

THE Critical Criminologist

Spring, 2000

Volume 10 #2 Newsletter of ASC's Division on Critical Criminology



Critical Criminology and the Mainstream: Issues in Publishing Critical Scholarship

This article is an edited discussion taken from the critical criminology list-serve, that was spawned by Bruce Arrigo's article "Critical Criminology's Discontent: The Perils of Publishing and the Call to Action" *The Critical Criminologist* 10(1): 10-13. The contributors here were Bruce Arrigo, Ellen Leichtman, Ray Michalowski, Steve Russell, Martin Schwartz, and Jeff Walker. Stuart Henry did editing and assembling.

Jeff Walker:

Although swamped, something led me to put aside my work and read Bruce Arrigo's essay on publishing. I think it is right on point and something that all of us in the Division should consider. I want to make three points about Bruce's position in an attempt to support and extend his call to action.

I think that Bruce is correct concerning the chilling effect of publication of critical manuscripts. Why would a professor subject herself or himself to abuse and rejection at the hands of *Criminology* reviewers when we know that there is little chance that the article will be accepted (literally or figuratively)? I think there is a latent issue that is also important here. One reason critical scholarship is not accepted in prestigious journals is because it often criticizes mainstream thoughts and theories. I don't think that is the only issue, though. As the latest firestorm over the editorship of *ASR* shows, there is a serious prejudice against works that are not highly empirical, obsessive-compulsively methodological, AND based on a rigid theoretical framework. Although much critical analyses are based on sound theory, and some are fairly empirical, we often get hammered by reviewers because all three are not present at the level of much of the secondary data analysis that is eminently publishable but means nothing. This is not a call for us to begin to mimic the works we see in the journals (although we would certainly benefit from empirical and testable support for some of the well thought out theories) as much as it is an echo of Bruce's call to work to change the editorial philosophy of some of these journals. The reality is, though, that we can't sit around and bitch among ourselves about the problem; and public, confrontational protests are likely to fall on deaf ears. We must begin to work within the system to change it, either by altering what we attempt to get published, by becoming a part of the decision making process or both. This brings me to my next point.

If we are to truly begin to change the views of the mainstream journals, we must position ourselves to be able to effect

that change. Bruce correctly points out that he, Stuart, Dragan (and many others) have been editors or on the editorial boards of many journals. That is great, and it is something that I believe we must do more of if we are to begin to effect change. As editor of the *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* (not prestigious but certainly mainstream), I made it a point to publish as many critically oriented manuscripts as I could. Granted, there were not a lot of manuscripts that were submitted where the choice was *Humanity and Society* or *JCJE*; but I did work to publish articles concerning persons of color, gender, etc. Also, a glance at the current editorial board reveals the names of Marty Schwartz, Gregg Barak, Mike Lynch and Barbara Sims. I believe that we must take up this mantle and begin to work to become editors of mainstream journals where we can have a substantial influence on the publication of divergent philosophies. Why don't we have editors of *Criminology*, *Justice Quarterly*, and other prestigious journals? If we have a call to action, why not a call to real action?

The last point is the issue of what this means for *Critical Criminology*, the journal? Granted, it is a journal for us by us; but the nature of journals is that those that have a built-in membership (it comes with an association membership) have a broader readership and typically become the most prestigious journals. It just may be that, if we can establish and maintain a journal such as *Critical Criminology*, it can become more than one more mouthpiece for the left. If we show "them" that we accept their contributions to "our" journal, then we may be on firmer footing when we request publication of "our" work in "their" journals. I strongly support Bruce's arguments and call for action including and beyond what he has proposed.

Marty Schwartz:

I have been asked to go more public with a version of comments I have previously made privately.

1. One can take a rather broad perspective on this problem. This is not a criminology problem, but one that affects sociology, psychology, political science, economics, history, etc. One exception is English literature, which has had a slightly different history, especially with postmodernism. One of the reasons is that academics from Duke, NYU, Berkeley, Chicago, etc. were doing the publishing. Like it or not, that will color the decision of many editors.

(Continued on page 5)

From the Editors...

At the risk of sounding like a National Public Radio pledge break... if you enjoy this newsletter, it is time to pay dues to ASC. Our apologies to those of you who have already paid up. For the rest, this is the last issue you will receive of the newsletter unless dues are paid soon. Dues have gone up to \$30 in order to fund the journal, which Marty promises to have in the hand of paid members by the end of the year. In the meantime, there's the newsletter.

In addition to many good articles, there is quite a bit of news about the division itself this month. Please read the message from the Chair on page 3 for a report. Also, we would like to start an ACJS critical section that would share some resources with us — see page 4 and contact Bob Bohm. The current newsletter editors only have one issue remaining to produce before they hand of this task to another collective. If you are interested, please contact Marty ASAP. Also, the journal is looking for a new editor and those interested should contact Marty.

Substantively, this edition of the newsletter follows up on an article in the last issue by Bruce Arrigo on publishing critical criminology in mainstream journals. Bruce inspired an interesting discussion on the division's listserv that is excerpted here so it can be more widely shared. We have shared listserv exchanges a few times here because of the thoughtful and engaged exchanges, but more happens than we reprint — so go to the division's homepage and sign up for it.

Part of our hope in taking the editorship was to pursue international issues. In this spirit, Gregg Barak (winner of last year's Critical Criminologist of the Year) summarizes some of the work related to book on global crime he is editing (manuscript is in production). In addition, Noriyoshi Takemura reports on the absence of critical criminology in Japan and some of the reasons for it not being well developed. We thank him sincerely for taking the time and effort to translate his ideas into English for us.

With another school shooting in the news, the topic is once again (still?) a hot topic. Stuart Henry tackles the topic by putting some larger context and understanding on it. His article is drawn from a longer one he wrote for an issue of the *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Stuart was a co-editor of that issue as well, so it is recommended for researchers seeking a helpful but critical perspective. Also, the last school shooting occurred near Flint, Michigan, not too far from where

all the newsletter editors live and work. Flint native Michael Moore (filmmaker of *Roger & Me*, author of *Downsize This!*) discusses the shooting, media coverage, race and politics with his characteristic bluntness. This column is reprinted for an email letter circulating cyberspace.

Finally, Matthew Robinson discusses the relationship of biological theories of crime causation and critical criminology. The paper developed from his experiences on a panel and critical questions that were raised about biological theories. He tries to argue biology is important for an integrated understanding of crime and that critical criminologists need to come to a better understanding of biological theories.

Gregg Barak, Paul Leighton, Donna Killingbeck and Andrew Pfeiffer all can be reached at the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminology, Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, MI 48197. Phone 734/487 0012. Short announcements can be sent by e-mail to <SOC_Leighton@online.emich.edu>

Stuart Henry is now the Director/Associate Dean of Interdisciplinary Studies Program, College of LifeLong Learning, Wayne State University, 5700 Cass Ave, Detroit, MI 48202. Phone (313) 577-4627; (313) 577-6566; fax (313) 577-8585. Email: <Stuart.Henry@wayne.edu>.

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. (There's also a membership form reprinted on p 21.) Subscription to the newsletter for non-members is \$10 yearly, available from Stuart Henry, who also handles information about back issues.

Table of Contents

Marty Schwartz <i>From the Chair</i>	3
Gregg Barak <i>Comparative Criminology</i>	8
Noriyoshi Takemura <i>The Absence of Critical Criminology in Japan</i>	11
Stuart Henry	

<i>Scope of School Violence</i>	13
Michael Moore <i>School Violence in Flint, MI</i>	17
Matthew Robinson <i>Bio-Critical Criminology</i>	19
ASC Membership form [Pay your dues!]	21
Call for Newsletter Editors	22

Chair's Message

The Division on Critical Criminology manages simultaneously to be exciting and frustrating. On the one hand, it has done so many good things, and it continues to be one of the most important divisions in the ASC. On the other hand, most of us see a lot of room for doing more.

Our first order of business is to get the journal straightened up and in order. I have been talking in detail with the editor of *Critical Criminology*, Brian MacLean. As most of you know, some years ago we came up with a bold idea for financing a refereed journal, which was a crashing financial failure. At the same time, it was an intellectual success, and one which there is almost complete unanimity that we should continue. Last year, although there remain pockets of unhappiness, the Division voted overwhelmingly to raise the dues dramatically in order to finance the journal. And, the turnout for the election was also extraordinary.

Now, we have to wait for people to vote with their checkbook. There is no doubt that we will lose some members. This is unfortunate. There are very few places where a biannual journal (let alone the quarterly we hope to become) can be purchased for \$20 or \$25 a year (plus \$5 to \$10 for the division dues and newsletter). Yet, \$30 membership to include a journal, a newsletter and division dues seems quite high to many people. I think that Brian MacLean is guilty of spoiling too many people by subsidizing the division almost single-handedly for too many years! My biggest challenge is to put the division back on its feet, paying its own way without Brian and Dawn Currie paying our way through donated labor and donated goods.

I hope to have some word fairly soon from one of several commercial publishers with whom I am negotiating. Our absolute first priority is to put out Vol. 9 of the journal, which Brian has assembled and promised. This will be expensive, but one way or another it will go out to everyone who pays their 2000 dues. I personally guarantee it. Our second order of business is to get the journal up on a permanent basis, with a publisher, editor, etc. We have a very competent board this year, and a competent publications committee, so I will have help in making these decisions. Volunteers for journal editor should contact me.

An essential order of business right now is to provide for a new home for the newsletter. Since the very beginning of this division the newsletter has been an essential part of our identity. Under Dragan Milovanovic, it virtually WAS our identity for several years, with Brian MacLean putting the newsletter out, and doing small volumes of reprinted essays that provided the money to keep the division going. More recently, the crew at Eastern Michigan University has revitalized the newsletter. We need a new home for it. Please see the advertisement elsewhere in this newsletter and interested parties should contact me.

Bob Bohm should be reporting elsewhere in this issue on the board's other initiative, which is to start a critical criminology section in the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. We hope to avoid having anyone pay dues to both sections, and to have members of one automatically be a member of the other (assuming, of course, that they are members of both organizations). However, we also hope to attract critical members of ACJS who are not members of ASC, to broaden the audience for our journal, our newsletter, and our e-mail discussion list.

