

Special Issue

Access to Justice: Historical Approaches to Victims of Crime

Message from the Guest Editors

Victims were central to the detection and prosecution of crime for most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Indeed, if it was not for the substantial activity of victims there would be little recorded crime at all before the 1830s. In many countries, newly formed police forces then took the lead in the prosecution process until their role was, in turn, supplanted by professional lawyers and state prosecution services. Despite their 'removal' from the courtroom, victims have remained important agents in the justice system. Today they are frequently evoked and re-imagined within media and political debates, becoming symbolic ciphers for concerns about crime and other perceived social challenges. This collection seeks contributors who will address one of three major research questions: How has victims' access to justice been facilitated or restricted over the past two centuries? How, and to what end, have cultural representations shaped perceptions of victims? How, why and when did victims come to shape political and criminal justice discourse and practice?

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Message from the Editor-in-Chief

Societies (ISSN 2075-4698) is an interdisciplinary journal that brings together different scientific approaches to engage with societal questions to enhance our understanding of the social realm throughout history. The journal publishes original empirical research papers, literature reviews, and conceptual papers. Our aim is to publish papers that have a significant impact on addressing present and emerging societal questions. Therefore, we encourage researchers to publish their results in as much detail as possible. For empirical research papers and literature reviews, all experimental details must be provided, so that the results are reproducible. We also encourage the publication of timely theoretical pieces on topics of interest to existing and emerging societal questions. Papers are either published in the open journal or in Special Issues devoted to specific topics of interest to the field.

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