

# Call for papers: 'We must persist! Towards a global criminology of war'

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*Criminological Encounters: Special Issue*

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**Call for papers: *We must persist! Towards a global criminology of war***

This special issue expands the criminological imagination around a 'criminology of war' to provide critical insights into the multiple and ongoing conflicts around the world, including Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Palestine, Israel, Ukraine, Russia, Syria, Libya, Ethiopia, and Yemen. Commissioned by *Criminological Encounters* ([De Backer, Melgaço & Volinz, 2023](#)), we invite contributions to analyse current conflicts through critical perspectives, collectively offering interventions around how to understand current dynamics and persistent ones, as well as contributions on how to research, resist and the heal harms of war in a global context.

Criminology as a discipline holds roots within trying to understand issues of criminological concern in post-war societies (Bonger, [2015] 1936), along with documenting and seeking to resist the harms flowing from state-corporate monopolies of power, violence, and capital accumulation (Whyte, 2007; Ruggiero, 2023). Despite Jamieson's (1998), Hagan et al.'s (2012) and McGarry and Walklate's (2019) call for criminologists to research war as a core site of mass victimisation and gendered state violence, war and atrocity remain somewhat on the disciplinary fringes (Aydin-Aitchison et al., 2023: 267). The special issue will pay specific attention to the intensification of conflicts and the role of unequal power in the exercise of military might, judicial intervention, the production of knowledge about war, as well as in the selection of images and the manufacturing of state narratives of denial (Cohen, 2001). There is also an urgency to connect war with the climate emergency and destruction of the natural world, eco systems and biodiversity (Rawtani et al., 2022; Loach, 2023).

Kaldor's (2013) 'new war' thesis details the blurring of boundaries between inter and intra state violence, combatants, and battlefields. While armed struggles and proxy wars continue within national boundaries and beyond (Kaptan, 2021), particularly over natural resources (Koubi et al., 2014), some recent conflicts, including Israel and Palestine and Ukraine and Russia, appear to be increasingly taking the form of traditional state-organised, nationalist warfare, linked to occupation and the colonial acquisition of territory. On the other hand, contemporary conflicts still involve large numbers of civilian casualties and the implosion of states as Kaldor highlighted.

Current conflicts involve organised state violence and armed group combatants committing human rights violations, which are sometimes contested as crimes of war, crimes against humanity and genocide (Dufeniuk, 2022; ISCI, 2023; Green, 2023a; Aydın Aitchison, 2014; Okosun and Kibiswa, 2013). Genocide is "the crime of all crime" as it epitomizes the extermination of a people, and as such it has entered the criminological imagination more than war per se (Green, 2023b; Savelsberg, 2021; Rafter, 2016; Hagan and Raymond-Richmond, 2009). Criminology has also recently become interested in the analysis of adjudication of

crimes against humanity, war crimes and crimes of aggression through international criminal justice systems (Lohne, 2019; Houge, 2019). The atrocious images coming from the multiple conflicts around the world reverberate through the global infosphere into places still claiming to be 'at peace', mostly in the Global North.

Indeed, war is increasingly entangled with daily life, making the need to study it from criminological perspectives and beyond even more urgent. From the live streaming of violence to social media feeds, to the racist treatment of displaced people seeking asylum and leaving conflict as refugees (Bhatia and Burnett, 2019, 2022), to the human rights abuses involved in producing technologies such as smart phones (Udell, 2023), we can no longer pretend that the ripples of war do not involve us all.

Contemporary 21<sup>st</sup> century conflicts are further characterised by technological weaponry, aided by artificial intelligence, private military forces, state-corporate law-breaking, and the systemic targeting of civilians, greatly supported by external state actors. International requests for financial and military support co-exist with initiatives to boycott institutions and corporations involved in conflicts. The difficulty of intervening in complex contemporary conflicts concerns the criminalisation of mass mobilization and restrictions to freedom of speech (Selmini and Di Ronco, 2023), including within academia. Despite growing public debate and the strong feelings and emotions around these issues, local governments and institutions use criminalization to disrupt activism, strangle voices of resistance and limit necessary democratic space (Cristiano et al., 2023).

