

Through this publication

I address the deficiencies of the

retributive model of criminal justice

& point to the future possibilities,

if we were to consider a

‘restorative’ model of justice...

I attempt to lay the foundations

for a substantial change of direction

for the future of our criminal

justice system in Australia –

a movement towards

Justice Reinvestment.

It is time for our community leaders

to explore new paths in pursuit

of true justice and greater

community safety in Australia today.



Peter Norden is currently an Honorary Fellow in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at Deakin University in Melbourne.

In 2007, Peter was made an Officer in the Order of Australia ‘for service to community development through social research and programs aimed at assisting marginalised young people and offenders, and to the mental health sector in Australia.’

In 2016, he was made a Fellow of the Australian and New Zealand Society of Criminology for his contribution to the Australian criminal justice system over a period of 40 years.

In 2018, he was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Deakin University ‘for eminent and sustained service to the Australian non-government sector in the field of community services.’

For more than 40 years, Peter Norden has worked in a variety of roles within the Australian criminal justice system. These include his years as Catholic Chaplain to the Victorian Prison system including Pentridge Prison (1985 – 1992) and as Convenor of the **Victorian Criminal Justice Coalition** (1992 – 2008).

In 1977, he had established a post-release accommodation centre for high-risk young men just out of prison. This program grew and developed over the years into what became known as **The Brosnan Centre**, now located in Dawson Street in Brunswick. Under his leadership, that project in turn expanded into a broad range of prevention and diversion programs located across Australia: **Jesuit Social Services**. At different stages, Peter played a key role in that organisation: as Founder in 1977; as Chief Executive Officer from 1996 – 2002; and as Policy Director from 2002 – 2008.

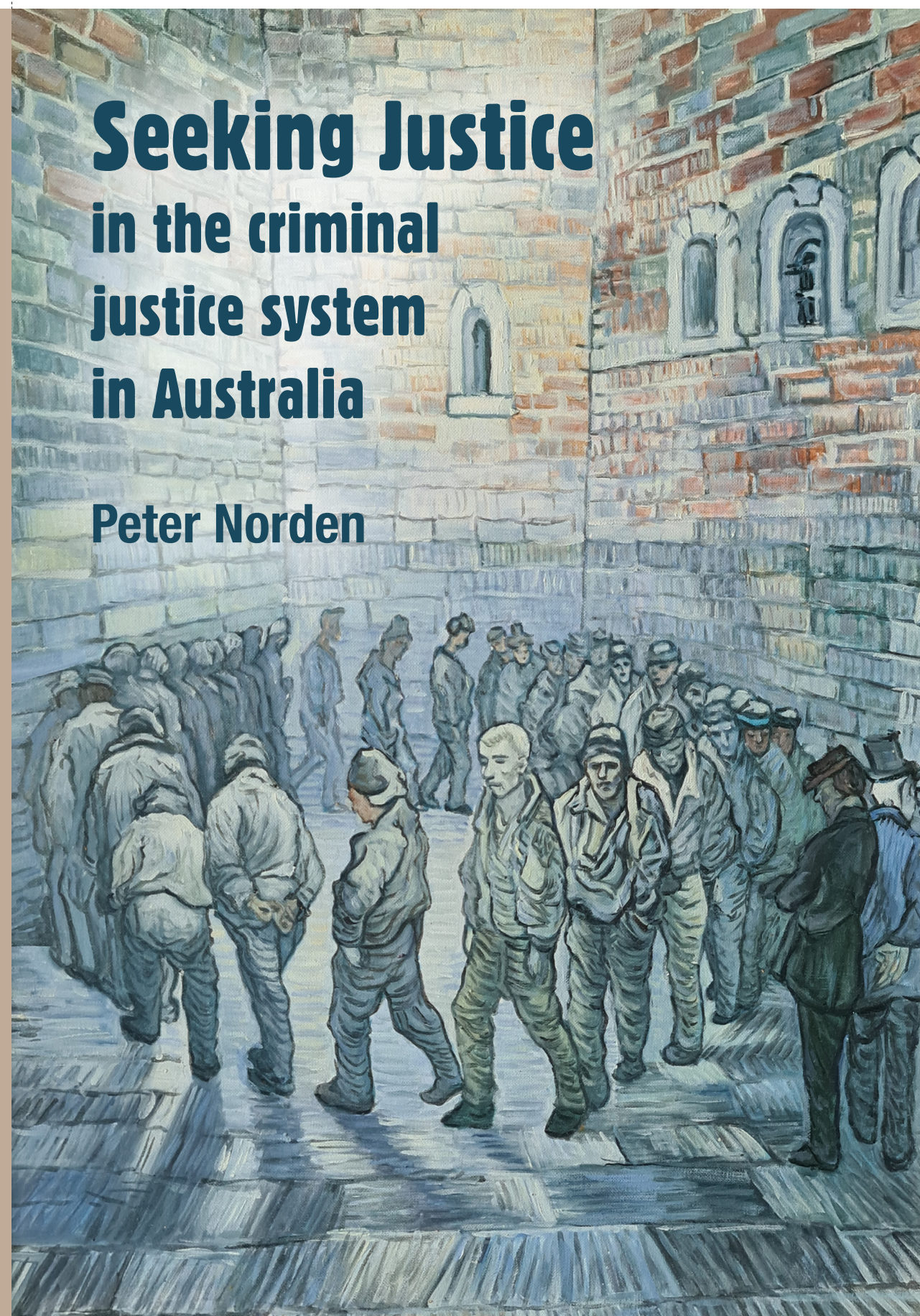
Over the years, Peter’s passion has been in social policy reform, justice promotion and human rights activism: from his work at **The Ignatius Centre for Social Policy and Research**, to his Board membership of both ACOSS (The Australian Council of Social Service) and Catholic Social Services Australia.