Of course, our most important reason for being is to get together at the ASC meetings, mostly in a wide variety of critical panels and workshops. We hope that you can all make it this year, and that you will all come to our critical criminology evening social event.

Martin Schwartz

Division News

DIVISION AWARD NOMINATIONS

The Critical Criminology Division of the American Society of Criminology is calling for nominations for the 2000 awards. Nominations should include supporting documentation such as vita, samples of work (if relevant), and a detailed statement justifying the nomination.

MAJOR ACHIEVEMENT AWARD: Signifying singular contributions to the development of critical criminology scholarship or pedagogy over time; or, contributions of an exceptional recent accomplishment (major scholarship or something exceptionally innovative).

CRITICAL CRIMINOLOGIST OF THE YEAR AWARD: Recognizing a scholar who has symbolized the spirit of the Division in some combination of scholarship, teaching, and/or service within the past year.

STUDENT PAPER RECOGNITION: Recognizing graduate and undergraduate papers that best exemplify the spirit of the Division. Student papers may be sent via email on disk (MS-DOS compatible), or hard copy (FOUR COPIES REQUIRED).

All nominations should be sent to David Friedrichs, Dept. of Sociology/Criminal Justice, University of Scranton, Scranton, PA 18510-4605. <friedrichsd1@UofS.edu>

DEADLINES: OCTOBER 1, 2000

CRITICAL CRIM. SECTION OF ACJS

At the ASC meeting in Toronto, division members overwhelmingly supported the idea of creating a critical criminology section in the ACJS (Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences). The idea was for the ASC Critical Criminology Division and the ACJS Critical Criminology Section to share members, officers, dues, the newsletter, *The Critical Criminologist*, and the journal, *Critical Criminology*. The ACJS critical criminology section would participate in the ACJS annual meeting just as other sections do and as the critical division of ASC currently does (e.g., have meetings, social events, and participate on the program).

Members would pay dues (now \$30.00) to *either* the Division or the Section and would be members of both, providing they were also members of both ASC and ACJS. Of course, a person could still be a member of either the Division or the Section by being a member of either ASC or ACJS but not necessarily both. Hopefully, the Division can increase membership and resources through the strategy by adding members who are not members of ASC. Bob Bohm volunteered to organize the initiative. If you will be attending the ACJS meeting in New Orleans in March 2000, and are willing to ask people to sign a petition indicating that they would join a Critical Criminology section in ACJS, please contact Bob at <rbohm@pegasus.cc.ucf.edu>

Even if you don't help with the petitions, please remember to sign one to show your support. If you are a member of ACJS and won't be at the meeting in New Orleans, please send Bob a short note indicating your intention to join a critical criminology section of ACJS when it is established. Send notes to Bob Bohm at Dept. of Criminal Justice and Legal Studies
University of Central Florida
Orlando, FL 32816

Thanks for your help!

ASC DUES REMINDER!!

ASC membership is based on the calendar year starting January 1, so it is time to pay dues. If you have not paid dues by May, you will not receive the next issue of the newsletter! A membership form is included at the end of this newsletter.

(Continued from page 1)

2. Although Bruce is clear, others have not been as clear in dealing with *JQ*. Be careful, this is the best journal so far in criminology to publish critical works. I have an obvious vested interest in saying this, having served as deputy editor to Victor Kappeler, but the point remains that under both Edna Erez and Victor feminist works were being published, and Victor published postmodern work.

3. One of the harder things to do is to differentiate between excellent pieces that don't get published, and crap that doesn't get published. Bruce and Dragan are well aware of this, having been editors of journals that had a lot of lefty crap submitted. I believe that Dragan once told me that he was rejecting 75% of submissions to *Humanity & Society*, which means a lot of lefty stuff was being rejected. But it wasn't because it was too far to the left.

One problem is that we are dealing here with journals (such as *Criminology*, *Law and Society Review* with acceptance rates along the lines of 8%. Under ANY circumstances getting accepted will be difficult. There doesn't have to be an all out conspiracy against non-empirical work to get rejected, but just a slight prejudice. If you consistently rate in the top 15% of submissions, but not in the top 8%, you will get rejected. Top journals get 200 to 300 submissions a year. Regional sociology journals can get 125 a year. It is very important to differentiate between articles that are rejected because they aren't good enough, from articles rejected because they don't fit pre-conceived molds.

Dragan, Bruce and Stuart between them have more articles and books than the entire faculty of several medium sized colleges. So, it is obvious that they can get things published. Why can't they publish in the most prestigious journals?

4. I am intrigued by Bruce's suggestion that we do an empirical study and determine rates of publishing critical articles. One problem, of course, is to determine the rates of submission of critical articles.

More important, though, is to fight through the tough questions. What IS critical criminology? The journal *Criminology*, for example, published as a lead article, a piece by Jody Miller, who I consider the best junior feminist criminologist in the U.S. Does that count? Do the publications of Elliot Currie as a left realist count? How do we decide who is and is not a critical criminologist? Then you get people like me -- not everything I have ever done in my life should be counted as critical. There are ways to deal with this in standard sociological research methodology. Have more than one "coder," check to see the level at which they agree with each other on the coding, etc. Still, all you can come up with is the percentage of all articles published that could be considered critical. No doubt the editors would just claim that they get few submissions, or that the submissions are not good enough. How can we respond to this?

Steve Russell.

Since this is the critcrim list, may I speak heresy? The rise of the electronic database as a research tool has changed the shape of the playing field. It now matters more what the title of your article is than where it is published in terms of influencing other researchers, which of course is why we publish.

It is very important to differentiate between articles that are rejected because they aren't good enough, from articles rejected because they don't fit pre-conceived molds.

Let me talk about law, which I know best, but there are similar stories in the social sciences and, probably, natural sciences. It used to be that how many people would read your article was determined by the circulation of the law review where it published. Here in my home state, the biggie was *Texas Law Review*, and the second highest circulation would probably be *Harvard Law Review*. The other law reviews in Texas had high circulation spots defined by location of alums, but their support was library subscriptions and law school subsidies.

Now, meatspace subscription numbers are pretty irrelevant. They have gone down for all journals. One researcher's topic on *Lexis* or *Westlaw* or consults the *Index to Legal Periodicals* on line. If a title is snappy enough, the researcher will open your document. If your writing is compelling, the researcher will read your document, perhaps cite you, and you have just become part of the national policy conversation through an article published in the *Podunk City College Journal of Antique Streetcar Law*.

One case in point among many: In 1992, I published a (very postmodern) article about family violence (as a vehicle for discussing legal rhetoric) in *South Texas Law Review*, which I later learned had the lowest circulation among the law reviews in Texas (no longer true). Within a month, I had a call from a publisher in New York who wanted to pay me for a reprint (I let him) and the article continues to be cited in the legal literature almost ten years later, most recently in an appellate opinion this year.

When people get their scholarly input from electronic data bases, it is the same number of keystrokes to access one journal as another. What motivates those keystrokes is sometimes author, sometimes the title of the journal, but most often the title of the article. To sum up my heresy: I think we are entirely too concerned about getting into the big kids' sandbox. We should be putting prettier toys in our own, so they will want to play with us.

Jeff Walker

Steve Russell is correct, I believe, about electronic databases changing the way research is read and cited. I think there are two limitations/issues for critical criminology that militate against this effect though.

First, it is my assumption that many of the crit. crim. publications are not indexed in the major computerized indexes (*Wilson Omnifile*, *Sociofile*, etc.). Unlike the *Index to Legal Periodicals*, which I believe indexes almost all of the law journals, it is somewhat difficult to get social science journals included in the major indexes. This is something that we probably need to ex-

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

plore as an action item for having our work included among the mainstream journals.

A larger issue, though, is who would read the material? It is my feeling that much of our material is marginalized by mainstream researchers regardless of whether or not they have access to it (exemplified by the number of "mainstream" criminology instructors who use nothing past *Class, State and Crime* as their readings for crit. crim.). If that is true, then even getting our material indexed may not create the effect we are looking for because, to many, if it is not in one of the prestigious journals, it doesn't matter.

Steve Russell.

If Jeff's assumption above is correct, it is a major problem. I am not sure how to attack it, but it must be attacked. The larger issue is important but, speaking here as an Indian who has had Indian policy marginalized on my own campus, the only thing that overcomes prejudice is results. Prejudice is not vulnerable to argumentation, however eloquent.

The reason for critcrim is I hope to show that more humane policies can make our living space more livable. If we have a better description of reality than the mainstream we will become the mainstream provided policy wonks have access to our description. If we do not have a better description of reality, we deserve to be marginalized. (It may be apparent from the above that I pick the ideas from post-modernism that suit me. I have not swallowed it whole. I do recognize that to describe is to create, but I maintain that there was already something there to be described.)

Ray Michalowski

I want to thank Bruce for, not only his article on publishing critical work, but for helping energize this discussion. I also want to thank Marty for his comments, and to add a few thoughts to them.

1. Yes, we have to be careful to distinguish what problems are specific to critical criminology, and what problems are inevitable for any work that cuts against the grain of a dominant paradigm. Reviewers and/or editors do not have to be hostile toward "critical" work in criminology, or be part of a plan to keep it out of high profile journals, for little of it to appear. All they have to do is not understand the epistemology and the language of critical work to find it "simply not argued at the appropriate level" (a quote from a review I received a few years ago).

Possible route to some amelioration: It can be useful to suggest a list of potential reviewers to the editor when submitting to a journal that does not normally publish work of the type being submitted. Sometimes this works - if the editor is open to multi-

ple perspective. If the editor does not, then they will, of course not listen, and may even actively seek reviewers known to be hostile to your work (don't ask how I know this). My co-authors and I have had experience in both directions, but clearly we have benefited from having directed editors toward people who might be knowledgeable about the epistemological and theoretical framework our work is based in.

2. Regarding quality: I have been reviewing manuscripts for both high profile journals and what I would consider often, equally good, but less sanctified ones for more years than I care to count. This has led me to the following observations regarding the matter of the relationship between quality and publication.

a. Most manuscripts I have reviewed are not ready for publication at the time of submission.

b. Manuscripts written from a critical criminology perspective are typically further away from being ready for publication than manuscripts written from more mainstream perspectives and/or based on quantitative models of inquiry. The reasons for this I suspect are:

(I) There is less of an agreed upon standard for how to do critical work as compared to the highly developed and relatively rigid format for quantitative work. This openness is good from the standpoint of allowing for creative critical exploration. On the down side, when standards are unclear, it is easier for people to believe they have met them. I think this is why I have reviewed a number of critical articles whose intellectual rigor is less than we would expect of a paper ready for publication.

