

Cambridge University Press

978-1-107-02278-2 - Criminal Law, Philosophy and Public Health Practice

Edited by A. M. Viens, John Coggon and Anthony S. Kessel

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Criminal Law, Philosophy and Public Health Practice

The goal of improving public health involves the use of different tools, with the law being one way to influence the activities of institutions and individuals. Of the regulatory mechanisms afforded by law to achieve this end, criminal law remains a perennial mechanism to delimit the scope of individual and group conduct. However, criminal law may promote or hinder public health goals, and its use raises a number of complex questions that merit exploration.

This examination of the interface between criminal law and public health brings together international experts from a variety of disciplines, including law, criminology, public health, philosophy and health policy, in order to examine the theoretical and practical implications of using criminal law to improve public health.

A. M. Viens is Lecturer in Law at the University of Southampton. He is also a Research Fellow at the Institute for Medical Ethics and History of Medicine, Ruhr-University Bochum.

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Cambridge Bioethics and Law

This series of books was founded by Cambridge University Press with Alexander McCall Smith as its first editor in 2003. It focuses on the law's complex and troubled relationship with medicine across both the developed and the developing world. Since the early 1990s, we have seen in many countries increasing resort to the courts by dissatisfied patients and a growing use of the courts to attempt to resolve intractable ethical dilemmas. At the same time, legislatures across the world have struggled to address the questions posed by both the successes and the failures of modern medicine, while international organisations such as the WHO and UNESCO now regularly address issues of medical law.

It follows that we would expect ethical and policy questions to be integral to the analysis of the legal issues discussed in this series. The series responds to the high profile of medical law in universities, in legal and medical practice, as well as in public and political affairs. We seek to reflect the evidence that many major health-related policy debates in the UK, Europe and the international community involve a strong medical law dimension. With that in mind, we seek to address how legal analysis might have a trans-jurisdictional and international relevance. Organ retention, embryonic stem cell research, physician assisted suicide and the allocation of resources to fund health care are but a few examples among many. The emphasis of this series is thus on matters of public concern and/or practical significance. We look for books that could make a difference to the development of medical law and enhance the role of medico-legal debate in policy circles. That is not to say that we lack interest in the important theoretical dimensions of the subject, but we aim to ensure that theoretical debate is grounded in the realities of how the law does and should interact with medicine and health care.

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Contents

<i>List of contributors</i>	<i>page</i>
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	ix
1 Introduction	1
A. M. VIENS, JOHN COGGON AND ANTHONY S. KESSEL	
2 Criminal law, regulatory frameworks and public health	19
ROGER BROWNSWORD	
3 Drugs, crime and public health: a lesson from criminology	42
DOUGLAS N. HUSAK	
4 Criminal law, drugs and harm reduction	62
TOM WALKER	
5 Morality and strategy in politicising tobacco use: criminal law, public health and philosophy	79
JOHN COGGON	
6 Pursued by the ‘fat’ police? Prosecuting the parents of obese children	102
TRACEY ELLIOTT	
7 Disease transmission, liability and criminal law	124
JAMES CHALMERS	
8 Compulsion, surveillance, testing and treatment: a truly ‘criminal’ matter?	142
JEAN V. McHALE	
9 Epidemiological criminology and violence prevention: addressing the co-occurrence of criminal violence and poor health outcomes	171
ROBERTO H. POTTER AND TIMOTHY A. AKERS	
	vii

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978-1-107-02278-2 - Criminal Law, Philosophy and Public Health Practice
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Frontmatter
[More information](#)

viii	Contents	
10	Forensic epidemiology: strange bedfellows or the perfect match? Can public health and criminal law work together without losing their souls? ZITA LAZZARINI	192
11	From the criminal to the consensual: the shifting mechanisms of environmental regulation ROBERT G. LEE AND MARK STALLWORTHY	214
12	Criminal law and global health governance DAVID P. FIDLER	237
	<i>Index</i>	261

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Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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