



THE WESTERN CRIMINOLOGIST

Fall 2005

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERN SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY

Editor: Dr. Yvette Farmer, Criminal Justice Division, CSU-Sacramento, 6000 J St. Sacramento, CA 95819-6085

From the President

Gisela Bichler

California State University, San Bernardino

I was introduced to the Western Society of Criminology by Paul Brantingham (who at the time was the current President), shortly after moving to the West Coast in 2000. Immediately, I was drawn into this association because it embodied all the qualities I wanted in a professional association. Our meetings foster a warm and collegial dialogue, across various criminal justice practitioners and academicians, in an intimate setting that inevitably leads to meaningful contacts between professionals. These connections are necessary to address the limitations and shortcomings of our collective response to crime and delinquency. This is what is sadly missing from other meetings. I suspect many share this sentiment, as to date I have yet to find a person that does not speak highly of the WSC. In fact, many proudly proclaim prior board participation, lifetime association membership, or recent attendance of the annual meeting.

One of the important lessons I learned at the very first board meeting I attended, was the WSC did things a little differently. The primary consideration of board members was to maintain the integrity of the founders' vision of the association while making adjustments necessary to keep the association current (i.e. the development of our online peer-reviewed, journal, the *Western Criminology Review*). I am honored to be afforded the opportunity to join a long list of distinguished members whom have led this organization. I look forward to doing my part to further the founders' mission.

Our 32nd Annual Meeting in Honolulu, Hawai'i was a resounding success thanks to all of the hard work of the 2004-2005 board under the leadership of Cynthia Burke. The meeting was attended by 164 individuals from around the Western United States, as well as participants from Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia. In total, 27 states and 4 countries were represented. Highlights include a plenary session by Barbara Bloom, and a keynote address by Meda Chesney-Lind. On behalf of the membership, I would like to extend a heartfelt *Mahalo* to the 2004-2005 board, their dedication and effort that led to an excellent meeting.

Preparations are well underway for the 33rd Annual Meeting, set for February 23-26, 2006 in Seattle, Washington. The Red Lion of Seattle is situated in the middle of the best shopping and entertainment district of the city and many other attractions are within walking distance. The hotel meeting facilities should prove exceptional. The call for papers is in development and will be posted on our web site shortly. If you have any suggestions or thoughts about next year's meeting, please contact us.

This year's board has a mix of new and returning members.

Executive Board. We are fortunate that Mike Day is continuing to serve as Secretary/Treasurer of the organization. Sue Cote hung-up her program chair hat and stepped into the position of Vice-President. Sharon Chamard and Andre Rosay are now the co-editors of the *Western Criminology Review*. Cynthia Burke will continue her service as the Past President.

Conference Committees. Brenda Vogel, our facilities coordinator *par excellence*, will remain at her post. Joining her will be Silvina Ituarte. Chris Curtis and Dana Nurge will be teaming up to organize the book exhibit. Dana will also chair the awards committee. Stacy Mallicoate will be program chair. She will be assisted by Christine Famega. Sue Cote will be chairing the June Morrison Scholarship committee while Christine Famega will be chairing the student paper competition.

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Standing Committees. Adrienne Freng will chair both the nominations and the constitution committees. Carrie Petrucci our membership/ publicity master will be working with Donald Dixon on targeted membership drives. Yvette Farmer will be assuming the editorship of the *Western Criminologist* (the WSC newsletter). John Vivian, Silvan Ituarte, and Neil Boyd will be working on site selection for 2007. In order to provide members the ability to plan ahead, we are finishing the contract negotiations with the Radisson Fort McDowell Resort and Casino for February 2007. This four star resort property is located a short distance from Phoenix.

One final note while a formal thank you will be made at the next meeting, I would like to extend my appreciation to Miki Vohryzek-Bolden for her 14 years of service to the Board. She served as the editor of the *Western Criminologist* and her guidance, enthusiasm, and friendship will be greatly missed at the board meetings. Miki is stepping down as editor, but assures us that we will continue to see her at meetings.