(II) Some critical work relies on historical analysis and social scientists tend to do bad history by relying primarily and often uncritically on secondary sources.

(III) The journal article format is often a bad fit for critical work. Historical, theoretical, and qualitative analyses done well often requires more space than the standard theory-methods-data-findings-conclusion "success model" used for quantitative work. The forced truncation of the development/presentation of critical ideas and analyses hurts the apparent quality of critical work in some cases.

c. Editors seem more likely to give outright rejections, rather than [revise and resubmits] to underdeveloped critical manuscripts than equally underdeveloped manuscripts that fit the quantitative model. This too, I think is related to the lack of clear models for evaluating critical work. Without a clear model it becomes harder to see just how it could be "fixed." I find that my reviews of quantitative manuscripts, for instance, tend to be 1--2 pages, while my reviews of critical manuscripts are often in the 2-5-page range. My own experience submitting work is that few

(Continued on page 7)

Most manuscripts I have reviewed are not ready for publication at the time of submission. Manuscripts written from a critical criminology perspective are typically further away than manuscripts written from more mainstream perspectives and/or based on quantitative models of inquiry

(Continued from page 6)

mainstream reviewers devote this much time to manuscript evaluation, meaning that an editor receives reviews that recommend less than outright publication, but little guidance as to what to tell the author to do. In that case rejection becomes the path of least resistance.

d. In my reviewing experience critical work that is revised and resubmitted is less likely to cross the threshold to publication than revised quantitative work. This is just an extension of the reason above: without clear directions of how to improve the work, it is harder to gratify reviewers on the second go around. It is also harder to revise critical work. It is much easier to add another statistical test, or respond to criticisms of potential multicollinearity than to rethink an entire theoretical argument so as to make it more logical and/or clearer to the potential audience.

There's a theme here. Quantitative work is more likely to get published in higher profile journals than qualitative work because: there quantitative work can appear to be "proven" according to a paradigmatically established standard, and quantitative work (regardless of how critical the substantive implications) does not challenge the orthodox assumption of the nature of "fact." Which brings me to another point.

I think part of the strategy is for critical criminologists to become more proactive as reviewers in the mainstream journals. Offer our services. Ask to be a reviewer on critical crim articles in our areas of expertise. Talk to editors. The more people who understand critical work, the more of it will be published. But we also have to be sure that we don't confuse solidarity with critical criminologists with being uncritical of their work. But being a critical analyst of the work of others carries a serious responsibility. We must actively help one another make our work better, rather than merely taking pleasure in pointing out what's wrong with each other's scholarship.

Marty suggests we have a serious discussion about what constitutes "critical" work. The discussion going on here, so far, seems to imply that quantitative work is, by definition, is not critical. Or am I misreading things? If quantitative work is excluded from the idea of critical crim, it puts the kind of political-economic analyses done by people like Susan Carlson and me outside the scope of "critical criminology." Is "critical" a code word for qualitative and post-modernist modes of analysis only? Or does it refer to forms of criminology that challenge the taken-for-granted of orthodox criminology from alternative perspectives that are not conservative/right-wing?

Marty Schwartz

In general, having been a reviewer in my career for over 30 academic journals and having had about 60 acceptances and 30 rejections of my own, I think that I am at least qualified to agree with Ray virtually point for point. An excellent commentary.

I was just writing privately to someone else suggesting that one of the many problems is that few of us are rigorously trained, or have rigorous colleagues. As Ray suggests, in a field with unclear boundaries, there are many who feel that they are sharp and clear when they are not (I don't mean this to apply to Dragan and Bruce, by the way). My students who have been successful at publishing in top journals are the ones who have gone to the very best graduate

schools, and have learned top rigor. They work in departments with very top senior scholars who critique their work before it goes out. Despite being radical feminists or socialist feminists, they still publish, get grants, etc. It is a bit harder than if they were mainstream, but it is being done. Most crim people (myself included) went to secondary schools and work in departments without rigorous scholars. We suffer at a great disadvantage as compared to many abstract empiricists.

Lately, I have been doing a lot of grant reviewing for the National Institute of Justice, and while I have vows of confidentiality about specifics, I can say that the overwhelming majority of grant applications have terrible theoretical bases and abysmal statistical design. I think that if a crit person had a very clear theoretical model, with a plan for action that was crisp and sound, it would be received enough to be read carefully, if not by all reviewers then certainly by the NIJ staff. Of course, the debilitating thing is that a certain amount of the money goes out to whatever the agency thinks is hot and needs to be done, even if the methodology is not very good. Of course, it could be worse. I write from Australia, where the conservative federal government (confusingly named the Liberal Party) has decided to fund the Lone Fathers Association to set up shelter houses for battered men, because they are tired of funding women and want to even up the score a bit.

EDITORS' NOTE: More of this discussion will be printed in the next issue of the newsletter. Please contact us if you have additional comments on the original article or this discussion that you would like included in the next installment.

Directions for subscribing to the listserve are available on the critical criminology homepage, whose address is on page 2.



Comparative Criminology: A Global View

Gregg Barak

Eastern Michigan University

As an academic specialty, the study of comparative, cross-cultural crime and crime control is less than thirty years old. In the late eighties, for example, Neuman and Berger (1988) were arguing that comparative crime theories were immature, and a decade earlier Blazicek and Janeksela (1978: 234) were pronouncing that the methods associated with the study of crime control abound with "ambiguity, confusion and misuse of the term 'comparative'." To be sure, there are still alternative views, definitions, and theories of as well as approaches to comparative crime and crime control. However, as the number of comparative studies have grown, some clarity of purpose has been established in the field. Then again, "transnationalists" like Paul Friday (1996), Jamieson, South, and Taylor (1997) or Jim Sheptycki (1998), some of whom argue that the nation-state is in demise and some of whom argue that it is obsolete, would contend that before comparative criminology gets its act together, that we will have moved on to doing international and transnational criminology.

DOING COMPARATIVE CRIMINOLOGY

When I refer to comparative criminology or to cross-national study, I am referring to the systematic and theoretically-informed comparison of crime and crime control in two or more cultural states as suggested by Beirne and Nelken (1997). More specifically, in our study the contributors and I surveyed the institutional relationships of crime and crime control for fifteen "nation-states" or countries (Barak, 2000). As part of our global analysis of crime and crime control, these countries were grouped into one of three classifications--Developed, Post-traditional, and Developing societies--based on their social, political, and economic development or integration into the 19th and 20th centuries' multinational corporatism and the emerging 21st century's lifestyle consumerism (Waters, 1995).

In these models, the traditional or less developed societies (e.g., Third World, post-colonial, underdeveloped) are characterized by "subsistence economies, underdevelopment, poverty, social inequality, and authoritarian political regimes" (Moaddel, 1994: 279). By contrast, the modern and developed societies are characterized by market economies, industrialization, "sustained economic growth and development, mass affluence, declining inequality, and political democracy" (Ibid.) In addition, there are also the transitional or trichotomous models of development, which include a third grouping of societies somewhere between the traditional and the modern societies.

In between the developed core with its relatively specialized and mechanized development, higher profits and higher wages, and more skilled activities, and the less developed periphery with its imposed upon productivity and lower profits, wages and skills, are those regions of development which represent intermediate types of production. These "semi-periphery" nation-state societies represent a third group of socio-economic formations that

tend to "exploit" lesser developed nation-states of the periphery, while they are subject to "exploitation" by the more developed nation-states of the core. Trichotomous models of development are sensitive to social change in general and to the inter-working relationships within and between these particular kinds of "countries in transition." To say the least, these are dynamic rather than static models, and they recognize the importance of the transitional or middle stratum societies where development is uneven, present in some sectors of society and absent from other sectors.

For our analysis, if any of the developmental pieces were missing, including the presence of modern institutions and values, industrialization, rapid economic development, and the dissolution of the traditional or repressive social order, then the middle level classification of development was used. If all of the pieces were present, then the upper level classification of development was used. If most of the pieces were missing, then the lower level classification of development was used. Accordingly, the organization of our study was as follows: the "developed" nations consisted of the United States, Germany, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, Taiwan, and the Netherlands; the "post-traditional" nations consisted of Ghana, Nigeria, and the Navajo Nation; and the "developing" nations consisted of Brazil, Poland, Russia, Iran, China, and India.

Historically, cross-cultural research that embodies a large number of countries, typically employs national or aggregated data sets, such as the United Nations World Crime Surveys, the Comparative Crime Data File, INTERPOL, Correlates of Crime, 1960-1984, or the Human Relations Area Files (which contain numerous data from different countries, past and present). Whereas our study of fifteen nations sporadically incorporated findings from some of these sources, there was no systematic undertaking to apply these kinds of data sets to our basic inquiries. Nonetheless, utilizing data that was assessable or made available to them during their research expeditions of 1998, our researchers provided an array of empirical data on crime and victimization. They did so, however, not as investigators systematically collecting the same material for 15 nation-states, but as members of a larger team asked to individually conduct, one nation at a time, simultaneous research on crime and crime control.

The primary focus of our nation-state studies were also "localized." In other words, these studies were keenly historical and concerned with telling the developmental stories of crime and crime control for particular countries. What were developed were rich narratives that describe contemporary crime and crime control, grounded not only in an historical account of crime and crime control for each country, but also in a profiling of the nation and its public perceptions of crime and crime control. In different ways, these national studies were comparative in the sense that they not only explored crime and crime control in two or more historical settings, but, at the same time, they examined these relationships in terms of their changing political, economic, and social contexts.

Ideally, it has been my assumption that some kind of inte-

(Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8)

grative macro/micro level of analysis of crime/criminals is preferable to either/or macro versus micro analyses (Barak, 1998). Nevertheless, our cross-cultural comparative study was predominately concerned with the historical records and territorial developments of crime and crime control at the macro or institutional levels (e.g., political, economic, social) of analysis. Moreover, our comparative analysis moves back-and-forth between the national and global perspectives, appreciating the importance of locally changing conditions, such as ethnic diversity, population growth, politicalization, urbanity, economic development, marginality, inequality, and so on, as well as the importance of the developing process of globalization.

