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The Marginalization of Critical Perspectives in Public Criminal Justice Core Curricula

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Abstract: Although critical perspective courses in criminal justice programs have grown considerably since the 1960s, the failure of contemporary public criminal justice programs to require critical perspectives in their undergraduate core curricula threatens to leave students without a framework for discussion of these issues within the greater context of their degree programs. Students must thus look to the other social sciences to further their knowledge in these areas, thereby perpetuating the neglect of criminal justice departments to present these views. Within most academic criminal justice programs, preference is given to the administrative facets of the criminal justice system and the theories and methods of social scientific research; for this reason, even general discussions of critical topics are limited. Furthermore, because many elective courses also focus on various aspects of the administration of justice, critical perspectives are conspicuously absent overall. This paper reveals the extent to which core, cognate, and other required critical perspective courses are marginalized within public criminal justice programs, and how, on average, private institutions require more of these courses.

Keywords: critical perspectives, criminal justice pedagogy, general education, liberal education

INTRODUCTION

Within the core curricula of most academic criminal justice programs, there is a preference for courses that examine the administrative facets of the criminal justice system, as well as the theories and methods associated with mainstream criminological research. Unfortunately, this predilection for "cops, courts, and corrections" (also known as the "Three C's") leaves little room for the addition of core courses devoted to other topics or theoretical perspectives, especially those which might be critical of the criminal justice system's handling of issues related to race, class, gender or culture. The present study thus sought to determine if core, cognate, and prerequisite criminal justice coursework at public institutions has evolved to include these critical perspectives at a lesser degree than at private institutions, which are largely autonomous from state control.

In his treatise on class conflict and law, Karl Marx asserted that, "the State will never look for the cause of social imperfections in the State and social institutions

themselves" (Bottomore 1956:124). Those who subscribe to a Marxist perspective, then, might expect public institutions of higher learning to be unlikely places to look for solutions to the State's shortcomings, especially where issues of inequality are concerned. Indeed, because compulsory education was originally meant to preserve the values of bourgeois society, it was believed that institutions that taught students to be critical thinkers would potentially contribute to the development of "problem populations" (Spitzer 1975:644). This viewpoint is bolstered by Mills, who described public education as a politically and economically tasked "mass medium" that fails to impart knowledge, "directly relevant to the human need of the troubled person...or to the social practices of the citizen" (1956:319). According to Mills, the task of public education is to create workers, not thinkers; instead of promoting individual struggle and transcendence, it encourages the "happy acceptance" of the status quo (1956:319).

Though a criminal justice education is certainly not compulsory, the core curriculum for the baccalaureate

degree consists of required courses designed to lay the foundation for further study in the discipline; in addition to these requirements, students must also complete courses in other disciplines. For public institutions, these courses make up what is commonly referred to as a *general education*—distinct from the major—whereby the student freely chooses a minimum number of courses within specified disciplines. On the contrary, private institutions tend to emphasize a *liberal education*—one that integrates the core requirements of the major with specific courses in other disciplines (Flanagan 2006). The differences in these approaches are striking and can have vast implications for the overall experience of the criminal justice student.

Richard Quinney (1980), in his Marxist phase, ¹ described criminal justice as a euphemism for the State's control of class struggles. Given this observation, criminal justice programs within public institutions might also be unlikely places to confront the problems associated with structural inequality in society. Yet, critical criminologists, whose approaches are rooted in such perspectives as neo-Marxism, feminism, social constructionism, and post-modernism,² strive to do just that. The barriers they face, however, are real, as resistance from mainstream criminologists abounds (Lynch and Michalowski 2006).

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Few studies have quantified the marginalization of critical perspectives using criminal justice coursework as a benchmark. In fact, with the exception of a study that measured the total space devoted to state crime in introductory criminology textbooks (Rothe and Ross 2008), most of the research has examined the overall curricula of criminal justice programs. For instance, in their assessment of graduate criminal justice programs, Lytle and Travis (2008) found that less than five percent of required courses were devoted to the intersection of race and justice. Moreover, they reported less than one percent of classes dedicated to gender-related topics (e.g., Women in Crime); social class and culture courses were not represented in their sample. Another study found that 13 percent of master's programs and 22 percent of undergraduate programs required courses in race, ethnicity or gender (Fradella, Owen and Burke 2009).³

