

# THE Critical Criminologist<sup>1</sup>

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## The Prison Industrial Complex and the New American Apartheid

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Crime pays - for big business and the "crime control industry"! Actually it is a good thing we have crime and plenty of criminals, otherwise profits would go tumbling and thousands would be jobless! The criminal justice system alone provides a steady supply of career possibilities, as police officers, prison guards, probation officers and many more. Most of these jobs offer not only good starting pay, but excellent benefits and a promise of future wage increases and job security. Many have formed unions, some of which have become stronger than any union heretofore. A multitude of businesses, ranging from small "mom and pop" security businesses to huge corporations listed on the New York Stock Exchange, have found it profitable to "invest in crime."

We have witnessed in the 20th century the emergence of a "crime control industry." The police, the courts and the prison system have become huge, self-serving and self-perpetuating bureaucracies, which along with corporations, have a vested interest in keeping crime at a certain level. They need victims, they need criminals, even if they have to invent them, as they have throughout the "war on drugs" and "war on gangs"(Baum, 1997; Gordon, 1994; Shelden, et al., 1997).

A big part of this complex is the *prison industrial complex*. A close look at the modern American prison system suggests a form of "Gulag," roughly the equivalent of the Russian *Gulag* (Christie, 1993; Richards, 1990). Indeed, the American prison system has many of the same characteristics of Gulags. Prisons are literally found in just about every part of the country, with the bulk of them (especially those built during the past 20 years) in rural areas. There is also a great deal of human rights abuses in American prisons (and also jails and juvenile correctional facilities) such as cruel and unusual punishment (e.g., long periods in solitary confinement) and extreme brutality and violence. Moreover, there is much forced (and cheap) labor, much of which produces great profits for corporations (Conquest, 1995; Harris, 1997).

The size of this system is so huge that it is almost impossible to estimate the amount of money spent and the profits made. Many observers have suggested that the criminal justice industrial complex has taken over where the "Military Industrial

Complex" left off - since we no longer have many external enemies, we must now have internal enemies. The new enemy is crime, especially crimes committed by minorities. The specific focus has been on drug offenses and the behaviors of those identified as "gangs" (the definition of which is racially biased) (Shelden et al., 1997; Klein, 1995). During the past 20 years expenditures on crime control have increased twice as fast as military spending (Donziger, 1996: 85-98; see also Lilly and Knepper, 1993).

One can clearly see the size of this complex by first noting the annual expenditures of the three main components of the criminal justice system (or more correctly, the "criminal justice industrial complex"): police, courts, and prisons. Since 1980 these expenditures have increased by more than 200%, with the largest increase being for prisons, an increase of more than 250% (the federal prison system alone went up by over 300% during this time). The most recent estimates indicate that the total expenditures now exceed \$100 billion annually. During this period of time annual payrolls went up 142% (up 183% within the federal system), while employment increased by 44% (prisons and jails led the way with an increase of 96%). It now costs about \$20,000-40,000 per year to house one inmate in the U.S. prison system (McGarrell and Flanagan, 1986: 2; Maguire and Pastore, 1995: 4; Donziger, 1996: 85).

One of the most obvious effects of the "get tough" policies on crime is that African-Americans are finding themselves behind bars in record numbers. For the first time in American history African-Americans constituted the *numerical majority* of prisons in the early 1990s. This may be mostly the result of the "war on drugs." (Coight, 1998: 2; Proband, 1998a; Proband, 1998b; Gilliard and Beck, 1998). On the other hand, given the fact the drug war has been ongoing for more than a decade, the reason for the increase in the number of African-Americans incarcerated may be more sinister than simply the result of a failing drug war, and questionable racist laws (e.g., crack v. powder cocaine). It may be plausible to argue that the "war on drugs" (and the "war on gangs") has actually been a "success" if the aim was to control the "surplus population," especially African-Americans. The result is clear: institutional segregation or what I would call the new form of "apartheid." (I am calling this the "new" American apartheid to distinguish from another form of "apartheid," namely residential segregation. For a discussion of

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## From the Editors...

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The Critical Criminology Homepage is maintained by Jim Thomas. It contains more information about the division along with links to a wide variety of data, current statistics, legal resources, political writings, teaching and mentoring information, and the Division's parent organization — The American Society of Criminology. <http://sun.soci.niu.edu/~critcrim/>

Division membership is available through Sarah Hall at the American Society of Criminology: 1314 Kinnear Rd., Suite 214 Columbus, OH 43212. Subscription to the newsletter for non-members is \$10 yearly, available from Stuart Henry, who also handles information about back issues.

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# Letters...

Julia & Herman (Hi) Schwendinger

University of South Florida



## A Few Suggestions

It seems only yesterday that critical criminologists found little support for their views at annual conferences sponsored by the American Society of Criminology. We recall an occasion in the early 1980s when Paul Takagi, Cyril Robinson and Herman Schwendinger failed to get Ron Akers to pair Richard Quinney with another radical so that at least two people could deal with critics at a conference session about radical criminology. Granted, Quinney's statement, written for that session, was then published in a purportedly 'Special Edition Devoted to Radical Criminology'. However, that special edition of the official ASC publication, *Criminology*, was a farce. With the exception of Quinney's brief statement and Ray Michalowski's book review, the other articles were from people selected by the editor, James Inciardi, because they were opposed to radical developments. Radicals were not merely shut out of a special edition 'devoted' (so it was said) to their work: they were refused the opportunity to edit a legitimate edition after they loudly protested Inciardi's unprofessional charade.

Yet, a lot of water has flowed under the bridge. Subsequently, the Critical Criminology Division emerged within ASC and now organizes its own sessions at annual conferences. The Division's international journal, *Critical Criminology*, has given expression to people who are committed to the advancement of criminology rather than the ideology of social control or politically expedient policies. The outstanding Summer 1998 edition, written by Irish colleagues about the conflict in Ireland, is one example among many that underscores the unique role played by this journal. Meanwhile, another radical journal, *Social Justice*, is now celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and planning an edition entitled, *Critical Resistance: Beyond the Prison Industrial Complex*. Even the contributions of members of the Division have been widely recognized. William Chambliss, one of the most important criminologists of our time, has been awarded the degree of Doctor of Laws *honoris causa* at a Canadian University.

Other good news includes the fact that the DCC took seriously charges of sexism leveled at some members of the division by Susan Caringella-MacDonald some years ago. In the Fall 1997 election, women were elected to five out of the six key offices, including vice-chair, secretary-treasurer, and the three executive counselors. Susan also suggested that in the name of egalitarianism, initiatives be established between the DCC and the Women's Division and the Division on People of Color and Crime. We have become aware that cooperative efforts are now underway.

Moreover, both of us have noticed the striking improvement in the quality of the Division's newsletter. The last issue was a gem! Including the poem by Michael J. Welters; the piece-

less column by John Katz on school violence and geek profiling; the erudite philosophy of science article by Biko Agozino; the informative dispute between Mark Hamm and Grant Snyder over the investigation of the Oklahoma City bombing; and the agreements as well as disagreements in the dialogue between Mike Lynch and Dragan Milovanovic. These writings represent the kind of critical thinking that has little or no outlet in any other media provided by ASC.

Simultaneously, the Division is being confronted by serious budgetary problems. Its nominal \$5 dues has never been enough to meet the costs of its services. Since the greatest expenditure involves the publication of *Critical Criminology*, the survival of the journal is in question. Brian MacLean and Dawn Currie have subsidized the publication but they simply cannot do this any longer. Either the Division provides financial and professional support or the journal despite its value will expire.

The Division is in a hard place. To resolve its financial problem, members voted to increase the dues to \$30 (paid on top of the general fee required by ACS). But Agozino has questioned the possible trade-offs stemming from the increase even though he grants that "with a regular newsletter and a prestigious refereed journal in the bargain, the division offers as much as the ASC itself and charges much less for its services." He recommends that members seek-out ways to improve its services yet cut costs because he is concerned that the dues increase will impair the division's "competitiveness and effectiveness". By 'competitiveness,' he may be implying that the increase might produce a significant loss of membership to other Divisions.

Agozino thoughtfully suggests that the Division's web site incorporate the journal and newsletter. ("That way," he adds, "both the newsletter and the journal will be more dynamic, more spacious, and more cost-effective.") His suggestion has merit for other reasons as well. We believe the web site has the potential to overcome social and geographical distances between members. If organized properly, for instance, the site might encourage the development of small yet productive networks by providing space for 'chat rooms' and announcements. It may help its members overcome the effects of professional competition and geographical isolation by using the web as well as conferences to make the division evolve further. We would be willing to start off a small network restricted to critical criminologists for the study of adolescent subcultures and delinquency. We are especially interested in contacting people who might help provide macro and micro alternatives to social control or 'opportunity structure' theories. We can, among other things, send participants works-in-progress and procedures for identifying local subcultures or constructing sociometric models of large networks. Anyone interested in helping us start the network can contact us in person at the forthcoming ASC conference or through our Email address ([schwendh@earthlink.net](mailto:schwendh@earthlink.net)).

The evaluation of the trade-offs associated with the dues increase in large measure depends on organizational aims and models. What kind of organization do we want? Should it be modeled after a fast-food cafeteria filled with people who fulfill their appetites and move on? Members might complain about a '600% increase' in dues but the added amount is merely \$25 (and no increase for students). Shouldn't this relatively small amount

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## ZERO TOLERANCE: Further thoughts on an ugly trend

Ken Ludwig

Student Advocacy Center



the number of students disengaged and disengaging from school, and toward a more effective direction which will accord them the respect and understanding due all citizens.

As I struggled to address the issues surrounding school discipline at the Administrative Law Section seminar on May 14, 1999 I once again faced the unhappy prospect of trying to make a case for perfecting bad law and regulation. Under the umbrella of "zero tolerance", school districts all over the country are increasing the penalties for an ever widening catchment of children's behaviors. We have all by now read story after story of the ridiculous extent to which district's will go to "send a message" or "make an example" of some child. The infamous Midol case, the 9 year old with a paper clip, the high school student in a class discussion about the Columbine murders saying something along the lines of "I can understand how someone could feel that way" and promptly being suspended, and on and on.

