



**Universiteit  
Leiden**  
The Netherlands

## **Public support for Vigilantism**

Haas, N.E.

### **Citation**

Haas, N. E. (2010, November 23). *Public support for Vigilantism*. Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement (NSCR), Leiden. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/16171>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

License: [Licence agreement concerning inclusion of doctoral thesis in the Institutional Repository of the University of Leiden](#)

Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/16171>

**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

# Public Support for Vigilantism

Aan mijn ouders

# Public Support for Vigilantism

## Proefschrift

ter verkrijging van  
de graad van Doctor aan de Universiteit Leiden,  
op gezag van Rector Magnificus prof. mr. P.F. van der Heijden,  
volgens besluit van het College voor Promoties  
te verdedigen op dinsdag 23 november 2010  
klokke 16.15 uur

door

Nicole Eveline Haas

geboren te Delft in 1981

**Promotiecommissie:**

**Promotor:**

Prof. dr. G.J.N. Bruinsma (NSCR en Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, voorheen  
Universiteit Leiden)

**Co-promotor:**

Dr. J.W. de Keijser (Universiteit Leiden)

**Overige leden:**

Prof. mr. dr. M. Tonry (University of Minnesota Law School, VS)

Prof. dr. S. Parmentier (Katholieke Universiteit Leuven, België)

Prof. dr. P. Nieuwbeerta (Universiteit Leiden)

Prof. mr. N.J.H. Huls (Universiteit Leiden en Erasmus Universiteit Rotterdam)

Cover design: Debbie de Munnik  
Cover photography: Ray Creemers/Razor Creativz  
Layout: Jo-Ann Snel, Uitgeverij Boekenbent  
Print: Wöhrmann Print Service  
ISBN: 978-90-9025811-9

© Copyright Nicole Haas, Leiden 2010

# Contents

## 1. Introduction

1.1 Introduction	8
1.2 Background	9
1.3 Outline	11

## 2. Public support for vigilantism: Two hypotheses

2.1 Introduction	16
2.2 Two rival hypotheses	16
2.3 Empirical findings on support for vigilantism	18
2.4 Two rival hypotheses: Conclusions	26

## 3. The concept of vigilantism

3.1 Introduction	30
3.2 Defining vigilantism	30
3.3 A typology	35
3.4 Conclusion	39

## 4. The concept and measurement of confidence in the criminal justice system

4.1 Introduction	42
4.2 Public opinion polls	42
4.3 Confidence literature	43
4.4 Operationalization	48
4.5 Conclusion	49

## 5. An explorative study on public support for vigilantism

5.1 Introduction	54
5.2 Method	54
5.3 Scale construction	59
5.4 Results	62
5.5 Discussion	63

## 6. Just-world theory and support for vigilantism

6.1 Introduction	68
6.2 Just-world theory	68
6.3 Just-world theory research	71
6.4 Just-world theory and support for vigilantism	75
6.5 The vigilantism event sequence and BJW	76
6.6 Conclusion	79

<b>7. Study design and pilot</b>	
7.1 Introduction	82
7.2 BJW vigilantism event sequence – A simplified version	82
7.3 The situation hypothesis and confidence hypothesis	84
7.4 Method – Part I	85
7.5 Method – Part II	94
7.6 Pilot study	95
7.7 Conclusion	98
<b>8. Testing the propositions</b>	
8.1 Introduction	100
8.2 Online panel	100
8.3 Sample and representativeness	101
8.4 Scale construction	102
8.5 Hypotheses	110
8.6 Plan of analysis	114
8.7 Manipulation checks	115
8.8 Reactions to sentence + vigilantism vignettes	118
8.9 Discussion	130
<b>9. Discussion</b>	
9.1 Introduction	138
9.2 Summary	139
9.3 Explaining support for vigilantism	142
9.4 Implications for the criminal justice system	144
9.5 Theoretical implications	145
9.6 Methodological considerations	146
9.7 Future research	147
9.8 Conclusion	149
<b>Appendices</b>	<b>151</b>
<b>References</b>	<b>175</b>
<b>Samenvatting</b>	<b>188</b>
<b>Dankwoord</b>	<b>192</b>
<b>Curriculum vitae</b>	<b>194</b>