Despite the paucity of quantitative research, the literature is rife with calls for critical criminologists to incorporate critical perspectives into their courses and programs. Since 1970, when Herman and Julia Schwendinger first used the word "critical" to describe those who would challenge any unjust "system of domination" (Schwendinger and Schwendinger 1970), critical criminologists have recognized the, "quite staggering diversity of perspectives, theories, and models," (Lippens 2008:146; see also Michalowski 1996) within critical criminology, and have debated the importance of adding these alternative world views to criminal justice

discussions (see Ratner 1989; Presdee 2004; Martel, Hogeveen and Woolford 2006; Owen et al. 2006; Cannon and Dirks-Linhorst 2007; Williams and Robinson 2006; Fradella et al. 2009).

Still, no study has measured the extent to which critical perspectives are marginalized within *public* institutions of higher learning. In light of the foregoing, it was expected that autonomous undergraduate criminal justice programs (i.e., programs that are not embedded within other departments such as sociology) would require fewer core/compulsory courses devoted to critical perspectives than their private counterparts.

Defining Criminology and Criminal Justice

Quinney's definition notwithstanding, criminologists tend to view criminal justice as the systemic study of the policies and institutions designed to control crimenamely police, criminal courts, and correctional systems as well as their actors and their administration (Clear 2001; Lytle and Travis 2008; Owen et al. 2006; Southerland et al. 2007; Wimshurst and Allard 2007). In contrast, criminology is typically viewed as behavioral or social science that explores the origins of criminal behavior and the social response to crime, as distinct from the workings of the criminal justice system (Owen et al. 2006; Ratner 1989). For this reason, academic criminology programs include studies of the biological, psychological, and sociological causes of crime, as well as the methods of controlling criminal behavior; they may also incorporate theoretical and practical insights from other social sciences and select humanities. Interestingly, use of the word "criminology" to describe academic programs was once considered "political anathema" (Morn 1995:129); however, some criminal justice programs have recently begun to combine a structural study of the institutions of social control with the theoretical and methodological enterprise of the behavioral and social sciences (Clear 2001; Owen et al. 2006; Southerland 2002).

What is Critical Criminology?

Critical criminology has been generally defined as, "any criminological topic area that takes into account the contextual factors of crime or simply goes beyond the scope of topics covered in mainstream criminology" (Hopkins-Burke 2001:173). Lippens defines it as, "attempt[ing] to analyse or assess theories, as well as practices, of criminal justice and related social policy, with an eye on alternatives, or on 'negative' ... reform" (2008:145). Indeed, critical, or *radical* criminology was born out of a movement of early deviance theorists who suggested that social control was actually a mitigating factor that led to deviant behavior (Ratner 1989).

Ultimately, critical criminologists are troubled by mainstream criminology's reliance on *normal-science* to

explain criminal behavior; because crime is often highly politicized, critical scholars question the "value-free" assumption required by the scientific model (Lynch and Michalowski 2006). Moreover, they are not convinced that crime can be explained by examining only, "defective individuals or disorganized communities" (Lynch and Michalowski 2006:3). For critical criminologists, many of the theories typically associated with mainstream criminology are simply not comprehensive enough to provide answers to the macro-level factors that also contribute to crime and delinquency. Critical scholars have thus created and adopted new theoretical frameworks that attempt to get at crime's social etiology: gender-relations ("feminists"), race relations ("critical-race theorists"), social class ("political-economists"), and cultural processes ("post-modernists"), to name a few. Despite these seemingly separate fields of inquiry, collectively, critical criminologists believe crime to be a relational (not fixed) sociological and organizational phenomenon. As such, when examining crime, critical scholars—to varying degrees—explore the underlying interplay of race, gender, class, and culture.