### Current Environment

School bureaucracies have become toxic environments for both students and teachers. The miasma of suspicion, reaction, thoughtless punishment, and degraded standards poisons the school community and drives out hope and laughter and learning. These local initiatives against children have found full and enthusiastic support in the legislature. In no recent piece of proposed or enacted legislation are the ideals of public education anywhere in evidence. Michigan is a national leader in the criminalization of children's behavior and binding the public schools ever more tightly to the criminal justice system. Our current legislature is in the process of defying the Federal Educational Right to Privacy Act (FERPA) with legislation which will breach the wall which keeps school information confidential from police agencies (Senate Bill 183). To argue against such thrusts is a necessary evil with which I must often contend. It is so unhappy a task that it compels me to try to find some language which will shift the dominant paradigm away from dehumanizing children, further eroding the few rights they still have in school, while increasing

*(Continued from page 3)  
Schwendinger letter*

be paid to maintain a journal that is more important to the development of critical criminology than the official journal of the Society? And, wouldn't the increase be worth risking the size of the Division? After all, the journal validates and reinforces the international character of critical criminology; moreover, while relevant articles can be found intermittently elsewhere, no other journal directly represent the professional corps of criminologists and its overriding devotion to social justice and equality.

### The Flip Side of Zero Tolerance

In pursuit of the ever elusive "paradigm shift" I have declared myself in favor of "Zero Tolerance"; zero tolerance of illiteracy, of innumeracy and of an imperfect knowledge of the rights and responsibilities of an informed citizenry. The idea of a free, universal public education is beautiful and good. The practices currently associated with this noble idea are neither beautiful nor good. Were our schools and our legislators to show the same zeal for eliminating illiteracy as they do for abandoning children we might actually prevent some of the hideous tragedies which sadly occur and reoccur in our schools. Alienated children, among whom are those with the potential for violence, need to be professionally identified early and provided the help they need .

### Kafka Anyone?

Creating a climate which blames kids, families and society at large does nothing to increase safety in schools. Encouraging our children to anonymously inform on their peers to administrators and police is equally unhelpful and merely exacerbates the anxiety and paranoia already running rampant in schools across the state. Those base characters whom I describe as "edu-nazis" are in the ascendant and must not be allowed to gain the high ground on which the direction of public education will and is being contested.

### Alienated Systems

Public schools no longer feel like integral components of our

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### ***Come to the Multi-Media ASC sessions On***

#### **Who Killed the School of Criminology? Round Up the Usual Suspects!**

With Jules Debro, Virginia Engquist Grabiner, Eugene Grabiner, Drew Humphries - Tomkins, Brian D. MacLean, Julia Schwendinger, Herman Schwendinger, Richard Schaufliker and Barbara Yaley.

Part 1: Thursday 4:30-6:00PM Albert

Part 2: Friday 8:00-9:45AM Albert

Various publications have explained the events behind the closing of the famous UC Berkeley School of Criminology in 1974. When assessing blame for *schoolslaughter*, the radical democrats at the School are often depicted as the 'usual suspects'- even by criminologists who weren't at the scene of the crime at that time and even though the corpse had decomposed so they couldn't put it under their knives. The ASC sessions will reopen the case, identify the real *perps*, and uncover features of the crime never disclosed by professional publications.

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communities—they have somehow become "other". Employees feel estranged and embattled, they respond to even the mildest criticism with extreme defensiveness and, often, hostility. Public schools have walled themselves off from the rest of us and we not only allow this but, by promulgating ever stronger support for ineffective school responses for very real problems, encourage the further isolation of schools from communities. We have allowed and encouraged schools to partner with the most reactionary elements in the legislature to make war on children and families and we have done so under the cynical guise of "family values".

### A Different Direction

Were we to focus on authentic education rather than credentialing and cease punishing, blaming, warehousing, and discarding children, the effects of 12 years of public education might look considerably different. Zero tolerance for illiteracy, for example, would require the earliest possible engagement of students in reading readiness programs taught by people who have both a passion for the work and high standards of accountability. Institutions would have to be held accountable for reasonable, attainable goals such as all children reading at grade level by the end of third grade. This is a critical benchmark time which predicates later success or failure academically.

Pro-action invariably costs less than remediation. If we are going to legislate about schools let us focus on education as the prime objective and let that inform all of our other decisions. Legislators are quick to enact draconian prescriptions which punish and damage children. They do not and have not moved in far more useful directions such as establishing performance standards with concomitant accountability requirements. Meaningful performance standards unencumbered by prescriptive irrelevancies free educators to get on with the exciting work of educating every child to his/her maximum potential. Reforming the ossified public school bureaucracies and liberating teachers to teach would do more than all the expulsion laws to keep our children in schools which are not only safe but effective. Repealing current expulsion laws would be a step in the right direction as would legislation leading to a constitutional change guaranteeing a free and appropriate public education to all Michigan's children. Financial accountability in the form of uniform reporting made understandable to the public and widely disseminated would also be helpful to advance the engagement of parents and taxpayers in meaningful discussion. The State of South Carolina has been a leader in financial reporting as has Seattle which allows citizens



to create individual school budgets and compare them to actual school budgets on the Seattle Schools web-site.

The shape of school reform debate must shift from the view that children are somehow less fully human than adults and toward a more enlightened and realistic approach which accords students the full protection and support of the best ideas rather than the worst as if they too, like Senators and school administrators, were worthy of respect.

The author can be contacted through the Dept of Sociology, Anthropology & Criminology, 712 Pray Harrold, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. This article originally appeared in the *Administrative Law Quarterly*.

## Police Malfeasance & McVeigh

William J. Chambliss

George Washington University

Grant Snyder makes a valid distinction between "malfeasance" and "nonfeasance." He errs, however, in arguing that Mark Hamm misused the term malfeasance when he applied it to the law enforcement officials who had ample evidence to justify intervening before McVeigh had the opportunity to bomb the federal building in Oklahoma City. What distinguishes malfeasance from nonfeasance and misfeasance is whether or not the behavior in question is criminal. If there is not an element of crime in the failure to act, than it is nonfeasance or misfeasance. Omission to act, under certain circumstances, for example, failing to provide assistance to a spouse who has taken an overdose of sleeping pills, is a crime. Thus the failure of the law enforcement agents to act when they possessed sufficient information to take action is, arguably, a criminal omission and therefore it falls under the legal category of malfeasance, as Hamm claimed.

Snyder also employs the handmaiden of all political, as contrasted with scientific, arguments when he says tautologically "I suggest that they (the law enforcement agents) did not see anything as they did not take any enforcement action." Very nice... Have faith all ye common people: if the police don't act it is because they did not see any danger. If they had seen danger, they would have acted. Tell that to all the victims of rape and domestic violence who have experienced the danger, the harm, and the indifference of law enforcement agents. Selective enforcement is the essence of policing. To argue that law enforcement agents always act when they see a potential offense is to live in a world of make believe. A world inhabited, unfortunately, by public relations spokespersons for law enforcement agencies throughout the world.



From the Chair...

## State of the Division, Thanks & Miscellaneous

The financial status of the Division as of September 1, 1999 was a balance of \$980.17. Dues received between January 1, 1999 and August 31, 1999 at \$5.00 per person came to \$1280.00 and current membership is around 300 members. The primary expenses for this period were the publication of two issues of *The Critical Criminologist*. With the publication of this issue of the newsletter and the costs for the 1999 division awards and the cash bar Social in Toronto, we should have a small balance left in our account which is typical for this time of year.

Effective January 1, 2000, the division dues will increase from \$5.00 to \$30.00 for employed members and remain at \$5.00 for students. The rationale behind this increase in dues was for the purpose of resurrecting the temporarily suspended journal, *Critical Criminology*. As the letters from Bruce Arrigo and Julia and Hi Schwendinger in this issue argue, for different reasons, the venue and publication of a "regular" journal of critical theories, methods, and research is essential to the status of the division and to critical criminology more generally.

At last year's meetings the Critical Division sponsored an Open Issues Forum. About twenty-five or so persons attended that discussion where one of the participants was Kevin Pranis, the Board Chair and Co-founder of the Prison Moratorium Project based in New York City. Kevin promised to write a piece for *The Critical Criminologist* on the work of the PMP and on the ways in which academic faculty, researchers, and public intellectuals can get involved to link up college students and campuses with the new prison movement. Please check out Kevin's piece in this issue, "My Brother's Keeper: Youth Fight the American Lockdown."

Last year's Social in Washington D.C. was well attended. We plan to have another Cash Bar Social in Toronto on Friday night (7:00 PM to ? in the Montebello Room) as this is the most economical way to proceed. Once again the division (and Michael Lynch as liaison person this year) have organized a number of critical sessions. Let me bring one of these to your attention: a double session Friday afternoon, 'Petit Apartheid' and Criminal Justice: Part I and Part II, co-sponsored by the Divisions on People of Color and Crime and on Critical Criminology, in the Alberta room from 1:10 PM to 4:20 PM with a ten minute break in the middle. The second of these sessions overlaps with our Business Meeting, scheduled from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM in the Montebello room.

As this was an election year, let me congratulate and introduce our new division officers who take over this

month in Toronto for their two-year terms of office:

Chair, Marty Schwartz  
 Vice-Chair, Jeff Ferrell  
 Secretary-Treasurer, Jeff Walker  
 Executive Officers,  
     Bob Bohm  
     Paul Leighton  
     Becky Tatum

A special thanks and acknowledgement to Michael Blankenship who Chaired the nominations committee and organized the ballot and election. Best of luck to the new officers of 1999-2001.

In closing, I would like to thank former division Chair Ray Michalowski and Vice-Chair Melissa Barlow for their assistance during the transition from Ray's term in office to mine. This involved a second election of the Chair in 1997 when Bill Chambliss declined to be "seated" as the elected Chair. So there was no formal Business Meeting in San Diego that year, and the division was without a Chair from the annual meetings until January 1998.

My thanks and appreciation to the 1997-1999 Steering Committee of Nanette Davis, Katherine Beckett, and Barbara Perry. A special thanks to the 1998 Awards Committee Chaired by David Kauzlarich and to this year's committee and Chair, Jill McCorkel, who are still at work as of this writing. Unfortunately, our Secretary-Treasurer, Charisse Coston, was unable to fulfil her duties in office, so my thanks to Susan Beelman, ASC Bookkeeper, for keeping track of the monies and to Ray Michalowski for taking the minutes at last year's business meeting. I would also like to extend a thank you to my editorial colleagues Stuart Henry, Paul Leighton, and Jennifer Hatten for resuscitating *The Critical Criminologist* and to all of those persons who have submitted such engaging pieces over the past couple of years. This being our third year as editors it is now time to pass the duties on to the next editorial group (please see the "call" in this issue for co-editors). Finally, last but not least, a special thanks to Jim Thomas, the Division's Web master for maintaining our Listserve and Web page.

Have a nice millennium,

Gregg Barak

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this, see Massey and Denton, 1993.) Another way of describing what is occurring has been noted by Los Angeles lawyer and activist Marilyn Mackel, who calls these prisons the modern equivalent of "slave ships" of a few centuries ago!

