

Editorial

Change, continuity, challenges

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A lot can happen in three months. Since the December 2017 editorial we have seen the ousting of South Africa's president, Jacob Zuma, and the election of his successor, Cyril Ramaphosa, all of which took place against the backdrop of pre-dawn raids on the Guptas' Saxonwold compound. Cape Town's water crisis deepened and brought with it the threat of 'Day Zero' – the day that taps in the Mother City would literally run dry. First meant to take place in early April, but eventually pushed out to June (and now hopefully avoided completely for 2018 at least), the spectre of #DayZero brought new conversations that melded questions of safety and security and the provision of water for the city's residents. #MeToo and the 'TimesUp' movement have changed the level of awareness of and attention on sexual victimisation globally and locally. So what is the thread that hangs all of these events together? What is my point in introducing this edition of *South African Crime Quarterly* with these events?

For me, the first striking point is change. Seemingly intractable problems shift (however slightly), and 'invisible' problems (re)take their place in common discourse – or at least on social media. Things that many of us take entirely for granted, like clean water from our taps, require new attention and make us confront not only our privileges but also how we equitably and safely secure access to this kind of basic need. The second thread is the notion of 'justice', and how we fight to right injustices, and seek out and value different experiences and solutions for and from different parts of our society. Linked to this, the third point relates to how narratives are shaped, and how we draw attention to the issues that we care about. Here I think especially about questions of how we allow the media, (prominent) individuals, and the state to raise and then attend to issues, and then, perhaps more critically, what is often sacrificed through that process as narratives change, constituencies are excluded, nuance is lost or attention wanes. I think these examples also speak to the importance of political will to address, intervene, fund and innovate in terms of service delivery and system's responses – issues that are especially felt in South Africa in the criminal justice and policing sectors.

The interconnectedness of these things – change, justice, representation and response – invites us to confront how we innovate in these spaces and how we envision our own contributions in doing so. As individuals, and as practitioners and scholars, we are reminded that finding solutions to policy problems requires the proper balance between learning from others and developing our own response strategies based on our own experiences. Working towards equitable (or at least 'good') outcomes requires more than just thinking short-term, but requires problem-solving that values collaboration, uses bottom-up approaches, that is conscious of context and foregrounds sustainability.

The articles in this edition of SACQ illustrate or address a number of these considerations. The articles by Guy Lamb and Ntemi Nimilwa Kilekamajenga address the question of how systems and agencies learn from periods of crisis. Lamb examines massacres perpetrated by the police in South Africa, and asks what impact these massacres have had on changing the police organisation. Using five typologies of change from existing literature on policing, he shows how these incidents of violence have, or have not, resulted in relatively immediate reforms of public policing practices, in some cases fundamentally reforming the organisation as a whole. Kilekamajenga addresses the crisis of overburdening and overcrowding in the Tanzanian criminal justice and prison systems, and asks whether this provides a moment to consider whether restorative interventions offer promise in resolving the problem. Using evidence from other jurisdictions in Africa and New Zealand, he argues that restorative justice approaches can be adapted to suit the Tanzanian restorative approach for both child and adult offenders.

Shifting focus to questions of narratives and perceptions, and picking up on themes raised as part of the December 2017 special edition on protest, Peter Alexander, Carin Runciman, Trevor Ngwane, Boikanyo Moloto, Kgothatso Mokgele and Nicole van Staden draw our attention to the frequency and turmoil of community protests between 2005 and 2017. These authors ask us to reconsider the ways in which protest is framed as violent, disruptive and disorderly. Comparing the data collected by the Centre for Social Change's archive of media reports with other sources of protest statistics, these authors not only show that South Africa is experiencing a rising number of community protests, and that these protests are increasingly disruptive and/or violent, but also raise questions about the ways in which community protests are measured and represented in the media and elsewhere.

Linking back to the theme of 'things change', Jameelah Omar provides commentary and analysis on the Social Justice Coalition's constitutional challenge of provisions of the Regulation of Gatherings Act (RGA), which criminalises the failure to provide notice of a gathering of 15 or more protesters. Judgment was handed down in the case – colloquially known as the SJC10 case – on 24 January 2018, in which the Western Cape High Court declared section 12(1)(a) of the Act unconstitutional. This judgment has been hailed as significant in its protection of the right to protest, and for its willingness to develop the provisions of the RGA, which was enacted pre-Constitution and has therefore been criticised for holding a view on protest that is, as Omar puts it, 'tainted by its moment in time [...] when dissent was criminalised'. Both the Alexander et al. and the Omar articles raise important questions about how the prevailing narrative characterises protest as violent rather than productive, and how we push back to create spaces to use and understand these environments.

Finally, in our 'On the record' feature we asked two scholar-activists to discuss the water crisis and its impact on questions of vulnerability, risk and security. The water crisis has been a visceral illustration of the way our society's challenges increasingly touch questions about safety and security, and of how the nature of our responses (in terms of both who is able to respond effectively, and what that response looks like) brings questions about who benefits and who is left behind to the fore. Nick Simpson talked with us about how the water crisis fits into a framework of criminology in the age of the Anthropocene, and Vivienne Mentor-Lalu reminded us about the gendered impact of the drought.

'Access to ...' issues – whether access to services or access to justice – have plagued this country forever. How we tackle the challenge(s) of balancing change, justice, representation and response may well define the criminological moment of today.