Critical criminologists have also contributed to the development of numerous distinct fields of study. For instance, cultural criminology explores the cultural machinations of crime and social control-it holds that crime is a socially constructed phenomenon largely shaped by cultural meanings, and it characterizes social control as less of a necessary response to crime than it is a potential causal factor (Ferrell, Hayward and Young 2008). Peacemaking criminology utilizes philosophical inquiry and emphasizes the humanistic principles of, "mutual aid...existentialism, Buddhism, pacificism, and socialism" (Barak 2005:132); it is sometimes confused with restorative justice in that both address the suffering of Newsmaking criminology studies the influence of the media in shaping society's interpretations of crime and justice; it confronts the spectacle of "serious crime" as portrayed by the media, and it encourages criminologists to utilize the media as a tool for becoming more involved in the dissemination of ideas, as well as in the formation of policy (Barak 2007). State crime criminologists consider the role of both the State and its bureaucrats as actors capable of inflicting and perpetuating human suffering through such acts as war, state-sanctioned violence, and human rights violations; in doing so, they typically move beyond the usual legalistic definitions of crime (Kauzlarich 2007). Feminist criminologists are primarily focused on the inclusion of women in criminological inquiries; however, they also espouse the criminogenic consequences of male-dominated society, and they are concerned with the subjugation of women by the criminal justice system, as well as its failure to adequately address female victimization (Wright and Friedrichs 1998). Postmodern criminology, still somewhat amorphous as a field of study, rejects the existence of objective truth and attempts to deconstruct the distinctions attributed to knowledge that is touted as "scientific" (and privileged and exclusionary). Postmodern criminologists largely believe that a social harm arises when a dominant group portrays its subjective knowledge as objective truth, thus marginalizing the subjective knowledge of other, less powerful groups (Henry and Milovanovic 1996). Last, critical race theorists believe that racism is not an aberration of American society, but rather, it is a function of the American way of life. Accordingly, critical race theory holds that society and the law should be less concerned with punishing those who have enacted discrimination, and should instead focus on helping those who have been victimized because of their race (Asch 2004).

Indeed, since its radical infancy, the theoretical hegemony that united early critical criminologists has loosened to include new and exciting insights. Today, multidisciplinary perspectives related to both criminology and criminal justice are embedded in the curricula of many leading programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels (Lytle and Travis 2008; Owen et al. 2006). Notably, this movement expanded opportunities for the further integration of critical perspectives into justice education (Barton et al. 2010). According to Martel, Hogeveen and Woolford (2006), contemporary critical criminologists now study, "crime- or law-related issues [from] within economic, socio-political, and cultural frameworks, and by means of sociological, philosophical, anthropological, and legal perspectives and methodologies" (2006:641).

Despite the numerous theoretical perspectives that influence critical criminology, mainstream criminologists have often rejected critical approaches as being idealistically utopian; some have even accused critical scholars of encouraging resistance to societal institutions (e.g., Ferrell et al. 2008). In actuality, negative characterizations such as these may be more attributable to unfamiliarity with the critical academy than with an unwavering attachment to mainstream paradigms. For example, Wright and Friedrichs (1998) found that, of the many names associated with critical criminology, Richard Quinney was the only scholar whose name appeared on the lists of mainstream citation studies with any regularity.

For the undergraduate criminal justice program, these mainstream misgivings often translate into degree programs heavily weighted in administrative criminology. In fact, Robinson (2001) criticized criminologists and criminal justicians as having become, "little more than producers of criminal justice employees," and that, "as our nation has shifted its crime reduction approach to 'get tough' mechanisms ... the result [has been] more jobs for criminal justice majors and thus more criminal justice students for the discipline" (2001:99); according to Robinson, "We are, in essence, a facilitator of a larger, more intrusive and destructive criminal justice system" (2001:99).

Research has shown that critical perspectives are marginalized in introductory criminology textbooks (Olivero and Murataya 2001; Rothe and Ross 2008); in introductory criminal justice course discussions (Owen et al. 2006); and in the overall pedagogical approaches employed by those who teach criminal justice (Williams and Robinson 2006; Barton et al. 2010). As well, critical scholars may experience difficulties acquiring and maintaining academic posts in traditionally administrative criminal justice departments (Schrecker 1998). Last, because there are fewer critical criminology journals than mainstream journals, there are fewer opportunities for critical scholars to publish their research; in fact, some critical scholars have even reported experiencing difficulty obtaining government funds to begin research (Brickey 1989; Ratner 1989; Martel et al. 2006). For the critical scholar who must satisfy tenure requirements, then, he or she must decide to either publish (in the mainstream), or perish (for the sake of critical criminology).

