



# THE WESTERN CRIMINOLOGIST

Fall 2017

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERN SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY

Editor: Dr. Ashley N. Hewitt, School of Criminal Justice, Texas State University, 601 University Drive, San Marcos, TX, 78666

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

**Dr. Hadar Aviram**

*UC Hastings College of the Law*

Dear Western Criminologists,

In her poem *Wage Peace*, Judyth Hill writes:

Wage peace with your breath.  
Breathe in firefighters and rubble,  
breathe out whole buildings and flocks of red wing  
blackbirds.  
Breathe in terrorists  
and breathe out sleeping children and freshly mown  
fields.  
Breathe in confusion and breathe out maple trees.  
Breathe in the fallen and breathe out lifelong  
friendships intact.

Hill's poem evokes the Buddhist concept of Tonglen meditation – a practice in which one breathes in suffering and difficulty and breathes out compassion and relief, in an effort to make the world a better place. As criminologists, our research and teaching requires us daily to breathe in the suffering and challenges of the populations we study: disenfranchised and underserved communities, people of color and low income, victims of violent crime, people caught in the clutches of the criminal justice system, people trying to leave past mistakes and entanglements behind, law enforcement and corrections professionals who come across high-conflict and high-risk situations on a daily basis. Our work, whether quantitative, qualitative, or experimental,

### IN THIS ISSUE:

From the President.....	1-2
From the Editor.....	2-3
An Invitation to Share Your Thoughts .....	3
Run for Election .....	3
2018 Award Recipients .....	4
Student Award Announcements .....	5
Call for Participation .....	6
Institutional Sponsorships Needed .....	7
<i>Beyond the Bars: Exploring Pathways to Prison and Returning Citizens' Narratives</i> by C. Bell & N. Buckingham.....	8-10
<i>Censorship Policy of the Colorado Department of Corrections: A Case Study of Policy Implementation in a Gender Resistant Corrections Culture</i> by S. Jones..	10-11
<i>The Value of Qualitative Courts Research</i> by C. Scott-Hayward .....	11-12
<i>The Need for Continuous Police Training and the Role of Practice</i> by T. Mijares .....	12-14
Contact Us .....	14
<i>Is it Art or is it Crime?</i> .....	15
CCJLS Call for Papers .....	16
Details About Our 2018 Conference in Long Beach ....	17
Social Media.....	18

gives a voice to these multiple experiences, often conflicting and contradictory, and tries to make sense of a reality that is often chaotic and married with trauma.

Even in conducting research, our work often gives us an opportunity for an “empathy workout” of the heart. We do

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not agree with or support everything our interviewees, survey respondents, or interlocutors do or say, but we work hard to understand where they come from and what fuels their behavior. And in times such as these, in which our knowledge and experience point toward systems that highlight rehabilitation, data-based proven programming, and efforts to improve trust between the criminal justice system and the communities it serves, it is hard to witness federal policies that roll back the last few years of progress and threaten to reinstate practices that bipartisan lawmakers, professionals, and advocates have come to realize are not only inhumane, but also ineffective.

If you feel disheartened, please know that you are not alone. Your colleagues and friends at WSC are here for you as we gear up toward our annual meeting in February in Long Beach, in which we will have ample opportunity to discuss international, federal, and local developments, learn from each other, and make sense of the contradictions of the multifaceted world of crime and criminal justice.

To help start this dialogue, I am planning two presidential plenaries. The first will feature several authors who focus on the tension between the federal war on crime and state- and county-level developments, discussing where we are and what to do next. The second will feature not only scholars, but also media people and publishers, offering you advice on how to disseminate your important scholarship and make it accessible and relevant to the general public. As scholars, we know that facts, correlations, and scientifically-gathered insights are the only way to fight unsubstantiated panics, scapegoating, and fear-based politics, and we must continue to find ways to offer our work and help make real change in the world. It is not only a scientific aspiration – it is a moral imperative.

Your work is valuable and WSC is here to support you. I look forward to welcoming you to Long Beach in February and to learning from you.

## FROM THE EDITOR

**Dr. Ashley N. Hewitt**

*Texas State University*

Greetings from Austin, Texas! I hope that each of you had an enjoyable summer filled with research and writing activities (and hopefully a little vacation time, too!), and that you have eased back into your regular routine following the start of the Fall academic term.

Our WSC President, Dr. Hadar Aviram, kicks this issue off with an exciting announcement about the two presidential plenaries that are planned for our 2018 annual meeting in Long Beach, California. The WSC Executive Board is also pleased to announce the 2018 award recipients! Congratulations to Dr. Patricia Brantingham (*Paul Tappan Award*), Dr. Michael D. White (*Fellows Award*), Dr. Delores Jones-Brown (*June Morrison – Tom Gitchoff Founders Award*), Dr. Matthew J. Hickman (*Joseph D. Lohman Award*), Dr. Charis E. Kubrin (*W.E.B. DuBois Award*), Dr. Marie L. Griffin (*Meda Chesney-Lind Award*), Andrea J. Ritchie, Esq. (*Richard Tewksbury Award*), and Dr. Malcolm M. Feeley (*President's Award*).

The WSC Executive Board also invites students to compete in the Miki Vohryzek-Bolden Student Paper Competition and submit their applications for the June Morrison Scholarship. The deadline for both awards is *12:00 noon* PST on Friday, October 13<sup>th</sup>. Please email your complete applications, according to the detailed instructions about each of these opportunities (see page 5), to Dr. Aili Malm ([ailli.malm@csulb.edu](mailto:ailli.malm@csulb.edu)).