#### THE EXPLOSIVE GROWTH IN IMPRISONMENT

The latest figures on American prisons show that as of June 30, 1998 there were more than 1.8 million people behind bars in America. The overall incarceration rate (prisons plus jails) at that time was 668 per 100,000 population, which placed the United States second only to Russia. The incarceration rate increased by 289% between 1980 and 1998, and by over 300% between 1975 and 1998. The rate of incarceration for African-Americans is about 8 times greater than for whites and the average black male has a 28.5% probability of going to prison in his lifetime, compared to a mere 4% chance for the average white male (Maguire and Pastore, 1998: 480; Proband, 1999: 2-3).

The actual *number of prisons* has also increased. In 1990, there were a total of 1,287 prisons (80 federal and 1,207 state prisons); by 1995 there were a total of 1,500 prisons (125 federal and 1,375 state prisons), representing an increase of about 17 percent. The federal system experienced the largest increase, going up by 56 percent. Prison construction has varied widely by state and region, with the largest increases occurring in the South (adding 95 prisons for an increase of 18 percent), with the state of Texas leading the way - adding 49 new prisons for an increase of 114 percent! California and Texas have the most prisons, with 102 each, followed by Florida at 98, North Carolina with 93. Texas now imprisons one out of every 25 state residents (Mays and Winfree, 1998: 171; Rush, 1997: 157).

And speaking of Texas, here we have a classic example of the "Gulag" look. Most of their 102 prisons have been built since 1980 and 80 have been built in the 1990s alone! An example of the rural nature of most of these facilities can be seen by sampling some of the towns where they are located (population according to the 1990 census): Iowa Park (6,072), Teague (3,268), Dilley (2,632), Brazoria (2,717), Kennedy (3,763), Dalhart (6,246), Marlin (6,386), Rusk (4,366), to name just a few. A check of the 1998 Rand McNally Road Atlas reveals that several Texas prisons are located in towns not even found on the map! These institutions are found literally in every part of the state.

The Texas prison system has more than 42,000 employees, operates its own health services system (with more than 8,000 personnel, including 200 doctors) and has 35 lawyers working for them. Farming is big business, with control over more than 134,000 acres (about 200 square miles), operating the largest horse and cattle herds in the entire state (more than 10,000 head of cattle and around 1,500 horses). The system also operates 42 factories within 32 prisons under its own "Texas Correctional Industries." In 1995, this system had 575,000 under some form of community supervision, 71,000 on parole, 127,500 in state prisons and 963 in state jails, with a grand total of over 700,000

(Rush, 1997: 157). The most recent figures (December 31, 1997) show that there are just over 140,000 inmates in the state prison system and an incarceration rate of 717 (ranked first in the nation, except for the District of Columbia).

How do we explain this phenomenal growth? While many different explanations have been offered, the "war on drugs" seems most obvious to me. A recent estimate is that convictions for drugs accounted for almost *one-half* of the increase in state prison inmates during the 1980s and early 1990s, as prison sentences on drug charges increased by more than 1000 percent! Between 1985 and 1995 the number of African-American inmates who had been sentenced for drug crimes increased by 700%! (For details about the "war on drugs" see the following: Baum, 1997; Miller, 1996; Reinerman and Levine, 1997; Currie, 1993).

Not only were more African-Americans sentenced for drug crimes, but the *severity* of their sentences increased compared to whites. In 1992, in the federal system, the average sentence length for African-American drug offenders was about 107 months, compared to 74 months for white drug offenders. There has been a huge discrepancy when comparing powder and crack cocaine sentences in the federal system. In 1995, for instance, African-Americans constituted a phenomenal 88 percent of those sentenced for crack cocaine, compared to less than 30 percent of those sentenced for powder cocaine (Maguire and Pastore, 1996: 492).



#### THE PRISON INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX

The *prison industrial complex* itself has emerged largely from "a confluence of special interests that has given prison construction in the United States a seemingly unstoppable momentum" (Schlosser, 1998: 54). Aside from firms who build and operate correctional systems, there are several types of businesses that benefit directly from the imprisonment of offenders. These are firms that provide several different kinds of services, such as food, vocational training, medical services, drug detecting, personnel management, architecture, facilities design, and transportation, among others. There are also companies that sell a variety of products, such as protective vests for guards, fencing, furniture, linen, locks, and many more.

Private business interests are constantly on guard for opportunities to make a profit. An example is in the area of prison food services, a billion dollar enterprise that is growing by between 10% and 15% per year. Even the Campbell Soup Company is getting in on the action, noting that the prison system is their fastest growing market in food service! (Ibid, p. 158.)

Another good illustration of how companies are "cashing in" on the boom in prison and jail construction is found in the amount of advertising done in journals related to this industry. Examples can easily be found in two major journals serving the correctional industry, *Corrections Today* and *The American Jail*, plus the American Correctional Association's annual *Directory*. The *Directory* is fascinating in itself and illustrates how big this portion of the industry is. A recent issue (1997) is instructive. Numbering more than 700 pages, it lists hundreds of prisons

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and juvenile correctional facilities in both the United States and Canada, along with the federal system, and there are almost 100 different companies whose ads appear within. *Corrections Today* is the leading prison trade magazine and the amount of advertising in this magazine tripled in the 1980s. A few issues of these two journals have been sampled and advertisements are found everywhere. There is even a web site on the Internet called "corrections yellow pages" (<http://www.correctionsyellowpages.com>). There are at least 1000 different ads on this site! Here are some sample ads in a recent issue of *Corrections Today*:

Prison Health Services, Inc. (noted in the previous paragraph), a company that, according to their ad, has since 1978 "delivered complete, customized health care programs to correctional facilities only. The first company in the U.S. to specialize in this area, we can deliver your program the fastest, and back it up with services that are simply the best"; Southwest Microwave, Inc., manufactures fence security, with their latest invention known as "Miconet 750" which is "more than a sensor improvement," it is "a whole new paradigm in fence detection technology"; Acorn Engineering, Inc., with their stainless steel fixtures known as "Penal-Ware" (lavatories, toilets, showers, etc.) and "Master-Trol" electronic valve system; Rotondo Precast, Inc. boasting "over 21,000 cells...and growing"; Nicholson's BesTea" with "tea for two or...two thousand"... "Now mass-feeding takes a giant stride forward..."; Northwest Woolen Mills, manufacturing blanket with the slogan "We've got you covered"; and, "Prison on Wheels" from Motor Coach Industries, with their "Inmate Security Transportation Vehicle."

## PRIVATIZATION

A recent development in the criminal justice field, related specifically to the prison system, is the trend toward what is known as *privatization*. This is where a private corporation takes over the operation of a jail or prison. It should be noted that "privatization" is a trend that includes more than the criminal justice system. As one recent study noted, "contracting out," as it is often termed, involves a number of services formerly provided by state and local governments, such as public education, health care, waste collection and many more (Laursen, 1996: 45-50).

The extent of privatization is not known, nor do we have any estimates of the total amount of money involved. However, I have a copy of the 1995 annual report of one such corporation, *Corrections Corporation of America (CCA)*, which is quite revealing. CCA operates 46 correctional facilities, including one in England, two in Australia and two in Puerto Rico. It is a growth corporation, indicating an obvious vested interest in a relatively high rate of incarceration. Revenues went from \$13 million in 1986 to \$207 million in 1995 (an increase of 1492%), while assets increased from \$8 million to almost \$47 million (an increase

of 488%) and stockholders equity increased from \$24 million to \$96 million (up 300%).

Private profit is obviously the driving force in the privatization of the correctional system. A report by Equitable Securities in March, 1996 called "Crime Can Pay," issued a "strong buy" advice to investors. The report concluded: "We consider the industry very attractive. There is substantial room for continued private-prison growth"(Brayson, 1996: 28-35). The potential for profits has not escaped Wall Street. A Prudential Securities vice president, who is part of a "prison-financing team," is quoted as saying that "We try to keep a close eye on all the crime bills"(Thomas, 1994). Wall Street is indeed eager to back the growth in "crime control stocks" with such companies as Merrill Lynch, Prudential Securities, Smith Barney Shearson and Goldman Sachs among the leaders in support of privatization (Brayson, 1996: 34).

Among the more recent developments in the prison industry has been the entrance of long-distance phone companies. Such industry giants as AT&T, Bell South and MCI have found prisons to be an excellent market for long distance business. Indeed, this makes sense because inmates all over the country spend countless hours on the telephone talking with relatives. Of course this requires a collect call, which brings these companies into prison for the huge profits to be made. AT&T has an ad that reads: "HOW HE GOT IN IS YOUR BUSINESS. HOW HE GETS OUT IS OURS." MCI, not wanting to miss out, went so far as installing, for free, pay phones throughout the California prison system. They levy a \$3 surcharge for each phone call made, the cost of which is paid for by the inmate's relative. MCI offered the California Department of Corrections 32 percent of the profits! (Schlosser, 1998: 63).

Where it will end is anyone's guess. The National Criminal Justice Commission estimated that if recent trends persist, then by the year 2020 about two-thirds of all African-Americans males between 18 and 34 will be behind bars! (Donziger, 1996: 107) Prison populations have been increasing from between 5% and 7% each year. Figuring an average annual increase of 6%, by 2005 there will be about 2.7 million inmates; by 2010 the number will be about 3.6 million; and by 2020 there will be around 6.5 million behind bars! At least as many will be on probation or on parole, bringing the total to well over 10 million!

Shelden is the author of *Controlling the Dangerous Classes: A Critical Introduction to the History of Criminal Justice* (Allyn and Bacon, forthcoming). He is currently conducting research for a book called *Cashing in on Crime: The Crime Control Industry in America*.

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#### NOTES

1. M. Mackel, "20th Century Slave Ships: Race and Racism in the 90s." Lecture at Wheelock College, Boston, MA, June 21, 1997, recorded by Roger Leisner of Radio Free Maine.
2. Space does not permit a full review of all the possible explanations for the rise in imprisonment. For a review of some com-

# Where it will end is anyone's guess

mon explanations, see Tonry, 1999.

3. Examples include Hopeman Correctional Systems, Bevels Correctional Food Service Equipment, and Szabo Correctional Services. Two specific firms that have greatly profited from the growth of prisons and jails, are Adtech Incorporated (specializing in electronic locking devices and security doors) and Space Master Enterprises (specializing in modular buildings used for minimum security facilities). In 1989, Adtech had revenues of \$21.6 million, a 110 percent increase from 1987. Space Master's revenues increased by a whopping 500 percent from 1982 to 1987! (Lilly and Knepper, 1993: 152 and 155.)
4. Information taken from the 1995 stockholders report of Corrections Corporation of America.
5. Space does not permit inclusion of still another aspect of the "prison industrial complex," namely, the use of inmate labor, which is widespread and takes us back to the days of "convict leasing" in the 19th century. For an excellent overview of inmate labor, written from inmates themselves, see Burton-Rose (1998). At one point in this book an ad by the state of Wisconsin asks businesses "in need of a willing and productive workforce" to consider that state's "prison inmate work program. The ad's heading reads, in large bold letters, "Can't Find Workers? A Willing Workforce Waits." Numerous other examples are found throughout this book.)