ACJS Recommendations for Certification of Criminal Justice Baccalaureate Programs

In 1988, the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) promulgated its first standards for undergraduate curricula in criminal justice. Southerland, et al. (2007), explained that ACJS, having revised its standards in 2005 in order to make criminal justice education more rigorous, implemented a certification protocol that led to formal accreditation for criminal justice baccalaureate and master's programs. Although the ACJS accreditation standards focus heavily on traditional criminal justice areas, several of these standards sought to integrate criminology, including several subareas that fell within the critical paradigm. Table 1 includes the most current ACJS standards (ACJS 2010) with recommendations for each.

The revised standards emphasize the use of interdisciplinary approaches (e.g., Section B.1), an examination and understanding of diversity (e.g., Section B.6, Section B.9), and the need for students to think critically (Section B.9). This represents a significant departure from the previous approach to criminal justice education in the United States, which functioned more as an apparatus to prepare students for careers in law enforcement (Hensarling and del Carmen 2002). Though not a call for the inclusion of critical perspectives *specifically*, the revisions seem to blur the lines between criminology and criminal justice. At the very least, the new emphasis on diversity and interrelatedness can be interpreted as recognition of the need to expand the mainstream repertoire.

THE PRESENT STUDY

The present study sought to determine if core, cognate, and prerequisite criminal justice coursework at

public institutions has evolved in accordance with ACJS Certification and Accreditation Standards to include critical perspectives *at a lesser degree* than at private institutions, which are largely autonomous from state control. To accomplish this, courses that are required to complete a baccalaureate degree in criminal justice were evaluated for evidence of coverage of critical topics such as race, gender, culture, class/social problems, ⁵ state crime, peacekeeping/restorative justice, and other theoretical perspectives from the related social, behavioral, and political sciences.

Table 1. ACJS Standards

Section	Description			
Section B.1:	Criminal Justice students should			
Interdisciplinary	"develop a mastery of the			
Studies	knowledge, methods of inquiry,			
	and intellectual skills pertinent to			
	the study of the causes,			
	consequences, and responses to			
	crime and its interrelatedness to			
	other areas of inquiry."			
Section B.6:	Undergraduate programs should			
Examination of	provide a "systematic			
Diversity	examination of diversity"			
Section B.5:	Administration of Justice			
Recommended Core	• Contemporary CJ Systems			
Coursework	• Social Control Systems			
	• Victimology			
	• Juveniles			
	 Comparative Studies 			
	Corrections			
	Theory			
	Law Adjudication			
	Law Enforcement			
	Research and Analytic Methods			
Section B.9:	"Educate students to be critical			
Educational Goals	thinkers"			
	"Quantitative reasoning"			
	"Ethical decision-making"			
	"Understanding of diversity"			

Methodology

Sample. A total of 608 institutions offering baccalaureate degrees in criminal justice were identified through a search using the *criminaljusticeprograms.com* website. As with other studies that measured variables within criminal justice programs (Wimshurst and Allard 2007; Lytle and Travis 2008), programs such as *criminology, justice studies*, and *peace studies*, as well as programs that were offered as concentrations within cognate disciplines (e.g., sociology, behavioral sciences, social ecology, etc.) were excluded from the final sampling frame. While it is understood that not all academic

programs emphasize the same theoretical underpinnings, intuitively, it made sense to compare only criminal justice programs—much the same as choosing to compare only "sociology" or "psychology" programs. Southerland (2002) recognized that while some programs had chosen names other than criminal justice, those programs that identified as such should logically be expected to share similarities in their curricula; however, others have shown that the typical curriculum for criminal justice programs is still largely ambiguous (Wimshurst and Allard 2007; Lytle and Travis 2008).

When conceptualizing institution type, it was decided that only state-funded/state operated institutions would be included in the public sample. Conversely, only institutions that identified as private or independently operated (including nonsectarian and faith-based liberal arts colleges and universities) were included in the private sample. The final sampling frame was comprised of 404 criminal justice programs at both private institutions (n=209) and public institutions (n=195), from which simple random samples of public (n=33) and private (n=34) were then drawn.