Among the customary advertisements and announcements that are found within *The Western Criminologist* each Fall, including information about running for election to the WSC Executive Board, a solicitation of sponsorships for the upcoming year, and information about the annual conference (this year, in Long Beach, California), this issue also includes four think pieces from our colleagues in the Western region that highlight important issues in the field of criminology and criminal justice. Charles Bell and Nicholas Buckingham discuss pathways to prison and returning citizens' narratives, while Dr. Susan Jones writes about implementing policy in a gender resistive corrections culture. In her piece, Dr. Christine Scott-Hayward discusses the importance of conducting qualitative courts research, and Dr. Tom Mijares examines the important role that practice plays in police training. Lastly, please see the press release of the new Art |

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Crime Archive that is part of San Diego State University's Institute for Public and Urban Affairs.

In this issue, you will also find calls for submissions to the WSC's official journal, *Criminology, Criminal Justice, Law & Society*, as well as for our upcoming conference. Please take a moment to think about the work that you would like to present at the 2018 annual meeting and be sure to submit your abstracts through the abstract submission system located on our website by Friday, October 6<sup>th</sup>!

If you come across a story that you would like to be posted or tweeted, please contact the WSC's social media director, Dr. Natalie Todak. Dr. Todak can also be contacted regarding job opportunities to circulate, new research or books by WSC members, or any other announcements that you may have for our membership.

I look forward to seeing you all in February in Long Beach!

### **AN INVITATION TO SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS**

I invite both practitioners as well as academics in the field of criminology and criminal justice to consider contributing your thoughts on a topic that is of interest to you and the WSC readership to be included in the Spring 2018 issue of our newsletter. Please send your article, or any questions, to:

Dr. Ashley N. Hewitt  
School of Criminal Justice  
Texas State University  
[ah737@txstate.edu](mailto:ah737@txstate.edu)



### **RUN FOR ELECTION TO THE WSC EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Each year, the Western Society of Criminology elects two or three Executive Counselors to serve three-year terms. And, each year, the WSC also elects one person to serve three consecutive years in the offices of Vice President, President, and Immediate Past President, respectively.

Board Members:

- form the policies of the WSC;
- determine the date, location, and general program of the Annual Meeting;
- ratify the budget for the WSC;
- review the accounts and disbursements of the WSC;
- act on resolutions submitted by the Resolution Committee;
- coordinate a book exhibit to raise scholarship funds for students each year;
- select editors for our journal, *Criminology, Criminal Justice, Law & Society*; and,
- select award recipients from the slate of people nominated by the general membership of the Society.

We hope that you will choose to get more involved with the WSC by running for election to the Board! Nominations, including self-nominations, are welcome. Please contact David MacAlister, Chairperson of the Nominations Committee, for more information:

**David MacAlister, LL.M.**  
School of Criminology  
Simon Fraser University  
8888 University Drive  
Burnaby, BC, Canada V5A 1S6  
(778) 782-3019  
[dmacalis@sfu.ca](mailto:dmacalis@sfu.ca)

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**CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WSC AWARD  
RECIPIENTS FOR 2018!**



**DR. PATRICIA L.  
BRANTINGHAM**

**PAUL TAPPAN AWARD:**

To honor outstanding contributions  
to the field of criminology



**DR. MICHAEL D. WHITE**

**FELLOWS AWARD:**

To honor a person generally  
associated with the western region  
who has made important  
contributions to the field of  
criminology



**DR. DELORES JONES-  
BROWN**

**JUNE MORRISON – TOM  
GITCHOFF FOUNDERS AWARD:**

To honor a person who, through  
scholarship and/or activism, has  
significantly improved the quality of  
justice in the United States



**DR. MATTHEW J. HICKMAN**

**JOSEPH D. LOHMAN AWARD:**

To honor a person who has provided  
outstanding service to the Western  
Society of Criminology



**DR. CHARIS E. KUBRIN**

**W.E.B. DuBOIS AWARD:**

For significant contributions to  
advancing awareness of racial and  
ethnic issues in criminology and  
criminal justice



**DR. MARIE L. GRIFFIN**

**MEDA CHESNEY-LIND AWARD:**

For significant contributions to  
scholarship or activism on the  
intersection of women and crime



**ANDREA J. RITCHIE, ESQ.**

**RICHARD TEWKSBURY AWARD:**

For significant contributions to  
scholarship or activism on the  
intersection of crime and sexuality



**DR. MALCOLM M. FEELEY**

**PRESIDENT'S AWARD:**

For contributions to the field of  
criminology and positive influence  
on the current Western Society of  
Criminology president's career

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## WSC STUDENT AWARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

**June Morrison Scholarship Fund:** Using money raised from the Book Exhibit, the June Morrison Scholarship Fund provides supplemental funds to help defray the cost of student members' participation at the annual meeting, provided that they are presenting papers at the conference. Typically, one or two awards are made to students attending the annual meeting of the WSC. The amount of the awards varies by year (usually between \$200 and \$300), depending on the sales of books at the Book Exhibit the prior year. Please note that this scholarship is not related to the Student Paper Competition. All students attending the annual meeting are encouraged to apply.