For each of the nations studied, the researchers agreed to present reviews of the same essential materials. These included: (1) quantitative data provided on the trends and rates of crime and victimization; (2) qualitative presentations on the historical development of crime and crime control, incorporating a profiling or conceptual framework of the changing demographics, politics, economics, and cultural styles of living and consumption; (3) a discussion on the general causes and responses to crime and on the circumstances concerning legal and policy developments; and (4) a speculative discussion on the future trends in crime and crime control.

TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Even when dividing 15 countries into differentially classified nation-states as was done in our study, it was still very hard not only to generalize about particular social and state formations and their relationship with the patterns and trends in crime and crime control, but also to provide findings that definitively resolved the theoretically raised questions about the similarities and differences in crime and crime control for our developed, post-traditional, and developing nation-states. Nevertheless, we could conclude with relative certainty that both crime and crime control are growing and expanding enterprises worldwide. This was generally true for developing, post-traditional, and developed countries. As found in our study and in other studies as well, as nations and inequality develop, crimes against property expand more rapidly than crimes against the person (Beirne and Nelken, 1997; Frate et al., 1993; Neapolitan, 1997; Newman and Berger, 1988). In many ways, the expressions of crime and criminality were more uniform between the three types of nations than were the responses to crime or the expressions of crime control. That is to say, trends in crime within and between the different kinds of nation-states were more alike than were the trends in crime control and criminal justice (See also, Ebbe, 1996; Newman, et. al., 1995).

For example, within the developed nation-states, while there has been a great deal of "risk analysis," "actuarial examination," and "legal rationalization" of the criminal justice system, there has not been clear-cut directions toward either "repressive" or "social" justice in general, or of trends in sentencing and punishment in particular. So, on the one hand, we witness the USA and the UK experiencing tougher and longer sentencing schemes; whereas, on the other hand, Germany and the Netherlands have

resisted such tendencies, keeping their punishment schemes in line with their more welfare-oriented practices of the post World War II period. Similarly, the former countries have started to privatize some of their responses to crime, whereas the latter countries have not. At the same time, all four of these developed nations have been experimenting with restorative forms of justice and with victim compensation schemes, not to mention other forms of community law enforcement and corrections, reminiscent of some of the practices characteristic of post-traditional countries. Unlike the post-traditional nations, however, these developed nations have also increased their surveillance and prosecutorial capacities, at the expense of liberty and the expansion of law and order.

In post-traditional societies like Ghana, the Navajo Nation, or Nigeria, there have been attempts to balance the values and practices of traditional and post-colonial forms of law enforcement and adjudication. But the similarities of poverty and gross inequalities in these peripheral societies express themselves differently in the various forms that their criminality takes. At least

the expressions of crime and criminality were more uniform between the types of nations than were the responses to crime or the expressions of crime control

in part, this is a result of each nation's unique economic relationship with other countries of the core and semi-periphery. Hence, the forms of crime that are manifested there will vary as was revealed by the self-abuse, battering, alcoholism, and other forms of domestic violence perpetrated among residents of the Navajo Nation as contrasted with the vast amounts of graft and corruption engaged in by the politicians and organized crime interests, alike, found in Ghana's fledgling democracy and Nigeria's repressive regime.

In the developing nations, there is even less uniformity in the expressions of crime and crime control, as these have varied to the extent that the political, economic, and social institutions have been democratically freed from autocratic or fundamentalist rule. In contemporary Iran, for example, just about every kind of non-conformist behavior is a crime, from etiquette and sin to actual violence against the person and thefts of property. In most of the developing nation-states, especially those from the former Eastern block nations, criminal "epidemics" revolve around hard-to-get goods and services. In other words, in Russia and Poland, the underground economies compete head-to-head with the above ground economies, making it a situation where bribes, corruption, and other felonies and misdemeanors pay better than legitimate work or no work at all.

In sum, while there do seem to be trends and patterns, if not general laws, for the origins and developments of crime, especially with respect to the production and reproduction of criminal formations, the responses in crime prevention and social control seem to be less uniform across nations. Compared to crime, crime control is more variable and subject to the perceptions, discourses, philosophies, and cultural attitudes of particular socie-

(Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9)

ties. But even these have begun to homogenize as evidenced by the contemporary movements in Zero Tolerance, in of all places, those countries with little crime, such as Finland. But generally responses to crime have ranged according to the way in which nations view criminals and think about crime, punishment, and society. In those societies like the United States or the United Kingdom, where criminals are frequently viewed as enemies, they have been isolated and excluded; in other societies like the Netherlands or the Navajo Nation, where criminals are viewed as vulnerable persons worth saving, they have been brought back into the community fold.

Finally, from a global point of view, a negative outcome of the thawing of East/West relations has been the influx of conflict and crime worldwide. During the past decade, one consequence of the end of the Cold War has been the international increase in transnational or border crimes, especially those involving the smuggling of goods and services out from and into various nation-states. For example, as late as the 1980s, the majority of stolen cars in the United States were hot-wired for "joy riding" or for domestic "chop shops" to sell the disassembled parts locally. With the breakup of the Soviet Union, the loosening of border controls across Eastern Europe, and the opening up of the "free market" in the early 1990s, the international demand for stolen cars (as operating vehicles) has increased and expanded worldwide. As a result, and in less than one decade, both the business of stealing cars and of protecting cars in the U.S., and elsewhere, has been completely transformed (Bradsher, 1999).

As we enter the 21st century, the internationalization of markets in all kinds of criminal contraband, including weapons, drugs, sex, alcohol, tobacco, coffee, PCs, etc., and the international efforts to combat this activity, is but one illustration of the globalization of crime, surveillance, and control. Yet despite the development of transnational crime, the bulk of crime, violent and property, individual, organized, corporate, or governmental (state), is still usually confined within the geographic boundaries of the existing nation-states.

The author can be reached at SOC_Barak@online.emich.edu

REFERENCES

- Barak, Gregg. 1998. Integrating Criminologies. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Barak, Gregg. (ed.) 2000. Crime and Crime Control: A Global View. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press.
- Beirne, Piers and David Nelson. (eds.) 1997. "Introduction" to

Issues in Comparative Criminology. Aldershot: Dartmouth/Ashgate.

- Blazicek, D. and G.M. Janeksela. 1978. "Some Comments on Comparative Methodologies in Criminal Justice." International Journal of Criminology and Penology 6:233-45.
- Bradsher, Keith. 1999. "For Car Thieves, a Technological Arms Race." New York Times (Sunday, March 21: 1F).
- Ebbe, Obi. (ed.) 1996. Comparative and International Criminal Justice System: Policing, Judiciary, and Corrections. Boston: Butterman/Heinemann.
- Frate, Ann A. Del, Ugljesa Zvekcic, and Jan J.M. van Duk. 1993. Understanding Crime: Experience of Crime and Crime Control. Rome: United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute.
- Friday, Paul. 1996. "The Need to Integrate Comparative and International Criminal Justice into a Traditional Curriculum." Journal of Criminal Justice Education 7: 227- 39.
- Jamieson, Ruth, Nigel South, and Ian Taylor. 1997. Economic Liberalisation and Cross-Border Crime: the North American Free Trade Area and Canada's Border with the US. Salford Papers in Sociology, No. 22: The University of Salford, UK.
- Moaddel, Mansoor. 1994. "Political Conflicts in the World Economy: A Cross-National Analysis of Modernization and World-System Theories." American Sociological Review 59 (April: 276-303).
- Neapolitan, Jerome L. 1997. Cross-National Crime: A Research Review and Sourcebook. Westport, CN: Greenwood Press.
- Neuman, W. Lawrence and Ronald J. Berger. 1988. "Competing Perspectives on Cross-National Crime: An Evaluation of Theory and Evidence." The Sociological Quarterly 29 (2): 281-313.
- Newman, Graeme, Debra Cohen, and Adam C. Bouloukos. (eds.) 1995. International Fact Book of Criminal Justice Systems. Washington, D.C.: United States Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- Sheptycki, James W.E. 1998. "Policing, Postmodernism and Transnationalization." British Journal of Criminology 38, 3 (Summer): 485-503
- Waters, Malcolm. 1995. Globalization. London: Routledge.



The Absence of Critical Criminology in Japan

Noriyoshi Takemura

Toin University of Yokohama, Japan

It is difficult to define what critical criminology is, who critical criminologists are and what the features of critical criminology are. Even though it is not easy to answer these questions, it is clear that critical criminology has not developed in Japan. In this short essay, I'd like to show the absent state of critical criminology in Japan.

HISTORY OF CRIMINOLOGY IN JAPAN

Taking a general view of the history of criminology in Japan, we find a tradition of translating foreign criminologists. We can broadly divide it into two periods: before and after World War II. During the former period, a science of management of penal institutions was developed ancillary to dogmatics of criminal law, and Japanese criminology was mainly influenced by European psychiatry. During the latter period, it has increasingly been influenced by American sociology. Through the history of Japanese criminology, however, our precursors have endeavored mainly to introduce concepts and methodologies of foreign criminologists and, as a result, they did not develop their own particular criminology. Their main activities were translations or introductions of foreign books or articles. As a result, Japanese textbooks of criminology have been no better than expanded explanations of white papers.

To my regret, the state of critical criminology in Japan is not an exception. Up to now, some Japanese scholars have tried to translate and introduce works of critical criminology. But in many Japanese textbooks of criminology we see only short outlines and descriptions. Even worse, they fail to keep up with new developments in critical criminology: postmodern criminology, chaos theory and so on. When my book titled *Epistemology of Crime and Punishment* was published last year, some Japanese scholars delightfully commented that it was the first monograph of postmodern criminology in Japan. At present, it is very difficult to find critical criminologists in Japan though there are some who are conducting research with critical perspectives. Although there have emerged some critical studies in the fields of legislation, criminal procedure, death penalty and so on for the last two decades, they are not critical enough to change the conservative situation of criminology and criminal justice policy in Japan.

CONTEXT OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE POLICY IN JAPAN

In order to activate and develop critical criminology in Japan, it is important to analyze reasons why critical criminology has not developed. There are many reasons for this grave situation.

