

Macrocriminology and Freedom

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[Macrocriminology and Freedom \(anu.edu.au\)](https://anu.edu.au)

How can power over others be transformed to 'power with'? It is possible to transform many institutions to build societies with less predation and more freedom. These stretch from families and institutions of gender to the United Nations. Some societies, times and places have crime rates a hundred times higher than others. Some police forces kill at a hundred times the rate of others. Some criminal corporations kill thousands more than others. Micro variables fail to explain these patterns. Prevention principles for that challenge are macrocriminological.

Freedom is conceived in a republican way as non-domination. Tempering domination prevents crime; crime prevention reduces domination. Many believe a high crime rate is a price of freedom. Not Braithwaite. His principles of crime control are to build freedom, temper power, lift people from poverty and reduce all forms of domination. Freedom requires a more just normative order. It requires cascading of peace by social movements for non-violence and non-domination. Periods of war, domination and anomie cascade with long lags to elevated crime, violence, inter-generational self-violence and ecocide. Cybercrime today poses risks of anomic nuclear wars.

Braithwaite's proposals refine some of criminology's central theories and sharpen their relevance to all varieties of freedom. They can be reduced to one sentence. Strengthen freedom to prevent crime, prevent crime to strengthen freedom.

'A true magnum opus, *Macrocriminology and Freedom* is a thought provoking and generative book from one of criminology's intellectual giants. John Braithwaite reaches far and wide across societies, time, and disciplines to advance no less than a theory of how to build a society that simultaneously reduces both domination and crime. His ambitious ideas on cascades of non-dominating collective efficacy and crime prevention, for example, and their connections to social movements and political freedom, go well beyond usual criminological discourse. Chock full of theoretical propositions and bold insights, this a book that will keep criminologists busy for years. *Macrocriminology and Freedom* should not just be read, but better yet, savoured.'

– Robert J. Sampson, Henry Ford II Professor of the Social Sciences, Harvard University

'In this majestic theorisation of the relationship between crime and freedom John Braithwaite isolates the unique power of macrocriminology as a lens through which to comprehend and challenge many of the fundamental crises facing our planet. Very few scholars have the breadth and overview to succeed in a mission of this order ... Braithwaite does. This extraordinary book is an object lesson for all who seek to understand and resist domination and the crimes of power that flow from it.'

– Penny Green, Professor of Law and Globalisation, Queen Mary University of London

'For over 40 years, John Braithwaite has been a voice of wisdom, hope and humanity in criminology. This dazzling new book weaves together all the main themes of his influential work, reanimating many of the core concepts of the discipline, as well as incorporating interdisciplinary resources from south and north, east and west, to produce an elegant and ambitious explanatory and normative account of crime as freedom-threatening domination. Decentring criminal justice as the solution to crime, Braithwaite shows that, on a global scale, the aspiration to tackle crimes, ranging from interpersonal violence through corporate crimes to ecocide, lies in the development of freedom-enhancing, power-tempering institutions in the political, economic and social spheres.'

– Nicola Lacey, Professor of Law, Gender and Social Policy, London School of Economics

'*Macrocriminology and Freedom* is a criminological epic, an expansive and erudite story that sweeps across history and contexts. The book is frightening in showing how cascading events can produce catastrophes from crime to environmental destruction. But in the end, its message is hopeful, identifying pathways—or “normative rivers”—for guiding freedom from domination and crime. Drawing on his distinguished career, John Braithwaite has bestowed an extraordinary gift—a book, like other masterpieces, that will yield special insights each time we take an excursion through its pages.'

– Francis T. Cullen, Distinguished Research Professor Emeritus, University of Cincinnati

'In this engaging book John Braithwaite reinvigorates discussions about crime and its control. While advocating a macro approach, the book is punctuated not only with insights and data from smaller-scale studies conducted in a range of jurisdictions, but also with auto-biographical vignettes. The effect creates a deeply personal account of the perils of state, non-state and market violence and authoritarianism and the potential and indeed duty, of criminologists to work towards their reduction, by refocusing their efforts on explaining and tackling crime in its myriad of forms.'

– Mary Bosworth, Professor of Criminology, University of Oxford and Monash University

'John Braithwaite has had a unique influence on criminology globally. In this encyclopaedic text he synthesises a wealth of criminological knowledge, particularly in the sphere of anomie theory, into broader debates about the nature of domination and freedom in contemporary society. He defends the relevance of criminological theory, while urging criminology to be activist rather than reactive and technocratic, counter-hegemonic rather than neutral. Not for the first time, John Braithwaite has challenged criminologists to construct theories that cut across micro and macro structures. This book will stir debate. It deserves a broad readership.'

– Harry Blagg, Professor of Criminology, University of Western Australia

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