this does not involve jettisoning rigor for oneiric flights of fancy. Rather, it is one that encourages us to 'graze' with and against spectrality in other disciplines and to explore alternative methodologies. It provides a framework to examine the not yet, never was, might be and no longer. And the collection, alongside the reviewers' careful considerations of it here, are points in an on-going séance between past and future.

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