More than twenty-five years on from Ruth Jamieson's powerful call (1998) to analyse war within criminology, we wish to reflect on some of the changes in the literature, both in criminology and further afield, and contribute to its development with novel, decolonial analyses of new conflicts. In doing so we recognize the need to study conflict from a longer historical continuum of colonialism and imperialism. Further, we acknowledge that the criminological toolbox has been grounded in Northern analysis and wish to offer space to voices coming from the Global South and indigenous perspectives. This special issue provides space for debating and analysing the intersectional issues war generates. As war touches all facets of social life (Klein, 2011), any proper rendition of conflict related issues inevitably involves delving within other schools of thought.

We encourage articles that are the product of the 'encounters' between criminology and other disciplines such as international relations, politics, history, anthropology, geography, philosophy, sociology, educational studies, and law. Artistic interventions, book reviews and ideas for commentary style discussions are also welcome. We especially invite emerging voices from the Global South, Middle East, and from diverse and indigenous populations, along with more established scholars to submit their abstract for consideration for a special issue to be published in May 2025.

In all submissions, authors are encouraged to analyse and utilise a variety of sources from different disciplines. We welcome critical pieces on war, which may include:

- analysis of ongoing genocides, particularly in the Global South
- calls to respond to war and conflict through the international criminal justice system
- theoretical insights into the colonial mechanics and ideologies underpinning atrocity
- technologies of war and artificial intelligence
- the role of social media to support narratives of war and to challenge state denial

- the impact of war and crimes against humanity on women, queer people, people with disabilities, and people facing intersecting vulnerabilities
- the destruction of the environment, the occupation of land, the pollution and health crises that war brings about, particularly through state-corporate powers
- visual methods to explore the role of art, culture and emotion in armed conflicts
- criminalization of mass mobilization, protest, and restrictions to human rights

As Ruggiero (2023) argued, there is a persistent need to intervene in war with a critical criminological toolbox. If criminology is to maintain its legitimacy as a discipline of study and collection of scholars, it must turn its attention to war and genocide, the most harmful of all state practices and lawbreaking.

### **Submission process and timeline:**

Please send a 500 word abstract and short biography to [info@criminologicalencounters.org](mailto:info@criminologicalencounters.org), [Hannah.Wilkinson@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Hannah.Wilkinson@nottingham.ac.uk) and [t.degenhardt@qub.ac.uk](mailto:t.degenhardt@qub.ac.uk) by 14<sup>th</sup> June 2024. Decisions will be communicated with authors by the 12<sup>th</sup> July 2024. Full draft articles, artistic interventions, book reviews and commentaries are to be submitted by 29<sup>th</sup> November 2024 for publication of the special issue in May 2025.

- Articles will be between 6,000-8,000 words including a bibliography (peer-reviewed)

- Short articles will be between 1,500-3,000 words including a bibliography (peer-reviewed)

- Artistic interventions will be accompanied by 150-500 words of description

- Book reviews and commentaries will be between 1,000-3,000 words including a bibliography

Author guidelines can be accessed via the Criminological Encounters website linked here: <https://criminologicalencounters.org/index.php/crimenc/about/submissions>. If English is not a first language, please get in touch using the three email addresses provided above if you would like to submit a manuscript in a different language.

### **Example biographies**

Hannah Wilkinson:

I am an Assistant Professor in Criminology at the University of Nottingham (UK) researching war, state violence and social harm. I am a cis white woman from the North of England and previously worked as a Lecturer at Keele University, where I completed my degrees in Criminology and Law. I engage in social justice and trade union activism, along with anti-fascist community networks. My current research explores the experiences of ex-military personnel who have embodied British state violence in the ‘war on terror’, the complexity of transitioning to post-conflict life, and the diversity of support needed to resist and heal the harms of war.

Teresa Degenhardt:

I am a Senior Lecturer at the University of Queen’s in Belfast. I have a history of migration as I am Italian by origin and studied for my Law Degree in Bologna University. However, I

moved first to Keele University (UK) and later to Ulster University in Belfast (in between Ireland and the UK). As a cis Caucasian woman with a European passport, I have been privileged to stay in some prestigious universities of the Global North. I have worked on liberal military interventions and international criminal justice, migration, and border control mostly from a critical criminological and feminist perspective.

### **Special issue editors:**

Hannah Wilkinson, University of Nottingham: [Hannah.Wilkinson@nottingham.ac.uk](mailto:Hannah.Wilkinson@nottingham.ac.uk)

Teresa Degenhardt, Queen's University Belfast: [t.degenhardt@qub.ac.uk](mailto:t.degenhardt@qub.ac.uk)

We are happy to discuss ideas informally by email before submitting abstracts and summaries for consideration.

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