

Global crime stories

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Professor Mary Kaldor rightly praised Misha Glenny's [McMafia](#) – and she made the interesting point that good journalism is still the best way to explain complex issues. The only way to understand something as sophisticated as international organised crime is by telling stories. And that's what Glenny does so well in [McMafia](#).

Speaking at a Polis event Glenny showed how a deadly combination of globalisation combined with liberalisation after the fall of communism created fertile ground for organised crime to thrive around the world.

Bulgarian weightlifters combine with Columbian drug barons with Thai sex tourism and Afghan poppy farmers to weave a web of exploitation and profit. Meanwhile, many states are powerless to police the problem. In fact, the state forces are part of the problem.

And so are we. We buy the mobile phones that are made with raw materials sold by Congolese war-lords in return for arms from Israeli and South African dealers.

Meanwhile, the global financial system with its complex derivative markets, hedge funds and off-shore banking accounts allows the crooked cash to flow unhindered by regulation.

And organised crime changes constantly and seeks out fresh markets. Glenny predicts the next big field will be cyber-crime and intellectual property theft.

It is a deeply worrying scenario and very convincing. Misha tells it brilliantly, both in the book and live in front of an enthralled audience.

Go [here](#) to read Lara Farrar's article on [McMafia](#) and organised crime.

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