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# Critical Criminology's Discontent: The Perils Of Publishing And The Call To Action

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It is not easy to publish in peer-reviewed journals. It is particularly difficult for critical scholars who often, through their research, challenge existing political, economic, and social structural dynamics, or otherwise resist prevailing sensibilities about law, crime, and justice. Part of our struggle is with dominant ideologies and how they are sustained through various means of communication. All too often I have, with my colleagues at the annual ASC, ACJS, and LSA meetings, exchanged war stories about academic publishing, assessed the psychology of revise and resubmit editorial decisions, and lamented the failure of members of the Division on Critical Criminology of the American Society of Criminology to assume, on a sustained basis, their rightful status among the legions of mainstream criminologists whose work routinely appears in high profile (read prestigious) periodicals. In the past, when rejections of this sort have occurred for me, I have been reduced to mumbling my indignation, summed up in the trite but all so apt saying: "Too bad, so sad, oh well." Back of the bus I go with my tail between my legs. So much for critical criminological discontent.

I now realize how inadequate my position has been. Moreover, I recognize how I have, unwittingly, allowed the forces of conventional criminology to dictate my behavior. This has been a personal and professional mistake, but one, I think, that can be rectified. If critical criminology amounts to anything, it seriously and persistently debunks victimizing, alienating, and oppressive practices, while, simultaneously, championing the cause of justice, fairness, and equality. This certainly should extend to the "journal-industrial complex." During the past several months, I have discussed with a number of critical criminological scholars, the problem of academic publishing in the leading periodicals of our profession. While I was not surprised to learn that rejection in these quarterlies is a routine occurrence for far too many (notable) colleagues, I was surprised to discover that our Division has not, thus far, addressed the issue in any systematic, organized fashion. This climate of passivity and non-responsiveness must change.

Recently, Dragan Milovanovic, Stuart Henry, and I reviewed this matter over a series of enthusiastic and spirited e-mail discussions. Although many ideas and strategies were proposed, one observation was made abundantly clear: the Division needs to assess the "suppressor effect" operating within and throughout the Academy, particularly when critical scholarship is repeatedly denied recognition and, thus, legitimacy in the leading periodicals of our discipline. This is the presence of hegemony in the Academy. What counts as "serious" scholarship and, hence, what is actively engaged in by critical criminologists is, all too often, circumscribed by the "chilling effect" found in the seemingly systematic exclusionary practices enacted and sustained by the more prestigious periodicals of our field. This exclusion must

be confronted and it must be addressed on our own terms in a responsible manner. This essay, then, is designed to lay out the dilemma we confront, suggest several avenues for resolution, and invite the Division membership to support the cause that awaits our deliberate and thoughtful attention.

## *Academic Imperialism or Questionable Scholarship?*

If your personal (and/or academic department's) budget is similar to mine, you subscribe to any number of professional journals and, as time permits, read the latest developments pertaining to your own instructional and/or research interests. Regrettably, it is painfully apparent how infrequently critically-inspired scholarship appears in the discipline's highly respected periodicals. How can we account for this? Where is critical race theory analysis? Where are the Marxist-informed commentaries? Where is border criminology and dialogical pedagogy? Where are the intersectional commentaries on race, gender, class, and crime? Where is left realism, anarchist praxis, prophetic criticism, peacemaking criminology, and the like? Where is the postmodern feminist jurisprudential critique? Where are the psychoanalytic and semiotic contributions? Indeed, how are we to interpret the absence of these divergent, though critical, strains of thought in the journals that, presumably, embrace all approaches to the knowledge process? Yes, articles along these and similar lines of inquiry do, on occasion, appear in high profile journals. But what is their frequency and how does it compare with the rate at which non-critically inspired scholarship is published?

*Criminology, Law and Society Review, Journal of Research on Crime and Delinquency*, and several other notable periodicals representing our profession, include detailed and/or clear statements about their openness to *all* types of scholarship, regardless of orientation. However, a cursory assessment of any one of these quarterlies reveals that the rate at which critical scholarship is published is far less frequent than its non-critical counterpart. This fact raises a number of important and provocative questions for us all. The essential concern, though, is as follows: can it be that what we write about is considerably less meritorious or substantially less well-crafted than our non-critical colleagues? Indeed, are more mainstream types of articles or forms of critical analysis that much more compelling in prose and substantively more enlightening? Or, is the problem one of academic imperialism? Relatedly, is the answer to this latter question, in part, linked to the frequency with which critical versus non-critical articles are submitted to mainstream journals? Or, can a compelling *prima facie* case be made for the suppressor effect based on a content analysis of what has been published in any one of several leading and mainstream criminological journals during the past 5-10 years? Is the playing field therefor depleted of otherwise possible important contributions because of the chilling effect, the suppressor effect? Do critical criminological scholars eventually give up sending material and, consequently, inadvertently engage in self-marginalization, producing a ghettoization

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of the discipline? As a result, isn't the intense, sustained engagement needed among the various critical perspectives greatly circumscribed, and thus, the movement to a better, more human, society that much more limited? Perusal of several mainstream journals (*L&SR*, *Criminology*, etc.) suggests that a *prima facie* case could be made for exclusionary practices of a broad range of critical scholarship. Of course, *prima facie* evidence is in need of further statistical support to significantly reach this conclusion. We owe it to ourselves (and to the criminological community), then, to inspect this very profound issue by collecting and assessing the available and appropriate data.

### **Toward a Strategy of Engagement**

Ultimately, what we want is information, engagement, and openness to a diversity of critical scholarship. Information should tell us about what we do as a Division composed of researchers/scholars within the Academy, practitioners of social justice, entering Ph.D. students, and other activists. The data we collect, however, is merely a tool in the service of a larger agenda. My sense is that we will find out just how infrequently critical criminologists publish in the prestigious journals of our profession. Clearly, there will be many explanations for this result and *The Critical Criminologist* is one forum to debate these accounts. But academic exegeses should not be the end of our inquiry. What we need to do is create a space within which to engage the Editors and the Editorial Board members of the mainstream journals we evaluate. I believe that if we create "us vs. them" dichotomies we undermine our goal of collegiality. Thus, the larger agenda is one of dialogue and engagement in the name of change. We want *Criminology*, *Law and Society Review*, the *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, etc., to tell us, if at all, why our analysis is flawed or inaccurate. Moreover, if the findings we arrive at are accurate, we want to invite the Editors of these periodicals to rectify the situation *with us!* We seek greater sensitivity to broad, critical scholarship of all persuasions. If there is hyperbole or avoidance, and I truly hope that this will not occur, we must firmly but supportively insist on a more genuine application of their stated philosophical principles regarding articles accepted for review and publication. Indeed, we must appeal to our colleagues' commitment to intellectual integrity and criminological *verstehen*.

In my discussions with Dragan and Stuart, several strategies were considered. The clear indication from our informal working group was that the Division membership needs to express their points of view on the general issue I outlined before we proceed much further. This observation notwithstanding, several suggestions for engagement were offered. In what follows, I briefly summarize a number of these recommendations. Collectively,

they represent a much needed call for further research initiated by scholars/practitioners/activists committed to this important and timely cause. The recommendations include, in no particular order, the following:

1. Discuss the general issue in greater detail at the ASC Critical Criminology Division meetings for further review, consideration, and recommendations.

2. Conduct a content analysis of several leading mainstream journals (during the past

10 years), and assess the rate at which "critical" versus "non-critical" articles are published. The principal researcher for this study could be: (a) an appointed/elected Division member; (b) a highly regarded critical criminologist; (c) the Division Chair; (d) an independent third party not affiliated with the Division; or (e) a collective composed equally of several Division members and several Editorial members of various mainstream journals representing our profession (*Note*: The intent here is not necessarily to establish consensus; rather, the intent is to ensure that majority and minority views are expressed).

3. Depending on the results of this content analysis, encourage critical scholars to submit to mainstream journals and report back the Division leadership and/or to those who engaged in the initial content analysis for possible follow-up.

4. Petition the various Editors of several notable criminal justice, law and society, and criminological periodicals for information about their review processes, requesting details on any internal evaluation procedures, publication practices, and/or submission/reviewer trends.

5. After substantive discussions within the Division, with, perhaps, inclusion of the content analysis findings, draft a formal

**W**here is critical race theory analysis? Where are the Marxist-informed commentaries? Where is border criminology and dialogical pedagogy? Where are the intersectional commentaries on race, gender, class, and crime? Where is left realism, anarchist praxis, prophetic criticism, peacemaking criminology, and the like? Where is the postmodern feminist jurisprudential critique? Where are the psychoanalytic and semiotic contributions?

document signed by the Division leadership and send it to the Editors of those journals that are subject to our content analysis inquiry. The document should draw attention to the questionable editorial and reviewer practices that culminate in a limited range of critical scholarship being published. Further, our content analysis results should be attached to the memo as an Appendix for perusal by the Editors-in-Chief or Editorial Board members. Finally, the document should make clear that the Division welcomes comments from those Editors who receive the memo, particularly in regard to the research conclusions reached by the Division on Critical Criminology.

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6. Develop a Panel (or series of Panels) for the ACJS meetings in March, 2000, exploring the perils and pitfalls of publishing in prominent mainstream journals as a critical criminologist. In addition, develop a strategic action plan to rectify this dilemma.

7. Publish, or attempt to publish, the results of our initial content analysis in *The Criminologist*, the *Law and Society Newsletter*, the *Journal of Criminal Justice Education*, or a related periodical.

8. Consult with the Division of People of Color and the Division of Women and Crime and assess with them whether the marginalization of non-mainstream discourses has been addressed, in any capacity, by their respective Division members. Moreover, build a coalition base, inclusive of these Divisions, and develop a strategy for engaging the Editors and Editorial Boards of *Law and Society Review*, *Criminology*, and similar high profile periodicals within the Academy.

9. Request that each Journal considered include a broader range of critical scholars on their various Editorial Boards and as a part of their manuscript reviewer pool.

#### **A Call to Action**

There are certainly additional strategies for engagement. I welcome thoughts on these strategies in *The Critical Criminologist*, the Division website, and at the Division on Critical Criminology business meeting at the upcoming ASC conference in Toronto. Our initial task, however, is to move the constructive dialogue on these matters beyond the private, safe, and supportive confines of the Internet, the coffee houses of our college communities, or the restaurant bars hosting the ASC, ACJS, or L&SA annual meetings. I realize that it is no longer acceptable to tacitly endorse the hegemony we confront in the Academy and that unwittingly governs our respective research decision making practices. We need to move beyond the publication sympathy and support extended to us by critically-inspired periodicals. We need a strategic vision for engaging our non-critical colleagues; one that changes the culture of academic publishing where diversity of intellectual perspectives is genuinely celebrated rather than privately dismissed. We must confront these realities in a planful, humane, and intelligent fashion. Indeed, we have a responsibility to the future generation of bright, enthusiastic, and creative critical criminologists whose scholarly pursuits rest, in a very meaningful way, upon the shoulders of our individual and collective action.