First, Japanese society has been believed to be safe all over the world despite lots of problems and victims. There has been a "safety-myth" in Japan and this myth has been loudly spoken again and again by government and media. It appealed to sensitivities of people and made people blind to problems of criminal justice system. As a result, people affirm the status quo - including present criminal justice policies.

However, as many serious crimes have occurred in recent years, it is said that the climate of crime situation has strikingly changed, and that "Europeanization and Americanization" of crimes has emerged. In this situation, the government and conservative parties developed "law and order" campaigns and made the legislature pass many important bills which can potentially violate human rights and freedoms. For example, laws against organized crimes widely permits police of wire tapping without strict control. Japanese society has become an increasingly surveillance society.

In this situation, we also find a lack of criticism. As for the academic society and research conditions, many ex-government officers and ex-bureaucrats become university professors after retiring and teach conservative criminology. So it is not easy for young scholars to get positions at universities. In addition, as Japanese academic society is very conservative, it does not like to accept young scholars who have done critical research. It is structured to exclude critical criminologists. Even if they survive through these struggles, they feel inferior within such a conservative situation. As a long run, as we see at present, there are many near scholars patronized by governments.

Further, our government and its organizations are extremely closed, so it is very difficult to get enough data concerning criminal justice practices (except for some publications such as white papers). Only researchers who belong to government institutions can use the data. If scholars outside governmental institutions want to get enough information to do their research, they have to edge up to those people who belong to governmental institutions. The fact that there are few cooperative studies between the government and academics proves this problematic situation.

Until recently, governments and bureaucrats have shown a contemptuous attitude to the general public and made people believe that authorities never make mistakes. In recent years, however, with the occurrence of many serious crimes which showed the corruption of power elites, Japanese people have their eyes opened to the stern realities and want to express their opinions and be involved in policy making. Although governmental institutions competitively built their homepages, opened windows and collected public opinions, there are still few circuits for them to respond or give feedback to people's opinions. Most are just superficial, obligatory public hearings. The predisposition of policy making behind closed doors unique to Japan has not changed.

In addition, it is said that Japanese people have a unique cultural or educational background. A Japanese proverb "harmony is the greatest of virtues" expresses this clearly. In school, teachers do not welcome different opinions from others and dislike disputes or arguments because Japanese industrial society has put the educational systems under an obligation to make silent uniform workers. This system works as a restriction or control of individual behavior. With this background, although Japanese students are well bred, it is hard for them to form critical minds.

CONCLUSION

In recent years, we can see the rise of research with critical perspectives. But as we have seen above, it is not enough to

(Continued on page 20)

COLLECTIVE PRESS

The following titles from the Collective Press offered at a special price for Division on Critical Criminology Members. Please complete the order form below and send it along with a cheque or money order in US dollars to the address indicated.

COPIES	PRICE (US\$)	TITLE	ISBN	YEAR	EDITORS	AMOUNT
___ copies @10.00		<i>Racism, Empiricism and Criminal Justice</i>	0-9694764-0-X	1990	MacLean and Milovanovic	_____
___ copies @10.00		<i>New Directions in Critical Criminology</i>	0-9694764-1-8	1991	MacLean and Milovanovic	_____
___ copies @7.00		<i>Seeking Shelter</i>	0-9694764-2-6	1993	Faith & Currie	_____
___ copies @12.00		<i>We Who Would Take no Prisoners</i>	0-9694764-3-4	1993	MacLean and Pepinsky	_____
___ copies @12.00		<i>Social Inequality, Social Justice</i>	0-9694764-4-2	1994	Currie and MacLean	_____
___ copies @12.00		<i>Farmworkers and, Their Children</i>	0-9694764-5-0	1995	Basran, Gill, and MacLean	_____
___ copies @15.00		<i>Thinking Critically About Crime</i>	0-9694764-6-9	1997	MacLean and Milovanovic	_____
___ copies @15.00		<i>Unsettling Truths</i>	0-9694764-6-9	1997	Bonnycastle and Rigakos	_____

Please make your cheque payable to Collective Press. Send order form and cheque to: Collective Press, Suite 361, #185-9040 Blundell Road, Richmond, BC, CANADA V6Y 1K3

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING: AMOUNT ENCLOSED: (US)\$_____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **STATE/PROVINCE:** _____

COUNTRY: _____ **ZIP/POSTAL CODE:** _____

What's the Scope of Violence in School Violence?*

Stuart Henry

Wayne State University

"The origins of lethal violence lie in a complex set of influences . . . no single factor . . . can provide the answer to the question of why kids kill." (Garbarino 1999:13)

In the analysis of school violence, there is a tendency for commentators to narrowly define the scope of the problem. Typically they focus on interpersonal violence: among students toward each other, or by students toward their teachers. I argue that not only does the complexity of this issue defy such a simplistic framing, but also dealing with the problem at this level does not go far enough. It fails to address the wider context of school violence, the wider forms of violence in schools, and the important interactive and causal effects arising from the confluence of these forces. What is demanded is an integrated, multi-level definition of the problem that will lead to a multilevel causal analysis and a comprehensive policy response that takes account of the full range of constitutive elements. Here I outline the first stage of such an approach with regard to defining the nature and scope of the problem.

THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

Public analysis of social problems tends to be framed very narrowly. Violence is visible and manifest among school students, so it is assumed that they constitute the scope of the problem. Yet, any analysis of school violence that simply looks at one factor, such as human fallibility, gun availability or cultural toxicity, is in grave danger of missing the point. Moreover, while each of several causes plays a part in producing and shaping an event, analyzed independently we lose the importance of their interactive and cumulative effects. Studies of victimization of children in school settings focus on the coexistence of individual-level problems such as drugs, gangs, guns, and academic failure, but not at the broader formative context of these expressive acts. Not considered is how such acts are related to the type of school organization, the social processes that are encouraged within the schools, and the forms of abuse and violence to which we subject our youth under the auspices of education. In what follows I criticize our myopic definition of the problem and suggest a more expansive and inclusive approach.

THE PAUCITY OF THE SCHOOL VIOLENCE CONCEPT?

In the school context, studies of violence typically refers to student-on-student and student-on teacher acts of physical harm or interpersonal violence: "Violence refers to the threat or use of physical force with the intention of causing physical injury, damage, or intimidation of another person" (Elliott, Hamburg, and Williams, 1998: 13-14).¹ As a result, conventional approaches to school violence ignore the equally important hidden crimes of the structurally powerful in society (Henry and Lanier, 1998), and the symbolic social harms that deny humanity through violating human rights (Henry and Milovanovic, 1996). In the school context

these include harms committed by teachers on students, and by school administrators on both students and teachers. They also include the organization of schooling where this creates harm to both student creativity and the educational process. Conventional definitions of school violence also neglect harmful institutionalized social and educational practices, including acts and processes of institutionalized racism/sexism, discrimination, labeling and tracking (Yogan, 2000), authoritarian discipline (Adams, 2000), militaristic approaches to school security (Thompkins, 2000; Pepinsky, 2000), sexual harassment and predation. For example, gender discrimination has been shown to create harmful effects on female students' learning experience. When teachers favor male students over females, because of their seemingly extroverted classroom participation, they disadvantage females and oppress their potential development, which can lead to feelings of inadequacy, anger, and long-term depression. Such practices are not defined as violence but they are symbolically violent with long-term harmful consequences.² Consider a school administration that exercises arbitrary, authoritarian discipline or teachers who "get by" without their best effort and who lack commitment to their students' education or the message conveyed to students about "trust," and "freedom" of educational thought when we deploy metal detectors, video cameras, identity tags, drug sniffing dogs, and guards to "secure" that freedom (Adams, 2000; Thompkins, 2000). This "hidden curriculum" can have a significant negative impact on students' moral and social development (Yogan and Henry, 2000). At a broader level, consider the harm of inequitable school funding, such that one school will receive better funding due to its location in a wealthy area, compared to a school located in a poverty-stricken urban setting. Finally, consider the harm created by celebrating competitive success while condemning academic failure; is it any wonder that "children who do poorly in school, lack educational motivation, and feel alienated are the most likely to engage in criminal acts"? (Siegel 1998: 197-98). And this analysis does not even begin to address how competitive success corrupts the morality of the successful, driving them to win at all costs, regardless of the harm they cause to others in the process (Nicholson, 2000; Staples, 2000).

TOWARD AN EXPANSIVE INTEGRATED CONCEPT OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

Because of the omission of these broader dimensions of school violence we are missing much of the content and causes of violence in schools. We are blind to the part played by this wider context of violence in shaping the more visible forms of interpersonal physical violence manifest by some students. I believe that a more inclusive integrated concept of school violence is necessary. Replacing the term "force" with that of "power," and conceiving of violence as the use of power to harm another (Henry and Milovanovic 1996; 1999; Henry and Lanier 1998), leads us to consider the concept of harm? Harm here is not simply physical pain and suffering but actions and processes that remove something from a person's existing standing as a human being or

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

that systematically limit another person's capability of achieving higher levels of accomplishment, from "being all they can be." Some would refer to this more generally as oppression. Acts of violence, then, are acts that make others powerless to maintain or express their humanity i.e. denying them their ability to make a difference (Henry and Milovanovic 1996, 116).

With regard to the perpetrators of harm, the concept for those who exercise the power to deny others, conventionally described as "offenders," is limiting since it assumes that only individuals offend. Yet the manifestation of power that denies people their humanity can operate at many levels from individual to organization or corporation, community and society to nation state. Further, the exercise of the power to harm, as mentioned earlier, can also be accomplished by social processes, such as sexism, ageism, racism, which goes beyond the individual acts of people. Although individuals may contribute to these social processes, it is the collective and cumulative repetition of actions by different people that creates harm to others. In the context of school violence these processes comprise the practices and policies of the school, or what Welsh (2000) calls "school climate." It can include the policies and practices of school boards and their detrimental effects on school districts, and the local politics of communities. At a broader level, the collective actors can operate on the state and national level to include educational policy. An example, would be the decision to expand prison building programs at the expense of school building, to hire corrections officers rather than school teachers, and even to submit to the apparent "economy of scale" that leads to building large schools over small ones, when all the evidence suggests that these are more alienating and more criminogenic.³ While these collective and policy decisions may seem distant from the day-to-day activities of the school, their shadow and effects reach long into the classroom, and constitute part of the formative context for violence that is played out there (see Kramer, 2000).