- **Eligibility:** Any student currently enrolled full-time or part-time in an academic degree program at either the undergraduate or graduate level is eligible to apply for this award, provided that they are presenting a paper at the annual conference. Conference registration and student membership dues must be paid prior to the scholarship being awarded.
- **Submission Requirements:**
  - A résumé or curriculum vitae
  - A cover letter, indicating your intent to apply for the award, including the following information:
    1. your full contact information, including your name, address, phone number, and email address;
    2. the name of your school, department, and whether you are a graduate or undergraduate student;
    3. the title of your paper presentation;
    4. a summary of other funding sources available to you, if any;
    5. a brief explanation of how conference attendance will be valuable to your career development (including how it will relate to future career plans); and,
    6. a brief summary of how your presentation fits into your larger research trajectory (i.e., what, if any, are your plans for the project you plan to present at the conference, such as use in project, thesis, or dissertation; submission for publication to a specific journal; etc.).
  - An e-mail message from a faculty sponsor from your school to the Chairperson of the Awards Committee, Dr. Aili Malm, indicating his/her support of your request for travel funds.

Email the information to [Dr. Aili Malm](#), by **12:00 noon PST on Friday, October 13, 2017**. Winners will be notified in writing by December 15, 2017.

### **Miki Vohryzek-Bolden Student Paper Competition:**

Students are invited to compete in the Miki Vohryzek-Bolden Student Paper Competition sponsored by WSC each year. Appropriate types of papers include, but are not limited to, policy analyses, original research, literature reviews, position papers, theoretical papers, and scholarly commentaries. Please note that papers co-authored by faculty will not be considered.

- **Eligibility:** Any student currently enrolled full-time or part-time in an academic degree program at either the undergraduate or graduate level is eligible to submit a paper. Students from all majors are eligible, however, all entries must be related to criminology, criminal justice, or criminal law and society. Papers must not exceed 30 pages, including abstract, text, references, tables and figures, notes, et cetera. Papers exceeding this limit will not be considered. Papers must be double-spaced, typed in 12-point font on pages using one-inch margins, and conform to a standard format for the organization of papers and citation (e.g. APA, ASA, Bluebook). The WSC Awards Committee is responsible for evaluating papers meeting the guidelines described above.
- **Award Prize:** Students selected for this award will be recognized at the WSC's annual conference; will receive a reimbursement of student conference fees (less membership dues); and will receive a cash award of between \$125 and \$250 for first place, depending on whether the paper was sole-authored or co-authored. Additionally, if the award recipient desires, the best paper will be submitted for review to the journal of *Criminology*, *Criminal Justice*, *Law & Society*. In rare circumstances, a cash award of up to \$100 may be awarded to a second-place paper. Please note that the cash award must be used to fund travel or hotel expenses for the award recipient to attend the WSC conference. An award winner who does not attend the conference will not receive the cash stipend.
- **Please Note:** The paper that students submit to compete in Miki Vohryzek-Bolden Student Paper Competition need not be the same paper that they present at the conference. We recognize that conference presentations may be works in progress or may be a result of joint efforts with faculty mentors. In contrast, papers submitted for the Student Paper Competition must be completed papers that were written by a student (or co-authored by two or more students) without the assistance of faculty. Papers are welcome from students matriculated at any college or university anywhere in the world.

**A completed, final paper should be emailed to [Dr. Aili Malm](#), by 12:00 noon PST on Friday, October 13, 2017.** Winners will be notified in writing by December 15, 2017.



# CALL FOR PARTICIPATION

## WESTERN SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY 45<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE FEBRUARY 1-3, 2018 • LONG BEACH, CA

❖ Please note that the deadline to submit abstracts is Friday, October 6, 2017 ❖

### PANEL TOPICS

- COURTS AND JUDICIAL PROCESSES (INCLUDING SENTENCING)
- CORRECTIONS
- CRIME ANALYSIS (INCLUDING GEOGRAPHY & CRIME AND SOCIAL NETWORKS & CRIME)
- CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORY
- CYBERCRIME
- DRUGS/SUBSTANCE ABUSE & CRIME
- FORENSIC SCIENCE AND FORENSIC PSYCHOLOGY
- GENDER, SEXUALITY, & CRIME
- JUVENILE JUSTICE
- LEGAL ISSUES IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE (CRIMINAL LAW & CRIMINAL PROCEDURE)
- ORGANIZED CRIME & GANGS
- PEACEMAKING CRIMINOLOGY
- POLICING
- RACE, ETHNICITY, AND CRIME
- SEX CRIMES
- TEACHING (PEDAGOGY & ASSESSMENT IN JUSTICE EDUCATION)
- TERRORISM
- WHITE COLLAR CRIME

The Abstract Submission System is *now open* and will remain open for submission until Friday, October 6, 2017, which is the deadline to submit abstracts. You may access the system in one of two ways:

1. From our **Home Page**, move your cursor over the **Conference** tab page and press on text in the drop-down menu that says, “**Submit and Abstract.**”
2. The Abstract Submission System can be accessed directly at the following URL:  
<http://westerncriminology.org/conference-3/abstract-submission-gateway/> (note the dashes).

In deciding the most appropriate topic area for your abstract, think about the main focus of your paper and how it might fit within a panel organized around a larger topical theme. For example, if your paper examines both race and juvenile issues, think about whether you would like to be placed on a panel with other papers discussing race issues or other papers dealing with juvenile issues and then submit it to the topic area in which you think it fits best.