The back of the bus was never a place of comfort or contentment. We need to own this poignant sentiment and, much like Rosa Parks, deliberately embrace our responsibility to repudiate our marginalized status in the Academy. The theme of this essay can be the first step toward much needed transformation within and throughout the Division. We must rectify our felt sense of victimization as a community of talented and compassionate scholars. We must channel our critical criminological discontent into productive social activism. This is the challenge that awaits us all.

#### **Endnotes**

1. A good part of the inspiration for this essay developed as a consequence of a recent "rejection" from a co-authored article I submitted to *Law & Society Review* with Dragan Milovanovic and Rob Schehr. Of course, we have all had our share of rejected manuscripts. Moreover, at times, some of us have even been on the side of the Editor, rejecting a colleague's manuscript whose contents were found not suitable for publication. However, my engagement with *L&SR* perhaps epitomizes the experience others of us have had with "prestigious" mainstream journals. The latest rejection did initiate some very pointed reflection about the nature of publishing in the leading periodicals of our profession. In this particular instance with *L&SR*, one reviewer dismissed the piece and the other referee suggested a revise and resubmit. The Editor, without more substantive comments, simply sent a rejection letter. Unfortunately, this was not the first time that my co-authors and I (as well as others in our Division) have not had a good experience with the reviews offered by *Law & Society Review*; indeed, in the past there have been some very irrelevant and even "nasty" observations made about our respective critical sociolegal analyses by the journal's referees. With the recent submission to *L&SR*, my co-authors and I spent some considerable time in advance discussing the prospects of a rejection from this periodical, given its historically restrictive approach to publishing critical scholarship. We agreed, however, that our concerns should be put aside. We felt that the article represented an opportunity for engaging the readership of the journal, and hoped that it would be reviewed in that spirit. Regrettably, it was not. I have heard many, many similar stories from a wide range of critical scholars who attempt to publish in the leading journals of our profession.

2. One important dimension to assessing the rate at which any version of criminological or sociolegal scholarship is published in our profession's leading periodicals is to consider the rate at which a given type of research is submitted to a particular prestigious journal for review. Thus, for example, the rate at which critical criminological scholarship is published must, to some significant extent, be evaluated based on the frequency with which it is submitted to *Criminology*, *Law & Society Review*, etc. As I subsequently intimate, however, this does not mean that the "playing field" is entirely level for critical criminologists when attempting to publish in the mainstream and leading quarterlies of our discipline.

3. The "back of the bus" reference is a metaphor about oppression. While the academic marginalization described in this article is qualitatively different than apartheid, economic and social inequality, and the denial of basic human rights, the effect is the same: the exercise of power (e.g., symbolic, psychological, physical, political) that results in felt harm.

4. One could fairly question whether critical criminological scholarship-- or any type of criminology for that matter-- effectively makes a difference in the lives of people. The central issue is whether what we do transforms the political, economic, cultural, psychological, legal, and social conditions in which people find themselves. I would argue that critical criminology, more than any other variant of the discipline, attempts to bring this

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concern for social justice right into center stage. Indeed, I hope this article, as a statement of transpraxis, moves the Division and its membership to a state of action so that each of us may experience greater inclusiveness and receptiveness in the Academy to which we maintain (some) allegiance.

5. Stuart's involvement was initiated following the rejection of my co-authored article from *Law and Society Review*. We turned to Stuart particularly because of his status as a member of the journal's Editorial Board.

6. To be clear at the outset, the combined involvement of Dragan's, Stuart's, and my own (co)editorship of journals and/or newsletters is eight. The point is that each of us, in our own way, has been quite sensitive to and invested in the process of academic publishing. Our e-mail discussions and the comments that follow are based on our collective histories as Editors and our desire to offer some insight into the publishing process for up-and-coming critical scholars.



7. One notable exception to the mainstream trend appears to be *Justice Quarterly*. Over the last dozen years or so critical scholarship has appeared with more frequency within the pages of this journal and, I would add, these contributions, along with the inclusion of more non-critically oriented articles, have exposed the *JQ* readership to a wider range of perspectives from which to appreciate issues in law, crime, and justice. Its counterpart, *Criminology*, has not compared favorably.

8. The Editorial Policy statement for *Law & Society Review* reads as follows:

The *Law & Society Review* is a peer-reviewed publication for work bearing on the relationship between society and the legal process, including articles or notes of interest to the research community in general, new theoretical developments, results of empirical studies, and comments on the field or its methods of inquiry. The Review is *broadly interdisciplinary* and welcomes work from *any tradition* or scholarship concerned with the cultural, economic, political, psychological, or social aspects of law and legal systems (emphasis added).

The Editorial Policy statement for *Criminology* reads as follows:

The journal is *interdisciplinary*, devoted to the study of crime, deviant behavior, and related phenomena, as found in the social and behavior sciences and in the fields of law, criminal

justice, and history. The major emphases are theory, research, historical issues, policy evaluation, and current controversies concerning crime, law, and justice (emphasis added).

Notwithstanding these Editorial Policies, the issue is whether they (and others that are similar) maintain fidelity to their respective philosophical claims. I note further that there are periodicals (e.g., *Humanity & Society*) that expressly welcome "critical and humanistic" scholarship. And, consistent with this Editorial Policy, the articles that appear in *H&S* are only critical and/or humanistic. Again, however, the question is whether the profession's leading periodicals adhere or fail to adhere to their "broad" and/or "interdisciplinary" Editorial Policy declarations.

9. As I mentioned in note 2 and elsewhere in previous passages, a content analysis of the sort described is just the beginning. A more detailed statistical analysis must necessarily assess the rate at which critical scholarship is submitted to prestigious journals as an important control variable for the rate at which they are published. Here, too, though one must carefully consider whether this relationship is much like the chicken and egg debate. In other words, even if we assume that critical criminological scholarship has a lower rate of submission than its non-critical counterpart, this fact does not, in itself, explain why so few critically-inspired articles are published in *Criminology*, *Law & Society Review*, etc. It could be the explanation; however, it could also be the effect. Indeed, if researchers do not see their critical criminological frames of analyses published in the leading journals of our profession they may elect not to submit material to these periodicals for review. This "chicken and egg" matter requires thoughtful and thorough consideration.

*Editors' Note: This article was posted to the Critical Criminology Homepage, <http://sun.soci.niu.edu/~critcrim/>*

*It caused an interesting exchange on the listserv that we will include in the next issue (directions on subscribing to the listserv are available through the homepage). Interested readers should also see Joe Feagin's "Soul Searching in Sociology: Is the Discipline in Crisis?" that appeared in the Chronicle of Higher Education 15 October 1999, B4.*

# Conspiracy, Deception and Misinformation: Standard Operating Procedure on the Environmental Front

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and

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*Information is power. No one understands this truism better than chemical manufacturers* (Fagin and Lavelle, 1996).

In 1962, Rachel Carson published her famous book, *Silent Spring*, widely regarded as the catalyst for the U.S. environmental movement. One of Carson's main concerns was to point out that the U.S. government played an active role in suppressing the increasing amount of evidence linking between environmentally destructive practices -- and especially our increasing reliance on toxic chemicals as a "way to a better world" -- and the rise in the incidence of cancer in the U.S. population over time. As scientist in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, Carson also had experience dealing with corporations and businesses, and was adamant about the role corporations played in shaping public policy and governmental interpretations of scientific data (Steingraber, 1998). In essence, Carson argued that corporations used their power to influence the government to create a conspiracy of silence. This conspiracy remains intact today.

A major part of the conspiracy of silence involves the use of public relations campaigns designed by public relations firms. As C. Wright Mills (1956:310) argued over 40 years ago, this form of "opinion making [has become] an accepted technique of power-holding and power-getting." Opinion-making strategies employed by PR firms on behalf of corporations involve the manipulation of information and its transformation into misinformation, and the use of mass media as a forum. To secure access to mass-media, PR firms have established mechanisms that have successfully "infiltrated" the mass media. Consequently, the media is "among the most important of those increased means of power now at the disposal of elites of wealth and power; moreover, some of the higher agents of the media are themselves among the elites or very important among their servants" (Mills, 1956:315).

This article reviews some of the evidence that speaks to the continued importance of the chemical conspiracy in the U.S. today. Specifically, we examine the role deception, manipulation of data, and misinformation provided by "corporate science" plays in undermining efforts to promote a healthy environment, or what we more broadly classify as environmental justice. In recent years, several excellent books have exposed these practices. Among them is: Fagin and Lavelle's (1996) *Toxic Deception*; Josha Karliner's (1997) *Corporate Planet*; Stauber and Rampton's (1995), *Toxic Sludge is Good for You*; Paul and Anne

Ehrlich's (1996) *Betrayal of Science and Reason*, Sandra Steingraber's (1998), *Living Downstream*, and Theo Colborn, Dianne Dumanoski, and John Peterson Myer's *Our Stolen Future*. In addition to reviewing some of the evidence presented in these works, we also detail current efforts to censor sensitive environmental information that has become widely available through an expanding media of information exchange: the Internet.

## "TOXIC SLUDGE IS GOOD FOR YOU" AND OTHER DECEPTIONS

Stauber and Rampton's book, *Toxic Sludge is Good for You*, examines the role the public relations industry now plays in controlling the information the public receives on a wide variety of issue. The essence of the argument is that the public does not receive information that represents both sides of a story, especially from the media. The media, in other words, is not a neutral and objective source of information. Rather, many stories the media presents the public *are first presented to them* by public relations firms -- already written or prepackaged in audio and video formats to increase the probability that this material will be "aired" -- hired to promote industry's interests. As Mark Dowie notes in the introduction to *Toxic Sludge is Good for You*, the 150,000 public relations "practitioners" now outnumber the approximately 130,000 news reporters employed in the U.S.. In effect, the number of people seeking the "truth" behind a story has been outnumbered by those hired to put a "positive twist" on otherwise disturbing news.

As Stauber and Rampton demonstrate, the PR industry is not only an ally of the corporations, but of the government as well. In both roles, PR firms help shape images of U.S. corporations. Like corporations, governmental agencies also employ PR firms to soften negative news and shape public opinion. And like corporations, the government also uses the PR industry to provide misinformation that shapes public consciousness with respect to issues that might have a detrimental impact on the corporate world. A clear example of this use of PR firms is found in Stauber and Rampton's analysis of the government's "monitoring" and "disposal" of toxic sludge.