The exercise of power to deny others their humanity by some agency or process also takes place in a spatial social context. Even though the term "school violence" implies that the spatial location is the "school building, on the school grounds or on a school bus" (Bureau of Justice, 1998), such a limited definition denies the interconnections between the school context and the wider society of which it is apart. It ignores the ways in which these acts of violence permeate social and geographical space. As a result, it fails to recognize that what may appear to be an outburst in the school is merely one manifestation of more systemic societal problems. These may begin in, or be modified by, activities in other spatial locations such as households, public streets, local neighborhoods, communities, private corporations, public organizations, national political arenas, global marketplace, or the wider political economy. As such, the social and institutional space of the school is merely one forum for the appearance of a more general systemic problem of societal violence.

In short, *school violence is the exercise of power over others in school-related settings by some individual, agency or social process, that denies those subject to it their humanity to make a difference.* From this general definition we can begin to analyze the constitutive elements of school violence and begin to explore the different types and their interactive effects.

THE DIMENSIONS OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE

John Hagan (1979; 1985) has developed an insightful integrated approach to crime and deviance, which he calls the "pyramid of crime" that can usefully be applied to school violence, and can be used to build a more comprehensive basis for analysis of the problem. Hagan argues that crimes can be considered on three measures of seriousness, each ranging from low/weak to high/strong. First is the dimension of relative seriousness of crime based on the harm it has caused. Some acts, like drug use and truancy, are victimless crimes in that they only harm the participants; others such as the recent high profile shootings in schools, harm more than one person at a time and that pain can extend to the victims' relatives, friends and even their community (See Nicholson, 2000).

Second, is the degree of moral consensus or agreement as to whether an act is right or wrong which "can range from confusion and apathy, through levels of disagreement, to conditions of general agreement" (Hagan 1985, 49). Thus while not desirable, few people consider a 16 year-old skipping school seriously wrong and while there is consensus that drugs should not be in schools, the consensus is much greater against heroin and cocaine, than marijuana, and against all three compared to alcohol and cigarettes (See Venturelli, 2000). The third dimension of Hagan's approach is the severity of society's formal response. Severity may range from social ostracism by school peers toward their fellow students, through informal reprimands by teachers, official warnings, expulsion and exclusion from school, prosecution, and imprisonment or ultimately to the death penalty.⁴ Elsewhere (Henry and Lanier, 1998; Lanier and Henry, 1998) we have argued that as a result of failing to consider the significance of power relations in the definitional process,⁵ Hagan's pyramid of crime neglects: (1) the visibility of crime, (2) the extent of crime, and (3) the selectivity of society's response to crime. For example, omitting the visibility dimension ignores the social construction of school victimization. As we have seen, school violence takes many forms, all of which involve harm, but not all of those harmed necessarily realize they have been victimized. For example, it is difficult to see the negative effects of tracking yet the "track system" has been shown to reinforce class and racial segregation and over time this practice operates as a crime of repression, limiting the intellectual, social and moral development of those subject to it (Yogan, 2000). The harmful effects of this practice are obscure, and may take a long time to appear (in lowered expectations for self, poor self-esteem, etc.). Visibility of some aspects of school violence is an important dimension because it is partly a reflection of the force of existing legal definitions, themselves shaped by powerful economic, political and class interests.

These interests, in turn, partly reflect the commercial interests of the mass media; which limit their framing of the crime question. In part, they reflect the popular culture's trivialization and sensationalization of direct interpersonal "true crimes" in preference to complex, diffuse social harms and injuries that have become institutionalized, compartmentalized, privatized and justified via the legitimate goals of the organization. Thus, we have argued that "crime can range from being "obvious" or "readily apparent," as a result of its prominence in the popular culture,

(Continued on page 15)

(Continued from page 14)

mass-mediated news and tabloid journalism . . . to being "relatively hidden" and finally, to being so "obscure" that it is accepted by many as normal, even though it harms its victims." (Henry and Lanier 1998, 619-20)

How does the acknowledgment of these six dimensions of defining school violence (degree of harm, visibility of harm, extent of harm, moral consensus, severity of response, and selectivity of response), affect our analysis of school violence. First, this expansive integrated approach to school violence allows us to better identify different types of school violence. Second, it allows us to identify the multiple and interrelated causes of such violence. Third, it provides for a more comprehensive approach to policy that reaches deeper into the roots of systemic violence than superficial quick-fix responses. Finally, it allows us to see the interconnections between different types of school violence and develop integrated policies designed to respond to them. By way of conclusion I will briefly discuss each of these issues.

CONCLUSION

In light of the discussion and analysis of this article an expansive integrated definition and reconception of school violence allows us to reframe our analysis of types of school violence, causes and policy. Types of school violence can be distinguished by the level of their perpetrators within the social structure. Five levels of violence are identified, though the accuracy of the distinction between levels is less important than that the range of levels be addresses:

Level 1: Student-on-student; student-on-teacher; student-on-school.

Level 2: Teacher-on-student; administrator-on-student; administrator-on-teacher; teacher/administrator on-parents; parent on teacher/administrator.

Level 3: School board-on-school/parent; school district-on-school/parents; community-on-school/parent; local political decisions-on-school and on parent.

Level 4: State and national educational policy on-school; state and national juvenile justice policy on-student; media and popular culture on student and on administrator; corporate exploitation on students; national and state policies on guns and drugs.

Level 5: Harmful social processes and practices that pervade each of the above 4 levels. Here social processes are the patterns of interaction that overtime take on the appearance of a natural order or social reality existing above the individuals whose actions constitute that structure.

Discussion on school violence tends to be restricted to Level 1 and some aspects of level 4. Even within level 1, some important distinctions can be made. For example, Kramer (2000) distinguishes between three types of student violence: (1) predatory economic crimes, which involves the pursuit of material goals by

any means, including violence, (2) drug industry crimes, which involve violent gang turf wars, and (3) social relationship violence from powerless angry youths who use acts of violence to resolve issues of humiliation from their alienation (See also Staples, 2000 and Cintron, 2000). In addition, as we have argued elsewhere not all school students respond in the same way to the conditions that generate violence, even within level one and this has much to do with the influence of class, race and gender (Yogan and Henry, 2000).

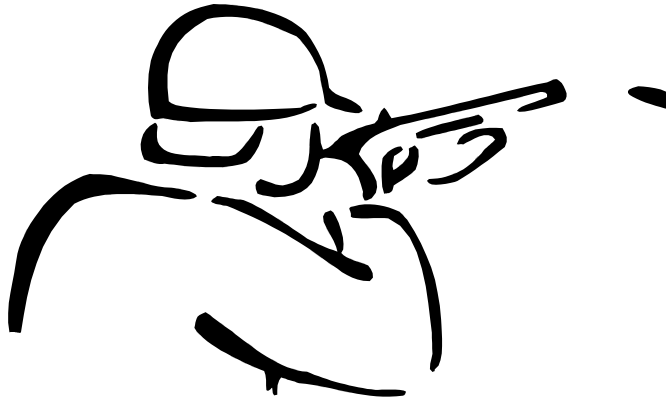
In contrast to the excessive discussion of level 1 and some of 4, there has been virtually no discussion of levels 2, 3, and 5 which, given the interrelations between these types, represents a glaring deficiency.

The definitional framework outlined above suggests that we need to take a much broader approach to examining the causes of school violence. Rather than operating simply on the individual or micro-level of analysis which looks to psychological and situational explanations for why students act violently, we need to address the context of students lives; their families, race, ethnicity, gender, and social class. We need to explore how these dimensions interconnect through social processes to shape and structure human thinking, moral development and individual choices. We need to examine how these social forces shape school curriculum, teaching practices and educational policy. Thus, at the meso-level we should be concerned to identify the way parents and schools themselves harm the lives of students, and the way they shape the content of young people's lives. Finally, at the macro-level we need to examine the ways the culture, and the economic, social and political

structure of American society is both reproduced and how it reproduces harmful processes. Although it may seem that this level has been addressed through the discussions, analysis and attempt to legislate against "toxic culture," this is an inadequate approach to macro-level analysis. Discussion of cultural causes of school violence has focused on the role of violence in the media-- in movies, in videos, video games, and on the Internet-- and on gun culture. The argument is that cultural violence amplifies young male aggressive tendencies. It devalues humans into symbolic object images of hate or derision, trains youth to use violent skills, celebrates death and destruction as positive values, and provides exciting and colorful role models, who use violence as the solution to problems, glorifying the most powerful and destructive performances via news media infotainment. While this may be true it is not enough to simply blame toxic culture for poisoning kid's minds without also looking at the ways in which corporate America invests in the exploitation of violence for profit that feeds this cultural industry. A macro-analysis of "culture," therefore, has to connect that culture to the political economy of the society in which it is generated.

Finally, an adequate policy response must be comprehensive, dealing *simultaneously* with each of the causes identified at each of the levels of definition. It must penetrate the built-in pro-

(Continued on page 16)



(Continued from page 15)

tections of systems that conceal their own practice from analysis and change. It must be reflexive enough to recognize that policy itself can be part of the problem rather than the solution; policy should be self-critical and self-correcting. While this article does not allow us to expand on the immensity of the policy question called for by such an analysis, the question of "dispute resolution" can be indicative in illustrating how a restrictive versus an expansive definition of school violence would operate (See Adams, 2000; Pepinsky, 2000; Caulfield, 2000; and Nicholson, 2000). A narrow approach to school violence prevention policy would begin by assuming a level 1 definition of the problem. For example, kids are violent in schools because they are taught to use violence to solve their problems or, at best, they are not taught non-violent ways of dealing with conflict. The simplistic restrictive policy response would suggest that dispute resolution training in techniques of non-violent problem solving would be appropriate.

In contrast, an expansive definition and an integrated causal analysis would tie the use of violence by students to the use of symbolic and other forms of violence by adults, whether these are parents, teachers, administrators, or politicians. Instead of just implementing such training for students, it would argue for all school personnel, at every level, to undergo and practice non-violent problem solving. Further, the school organization, curriculum and educational processes would be subject to the same "violence cleansing" scrutiny to be replaced by what Pepinsky (2000) calls "educating *for* peace" rather than "educating *about* peace."