All presenters are asked to submit an abstract of 1,100 characters or fewer to only one of the panel topics listed above (on or before October 6, 2017). In addition to the abstract, please include the name, mailing address, email address, and phone number for all authors on the submission for the participant directory. *Note that all presenters must pre-register and pre-pay for the conference by Wednesday, January 3, 2018.*

All proposals must be electronically submitted through the WSC's [online Abstract Submission System](#).

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## WE NEED INSTITUTIONAL SPONSORSHIPS FOR 2018!

The WSC could not afford to provide food and beverages for our conference attendees, or to publish an open-access journal, without the generous support of institutional sponsors. Please ask your college or university to purchase one of the following sponsorships:

- **Double Diamond Sponsor**: A contribution of \$5,000 or more.
  - Sole sponsorship of a major event at the annual conference (e.g., Plenary Breakfast, Awards Luncheon, Keynote Brunch, or a reception) *and* named sponsorship of the journal, *CCJLS*;
  - A two-page advertisement in the conference program;
  - Two faculty hiring position announcements distributed to all WSC members via email;
  - A year-long online advertisement on our website; and
  - Two complimentary conference registrations for people from the sponsoring institution.
- **Diamond Sponsor**: A contribution of \$2,500 to \$4,999.
  - Sponsorship of a major event at the annual conference (e.g., Plenary Breakfast, Awards Luncheon, Keynote Brunch, or a reception) *or* named sponsorship of the journal, *CCJLS*;
  - A two-page advertisement in the conference program;
  - One faculty hiring position announcement distributed to all WSC members via email;
  - A year-long online advertisement on our website; and
  - One complimentary conference registration for a person from the sponsoring institution.
- **Platinum Sponsor**: A contribution of 1,000 to \$2,499.
  - Sponsorship of a major event at the annual conference (e.g., Plenary Breakfast, Awards Luncheon, Keynote Brunch, or a reception);
  - A one-page advertisement in the conference program;
  - One faculty hiring position announcement distributed to all WSC members via email; and
  - A year-long online advertisement on our website.
- **Gold Sponsor**: A contribution of \$500 to \$999.
  - Co-sponsorship of a reception at the annual conference;
  - A one-half page advertisement in the conference program;
  - One faculty hiring position announcement distributed to all WSC members via email; and
  - A year-long online advertisement on our website.
- **Silver Sponsor**: A contribution of \$250 to \$499.
  - A half page advertisement in the conference program;
  - A year-long online advertisement on our website.

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# BEYOND THE BARS: EXPLORING PATHWAYS TO PRISON AND RETURNING CITIZENS' NARRATIVES

Charles Bell<sup>a</sup> & Nicholas Buckingham<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>*Wayne State University*

<sup>b</sup>*Oakland University*

## Introduction

Research shows mass incarceration is a serious social problem that disproportionately affects African American men and women in urban settings. As research shows ninety percent of the individuals incarcerated within state prisons will be released back into their communities at some point, it is important for criminal justice stakeholders to understand social problems that create pathways to prison for urban youth. Moreover, criminal justice stakeholders should also be cognizant of the experiences shared by returning citizens as well as the challenges returning citizens encounter as they navigate life with a felony. This paper focuses on a series of community engagement events that were initiated in Detroit, Michigan to accomplish the following goals: (a) explore the experiences of returning citizens directly leading up to their incarceration, during their imprisonment, and post incarceration, (b) mobilize returning citizens as an instrument in the effort to reduce school discipline and mass incarceration, (c) establish a progressive community engagement series that addresses factors related to mass incarceration (i.e., school discipline, community stressors, parenting, etc.) by including educators, law enforcement, at-risk youth, and returning citizens in a solution-oriented public forum.

## Exploring Returning Citizens' Lived Experiences

While researchers typically rely on quantitative data to establish the relationship between community stressors and incarceration, we argue researchers and practitioners can gain tremendous insight into the risk factors for incarceration by allowing returning citizens to speak about their experiences. The community engagement series described in this article began in the spring of 2016 and is a large component of an ongoing effort to advocate for reforms in our justice system. Each panelist is dedicated to openly discussing the factors that led them to prison, their experiences during their imprisonment, and their post incarceration challenges. The audience members typically consisted of parents, at-risk

youth, community leaders, politicians, and members of the law enforcement community.

**Panelist 1:** James is a middle-aged African American man who spent seventeen years in prison on a first-time drug offense. Currently, James is employed within a violence prevention organization and he works part-time as a chef.

**Panelist 2:** Thomas is a middle-aged African American man who spent ten years in prison as a result of a drug conviction. Currently, Thomas is employed as a computer engineer and is working to start his own business.

**Panelist 3:** Dion is an African American man who spent seven years in prison as a result of an armed robbery conviction. Currently, Dion is employed as a maintenance manager.

**Panelist 4:** Nicholas is an African American man who spent seven years in prison as a result of an armed robbery conviction. Currently, Nicholas is a student at Oakland University and is a national advocate for prison reform.

## Exploring Pathways to Prison

Throughout the community engagement event, the panelists stated being raised in a single parent household, removed from school via suspension or expulsion, having a parent in prison, and a variety of intertwined social issues played an important role in their incarceration. In an effort to highlight the panelists' experiences in relation to the factors that contribute to incarceration, the following section focuses on and was written by Nicholas.