Measures. Using the departmental websites and the 2010-2011 academic catalogs for each of the schools in both samples, the content of each program was measured to determine which courses were required for the baccalaureate degree in criminal justice. Most of the schools' criminal justice departments posted graduation guidelines on the department's website listing the prerequisites (if any) for admission to the program, as well as the specific courses needed to satisfy the core curriculum for the degree. Additionally, some departments also listed courses that could be chosen by students to satisfy a cognate, correlated, or elective category. For courses in these categories, only those specifically designated as required were selected for content analysis. Courses taught by other departments were measured, as well: for instance, many programs required students to complete courses such as "Introduction to Sociology" or "Multicultural Diversity" before being admitted to the department. Other programs gave students a choice of courses within other disciplines—usually one of the social or behavioral sciences. Again, only courses designated as required were analyzed.

Having selected the courses, course titles were then measured for words associated with critical topics (e.g., "race," "gender," "class," "culture," "media," etc.), and a classification corresponding to the type of perspective represented was assigned (see Table 2). Two additional categories were created for introductory sociology courses and criminological theory courses, the assumption being that such courses would at the very least expose students to the theoretical underpinnings of critical criminology (Owen et al. 2006; Rothe and Ross 2008).

Content analysis. Recognizing that course titles do not always represent course content, an analysis of each course description was performed to confirm that a critical perspective was, in fact, presented. For instance, at one institution, a course titled "White Collar Crime" was found to also include a study of state crime, and was thus included; in other instances, courses with names such as

Table 2. Examples of Critical Perspectives Courses in Criminal Justice Programs

Course Type	Course Title				
Race	Blacks in the American Justice				
	System				
	Minorities and Criminal Justice				
	Policies in Crime in Heterogeneous				
	Societies				
	Race and Crime				
Gender	Gender and Issues in Law and				
	Society				
	Gender, Crime, and Justice				
	Women and Criminal Justice				
	Women in Crime				
Class	Constructing Social Problems				
	Social Inequality				
	Social Stratification				
	Wealth and Power				
Combined Critical	Crime and Inequality				
Perspectives	Race, Class, and Gender in a				
("Other")	Correctional Context				
	Special Populations in Criminal				
	Justice				
	Woman and Minorities in Criminal				
	Justice				
Newsmaking	Crime and the Mass Media				
Criminology	Fair Trial/Free Press Conflicts				
	Justice and the Media				
	Media, Justice, and Crime				
State Crime	Corporate and Governmental				
	Crime				
	Environmental Crimes				
	Political Violence				
	Politics of Crime				
Peacekeeping	Alternative Social Control Systems				
Criminology	Behind Bars: Incarceration and				
	Creative Alternatives				
	Restorative Justice				
	History of Social Control in the				
	United States				

"Alternatives to Incarceration" were not found to include a study of restorative justice or peacekeeping criminology, and thus were not included. To ensure reliability, a second researcher coded a random sample of about ten percent of the course descriptions selected for inclusion in the study. Analysis using the Kappa statistic was performed to determine consistency between the two.

Findings. Using SPSS 18, the total number of critical perspectives courses was measured in each sample and a standard t-test was employed to compare means. For private institutions, an average of 2.94 courses were listed as core, cognate, or prerequisite requirements; conversely, programs at public institutions averaged 2.00 courses. This difference was found to be statistically significant (t_{65} = 2.503, p <.05). Additionally, for *class* courses, on average, more private institutions required these courses (n = .22)than public institutions (n = .04); again, this difference was found to be statistically significant ($t_{65} = 2.364$, p <.05). When comparing only race courses, or only gender courses, private institutions required more of these courses than public institutions; however, these differences did not reach statistical significance. Last, the interrater reliability for the coders was found to be $\kappa = 0.68$ (p < 0.001), 95% confidence interval (0.525, 0.845); the strength of agreement is thus considered substantial.

Table 3. Percentage of Institutions Requiring Critical Perspectives Courses, by Type

	Public		Private	
Course Type	N = 33		N = 34	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Race	7	21.2	9	26.5
Gender	4	12.1	8	23.5
Class	2	6.7	8	23.5
Culture	2	0.3	5	14.7
Other critical	9	27.3	12	32.4
perspectives				
Newsmaking	0		2	0.6
Criminology		-		
State crime	1	0.3	0	-
Peacekeeping	2	6.0	3	11.8
Criminology				
Introductory	14	42.4	20	58.8
sociology				
Criminological	29	87.9	33	97.0
theory				

Despite these findings, it is clear that critical perspectives courses, *overall*, are severely underrepresented in the required curricula for all institutions in the study, regardless of their designation as public or private (Table 3 reveals the actual percentage of public and private institutions requiring critical perspective courses in each category). In the public sample, the least represented course types were those covering culture (0.3%), state crime (0.3%), peacekeeping criminology (6.0%), and class (6.7%). Newsmaking criminology was not a required course at any of the public institutions. For the private

sample, only newsmaking criminology (0.6%) and state crime (not represented) fared poorer than their public counterparts. For all remaining categories, on average, more private than public institutions required critical perspective courses for the baccalaureate degree.