I look forward to serving as your president and working with our board to make the next meeting equally successful.

Cheers,
Gisela



From the Former Editor
Miki Vohryzek-Bolden

After fourteen years serving as editor of *The Western Criminologist*, I resigned following the February annual meeting in Hawaii to pursue other personal and professional opportunities. It was an honor and pleasure to serve as the editor of *The Western Criminologist*. This opportunity allowed me to work with many different presidents over the years, meet some terrific people, and promote the Western Society of Criminology (WSC). I am a huge fan of WSC because of its size, commitment to both academics and working professionals, and its support and encouragement of student involvement as presenters and members of the Board.

Some of my initial motives for accepting the position as editor were not totally altruistic or noble. The daunting task of securing tenure at a university made it clear that I was expected to publish and become actively engaged in my professional organizations. The reason I readily accepted the offer presented to me by my then-colleague Susan Meier was because WSC was small and all the people I met were so incredibly friendly and supportive. The association was also a mix of practitioners and academics and its annual meeting format was user-friendly for new faculty and students.

My future holds many opportunities – continuing my cooking for cancer patients, training new culinary caregivers, working with my colleagues on several research projects, and hopefully some international travel. It is the right time for me to thank the association for helping me grow professionally and personally and to wish

my colleague Yvette Farmer a rich and rewarding experience as the new editor of *The Western Criminologist*. Yvette and I work together on research projects and I knew that she too will need to build her portfolio as she navigates the tenure world; so, like Susan, I nominated her as the new editor. The WSC Board fully supported her nomination. Most importantly, though, Yvette has the skills and motivation to take the newsletter in new directions that will continue to and hopefully better serve the association. Watch for new and wonderful things to happen with Yvette as your editor!



From the Editor
Yvette Farmer

Thank you for the opportunity to serve as the Editor of The Western Criminologist. I am working closely with Miki Vohryzek-Bolden (former Editor) during this transition and I truly appreciate her support. It is my intention that this newsletter remains informative and continues to challenge its readers to critically evaluate important issues in criminology and criminal justice.

The Western Society of Criminology is an organization whose membership includes both academics and practitioners resulting in a diverse community of scholars. As such, we have the privilege and responsibility of sharing important ideas and information with each other. I hope that this newsletter will continue to be a means to share such information and I encourage all of the readers to take an active role in the accumulation of information for dissemination in *our* newsletter.

The newsletter will be published annually in the Fall. The deadline for receipt of materials will be August 1st. Ideas should be sent to Dr. Yvette Farmer, California State University, Sacramento, 6000 J Street, Sacramento, California 95815-6015. The telephone number is (916) 278-5062 or 278-6487 (msg).

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have ideas, questions, or concerns about the newsletter.



An invitation to share your thoughts...

I recently visited my first prison and would describe that experience as both enlightening and disturbing. For me, there are two things that I will never forget: 1) the existence and use of small holding cells in the prison yard; and 2) the empty or 'vacant' look of many inmates in prison. Many of my colleagues relate to this experience with prison stories that include their feelings about gates and doors being slammed behind them. What do you remember about your first prison visit?

If you are willing to share your thoughts about this issue, I would like to compile them for a future article in this newsletter. Please e-mail your thoughts to Yvette Farmer at drfarmer@csus.edu.



Attaching a Name to the WSC Student Paper Competition

In an effort to honor Miki Vohryzek-Bolden's service to the Western Society of Criminology, the WSC Board voted to rename the student paper competition the "Miki Vohryzek-Bolden Student Paper Competition". This tribute was chosen in light of her continued dedication to student matters. For a glimpse of her current thoughts regarding students, see 'Miki's Reflections' – a new column contained in this issue.



Miki's Reflections

The recent action taken by the WSC Board to rename the student paper competition in my name still overwhelms me with what it means and what it says about the association. They also honored me with the opportunity to continue sharing my thoughts with the membership by giving me my own column. As Gisela said in her letter, "we realized that important thinkers often have their own column." So, let's talk about our students.