It is a known fact that black males raised in a single parent household have a greater chance of incarceration than children raised in a two-parent household. My father was completely absent from my life and I still find myself wondering how life would have been different if my father was present. My father abandoned me the moment he discovered my mother was pregnant. Despite the absence of my father, my older siblings were able to spend a great amount of time with their father until his passing during their early adult years. Unfortunately, the opportunity to bond with a male figure was denied to me therefore my mother was forced to adopt the role of a mother and a father in my life.

Although my mother was placed in a challenging position, she firmly believed in education and she earned a degree in aviation. Around my fifth birthday, she began working as an air traffic controller and this job demanded more hours in the workplace than at home. Therefore, the majority of the time I



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was under the supervision of my older siblings and I felt I was a burden upon them because of the gap in our ages. By the time I turned ten years old, my siblings had moved out of the house to pursue higher education and my little brother was born. When my brother turned two years old, his father was sentenced to life in prison for his involvement in a major drug gang. As a person with severe autism, my youngest brother received considerable attention and placed more pressure on me because I was required to supervise him while my mother worked. In many respects, I was a child forced to care for the well-being of another child.

During my childhood years, I lacked discipline in the home which would become a major issue in the school setting. Since my mother was away from home most of the day, I had more time to devote to my friends in the neighborhood. I found myself focusing on my friends instead of my school work. Additionally, my mother prioritized performing household chores above schoolwork and there were nights where my mother would transition into a rage about a half-cleaned kitchen. As I got older, her rage would become physical and fueled by alcohol.

Due to the stress from my brother's autism, an overwhelming workload, and alcohol, my mother lashed out at me. The hostility in my mother's attitude caused me to be defiant. I began treating school as a social playground and exhibited no respect for education. By the time I reached the sixth grade, I was labeled as a troubled black child and expelled. Despite school personnel mentioning the possibility of mental illness and attention-deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), my mother claimed that my behavior in school was based on my own desire to engage in wrongdoing.

My high school years were the most difficult in my childhood. My young brother's behavior started to take a turn for the worst and I had to learn to adapt to his illness. In my ninth-grade year, I was expelled from high school and sent to an alternative education institution that enrolled about fifty students in between two classrooms. In this environment, there was little support offered to the success of the student through education and it was obvious that we were considered "throwaway students." Any confrontation between students resulted in the police being contacted. Additionally, the school security officers would engage in physical altercations with the students and often these altercations would go undocumented. In one incident, I remember walking away from an argument with another student and going to the restroom. I was immediately confronted by a security officer and when I tried to explain

my side of the story and how I feared returning back to class, I was punched in the mouth by the security officer. Despite losing two teeth, police officers were not called and when I explained the incident to my mother, the school staff made it seem as if I was the aggressor and nobody in the school could control me. Further inquiry into the security officer revealed he is currently incarcerated for second degree murder.

In the tenth grade, I was permitted to return to the public high school in my community. It was very difficult for me to focus on the public-school agenda and keep up with all of my homework because my relationship with school staff was problematic. Additionally, I gained a sense of honor and elevated social status from my peers because I attended the alternative school. In the eyes of my peers, being in the alternative school was the equivalent of being incarcerated as a juvenile and when I transitioned out of that institution I was glorified. Six months into the school year I was expelled from high school because I walked into a class late and this teacher, who also taught at the alternative school, felt that I should be placed back into the alternative school. All of the teacher's accusations about me were personal and during the meeting I became emotionally outraged because my voice was not being heard. Later that day I was confronted by two police officers which led to a physical altercation. I was arrested and charged as an adult for assault on a police officer. At the time, I was sixteen years old and this was my first experience being incarcerated in a county jail. Although I was only locked up for three days, my experience in that jail changed my life dramatically. The judge on my case banned me from Wayne and Oakland counties and ordered that I live with my oldest brother in Lansing, Michigan, which was approximately one hundred miles away from my home.

Although I looked up to my brother, the transition to live with him was very tough. Due to the ten-year difference in our age, there was friction in our relationship. Due to a lack of hope and overwhelming depression, I dropped out of high school in my senior year. By the time I turned twenty years old, I had been arrested numerous times for petty crimes and drug sales and I had spent nearly one year in the county jail. As a result of a lack of education, family support, and being banned from my hometown, I navigated towards the street. At this time, I was involved in drug distribution, money counterfeiting, and identity theft. As I continued to live my life in the streets, I had my first child at the age of twenty while I was homeless. Through drug distribution and managing a minimum wage job I tried my best to provide for my daughter and her mother. Although my daughter's mother was receiving housing assistance from the government, I was

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not permitted to reside in the household because I was a felon.

When I turned twenty-two years old, I committed a senseless act of violence that had a profound impact on my life. At this time, the group of guys I associated with conspired to rob a store. However, what we did not decide on was that I was going to be the one to rob the store. Although I made it out of the store, the robbery escalated into a shootout between the store owner, myself, and a partner that assisted with the robbery. After that day, I went on a run from the U.S. Marshalls for nearly one year and my face was posted on “Michigan’s Most Wanted.” After returning back to Lansing to spend time with my daughter, I was apprehended by federal agents in less than a month. I was informed by the prosecutor that I was facing twenty-four years to life without the possibility of parole. Through the grace of God, I was given seven years to twenty years in the Michigan Department of Corrections.