CONCLUSIONS

This study set out to test two hypotheses: 1) that critical perspectives are marginalized in the core curricula of public criminal justice programs, and, 2) that private criminal justice programs require more critical perspective courses than their counterparts at public institutions. As expected, the findings support both hypotheses. The data also confirm that, for the majority of programs in both samples, the core curricula were characterized by mostly administrative criminology courses (i.e., 'cops', 'courts', 'corrections'); this is consistent with the findings of past research (e.g., Clear 2001; Lytle and Travis 2008; Owen et al. 2006; Southerland et al. 2007; Wimshurst and Allard 2007).

Many of the programs in both samples require that students complete several research-oriented courses such as criminological theory, research methods, and/or statistics; most of these courses, when offered, were taught by the criminal justice department itself. Moreover, in her study on criminal justice curricula, Southerland (1991) reported that in 1988-89, over thirty-three percent of a sample of criminal justice programs required a course in sociology, psychology and political science. That number dropped to "less than 12%" (Southerland 2002:595) in 1999-2000. Interestingly, while the present study measured only introductory sociology courses, programs in both the public (42%) and private (59%) samples were found to require completion of this course at much higher rates than even Southerland's 1989-90 study; indeed, for some programs it is a pre-requisite for admission to the major.

Still, the majority of programs failed to require the study of more than one critical theory, perspective or methodology in their core curricula. For programs at public institutions, this neglect was even more pronounced. Why?

Public vs. Private

Despite the neo-Marxist critique of state-funded education, which suggests that there is perhaps more academic freedom at private institutions than at public ones, one study did not reveal any meaningful differences in academic autonomy, or in the level or type of control perceived by faculty at either public or private institutions of higher learning (Volkwein and Parmley 2000). Yet, public and private institutions of higher learning *do* differ in that the former are typically operated by the state, while the latter are largely autonomous from direct state control. Factors such as cost to attend, available programs of study,

and diversity of students and faculty may also differ for public and private institutions; however, the extent to which these differences affect a criminal justice department's decision to require critical perspective coursework is perhaps minimal, at best.

Funding, however, may play a role. Public institutions must fill classrooms to receive state and federal funds, and "sexy" classes such as "Terrorism and Homeland Security," "Forensic Science," and "Serial Killers & Psychopaths" may, in fact, be more popular than courses related to race, gender, class, and culture. In a study of student input regarding criminal justice baccalaureate curricula, Kelley (2004) found that almost sixty-six percent of students at Wayne State University preferred the addition of more courses related to criminal investigation. While over fifty percent of students did favor the inclusion of race and gender courses, this number still represents a lower level of student interest than for courses related to administrative criminology.

General Education vs. Liberal Education

Unlike most public institutions, which tend to emphasize a general education, many private institutions utilize a liberal arts-based approach—in fact, of the private institutions sampled, fifty-six percent identified as liberal arts colleges. Both approaches require students to satisfy a minimum number of courses in disciplines outside their major; however, the liberal education approach is usually more integrated with interdisciplinary coursework typically pre-determined by the institution. This translates into student experiences that, "consciously incorporate perspectives from [other] disciplines into the study of crime and justice," and, "intentionally and productively integrate[s]" criminal justice with those disciplines (Flanagan 2000:9). This increases the likelihood that criminal justice students will be exposed to critical perspectives that are both meaningful to their major course of study, and that will enable them to enter their respective professions with an understanding of the greater factors contributing to crime and delinquency.