In short, the issue of school violence is not just about kids in schools; it is about the total coproduction of our society by each of its constituent elements. To approach school violence in the limited traditional manner, is not merely shortsighted, it is to do more violence to those who have already suffered so much pain.

The author can be reached at Stuart.Henry@wayne.edu

* This article is drawn on the longer version "What Is School Violence? An Integrated Definition of the Problem." In W. Hinkle and S. Henry (Eds.) *School Violence*, Vol. 567 *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2000.

NOTES

1. Even at the level of individual violence this restrictive approach ignores student acts of damage and destruction toward a school or the educational and learning process, as in the examples of vandalism or drug taking.
2. Similar exclusionary practices have recently been argued to be contributing to male violence in schools (See Pollack 1998; Yogan and Henry 2000).
3. The evidence from recent victimization data shows that whereas violent crime in larger public schools increased by 25 percent between 1989 and 1995, it actually declined in small private schools by 20 percent. Indeed, only 2.3 percent of students at private schools reported violent victimization in 1995, compared with 4.4 percent in public schools, and gang presence in public schools is five times as great as that reported in private schools (Bureau of Justice 1998).

4. Increasingly children are being tried as adults, juvenile court cases are being waived to criminal court, and in some states such as Illinois they are now eligible for the death penalty for acts committing mass murder in schools. In 1996 10,000 juvenile court cases were waived to criminal court compared with 6,800 in 1987 and 15% of those involved youth under 16 years old, compared with 7% in 1987 (Office of Justice Programs, 1999, 1)

5. These are reflected in the critical conflict tradition in defining crime, and more recent postmodern perspectives (Henry and Milovanovic 1996).

REFERENCES

- Adams, A., Troy. 2000. "The Status of School Discipline and Violence." In W. Hinkle and S. Henry (Eds.) *School Violence*, Vol. 567 *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Bureau of Justice Statistics. 1998. *School crime supplement to the national crime victimization survey, 1989 and 1995*. Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs..
- Caulfield, Susan L. 2000. "Creating Peaceable Schools." In W. Hinkle and S. Henry (Eds.) *School Violence*, Vol. 567 *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cintron, Ralph. 2000. "Listening To What the Streets Say: Vengeance as Ideology?" In W. Hinkle and S. Henry (Eds.) *School Violence*, Vol. 567 *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Elliott, Delbert S., Beatrice A. Hamburg, and K. R. Williams. 1998. *Violence in American schools*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Garbarino, James. 1999. *Lost boys: Why our sons turn violent and how we can save them*. New York: Free Press.
- Hagan, John. 1977. *The disreputable pleasures*. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
- Hagan, John. 1985. *Modern criminology*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Henry, Stuart and Mark M. Lanier. 1998. The prism of crime: Arguments for an integrated definition of crime. *Justice Quarterly* 15:609-27.
- Henry, Stuart and Dragan Milovanovic. 1996. *Constitutive criminology: Beyond Postmodernism*. London: Sage.
- Henry, Stuart and Dragan Milovanovic. 1999. *Constitutive criminology at work: Applications to crime and justice*. Albany: SUNY Press.
- Kramer, Ronald C. 2000. "The Role of Poverty, Inequality and Social Exclusion in Shaping the Problem of Youth Violence." In W. Hinkle and S. Henry (Eds.) *School Violence*, Vol. 567 *ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lanier, Mark M. and Stuart Henry. 1998. *Essential criminology*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Office of Justice Programs. 1999. Delinquency cases waived to criminal court, 1987-1996. *OJJDP Fact Sheet 99*. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs.
- Nicholson, Jane. 2000. "Reconciliations: Prevention and Recovery for School Violence." In W. Hinkle and S. Henry (Eds.)

(Continued on page 17)

Michael Moore on School Violence in Flint, MI

Dear friends,

I tried to write this letter to you last night, but the level of sadness in me would not allow me to sit at this keyboard and compose these words.

How much more can my hometown take? How much more do the people we love have to suffer? How much? How much?? HOW MUCH! Isn't it enough that tens of thousands of lives in Flint have been wrecked, destroyed by the greed of General Motors? Isn't it enough that my wife and I and tens of thousands of others who love our home -- love it more than any of you will ever know -- have had to leave Flint in the past 20 years to find work far from family and friends? Isn't it enough that Flint suffers the highest or near-highest per capita rates of murder, rape and theft in the nation?

What else do the people of Flint have to go through while the rest of country mouths the propaganda of the evening news claiming "the economy is the best ever!?" The top 10 percent just get richer and richer and the next 30 percent of you keep the CNBC stock ticker on your screens all day and toss out all sections of the daily paper but the pages that tell you how well your portfolio did yesterday.

I thought there was nothing else left for Flint to go through. Like Job, it seemed that every imaginable sorrow had been visited upon its people. I guess I was wrong. I look up at the TV and a helicopter is hovering over a school while the words "Buell Elementary" flash on the screen. Buell? Buell! At the end of "The Big One," when I twisted Nike chairman Phil Knight's arm to match my \$10,000 contribution to the kids of Flint -- that \$20,000 went to Buell Elementary.

Yesterday, a 6-year old boy brought a semi-automatic gun to that very school in Flint and killed a 6-year old girl in their first grade classroom. Six years old. A little girl whose name was Kayla Rolland. That's about the only thing the national media got

right about the story. Twenty satellite trucks now ring the school, but with all that technology, they cannot find the way to bring you the truth. Of course, they have been spun and snookered by the local officials in Flint who try to hide from the responsibility they share in Flint's destruction any time a tragedy like this happens. You have probably heard that this school shooting took place out in the "suburbs," in a place called "Mount Morris Township"... "somewhere near Flint." There is no such place.

Buell Elementary, where the shooting took place, is in the Flint Beecher school district, the poorest school district in Genesee County, Michigan, and perhaps the poorest in the entire state. Eighty-two percent of its children, according to the federal government, live below the "official" poverty level (meaning the number of kids in total poverty is even higher). Beecher is Flint's dump. It is where you go when you have nothing left to your name. 60 percent black, 40 percent white. No municipality in Genesee County wants to govern Beecher, so it exists as a No

(Continued on page 18)

We look like a bunch of idiots. Let's do something about it and about the poverty in which so many of kids still dwell. We have never been in a better place to make it happen than right now. What are we waiting for?

(Continued from page 16)

School Violence, Vol. 567 ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pepinsky, Hal. 2000. "Educating for Peace." In W. Hinkle and S. Henry (Eds.) School Violence, Vol. 567 ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pollack, William. 1998. Real boys: Rescuing our sons from the myths of boyhood. New York: Random House.

Siegel, Larry J. 1998. Criminology: Theories, patterns and typologies. 6th ed. Belmont, CA: West/Wadsworth.

Staples, J. Scott. 2000. "The Meaning of Violence in Our Schools: Rage against A Broken World." In W. Hinkle and S. Henry (Eds.) School Violence, Vol. 567 ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Thompkins, Douglas E. 2000. "School Violence: Gangs and A Culture of Fear." In W. Hinkle and S. Henry (Eds.) School Violence, Vol. 567 ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Venturelli, Peter J. 2000. "Drugs in Schools: Myths and Realities." In W. Hinkle and S. Henry (eds.) School Violence, Vol. 567 ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Welsh, Wayne N. 2000. "The Effects of School Climate on School Disorder." In W. Hinkle and S. Henry (Eds.) School Violence, Vol. 567 ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yogan, Lissa J. 2000. "School Tracking and Student Violence." In W. Hinkle and S. Henry (Eds.) School Violence, Vol. 567 ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Yogan, Lissa and Stuart Henry. 2000. Masculine thinking and school violence: Issues of gender and race" In D. Sandhu (ed.) School Violence: A Practical Guide for Counselors. The American Association of Counselors, (forthcoming, 2000).

(Continued from page 17)

Man's Land on the northern city limits of Flint. It covers a small portion of two different townships (one of which is where my wife Kathleen is from).

But folks, when you hear the word "township" used in the case of Beecher, those of us from Flint mean it in the way the word was used in South Africa. Buell Elementary in the Flint Beecher school district has a Flint address and a Flint phone number, but the black officials from Flint on the news yesterday tried to point out that "this school really isn't in Flint!" It is amazing how deep oppression takes its roots when even black leaders find themselves in bed with General Motors and, like Peter in the Garden of Gethsemane, repeatedly deny that people of their own race have anything to do with them.

Poor, poor Flint. The media blowhards babble on about how "this is the youngest child to kill another child in a school shooting" and the few anchors who started to look at their own helicopter shots showing the school sitting in the middle of a bombed-out neighborhood commented that "this is actually the first of all these school shootings we've had lately that has taken place in an 'urban' school." Wow. Two records for Flint in one day.

When I was a senior in high school, the assistant principal of Beecher High -- the first black man in the area to hold such a position -- became despondent over his inability to quell the racial disturbances in the school, so one night he went home, wrote a heartfelt letter to the kids in the district, then put a gun in his mouth and blew his brains out. As my friend, Jeff Gibbs, who went to Beecher, told me last night, it's sad that the only two times that Beecher receives the attention of the nation is because of a gun.

I heard from relatives last night that the family of the little boy who killed the girl had been evicted from their home just last week. Evicted, I wonder, by Deputy Fred, who 10 years after "Roger & Me," still spends his day at the behest of Flint's landlords. Homeless and fatherless (his dad is in jail as 30 percent of all black men in America will be at some point in their lives), the boy was staying at his uncle's. In the house were guns, as there are in virtually every home in this devastated and desperate area. The gun, that the boy found and took to school, was not some "junk gun," the kind that Al Gore promises to get rid of. It was a gun with a brand name bought initially at a sporting goods store (I wonder, were the bullets bought at K-Mart, as they were at Columbine?).

How do Mr. McCain and Mr. Bush feel this morning? Just seven days prior, John McCain's "Straight Talk Express" bus rolled past Beecher on I-75, but it didn't stop. It rolled on down near Ann Arbor where McCain blasted those who seek gun control, saying that he opposes ANY ban on ANY assault weapon, and opposes ANY waiting period for a background check when one purchases a gun. Mr. Bush never stopped in Flint either.