Throughout Nicholas’ narrative, criminal justice researchers and practitioners should be able to recognize several important factors related to incarceration. First, the education institution plays a vital role in a student’s overall life trajectory and school exclusion has devastating consequences for urban youth. According to the U.S. Department of Education, black boys are suspended and expelled at three times the rate of their white counterparts (U.S. Department of Education, 2014). Considering the prevalence of school exclusion in black male school-age populations, researchers must consider novel strategies that help black boys remain within the education setting. Secondly, as children navigate community stressors and familial discord, education and criminal justice practitioners must create safe spaces for children to speak. As Nicholas discussed his experiences, he specified numerous instances in which his voice was marginalized and completely removed from important conversation regarding his life. While socio-emotional development studies encourage practitioners to conduct a deeper exploration into a student’s experiences when behavioral problems manifest, it is evident that many criminal justice and education stakeholders fail to do so. Thus, the ability to reduce incarceration rates and address social problems before they escalate into a criminal offense lies in our willingness to elevate the voices of marginalized youth.

While Nicholas’ narrative highlights many of the factors that lead black men to prison, each panelists’ narrative contains very unique issues that are worthy of consideration. As we

work throughout Michigan to raise awareness of the factors that lead to incarceration and play a pivotal role in disrupting pathways to prison, each panelist has agreed to share their narrative within *The Western Criminologist*. We hope Nicholas’ narrative helps criminal justice stakeholders gain insight into the dynamics that shape mass incarceration. We look forward to your feedback and to our next submission.

## **CENSORSHIP POLICY OF THE COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS: A CASE STUDY OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN A GENDER RESISTIVE CORRECTIONS CULTURE**

**Dr. Susan J. Jones**

*Colorado Department of Corrections Warden, Retired*

This feature is derived from the research published in the following article:

Jones, S. J. (2016). Censorship policy of the Colorado department of corrections: A case study of policy implementation in a gender resistive corrections culture. *Corrections: Policy, Practice, and Research, 1*(4), 246–265. doi: 10.1080/23774657.2016.1218805

While this research describes the policy change and implementation process that the Colorado Department of Corrections traveled, the real take-away is the concept of Gender Resistance. This policy change process in Colorado was hampered by many barriers related to the workplace culture that was very resistive to adaptations for female employees. This case study proposes a theory of gender resistance in a corrections culture as a way to explain the resistance to change.

This message is disturbing and important: Females have not been accepted into this line of work, they have merely been allowed to work – as long as the environment does not change. Of course, this statement is an over-generalization. Change has occurred in a variety of areas but perhaps these changes have not reached the level of deep systemic changes hoped for by early scholars and practitioners. The idea that women entering the corrections workplace would help to “normalize” the environment and improve correctional outcomes was first theorized as a way to justify the need to introduce women in areas of corrections where they had not

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yet been allowed. Then, practitioners and researchers found some evidence that this type of “normalization” had in fact occurred (Carlson, Anson, & Thomas, 2003; Management and Training Corporation, 2008).

This current research casts some doubt upon the actual effect of the change and suggests that a more thorough look at the current correctional environment may provide useful information for both researchers and corrections professionals.

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## THE VALUE OF QUALITATIVE COURTS RESEARCH

**Dr. Christine S. Scott-Hayward**

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Those of us who conduct qualitative research often find ourselves responding to criticism for failing to conduct statistical analyses, and justifying to peer reviewers why this kind of research is important. Despite the fact that few scholars dispute the empirical validity of qualitative research methods, such as participant observation, in-depth interviews, and qualitative media analysis, the decades-old debate over the relative merits of quantitative and qualitative research endures. Although different methods have different strengths that are suited to particular forms of research, unfortunately,

in both publishing and methodological training, quantitative methods are often privileged over qualitative methods. This is particularly unfortunate in the area of courts, particularly federal sentencing. Perhaps because of the excellent data collected by the United States Sentencing Commission and readily available to scholars, much of the recent research in the area of sentencing has been quantitative. However, as a comparison of two recent studies demonstrates, the numbers alone rarely explain what is actually happening in courthouses.

In September 2016, the United States Sentencing Commission released a report on simple possession of drugs in the federal criminal justice system (United States Sentencing Commission, 2016). The report was prompted by an almost 400 percent increase in the total number of federal defendants sentenced for simple drug possession between 2008 and 2013.<sup>1</sup> It concluded that the overall increase was almost entirely explained by an increase in sentences imposed for marijuana offenses in the District of Arizona, and noted a surprising feature of these cases – the quantity of the drugs involved. Although no quantity is specified in the statute, the median quantity of marijuana involved in these offenses in non-US/Mexico border areas was 5.3 grams. However, in border cases, the median quantity involved was more than 22,000 grams. As the report notes in a rather understated way, that is “a quantity that appears in excess of a personal use quantity.” Further, almost 95 percent of those sentenced in the border areas were non-U.S. citizens.

Unfortunately, the report ends there; it does not offer any explanation for why non-U.S. citizens in the border area are being convicted of simple possession of drugs in cases that involve such large quantities. And, indeed, the raw data available to the Sentencing Commission cannot explain what had transpired in the District of Arizona. Thankfully, during part of this time period, Professor Mona Lynch was conducting both quantitative and qualitative research in the same area, as part of a larger project (Lynch, 2017).<sup>2</sup> In addition to analyzing the Sentencing Commissions’ data and reviewing case files, she conducted direct observations and interviewed various court actors, including defense attorneys,

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<sup>1</sup> Simple drug possession is the possession of “a small amount of an illegal substance for the purpose of consuming or using it but without the intent to sell or give it to anyone else.” 21 U.S.C. § 844.

