

Criminalisation of children in Scotland from the historical perspective

Christine Kelly

Christine's presentation discussed her project which aims to consider the criminalisation of children in Scotland from the mid nineteenth century until the second decade of the twentieth century. The research examines how the processes involved in criminalisation change: it considers whether contemporary concerns about criminalisation, and the degree of criminalisation applied nowadays to children in particular, are justifiably regarded as something new, or whether they have parallels in the past. Arguing that the historical perspective sheds light on the continuities involved in the criminalisation of children, the paper addressed the question of how recognition of the special status of young offenders emerged in the course of the nineteenth century which for the first time saw children being significantly distinguished from adults in the processes of criminal justice.