I guess we all feel sorta proud that they both avoid us like the plague. There is not -- and has not for nearly thirty years -- been a single Republican state or federal representative elected from Flint. Another reason, I suppose, for our neglect and punishment. But we're proud of how we've made it almost a crime to support a Republican in Flint, proud of the fact we elected the country's first black mayor in the '60s, proud that we voted for Jesse Jackson 9 to 1 over Michael Dukakis in 1988 (and 4 to 1 for Jesse in Flint's all-white suburbs). So I guess the gun crazy presidential candidates made the right decision to take their hate-filled campaigns else-

where. And, in the end, I was proud to see that the people of Michigan, like the people in Minnesota, have kept their sense of humor intact as a way to express their sense of outrage. 51 percent of those who showed up to vote in the Republican primary were Democrats and Independents! They took the time to go the polls to plunk down for McCain just to, in good ol' working class fashion, stick it to the Bush with the silver spoon in his mouth.

I'll end by repeating what I have said many times before -- the handguns have to go. 16,000 gun murders last year in the US and 15,500 were killed by someone they knew (husband, boyfriend, neighbor) or by someone at work. Approximately 500 were killed by a stranger who broke into their home and 300 of those were killed by their OWN gun. Those are the facts. Easy access to guns by a species that often responds irrationally and with intense emotions is a lethal combination. Great Britain, a nation of 60 million people with a violent history of conquering the world at the barrel of a gun and now full of drunks and hot-heads who eat up violent American movies and TV shows -- last year they killed a grand total of 12 -- that's TWELVE! -- of their own citizens with handguns. That's because handguns are TOTALLY banned. Let the hunters keep their rifles after a serious background check, but the handguns, whose only purpose is to take a human life, must go. The Brits have done it, the Australians have done it, the Canadians have done it. Even New York City mostly did it -- and the number of murders there has dropped from 2,200 a year to 600.

We look like a bunch of idiots. Let's do something about it and about the poverty in which so many of kids still dwell. We have never been in a better place to make it happen than right now. What are we waiting for? Another Kayla Rolland? God help you if you ever have to live in a township that no town will claim and is forgotten by everyone else as soon as the next gun nut enters a McDonald's and a Burger king on the same day. Fried or flame-broiled, it's all our own unique American Hell.

On behalf of the six of us from Flint who work on The Awful Truth,

Michael Moore
MMFlint@aol.com

P.S. If you would like to contribute to the Kayla Rolland Memorial Fund please send donations to: Kayla Rolland Memorial Fund, c/o Calvary Assembly of God, 2518 Delaware Avenue, Flint, MI 48506.

Dr. Matthew Robinson

Appalachian State University

Editors' note: An earlier issue of the *Critical Criminologist* ran an article about school violence entitled 'Geek Profiling'. The article was excerpted from work by John Katz, who used quotes from students to indicate how an already alienating school environment was made worse for the best and brightest students by responses to school violence. His original column, 'Voices from the Hellsmouth' has now been updated with 'More Voices from the Hellsmouth' and 'The Price of Being Different.' All are available through <http://slashdot.org>

Bio-Critical Criminology: Why Biological Models are Critical for Critical Criminology

Matthew Robinson

Appalachian State University

During an ASC panel titled “Genetic and Congenital Sources of Antisocial Behavior and Their Social and Legal Implications”, some audience members were highly critical of the research presented. These ‘critical’ persons asserted that genetics research would be used to subjugate and oppress certain segments of the population, that brain research was a tool of government hegemonic ideology, and that biological research in general had no valid place in criminology. One person asked, “Why is this panel even happening?” As I will illustrate below, these persons misunderstood biological models of behavior as biological reductionism, determinism, positivism, and “neo-Lombrosianism.”

As chair and discussant of this panel, which featured papers on the use of DNA technology, genetic research, and the effects of cigarette smoking by pregnant women on later criminality of their children, I made a realization which I want to share with those criminologists who consider themselves ‘critical criminologists’, as I do. That realization is suggested in the title of this paper — in order for critical criminology to succeed in many of its goals, we must study, understand, and ultimately embrace biological research.

Such an assertion is similar to that made by Lee Ellis (1996) in the article, “A Discipline in Peril: Sociology’s Future Hinges on Curing Its Biophobia.” Traditionally, sociology (and hence criminology) has examined the relationships between larger, macro level factors (e.g., economics, poverty, group level learning) and behavior, but has ignored lower, micro level factors at the individual, organ, and even cellular levels. This is because sociology historically has been aimed at explaining crime rate variations rather than individual motivations and criminal behaviors.

Criminology as a scientific discipline has, for at least the past 100 years, paid little attention to biological models of behavior relative to sociological models. Thus, it should not be surprising that critical criminologists also have. I will argue that this will be detrimental to critical criminology (and more importantly to society) if certain policy implications are developed from biological models of behavior and utilized by persons who do not fully understand the research (such as legislators)!

What I would like to see and what I am proposing is a partnership between, and a merging of, those who consider them-

selves bio-criminologists and critical criminologists. Despite the shocking nature of such a proposal, it is logical because behavior is a product of genetic *and* environmental factors, nature *and* nurture. Since all environmental factors must first act on the brain of an individual before it can result in behavior, and because the brain itself is a product of genetic-environmental interactions, it seems silly to deny that genetics plays a role in behavior. The majority of our genes code for brain development — i.e., determine brain structure and/or affect brain processes. Critical criminologists have argued for years that certain harmful environmental factors (e.g., pollution) are disproportionately located in certain areas which are occupied by certain segments of the population (e.g., poor minorities). To the degree that such factors interfere with brain development, and thus produce learning disabilities, poor self-control, impulsivity, aggression, and similar disadvantageous outcomes, they become important for understanding the development of maladaptive, anti-social, delinquent, and even criminal behaviors. Is it also possible that such tendencies can be inherited by children who are born to families who have been historically exposed to such environmental conditions? It seems a questions at least worth considering for critical criminologists.

Imagine a “bio-critical criminology” where geneticists work to pinpoint genetic influences on behavior in the form of predispositions, where critical criminologists work to identify

I imagine a “bio-critical criminology” where geneticists work to pinpoint genetic influences on behavior in the form of predispositions, where critical criminologists work to identify environmental factors which increase the probability that genes will express themselves through behavior, where neurologists study effects of such environmental effects on the brain, and where all work together to develop appropriate policies

environmental factors which increase the probability that genes will express themselves through behavior, where neurologists study effects of such environmental effects on the brain, and where all work together to develop appropriate policies. Recommendations aimed at altering harmful environmental factors and/or genes themselves could be used to *prevent* the development of maladaptive, anti-social, delinquent, and even criminal behaviors and such disgusting practices as environmental racism.

Such a venture would not advocate reactive, destructive, or oppressive criminal justice policy. In fact, it would benefit those individuals and groups of people who are currently most subjected to unfair and unjust exposure to harmful and/or criminogenic environmental factors. The great irony here is that without such a link between bio-criminologists and critical criminolo-

(Continued on page 20)

(Continued from page 19)

gists – hence a “bio-critical criminology” – critical criminologists assure that they will play no role in the research which does and will continue (e.g., the Human Genome Project). Any policies which are developed and initiated which stem from this research will therefore not be informed by critical criminology at the most crucial stages.

Clearly, negative, harmful, and discriminatory policies will derive from genetics research. Virtually every major discovery and/or invention known to mankind has at some point been used for undesirable purposes. So, the general concerns among the audience members were legitimate and warranted. Ultimately, however, new discoveries are used to benefit mankind. By forming the bond between bio-criminology and critical criminology, critical criminologists can serve mankind by decreasing the likelihood that negative policies are developed and implemented.

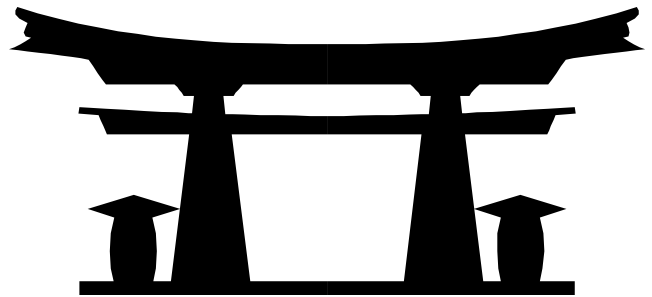
So I argue that critical criminologists should not reject biological models of behavior and ask questions such as “Why is this panel even happening?” Instead, we should make efforts to understand and be involved in the research so that we do not misunderstand biological research as deterministic, positivistic, or “neo-Lombrosianistic,” or equate interactive, integrated models with biological reductionism.

The myopic and emotional responses of some critical criminologists to biological research is understandable given our past endeavors as human beings. But they are not justified and will ironically increase the likelihood that harmful policies that we fear will occur.

(Continued from page 11) JAPAN

change the state of affairs in Japan. We cannot leave this situation as it is any more. We are pressing to establish critical criminology and change the basis of research and practice. To begin with, by using perspectives and methodologies of critical criminology, the history of criminology and criminal justice policy in Japan has to be analyzed and the features of them have to be examined as well. After such work is done, we may suggest conditions needed to change the state of criminology and criminal policy in Japan --- from criminology serving people in power and wealth to criminology of, by and for weaker people; from management of criminal justice led by and indebted to government to justice system open for suppressed people.

The author can be reached at takemura@cc.toin.ac.jp



The Division's Journal, *Critical Criminology*, should be back in publication by the end of the year. The Division is currently soliciting applications from members who would be interested in serving as Editor. This opportunity is open to past editors as well as newcomers. Many details will depend on the specific arrangements worked out with the new publisher, but experience and institutional support are helpful. Please see the letter from the Chair on page 2.

The Division is attempting to establish a critical section within the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. ACJS members can help out by signing the petition that will be circulating at the meeting. Please check out the announcement on page 3 and contact Bob Bohm for more information.

Save this page for printing the asc membership form

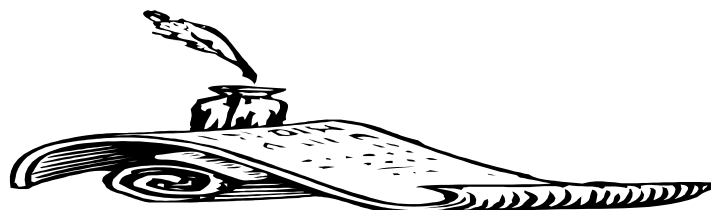
The Division on Critical Criminology is seeking applications for the positions of

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.

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