Seeking Justice

Peter Norden

Seeking Justice in the criminal justice system in Australia

Peter Norden



Prisons walls serve a dual purpose:

they keep prisoners from escaping

& they keep the community outside,

& ignorant of what goes on

behind those prison walls...

Private prison operators

are business people

who are more interested

in doing well

than in doing good.

Let us hope that the future direction

of the Australian criminal justice system

will be founded on evidence,

and not on a misguided model based

on our past as a penal settlement.

A significant change of direction is required

to turn around this international scandal

of the mass incarceration of

Indigenous Australians.



Reflecting on decades of front-line work and advocacy, Peter Norden comes back to principles with which he began: genuine social justice. After searching the globe, he concludes, with other social justice champions that justice is not found in our retributive criminal (in)justice systems but in fair distribution of resources to the most marginalised communities in society. Australia will be a far more just society if we listen to and act on Peter Norden's message.

Professor Eileen Baldry AO FASSA, Criminologist, Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of New South Wales



This dynamic account is an essential read. It includes many (in) famous stories about criminals, prison life, and Peter Norden's five-decade fight for justice and reform of the Australian, and in particular the Victorian, criminal justice systems. Peter Norden in this publication addresses the urgent need for prison reform in this country.

Adjunct Professor Rhonda Galbally AC Disability Royal Commissioner, Health development, social services and disability rights advocate.



Peter Norden takes his wealth of experience and turns his attention to Australia's retributive criminal justice system. He identifies how 'justice' could be delivered through justice reinvestment. It is a timely reminder in an age of ever-expanding incarceration, particularly for our First Nations persons. This latest book is compulsory reading for all those trying to create a more just Australia.

Professor Tara McGee Criminologist, Griffith University. Former President of the Australian & New Zealand Society of Criminology



Peter Norden has drawn a remarkable portrait of an era: of jails, executions, police killings, prisoners lost in their cells, brutality, survival and hope. His engagement at the face-to-face level with so many in the 'system', from government ministers to prison guards, from prisoners to their grieving families, informs his search for more reasoned humane solutions.

Julian McMahon AC SC Melbourne Barrister, President of the Capital Punishment Justice Project



With his breadth of experience and depth of insight, Peter Norden is ideally placed to chart a new vision for criminal justice in Australia: one that is premised on hope, not despair. In identifying the malaise of the current justice system, he directs our attention to the time-honoured principles of restoration, healing and relationship-building.

Emeritus Professor Rick Sarre AM, Criminologist, former Dean of Law and Criminal Justice at the University of South Australia and Chair of the University's Academic Board



Justice is rarely achieved by doing something to someone, especially when that 'someone' consists of the most marginalised, impoverished, vulnerable and dispossessed members of our society. In this book, Peter Norden offers a positive way out of the present impasse and the injustices of our criminal justice system, one that places investment in communities, that include offenders and victims, at the forefront.

Distinguished Professor Rob White Criminologist, School of Social Sciences, University of Tasmania



Peter recently celebrating his 70th birthday with members of his extended family.

Peter Norden was educated by the Jesuits from the age of 9 at St Patrick's College, East Melbourne, established in 1854: one of the four original Public Schools in Victoria.

From the age of 18, in 1968, he continued his Jesuit education, completing a further 15-year training period, including studies in philosophy, theology, and social work.

His time as a Jesuit priest, from 1981 until 2008, focused on work in the social services and social justice fields. During this period, he completed a Master's Degree in Social Work at La Trobe University.

When he decided to resign from the ministry and leave the Catholic Church in 2008, he was appointed a Vice Chancellor's Fellow at the Melbourne Law School. He

also established his own independent consultancy service: Norden Directions.

In 2012, Peter continued teaching in social work, mental health, legal studies and social sciences at RMIT University. In recent years, he completed a Master's Degree in Human Rights Law at Monash University and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Deakin University.

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