In the August 2005 edition of the *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, there is one article that talks about the pedagogical use of internships in criminal justice programs and another article that talks about the rewards and challenges of pursuing research in a correctional setting. Both of these articles discuss issues that are important to the growth and development of our students' knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes.

Faculty need to promote the integration of academic and experiential learning for our students, whether through internships or opportunities to participate with faculty on their research projects. I see these two activities as different venues for applying what they learn in the classroom in a real-world setting. WSC as an organization has always recognized the link between academics and practitioners, especially in our discipline.

Amy Stichman and Mary Ann Frakas (2005:145-165) in their nationwide study of internships in criminal justice programs, cite from the literature the many benefits to our students of these internships: enhanced appreciation of concepts learned in the classroom and how they apply to professional settings; through hands-on experience, students also learn information that is not covered in the classroom; professionals they meet may be a source of factual and procedural information; increased understanding of the criminal justice system; helped solidify their career decisions and deepen their understanding of the requisite tasks and abilities;

and build social relationships, develop interpersonal and communication skills, and encourage personal growth as students participate in their own learning.

There is evidence that suggests that there are some problems with internships (e.g., less academic value because they are applied, may undercut legitimacy of criminal justice as a social science). However, the overwhelming evidence supports their use. Students and faculty alike benefit from these experiences in part because of the discussions and feedback from students regarding how the academic preparation related to the internship experience.

Scott Camp (2005:110-124) discusses the rewards and challenges of pursuing research in a correctional agency. His discussions of the challenges that face researchers who work in a correctional setting are relevant to an exploration of how we involve students in our research projects. Camp addresses several challenges: identifying the research question; presenting 'plain english' results; lack of lead time in answering important and complicated questions; reasonable deadlines; avoiding personal investment in agency programs; calling for help; and retaining relevance. Students who are interested in engaging in research need to understand the difference between what they learn in their research methods class and the practical application of those skills in a real-world setting.

As one who has conducted a lot of research in the criminal justice field, I am well aware of the challenges, including getting your clients to understand what a research question is and why it is important to agree upon the question before establishing the methodological approaches to the research. In an ideal world, a researcher is provided with all the tools and time to conduct a study that is reliable and valid. In a correctional or other criminal justice setting, you often have to make some compromises whether because of time limitations, cost factors, or human subject concerns. And, rest assured, they want the answer today, not tomorrow.

Camp also states that "credibility is key in an operating agency, and it is much easier to lose credibility than to build credibility." You don't gain credibility by continually talking about your academic credentials. Faculty who conduct research in the field must learn to talk in English and not academic jargon. They must also be aware that the agency may turn to the researchers for a quick answer to a question. Camp states that it is often tempting to provide an answer that is "good enough," yet it is important for the researcher to "stick to her/his guns and only give an answer that is based upon solid information."

There is no other way to learn these lessons than to be a part of a research team. My colleague Yvette Farmer and I are currently working on a research project with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. We involve students in two areas: data entry and data collection involving interviews and process mapping. The students will conduct their research in the field, that is, in the 33 adult institutions in California. This experience will provide them the opportunity to apply their classroom knowledge in a practical setting.

The opportunity to integrate their academic and experiential learning has value for our students. I encourage all of you to think

about how you can involve your students in your professional activities, whether through internships, research in a criminal justice setting, mentoring, volunteering in a justice setting, or other research-related activities.



***Thoughts from our Plenary Speaker:
Barbara Bloom***

Barbara Bloom, previous recipient of the Lohman Award, presented information on the need for gender-responsive strategies and principles to guide the development of criminal justice programs, research, and policy. According to Bloom, the goals of the criminal justice system can be met by adopting appropriate policies and practices that acknowledge the differences between men and women including their pathways to offending. Women offenders are often survivors of physical or sexual abuse with fragmented family histories who are eventually convicted of drug or property crimes. They are also disproportionately women of color in their early to mid-thirties with substance abuse problems and sporadic work histories.