Unfortunately, attempts to make criminal justice programs more interdisciplinary at general education-based institutions have been met with resistance from older, more established academic departments. Owen et al. (2006) discuss one such endeavor wherein a college curriculum committee vetoed the inclusion of an introductory criminal justice course into the general education curriculum. The criminal justice department had sought to make the course more theoretical and less survey-based; however, the committee believed the new course was "too academic for criminal justice" (Owen et al. 2006:3-4).

Assuming other public programs have experienced similar resistance, criminal justice departments at public institutions must then take it upon themselves to present critical perspectives within their own curriculum. Indeed, if academic criminal justice is to emerge from its preprofessional roots, those who teach criminal justice must encourage students to "question the American way of doing justice and reducing crime by...considering possible alternatives" (Williams and Robinson 2004:379). Williams and Robinson go on to say:

Without basic theoretical principles and associated criteria, criminal justice students will be at a loss to develop a general understanding of why our systems of criminal justice behave as they do, and the current pedagogical paradigm will continue to be viewed as an ill-defined, poorly articulated, intellectual outcast among the academic community. (2004:380).

Secular vs. Nonsecular

Another potential factor affecting the presentation of critical perspectives is whether a program is affiliated with a nonsecular institution. Sixty-two percent of the private sample was comprised of criminal justice programs associated with such institutions—all of which were affiliated with a Christian denomination. While a review of the literature did not reveal any studies on the differences between these and secular criminal justice programs, one article did discuss the differing concepts of justice held by Catholic universities, in particular. According to Kolvenbach, "the meaning of justice within the Jesuit (and Catholic) tradition is hardly synonymous with the meaning of justice within the field of criminal justice," and that, this is attributed to the core Catholic value of "promoting dignity, freedom and charity in relation to justice" (1985:320). Indeed, many Catholic colleges and universities have encouraged students to be change agents, as well as to consider such issues as poverty, oppression, and human rights as they relate to justice (Wolfer and Friedrichs 2001). Perhaps this difference in core values affects a nonsecular institution's decision to require more courses related to marginalized groups such as women, African-Americans, and the poor. It may also affect a department's faculty hiring preferences in that only those whose theoretical preferences mirror those of the department may be sought.

Limitations

Because only one source was utilized to identify undergraduate criminal justice programs, the sampling frame may not be a complete list of all criminal justice programs in the United States. Certainly, there are other sources, such as professional organizations, that provide lists of academic criminal justice and criminology programs (e.g., Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, American Society of Criminology); however, the website used in the present study identified as many programs, if

not more, than the programs listed on the websites for these organizations.

Another limitation may lie in the assumption that, because critical perspectives courses are not required, they are not encouraged either. This is simply not true. First, undergraduate faculty advisors may provide individual guidance as to the general education courses a student should consider in order to make their education more critically oriented. Second, faculty may incorporate critical perspectives into classroom discussions, or, they may utilize textbooks that offer a broader exposure to the theoretical underpinnings of critical criminology; they may even assign additional readings that present unconventional viewpoints. Third, departments that do not present critical perspectives in the normal curriculum may utilize pedagogical methods such as capstone experiences, directed readings courses, and special topics courses that allow for students to explore such areas as race, gender, class, and culture as they pertain to crime and the criminal justice system.

SUMMARY

Obviously, the importance of critical discourse is apparent to critical criminologists; however, without cultivating new scholars to the field, the degree to which both critical and mainstream criminologists can collectively address the societal sources of crime will be severely limited. Although critical perspectives have grown considerably since the 1960s, the failure of contemporary criminal justice programs to require critically-oriented courses as a component of their undergraduate core curricula threatens to leave students without a framework for discussion of these issues within the greater context of their degree programs. Students must thus look to the other social sciences to further their knowledge of critical perspectives, thereby perpetuating the neglect of criminal justice departments to present these views in meaningful ways. By continuing to require criminology courses that are predominantly administrative in nature (i.e., cops, courts and corrections), criminal justice departments inadvertently send a message to students that nothing else is important. The continued failure to present alternative theoretical frameworks thus has the potential for reinforcing ineffective or outdated status quo policies and procedures within administration of justice. To counter this, students should be encouraged to draw upon multiple frameworks when addressing crime- or law-related issues; in doing so, they will be more effective change agents for their organizations and for the criminal justice system as a whole.