The history of modern human social organization, especially since the rise of the city, is closely connected to the history of sludge. Before humans were concentrated into urban tracts of land, the waste they produced was not only less noxious, but more easy to dispose. Before human populations were concentrated in cities, human waste or excrement, for example, was used turned into fertilizer by composting methods (Stauber and Rampton, 1995:101-102). Urbanization created an impediment to this form of waste disposal, and presented the problem of how to dispose of the large mass of human excrement that was geographically concentrated in cities. The solution that presented itself was simple and not necessarily farsighted: sewers and waste water systems that dumped these human wastes into streams, rivers, lakes and oceans. In the long run, this solution was bad enough,

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but was also exacerbated by additional conditions.

Later in human history, more rapid urbanization was accompanied by industrialization. Industries that were (and are) concentrated in cities produce an enormous amount of waste, much of which is toxic. The public sewer system designed to dispose of human waste became a cheap method for disposing of these industrial waste. Industries hooked themselves into the public sewer system, and added their toxic outputs into the streams, rivers, lakes and oceans. Thus, rather than have to solve the problem of reducing waste, or find other options to dispose of their waste products, industry was presented with a readily available option for waste disposal that has become a modern nightmare.

By the 1950s and 1960s, some waterways in the U.S. were so polluted with toxic corporate wastes and other hazardous materials that life forms died. Some rivers that experienced extensive chemical pollution even caught on fire. Human health suffered too, as water became too polluted to consume, and hot spots of disease began to emerge (Carson, 1962). A new solution to the problem of waste disposal had to be invented. That solution was found in the sewage treatment plant. Again, rather than address the nature of how we produce, or the wisdom of producing things in specific ways, and how these productive practices related to human and environmental health, the easier path was taken. That solution was to reduce the waste that was already produced by "shrinking it down" and "making it less toxic."

Sewage or water treatment facilities operate on the following principle: wastewater, which contains chemicals and other wastes products that negatively impact the environment when dumped into our waterways, can be cleaned. This cleaning process has been the subject of much scientific study. In a nutshell, the process involves the removal of waste sediment from used water, the separation of the used water into sediment (sludge) and used water, the cleaning of used water through the use of bacterial treatments (biodegradation) and chlorination, and the condensing of left-over semi-solids (sludge) through evaporation. While the wisdom of bacterial and chlorination treatments themselves could be challenged (these processes themselves are dangerous and present risks of what the EPA labels "accidental chemical releases" which have killed and injured U.S. citizens), our concern here is on the sludge produced through evaporation.

What can be done with this sludge, which is a toxic cocktail of chemicals and human waste? First, the sludge requires treatment to "neutralize" its contents. Of course, many of the contents of the sludge cannot be neutralized, particularly the toxic components like heavy metals, radio-active contamination, pesticides, and other chemicals too numerous to mention that have been linked to human cancers. In fact, it is estimated that approximately 60,000 toxic substances can be found the typical sludge by-products produced by a water treatment facility (Stauber and Rampton, 1995:104). In addition, the more success-

ful water treatment has become -- the better water treatments are at removing toxic contaminants from waste water -- the more toxic the resulting sludge by-product has become.

The sludge which remains at the end of the water treatment process, about 14 percent of the input, amounts to about 28 million pounds annually in the U.S. (Stauber and Rampton, 1995: 105). The acceptable (legal) means of dealing with this waste is through incineration (which creates another part of the story which cannot be addressed here -- dioxin, see, Gibbs, 1995), or is dumped into landfills and the ocean. In recent years, these practices have become problematic. First, we are running out of room for these kinds of dumps. Second, sludge landfills create the additional problem of groundwater contamination through seepage. Third, ocean dumping has devastated ocean life, creating gigantic "dead zones" in the oceans of the world. Once again, rather than create policies that would reduce waste in the production process, the government identified an alternative method for dealing with sludge: spread the sludge on farms. There was only one big hurdle here: convincing farmers to use sludge as fertilizer. Who would be willing to take toxic sludge and use it as fertilizer, and face the problems of contamination that accompanied this form of waste disposal? How could farmers and other citizens be convinced that the use of toxic sludge as fertilizer was ok? This is where PR firms entered the picture.

Once considered a threat to human health and *opposed* by the Environmental Protection Agency -- the governmental arm charged with overseeing the disposal of sludge -- the use of toxic sludge as fertilizer is now in full swing in the U.S., *supported* by EPA policy (Stauber and Rampton, 1995:105). How was this accomplished? The EPA knew that it would have to change the image of sludge. To do so, the EPA hired the *Water Environmental Federation* (WEF; they received a \$300,000 "grant"), "the sewage industry's main trade, lobby and public relations organi-

**T**his widespread conspiracy -- and it can be called little else -- that involves manipulation and deception is not out of the ordinary in the chemical industry, and can be seen across a variety of industries

zation" (Stauber and Rampton, 1995:105) to promote a "cleaner image" for sludge that would make sludge more acceptable and make farm land application of sludge a feasible disposal option. The task of creating a "cleaner image" for sludge turned out to be a simple form of manipulation and deceit: a change of name for sludge. A Seattle-based sludge producer, for example, held a contest to rename sludge. Meanwhile, WEF organized a "beneficial use" campaign that promoted the advantages of sludge as fertilizer.

The whole story is complex and beyond our ability to review in a short article. This story, however, involves intercon-

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nections between sludge researchers, sludge producers, and advocates and practitioners of "sludge farming" (Stauber and Rampton, 1995: 109-122). It is sufficient to note that former EPA regulators once opposed to sludge farming have been hired by industry to promote the benefits of sludge farming. The conspiracy between these groups is further evident in the composition of the EPA's *Peer Review Committee* assigned the task of *restricting the use of toxic sludge*. Several members of this Committee are also paid consultants to corporations that use processes that turn sludge into fertilizer (Stauber and Rampton, 1995: 109-111). This widespread conspiracy -- and it can be called little else -- that involves manipulation and deception is not out of the ordinary in the chemical industry, and can be seen across a variety of industries (Fagin and Lavelle, 1996; see also, Karliner, 1997).

#### ENSNARED IN THE WORLD WIDE WEB: OR, THE WEB OF INJUSTICE

In 1984 a deadly gas leak at a Union Carbide plant in Bhopal, India, killed more than 2,500 people and injured over 200,000 others (Lynch, Nalla and Miller, 1989). This incident and public pressure prompted U.S. lawmakers to push for legislation that requiring corporations to publicly disclose information they possessed concerning risks of chemical accidents (Fagin and Lavelle, 1996). The result was the 1987 *Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act* (SARA) of 1986 (a.k.a, SARA Title III). The purpose of the *Community Right-to-Know Act* is to improve community access to information concerning chemical hazards present in their local areas, and to help state and local governments develop a plan of action to respond to chemical accidents and releases. (Most communities in the U.S. lack hazardous waste response plans, even those with high concentrations of companies that use hazardous chemical production processes; Millar, 1994). Building on the *Community Right-to-Know Act*, section 112(r) of the *Clean Air Act* (1990) requires the EPA to establish regulations to prevent accidental chemical releases, and establish standards that reduces the severity of the releases that occur. The EPA published these risk management rules in 1996. Under these rules, an estimated 66,000 chemical facilities must prepare a *Risk Management Plan* (RMP) that is submitted to the EPA electronically through *RMP\*Submit*. Under the *Community Right-to-Know Act*, the EPA was supposed to make all *RMP\*Submit* data accessible to the public. The RMP includes information concerning accident history prevention and emergency response data. The RMP also includes an "off-site consequence analysis" (OCA) reported by each facility that details the potential area and number of people impacted by a "worst case scenario" chemical accident, should it occur.

The OCA has become the subject of much controversy. Since the inception of EPA OCA regulations, U.S. corporations have lobbied to have this information restricted from full public access requirements specified in the regulation. A brief history of this effort is found below.

From 1987 through 1998, the majority (80%) of reported U.S. chemical accidents have occurred at industrial and commercial facilities, and caused nearly 4,000 deaths, 25,000 injuries,

and the evacuation of 147,000 individuals (Internet Posting of Chemical Worst Case Scenarios, 1999). While the release of the OCA data would allow the public to assess their future potential risk of becoming the victims of one of these accidents, the chemical industry has systematically reduced the public's access to the OCA data (for further discussion of accidental chemical releases, see, Stretesky and Lynch, 1999a). The chemical industry began its efforts to limit public access to OCA data in 1996, immediately following the EPA announcement of this new regulation.

In 1996, the EPA created the *Accident Prevention Subcommittee* (Subcommittee) to the *Clean Air Act Advisory Committee* to provide the *Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office* with advice concerning various policy issues surrounding RMP data. In September of 1996, the Subcommittee met and discussed the release of RMP data over the Internet. At that meeting, Art Burk, an EPA appointed member of the Subcommittee and an *employee of DuPont chemical company*, stated that his interest in RMP was largely in line with the interests of DuPont and the Chemical Manufacturers Association (Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office, 1996, September 24). He urged that the committee consider "varying visions of model RMP" (i.e, something other than what EPA had proposed). Burk also "expressed his concern that an RMP database available over the Internet will allow widespread and unlimited access to worst-case scenario data" that could be employed by terrorist groups to consider chemical facilities as potential targets (Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office, 1996, September 24:6).

The questions posed in the first meeting of the *Accident Prevention Subcommittee* were addressed at the end of 1996, when Burk clearly re-articulated the industry's position: "a problem arises when those outside of the ecological footprint have unrestricted access to RMP data, particularly worst-case release data" (Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office, 1996, December 11:2). In that meeting Burk linked the release of RMP data to potential terrorist activities, stating that "while professional terrorists will not be inconvenienced by restricted access to worst-case release data, the EPA should avoid facilitating the efforts of armature terrorists whenever possible" (Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office, 1996, December 11:2). Several suggestions resulted from this meeting. First, Burke asked that the committee recommend that there be a "gatekeeper" responsible for disseminating all RMP data. He also urged that RMP data not be made available over the Internet. Other suggestions ranged from "giving the facilities the option to disseminate the RMP data themselves" to using a "system where users must make a showing that they will use data for appropriate purposes before they can access the data?" (Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office, 1996, December 11:4). It was also determined at the December meeting that the Department of Defense would be consulted to determine if RMP data would "stimulate terrorist activities" (Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office, 1996, December 11:4).