<sup>2</sup> Lynch does not refer to the District of Arizona by name, instead referring to it as “the Southwestern District.” However, given the

caseload in the district that she describes, it can only be the District of Arizona: “This district’s possession convictions, alone, accounted for 83 percent of the nation’s federal drug possession convictions” (p. 120).

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prosecutors, and judges. Lynch notes the dramatic increase in misdemeanor possession convictions, and because of the methods she used, is able to explain the court practices in the district that have led to this increase.

Lynch concludes that the increase is largely attributable to prosecutions of “the so-called ‘backpacker,’ who is almost always an unauthorized immigrant, arrested in the desert after crossing into the United States with a backpack full of Mexican marijuana” (p. 112). Since 2012, backpackers have been prosecuted in what is termed “flip-flop court,” in which certain defendants agree to waive many of their rights and participate in mass processing in exchange for a misdemeanor conviction, rather than opting for individual case processing in which a felony conviction is on the table. Lynch convincingly argues that this change in policy indicates how “immigration enforcement has subsumed criminal enforcement of drug laws in this court” (p. 119).

As others have pointed out, Lynch’s research is a major contribution to the literature on the relationships between immigration and criminal law and policy (Chacón, 2017). It also demonstrates the importance of in-depth, mixed methods studies to understanding the complexities of court systems. The barriers to qualitative research, including access, IRB approval, and time, can often deter scholars, particularly junior scholars, but studies like these show us that the pay-off can be great.

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## THE NEED FOR CONTINUOUS POLICE TRAINING AND THE ROLE OF PRACTICE

Dr. Tom Mijares

*Texas State University*

Mass disturbances, increased criminal violence, and the politicization of criminal behavior are among the many factors leading to the realization that more training for police officers was necessary. Topics covered in most police training sessions are given little more than cursory attention and, because of time limitations, little subsequent opportunity is allotted for application and practice. Police training should never be regarded as a singular operation. It should be viewed as a continuous process for all concerned including the trainees, their respective law enforcement agencies, the citizens who are served, and even the criminal suspects.

Practice provides the opportunity to review, rehearse, refine, and reinforce the tactics and techniques learned in earlier instructional sessions. Humans are creatures of habit who often need a “coach” to help break bad habits and to reinforce and strengthen good ones. Since police operations are often group operations, continuous training with practice enhances the transformation of a collection of individuals into a coordinated and cohesive unit. Just as a successful athletic team typifies the axiom that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts, a police department requires disciplined, unified and synchronized structure and procedures for operational success. Training, followed by supervised practice, facilitates the transition from the individuality associated with routine law enforcement to the coordination by members of a group needed in critical situations.

Practice requires breaking down a given task into its constituent parts, re-assembling them progressively, and then performing the entire operation at increasing levels of speed, efficiency of movement, and effectiveness. The process requires repetition, discipline, and the watchful eye of an experienced coach. Practice must be done on an individual as well as a team basis.

Practice is enhanced when the coach recognizes two related principles. *Muscle memory* consolidates a physical task into an automatic response through repetition. When the task is repeated correctly several times, conscious effort and the exertion needed to complete each phase of the task are decreased. Efficiency of movement and the endurance needed

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to repeat the task are increased. The principle is applicable to individual as well as group activities. For example, the young baseball player learning to field a ground ball must first learn how to approach the ball, stop it, and then throw it to a teammate to prevent any scoring. Within increased repetitions during a practice session the players learn where and when to go as soon as the ball is hit and the players can coordinate their efforts so that the entire task is performed smoothly with minimal effort. When practice ceases, skills and discipline deteriorate.

The *training effect* was first described by as an elevation of metabolism through physical exercise. Dr. Cooper noted that progressively and incrementally elevated levels of physical exercise strengthened the heart and respiratory muscles and lowered blood pressure while increasing the amount of blood flow and red blood cells to the muscles. Thus, the circulatory system becomes a more efficient carrier of oxygen to the cells and remover of carbon dioxide. The term has been extrapolated to other physical activities whereby the efficiency of an operation can be increased by repeated exertion under continuously increasing levels of frequency, intensity, and duration. This principle also applies to individual and collective or group activity. In terms of performance for police operations, an increase in the intensity, duration, and frequency of training will result in a corresponding increase in skills and abilities.

Muscle memory and the training effect will produce an automatic response to given situations with sufficient supervised practice. The principle works in a similar fashion during team activities. Just as Tom Brody and his pass-receiving corps have practiced their tasks countless times, a police agency must practice many skills until the entire operation is automatic and can be conducted at a minimum of risk and injury. It is the responsibility of the trainer to observe the students to ensure that the procedures are correct and then to require increased effectiveness and efficiency in performance.

However, significant dilemmas still exist for public administrators. Beyond the initial recruit level of instruction received by new employees, very little attention is directed to the needs of incumbent police personnel. The average junior high school baseball player receives more supervised practice

in a week than the typical police officer receives in a career. In most instances, the maximum amount of training for experienced police officers provided by a law enforcement agency is the minimum required by state law. Practice is generally not a component of the mandated training. Even the most basic of skills require continuous practice with unrelenting zeal<sup>3</sup> under the watchful scrutiny and guidance of a coach. Through supervised training, constructive criticism can be offered about past performances, suggestions can be made for present operations, and instruction can be made about future applications of skills.