Understanding the context of women's lives including race, social class, and the need for relationships is essential to developing appropriate criminal justice policy and practice. Women offenders need access to services that may be delivered differently. For example, service providers should use assessment instruments developed for women and people of color, acknowledge gender differences in health and education issues, and receive gender-specific training to deal with female caseloads. Women offenders also need opportunities to improve their socioeconomic conditions and access to comprehensive services for successful re-entry to society.

According to Bloom, the ultimate goal of gender-responsive practice is to improve outcomes for female offenders and the agencies/systems that serve them. She claims that we need more community-based programs that supervise women with their children in an effort to keep the next generation from being incarcerated. It's definitely time to break the cycle.

The final report detailing this work is available on the National Institute of Corrections website: <http://www.nicic.org>.



***Thoughts from our Keynote Speaker:
Meda Chesney-Lind***

Meda Chesney-Lind, WSC Past President, presented information on the way in which society constructs and controls adolescent females. This 'shaping' process is more than a gender issue, it also involves race. She reminded us that 'deviant' white girls were

portrayed as hippies in the 1960s and in the 1980s the image of deviant adolescent females included girl gangsters, i.e., economically marginalized girls of color. According to Chesney-Lind, white girls are now usually positioned as victims or their deviant behaviors involve being sneaky, mean, and manipulative. It's clear that we must focus on the interface of gender and race to gain a true understanding of the experience of adolescent females in the juvenile justice system.

Chesney-Lind reported that there is an increasing number of girls coming into the criminal justice system. She further noted that increased detention among African-American girls is already evident in San Francisco. Even though girls are often arrested and detained for less serious offenses, we should not assume that their problems are trivial.

In the past, women's violent behaviors were denied. Even if they confessed to violent crimes, they were not always arrested. Currently, the arrests for domestic violence among girls are increasing and these girls are being sent to more public detention facilities. Given our society's affinity with incarceration, Chesney-Lind predicts that improved adolescent female detention facilities will lead to more incarcerated girls—and more incarcerated girls of color since they are more likely to be detained while white girls are dismissed.

In closing, Chesney-Lind asserts that we need to spend more time on 'newsmaking criminology' since journalists now define the crimes that deserve our attention. She reminds us that patriarchy matters and that we need to challenge racism and sexism in juvenile justice.



WSC Awards 2005

***Recipient of the Western Society of Criminology Fellow Award
2004-2005:***

Larry Bennett

***Recipients of the Western Society of Criminology Awards
2004-2005:***

The Paul Tappan Award - For Outstanding Contributions to the Field of Criminology - Finn Aage Esbensen

The Joseph D. Lohman Award - For Outstanding Service to the Western Society of Criminology - Angel Ilarraza, Gisela Bichler, and Stephen Tibbetts

The June Morrison-Tom Gitchoff Founders Award - For Significant Improvement in the Quality of Justice - Pamela Lichty

President's Award - For Contributions to the Field of Criminology and Positive Influence on the Current President's Career - *Susan Pennell*

W.E.B. DuBois Award - For Significant Contributions to the Field of Racial and Ethnic Issues in Criminology - *Karen Umemoto*



Acknowledgment of Sponsors

The Executive Board of the Western Society of Criminology, on behalf of itself and all members of the association, wishes to express thanks and appreciation to the College of Health and Human Services at California State University, Sacramento for the Coffee Breaks throughout the conference. Special thanks are also extended to the Department of Sociology at University of Hawai'i, Manoa & the University of Hawai'i Youth Gang Project for supporting the printing of the program and other conference material.



COME JOIN US!

WESTERN SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY

33RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE

RED LION HOTEL, SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

FEBRUARY 23 - 26, 2006

We encourage you to mark your calendar for the 33rd Annual Conference of the WSC. The theme of the conference is *Social Construction of Crime and Justice: Myth v. Reality*. The Program Chair is Dr. Stacy Mallicoat, Division of Political Science & Criminal Justice, CSU Fullerton, Fullerton, CA 90621. Please contact Dr. Mallicoat or check out our website - www.sonoma.edu/cja/wsc/main/html for detailed information on the conference. We look forward to seeing you in the beautiful Pacific Northwest!



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