The Department of Defense's report on RMP data was released in 1997. That report concluded that the risk of terrorism due to the release of RMP data was small to nonexistent. This report, however, drew heavy criticism from the chemical industry. In a letter of dissent written to the EPA, Burk claimed

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that while the "baseline risk [from terrorist attack] is still very small, the consequences are potentially catastrophic. . . .The Chemical Manufacturers Association cannot in clear conscience accept an option which significantly increases the risk from terrorist attack" (Burk, 1998:2). Several e-mail comments (which are now classified as anonymous) were released in a Committee attachment (Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office, 1997, May 9:10-14). A portion of these comments, which reveal the antagonism between the chemical industry and those individuals interested in public safety, are reprinted below:

*Emergency Response Manager:*

"The fact that industry does not object to posting either emergency response or prevention information (which would also be useful for terrorists), suggests that unfortunately, the objection to release data is not terrorism but PR."

*Academic Researcher:* "The major purpose of the regulation could be undermined if access to the data required under the law were restricted. Moreover, I find the argument about potential terrorism to be spurious."

*Emergency Manager:* "The terrorist/criminal is not the main threat here. I would worry more about environmentalist groups, media representatives and politicians using the data (for their own personal agendas) to attack certain industries and businesses rather than about possible misuse of the data by terrorists/criminals. Unfortunately, the law does not consider this a threat.

Maybe we should and make sure no environmentalist groups, media representatives or politicians have access to the OCAs?"

*Industry Representative:* "A single large scale terrorist attack that kills or injures several hundred or thousands members of the public as a result of the RMP data release will probably mean the end of the RMP program if not the EPA.

*Industry Representative:* EPA has been trying to blow this off as a non-issue, hiding behind the skirt of the public's "right to know.? If you have been listening, you will know that the industrial community has very real concerns here. Perhaps it would be appropriate for EPA to join with industry and meet with Congress to present their argument for limiting access to certain, potentially harmful information."

The sentiments of the chemical industry were echoed as far away as Australia, where, in September of 1998 the vice-president of the Chamber of Commerce, William Kovacs, gave a speech to the *Plastics and Chemicals Industries Association*. In that speech he is reported as stating that "use of the Internet by environmentalists and greater amounts of public disclosure law will create fear and allow sabotage of industries . . . . When the tide changes against industry, industrialized nations will act

like countries dominated by religious fundamentalists" (Internet a Threat, 1998).

Finally, in 1999, after a split recommendation from the Subcommittee, Jim Makris, Director for the Chemical Emergency Preparedness and Prevention Office e-mailed the Subcommittee stating "although most of the RMP data would be released on the Internet, the off-site consequence analysis (OCA) data will not be posted" (Makris, 1998).



The BMP rule and the public's right to know was again weakened when six companies sued the EPA to prevent their facilities from reporting under the RMP. The result of this suit is that approximately 40% of facilities previously covered under the RMP are no longer required to report (Internet Posting of Chemical Worst Case Scenarios, 1999). This means that 36,000 (rather than the original 66,000) facilities will now report under the RMP rule.

More recently (May, 1999) Thomas Bliley Jr., a republican from Virginia, proposed House of Representatives Bill 1790 (1999). That bill will amend the Clean Air Act to ensure that "worst case scenarios" data are not distributed over the Internet (though requests for paper copies can be entertained). In addition, the bill proposes that any government official found guilty of distributing environmental OCA data to the public over the Internet can spend up to one year in jail.

#### CONCLUSION

*...most American men of affairs have learned well the rhetoric of public relations . . . . (Mills, 1956:5).*

Ordinary people, living out their ordinary existence are often touched by the negative consequences of actions undertaken by a power-elite seeking to maintain their privileged positions within society (Mills, 1956). These elite have learned to hide and protect their secrets and information about the hazards their actions produce from ordinary people. The lessons the elite have learned includes how to control and manipulate information, the availability of information, and public policy debates that center around this information. The elite has developed an elaborate mechanism for hiding information, and for the generation of misinformation and positive (corporate friendly) images. These mechanisms include the use of PR firms, the media, and corporate capture of governmental agencies that are supposed to represent the public's best interests. Working together, these groups have conspired to hide the crimes corporations commit on a daily basis from public scrutiny.

The information corporation, governments and PR firms hide from us is of vital importance to the movement seeking to ensure environmental justice for the citizens of the United States. There is, for example, a clear pattern to accidental chemical releases that have adverse consequences on lower class and minority communities (Stretesky and Lynch, 1999a, 1999b; on race and class proximity to hazardous waste sites, see, Stretesky and Hogan, 1998). Thus, efforts to hide information about these accidents is a form of class and race bias that also places these com-

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munities at a disadvantage with respect to the development of hazardous waste release emergency disaster response programs.

With respect to the issue of environmental justice, it is necessary for researchers interested in this topic to expose the conspiracy, deceit and manipulation that now invades discussions of toxic waste production and disposal in the U.S. We offer this article as an example of the kind of research that can be conducted on this issue, and suggest that others also take up the task of researching this widespread problem.

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#### POSITION AVAILABLE

The Department of Sociology, Social Services, Gerontology, and Anthropology invites applications for a tenure-track position for a new Criminal Justice major to begin Fall 2000, (pending approval). Quinnipiac College, soon to be Quinnipiac University, is a comprehensive institution with a strong emphasis on teaching, located in a bucolic setting with proximity to New Haven, New York, and Boston. The successful candidate must have a Ph.D. in sociology or Criminology by time of appointment and be able to teach courses in criminal justice/criminology, and sociology. Candidate must show evidence of professional and scholarly activity in this specialization and will be instrumental in developing the new program, including teaching undergraduate courses, developing relationships with regional agencies involved in criminal justice, and collaborating with College's Department of Legal Studies and Quinnipiac School of Law. Send letter of interest, C.V., three letters of reference, and other supporting documentation to: Lynne G. Hodgson, Ph.D./Chair, 275 Mt. Carmel Avenue/Hamden, CT 06518. To ensure full consideration, applications should be received by 2/1/2000. Salary is competitive and depends upon qualifications and expertise. For additional information regarding Quinnipiac College, please visit our website at [www.quinnipiac.edu](http://www.quinnipiac.edu). Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

# My Brother's Keeper?

## Youth fight the American Lockdown

Kevin Pranis  
Prison Moratorium Project

At the close of the Twentieth Century, young people in the United States are on the front lines of a deadly "war on crime" over which we have no control. Since 1970, the number of Americans behind bars has increased by more than 500% and is expected to reach 2,000,000 within the next two or three years. The bulk of the newly incarcerated are young people of color (age: 15-30) from urban neighborhoods who have been convicted of non-violent drug offenses.

In 1995, progressive student activists from the Democratic Socialists of America Youth Section sat down with former prisoners from the Harlem-based Community Justice Center to discuss the harmful impact of uncontrolled prison expansion on our youth, our communities and our public institutions. The participants identified the loss of public funds for education and social services, the exacerbation of racism, the erosion of civil liberties and the criminalization of youth as negative consequences of prison expansion. They also identified lack of information and lack of opportunities for involvement at a grassroots level as major barriers to the adoption of more compassionate and effective criminal justice policies.

The discussions led to the formation of the Prison Moratorium Project (PMP)—a youth-led grassroots organization dedicated to halting prison expansion, empowering youth and other constituencies affected by prison expansion, and advocating for a fair, effective and humane criminal justice system. Over the last four years, the PMP—which is staffed entirely by volunteers—has helped to train and educate youth. We struggle with students to preserve higher education funding, fight alongside labor unions to eliminate private prison corporations (first stop, Corrections Corporation of America and food service giant Sodexo Alliance/Sodexo-Mariott Services, CCA's biggest investor), and work with Hip Hop artists to educate youth through the forthcoming *No More Prisons* Hip Hop CD. But before describing PMP in greater detail and describing how people can become involved, I want to explain our analysis.

### OVER 2,000,000 SERVED

Michael Jacobson, a criminologist and former Commissioner of Corrections known to many members of the Critical Criminology Division, once told me that, for years, he used to believe prison expansion would soon reach natural limits of cost and absurdity. Indeed, for those who were arguing in 1975 against overincarceration, this has been a trying quarter-century. A clear lesson to be drawn from their experiences: no matter how costly or counterproductive our current policies, there is nothing inevitable about progressive criminal justice reform.

There are, however, reasons for cautious optimism. There are signs that, in the past three years, the nation has begun trying to come to grips with the size and scope of the prison crisis. The fact is that there is a qualitative difference between holding

400,000 people behind bars and holding 2,000,000 behind bars, and that difference is being felt in every corner of society. Hollywood has always been fascinated by prisons, but now the Department of Agriculture tracks them too; the Unitarians and Quakers have a long standing concern, but now they're being joined by the Catholic Church.

Nowhere is this growth of interest more apparent than in the news media. When I first began working on the Prison Moratorium Project, a good prison story would show up in the New York Times every few weeks. Now the stories come almost daily, in every newspaper and on every television network. In fact, the media is well ahead of the public at large, both in terms of the policy implications and the social implications, which add up to literally *thousands* of compelling news stories. This expanded, and largely sympathetic, media coverage of criminal justice issues helps us begin to overcome *one* of the barriers to progressive criminal justice reform—the general public's lack of information on criminal justice issues.

However, I would argue that the most formidable barrier to progressive reform is the absence of an organized, grassroots reform movement capable of holding elected officials, and others, accountable. After all, most elected officials already *know* what the experts have to say, because criminologists, blue-ribbon commissions and policy advocates have been saying it to them for twenty-five years. Most of them continue to vote as they do because the beneficiaries of prison expansion—from residents of economically devastated towns seeking jobs to investment bankers to correctional officers' unions to private prison operators—are well organized.

Those who are hurt by prison expansion—prisoners, their families, students, educators, taxpayers, and the public at large—are, by contrast, relatively unorganized and thus ignored or turned against one another. The elimination of Pell Grants for the handful of prisoners seeking college degrees is the perfect example: prison college programs were eliminated without relieving students and parents of the growing burden of college debt. All of this has made prison expansion a "no-lose" proposition for most politicians.

Fortunately, the past few years have seen an upswing in grassroots activism around criminal justice issues, led by prisoners and their families working through organizations like Families Against Mandatory Minimums (FAMM), Citizens United for the Rehabilitation of Errants (CURE) and The November Coalition. In a number of states, these groups have helped achieved modest but significant victories—like FAMM's successful fight against the most egregious of Michigan's sentencing laws—and there is clearly potential to accomplish much more.

In order for serious reform to take place, however, the movement must radically expand its base to include constituencies not traditionally associated with criminal justice reform. And it must involve youth, both because young people have a special stake in reform, and because their vitality and creativity

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are desperately needed for this uphill battle. Recently, there have been some promising efforts made to involve youth in criminal justice issues, including the work of the Berkeley-based Prison Activist Resource Center and the Critical Resistance conference convened last year by Angela Davis.