Notes

- ^{1.} Quinney varied his position throughout his career from social constructionist, to conflict theorist, to Marxist and then to humanist.
- ^{2.} Marxist criminologists have criticized other critical criminologists for fragmenting the field of critical criminology that was once dominated by radical criminologists. See Russell's (1997) critique of postmodern criminology, for example.
- ^{3.} Because the researchers grouped these three topics as one measure, individual figures for each category were not available.
- 4. Unlike restorative justice (which utilizes techniques such as victim-offender mediation), peacemaking criminology addresses the suffering of victims after a crime has been committed; it holds that, because personal suffering, in of itself, leads to crime, the conditions that inflict suffering must be dealt with proactively (Quinney, 1991).
- ^{5.} Sexual orientation was not included because so few courses mention sexuality in the curricula of both public and private universities (Fradella, Owen, & Burke, 2009).

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Appendix A. Private Institutions

- 1. Albertus Magnus College (*R*, *LA*)
- 2. Ashland University
- 3. Baldwin-Wallace College (*LA*)
- 4. Carroll University (*LA*)
- 5. Cedarville University (*R*, *LA*)
- 6. Centenary College
- 7. Central Methodist University (R, LA)
- 8. Concordia University (R, LA)
- 9. Doane College (*LA*)
- 10. Drexel University
- 11. Farleigh-Dickinson University, Metropolitan Campus
- 12. Faulkner University (*R*)
- 13. Grand View University (R, LA)
- 14. Greenville College (*R*, *LA*)
- 15. Hannibal-LaGrange University (R, LA)
- 16. Johnson & Wales University
- 17. Lincoln Memorial University (*LA*)
- 18. Madonna University (*R*)
- 19. Miles College (R, LA)
- 20. Mount St. Mary's University (R, LA)
- 21. Muskingum University (*LA*)
- 22. Oakland City University (R)
- 23. Saint Mary-of-the-Woods College (R, LA)
- 24. Siena Heights University (R)
- 25. Simpson College (LA)
- 26. St. Louis University (R)
- 27. St. Thomas University (R)
- 28. Temple University
- 29. The University of Great Falls (*R*)
- 30. Trinity Washington University (R, LA)
- 31. University of Indianapolis (*R*)
- 32. University of Sioux Falls (R, LA)
- 33. Widener University
- 34. Wiley College (R, LA)

R = Religious Affiliation LA = Liberal Arts College

Appendix B. Public Institutions

- 1. Bemidji State University
- 2. Bridgewater State University
- 3. California State University, East Bay
- 4. California State University, Long Beach
- 5. California State University, San Bernardino
- 6. Cameron University
- 7. Coppin State University
- 8. Fairmont State University
- 9. Ferris State University
- 10. Florida Atlantic University
- 11. Fort Valley State University
- 12. Indiana University Bloomington
- 13. John Jay College of Criminal Justice
- 14. Kean University
- 15. Mesa State College
- 16. Mississippi Valley State University
- 17. Missouri Western State University
- 18. Ohio University, Chillicothe Campus
- 19. Pennsylvania State University, Altoona
- 20. Prairie View A&M University
- 21. San Diego State University
- 22. Southeastern Oklahoma State University
- 23. Southern Utah University
- 24. SUNY Albany
- 25. SUNY Brockport
- 26. SUNY Plattsburgh
- 27. University of Alabama
- 28. University of Mississippi
- 29. University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg
- 30. University of Texas at El Paso
- 31. University of West Florida
- 32. University of Wisconsin, Platteville
- 33. Utah Valley University

About the Author

Brian J. Frederick received his B.A. in Criminal Justice at CSU Fullerton and his M.Sc. in Criminal Justice at CSU Long Beach. Mr. Frederick was named a *CSULB RIMI Health Scholar* and was awarded his department's *Promising Scholar* and *Outstanding Thesis* awards. He has presented research at numerous conferences and worked as a graduate research fellow at CSULB's *Center for Behavioral & Services*. In addition to cultural and critical criminological pedagogy, Mr. Frederick is exploring the connection between popular online social networking and the emergence of deviant global subcultures. He was recently awarded an *Erasmus Mundus Doctoral Fellowship* by the European Commission's *Education, Audiovisual & Cultural Executive Agency*, and has since begun the *Joint Doctorate of Cultural & Global Criminology* program at both the University of Kent at Canterbury and the University of Hamburg.

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