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**"Sympathies and Scandals: (Counter-) Narratives of Criminality and Policing in Inter-war Britain"**

In Great Britain, the inter-war period saw a great deal of attention to crime, criminals and the state of the justice system, sparked not least by the upheavals of the Great War and its aftermath. Crime narratives were a key location for expressing social anxieties and for urging responses by the authorities to them. But given the breadth and diversity of the British media landscape in this period, crime narratives were complex. Criminal justice historiography has largely focused on negative depictions of criminals and positive depictions of the police, often seeing both as examples of how ideological support for state power and the enforcement of conservative social norms was generated. In the 1920s, however, it is possible to identify alternatives to such narratives: in particular, there were many sympathies towards criminals – whether before or during their trials or in the context of those condemned to death – as well as critiques of the police, many of which arose in dramatic scandals involving corruption and accusations of violence. Both kinds of counter-narrative emphasise the need for a far more nuanced understanding of the relationship between crime, media and state power.