#### PRISON MORATORIUM PROJECT

Nevertheless, much more needs to be done, and alongside PARC, Critical Resistance and others, Prison Moratorium Project (PMP) has been doing it. While college campuses aren't the only place where we operate (PMP has also worked in high schools, Alternative To Incarceration programs, on the street), they are an important site of political struggle, and they offer valuable resources. Over the past four years, we have developed new tools and strategies designed to build links between prison and campus, and help students and educators become effective advocates for progressive criminal justice reform. Our programs, which are organized around peer-education and capacity-building, include:

Education Not Incarceration, which helps students at underfunded community colleges and state universities make the connection between ballooning corrections budgets and declining support for public higher education. Collaborating closely with Justice Policy Institute, which has produced innovative reports documenting a nationwide dollar-to-dollar shift from higher education to corrections, and the U.S. Student Association, which represents two million students at colleges and Universities across the country, we have helped to make criminal justice reform a "student issue." ENI has worked primarily with State Student Associations in New York and California, but we hope to expand that work to encompass faculty and staff—who have also expressed interest in the issue—as well as additional states—like Wisconsin—where prisons have been built on the backs of students. Efforts have included press conferences (one of which

brought together Congressman Charles Rangel, Angela Davis and former NYPD Commissioner Patrick Murphy), a weekend organizing training, and guerrilla theater actions in the State Capitol for a press conference linked to the release of a JPI report on higher ed and prison spending in New York.

No More Prisons, which uses Hip Hop music as a tool to reach both college students and youth from low-income urban communities of color who are often "at risk" of involvement in the criminal justice system. Begun in 1996, NMP has generated tremendous support from Hip Hop artists, producers and journalists, many of whom have donated time and talent to the production of the *No More Prisons* Hip Hop Compilation CD. NMP's first CD Single was released in September of 1998 at Critical Resistance. The full-length CD—which will feature 24 original tracks of prison music, poetry and performance recorded by the likes of Last Poets, Dead Prez, The Coup, Danny Hoch, and Cornel West—will be available in major record stores on October 31.

End Punishment For Profit, a new PMP-led campaign to publicize the role of private prison-for-profit in the expanding prison-industrial complex, and to hold the companies and their investors responsible. Two years of research on various aspects of the prison-industrial complex, including prison labor and prison contracting, led us to an unholy alliance between a global food service contractor (Sodexo Alliance/Sodexo-Mariott Services) and an infamous purveyor of prisons-for-profit (Corrections Corporation of America. It seems that the world's biggest recipient of student fees (and employer of university workers) is also the major investor behind the nation's largest private prison company (holding 9% stock in CCA's realty trust). Frankly, the thought sickens us, and—judging from the response from allies in student, criminal justice and labor organizations—we're not the only ones. Look for students, faculty and staff at major universities to draw a line in the sand: our business or the prison business, but not both.

#### WHAT'S AN ACADEMIC TO DO?

I promised to discuss how faculty can get involved, but before getting to specifics, let me put my cards on the table: as a student organizer, a one-time graduate student, and a strong believer in the reflective component of praxis, the role of academics (or lack thereof) in progressive politics is close to my heart. It pains me greatly to see how much interesting work remains locked in the academy and how few "progressive" academics are actively connected to movement work. Whether you're acting as a teacher, researcher or public intellectual, the content of the work means little if it isn't somehow grounded in an actual political strategy. And it's difficult for your work to be grounded in a political strategy if you're not in regular contact with people who are doing the politics.

That doesn't mean you have to be the one with the picket sign, although that would be nice, but it does mean that you need to go to meetings occasionally. It means that if you want your research to be "political," you have an idea beforehand about who will use it and how it will be used to make political change. It means that if you want your teaching to "politicize" your students, you will link them to political organizations (rather than just talking about controversial ideas) and you will actively support their efforts to take what they're learning and do something

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## Division Awards:

Major/Lifetime Achievement Award: Herman and Julia Schwendinger

Critical Criminologist of Year Award: Gregg Barak

Graduate Student Paper: Phillip Chong Ho Shon (UIC dept. of criminal justice) for "Postmodernizing Police Studies: Mastrofski and Parks Revisited"

Undergraduate Paper:

1st place: Jeanette Hussemann (Southern Illinois at Edwardsville) for "The Struggle for Power: Women in Policing," sponsor: David Kauzlarich

2nd Place: Colby Dolly (Southern Illinois at Edwardsville) for "A Sociological Examination of Police Brutality," sponsor: David Kauzlarich

3rd Place: Michael Peters (Northern Illinois University) for "A Divided Society: Marx and Conflict Theory," sponsor: Jim Thomas

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with it. And if you want to promote a culture of active engagement in academia, then you (faculty) need to help create a safe space for graduate students—who were once the backbone of student organizing but who are now terrorized and professionalized—to spend some time on politics rather than preparing for exams.

I apologize to those who find this obvious and patronizing, but if it were so obvious to everyone, then I wouldn't be able to

## **PEACE REVIEW** Summer 2000

### THEME: **WORKPLACE DEMOCRACY,**

The ideal of workplace democracy has been part of the social critique for more than 150 years. Although academics and practitioners study workplace democracy, relatively few have embraced substantive worker participation. Those who do come from various approaches, including applied ethics, egalitarian labor relations, and the sociology and anthropology of work. The study of workplace democracy is increasingly relevant since applications are multiplying in certain regions of the world, and since potential exists for new applications in regions characterized by ongoing political and economic transformations. Furthermore, the growth of globalization, with its emphasis on technology, competition, supranational arrangements and generalized abstractions, demands a better understanding of the world of work on a concrete, democratic, human scale. As an alternative to either extreme capitalism or command economies, workplace democracy can be a potent tool of social organization for promoting more peaceful and equitable institutional, societal, and international relations. Essay submissions might address the issue's theme and its relation to war, violence, human rights, political economy, culture and consciousness, race, gender, the environment, and other related issues. Special Editor is Mary Abascal-Hildebrand, University of San Francisco. (Author Deadline: January 15, 2000)

Peace Review is a quarterly, multidisciplinary, transnational journal of research and analysis, focusing on the current issues and controversies that underlie the promotion of a more peaceful world. We define peace research very broadly to include human rights, development, ecology, culture, race, gender and related issues. Our task is to present the results of this research and thinking in short, accessible, and substantive essays. Peace Review essays are relatively short (2500-3500 words), and are intended for a wide readership.

We strongly recommend that you request the full Writer's Guidelines before submitting an essay. For Writer's Guidelines, please email: [watkinsr@usfca.edu](mailto:watkinsr@usfca.edu)

Send editorial correspondence, including manuscripts and disks to Robert Elias, Peace Review, Peace and Justice Studies, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117, USA. Tel: 415-422-6349/2910. Fax: 415-422-5671, or 415-388-2631, Attn. Elias. Email: [Eliassr@usfca.edu](mailto:Eliassr@usfca.edu). Direct essays by email attachment to: [watkinsr@usfca.edu](mailto:watkinsr@usfca.edu). Email for Special Editor Mary Abascal-Hildebrand: [abascal@usfca.edu](mailto:abascal@usfca.edu).

count the number of really helpful faculty I've met on my fingers and toes. I can name campuses where one member of the faculty is the link between generations of politicized students, and many more where campus politics dies out because no-one helped keep the flame alive. (And lest I be misunderstood, the blame is shared equally by classical liberals, orthodox Marxists and postmodernists.)

In the field of criminal justice, there is a great deal academics can do to help the movement go forward. We need help sifting through mountains of research to find the useful pieces, and we need new research on specific issues—like the impact of prisons on small rural towns—to inform our organizing. We need faculty willing to speak as "experts" (this, by the way, takes some work). We need faculty to encourage and support student activism. We need financial support, from both individuals and departments, so we can educate and train students. We need faculty and graduate student unions to make the prison vs. higher education issue a priority (hey, it's your butter too!). There is a movement being born. Young people want to become involved. And we're counting on you.

Kevin Pranis is the Board Chair and co-founder of the Prison Moratorium Project. Based in New York, he works as a development consultant and edits *HX* a quarterly progressive student/youth publication.

For more information, contact PMP at (212) 727-8610 x23 or [kpranis@igc.org](mailto:kpranis@igc.org), or write to PMP, c/o DSA 180 Varick St. 12<sup>th</sup> Floor, New York, NY 10014. Donations are welcome.

### *New Book*

## **Social Rage: Emotion and Cultural Conflict**

By Bonnie Berry

This analysis describes social rage as a social feeling and behavior, the manifestations of which can be as obvious as acts of terrorism or as covert as voting against affirmative action. Social rage erupts largely by opposition to social change, social change that is not to the liking of the traditionally privileged. Social forces creating our current social rage, prevalent in many societies but especially in the United States, are from the hard right political field, the religious right, and the sensation- and capital-seeking media.

The results of social rage include a devolution of human rights... For women, the poor, immigrants, the convicted, homosexuals, racial and ethnic minorities, the mentally and physically different, and others. Also among its ill effects are ineffective and costly social policies, such as the tough-on-crime programs, which distract the public from real and treatable social problems, such as homelessness, hunger, and illness. Recommendations are offered on how to reduce social rage.

Garland Publishing, 1999: ISBN 0-8153-3089-8

Buy it from [Borders.com](http://Borders.com) at \$42.00 (the best price available).

The Division on Critical Criminology is seeking applications for the positions of

CO-EDITORS of  
***The Critical Criminologist***

The Publications Committee of the Division on Critical Criminology is accepting applications for the positions of co-editors of *The Critical Criminologist* for three years, beginning with the November 2000 issue.

Please submit your applications to Marty Schwartz, Chair of the Division on Critical Criminology, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Ohio University, Athens, OH 45701 who will share it with the Publications Committee (schwartz@ouvaxa.cats.ohio.edu).

The Co-editors will be responsible for administering and producing a "high quality" desk-top publication of the division's newsletter (that you are presently reading). As co-editors and managers of the newsletter, you are responsible for delivering three issues a year, one in November, one in March, and one in July. Ideally, the group of editors should be from one and not more than two university settings where the costs of producing some 330 copies of around 25 front-and-back pages per issue can be absorbed. The division is currently spending \$900 per year for mailing. If the editors' institution/s were capable of absorbing the mailing costs as well, it would also be of benefit to the divisional budget.



Those interested in being considered should provide a formal proposal to the Publications Committee (via Marty Schwartz) breaking down the expenses that will be provided by the host institution and those expected from the Division no later than February 15, 2000.

If you have any questions or need further information, please contact the present co-editors: Gregg Barak, Stuart Henry, and Paul Leighton at soc\_barak@online.emich.edu, soc\_henry@online.emich.edu, soc\_leighton@online.emich.edu. All editors can also be reached through the department of Sociology, Anthropology & Criminology, 712 Pray Harrold, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI 48197