The adage that “practice makes perfect” has a direct application to police operations. Not every incident allows sufficient opportunity for a rehearsal and not every rehearsal can replicate situational conditions exactly. There are several benefits to repeated practice as often as possible especially when the practice is content valid and based on a review of past case histories. First, practice allows a supervisory officer to observe a simulated performance to identify any shortcomings. Second, a training session can identify potential problems, particularly if the physical conditions can be closely replicated. Third, supervised rehearsal provides information about the anticipated chronology and amount of time between the events of a crisis. This information is critical when the actions of one aspect of the operation are dependent on the amount of time needed to complete a subsequent aspect. Finally, just as an athletic team becomes more efficient and proficient as it repeatedly runs a play during a practice session before a game, law enforcement personnel can remove superfluous movements with a rehearsal.

In most instances law enforcement personnel are in a continuous response mode as they respond to calls for service. When not reacting directly to public demand they are expected to be visible as deterrents, present for immediate apprehension of offenders, and available as witnesses in court for any work already completed. Most of the moments spent in practice, preparation, or conditioning are done on the officer’s off-duty time, often at the expense of the time normally allocated to family activities in most households. Usually claiming a lack of financial resources, most public safety agencies rarely provide the opportunity, supervision,

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<sup>3</sup> Arnold Palmer, arguably one of the greatest golfers of all time was once confronted by a news reporter who claimed that he was a lucky

golfer. Mr. Palmer admitted that indeed he was a lucky golfer and that the more he trained and practiced, the luckier he became.

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facilities, or the release-time to be excused from duty for skill maintenance once an officer receives initial training.

A further managerial training dilemma stems from the fact that it is the action taken by the first responders that become the greatest single factor contributing to a successful resolution to any criminal activity. The first responding officers are often under-trained, under-equipped, and under-prepared for many of the tasks that unfold. During a large-scale incident requiring several police officers, the common thread is the composition of the initial responders; i.e., usually they have not trained or operated as a coordinated and cohesive unit and must deal with the crisis as a collection of individuals.

The term “practice” in the police training context usually refers to repetition of techniques such as shooting, building entry, and take-down techniques. The function of identifying, supervising, and reinforcing training topics that need attention through practice must be done by the instructor who is in a supervisory position. This task requires a continuous analysis of performance levels during training and a thorough and honest critique of past operations to identify any factors that presented a hindrance to the operation and prevented optimum performance.

Practice effectiveness depends on factors such as the intensity, duration, and frequency in which it is engaged. However, the most important factor is the feedback from a trainer or coach. Without constructive feedback, the practice could not only be valueless, it could be counter-productive. Without practice, muscle memory is lost and reinforcement fades. Some people respond to practice faster than others and some will never respond to a satisfactory level. In such cases, it is the responsibility of the trainer to point out this situation to the agency’s management with the appropriate recommendation that the individual be removed. Differences in performance among individuals are often a function of a methodical and purposeful effort to perform in a specific domain through deliberate practice. The quality of practice and the attendant feedback are more important than mere repetition.

*Dr. Tom Mijares retired from the Detroit Police Department in 1990 after spending most of his career in tactical operations. He obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan in 1988. He joined the faculty at Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University) immediately afterward and just completed his 27<sup>th</sup> year, the last 14 as a Full Professor.*

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## Is it Art or is it Crime?

### The Art | Crime Archive Launches New Platform.

San Diego, CA – July 27, 2017. The Art | Crime Archive (ACA), the online archive of deviant art and creative criminality, announced today the launch of its new web-based platform: [www.artcimearchive.net](http://www.artcimearchive.net).

“The Art | Crime Archive is a great space for artists, academics, students, or anyone interested in art and crime to post content and to engage in conversations about the shadow space where creativity and deviance overlap,” said Paul Kaplan, professor of criminology and ACA co-director said.

The ACA’s method involves locating, archiving, and studying visual, audio, and text artifacts that illuminate the cultural similarities between deviant art and criminal behaviors. The work product is a dynamic archive which can be configured and re-configured for a multiplicity of contexts — art exhibitions, academic presentations, community awareness panels, etc.

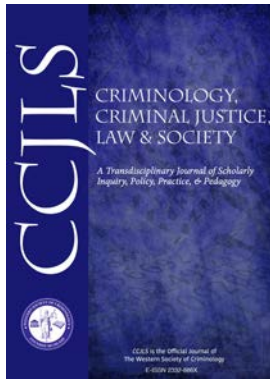
### About the Art | Crime Archive

The ACA was created in 2012, and since its inception has functioned as a participatory archive for a wide range of scholars, artists, students, and community members. The website’s content—over 500 articles from around the globe—is entirely user-generated. The ACA is part of San Diego State University’s (SDSU) Institute for Public and Urban Affairs (IPUA), and is directed by Paul Kaplan, artist Brian Goeltzenleuchter, and computer engineer Dan Salmonsens.

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## CALL FOR PAPERS

*Criminology, Criminal Justice, Law & Society (CCJLS)*, formerly *Western Criminology Review (WCR)*, is the official journal of the Western Society of Criminology. This peer-reviewed journal builds on the mission of its predecessor by promoting understanding of the causes of crime; the methods used to prevent and control crime; the institutions, principles, and actors involved in the apprehension, prosecution, punishment, and reintegration of offenders; and the legal and political framework under which the justice system and its primary actors operate. Historical and contemporary perspectives are encouraged, as are diverse theoretical and methodological approaches.

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