



Crime, Law, and Deviance

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2000

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FROM THE SECTION CHAIR

Dear CLD Members:

As Chair for the 2000-2001 year, I extend a warm greeting to members everywhere. I am glad to be the bearer of good news on several fronts. The best news is that our section is thriving and poised to do even better. In fact we recently increased our count to over 600 members and thus gained an extra panel session for next year. What happened?

Last winter, the committee on membership (Joachim Savelsberg, Chair; Karen Heimer, past Chair of CLD, and myself) embarked on a mission to increase membership and jump-start a more sustained intellectual dialogue among members and in our annual panel sessions.

The spark was ignited at a well-attended and provocative session at the 1999 Chicago meetings. After much discussion and exchange, we produced a memo that was mailed in April to over 600 attendees at the Toronto meeting of the American Society of Criminology who were not members of CLD.

That memo, which proved to be somewhat controversial, is reproduced in this newsletter for your interest. I won't claim a complete cause and effect, but our membership did jump by almost a

hundred in the period April to September, and we now stand at 623. This apparent response was obviously gratifying.

We were also pleased by the resulting e-mails, letters, and conversations we had on the relationship between criminology and sociology. Some senior scholars came back to the fold, while at the same time we saw an upsurge in graduate student membership.

I am particularly pleased at the vigor and quality our graduate students bring to the section, as evidenced by this year's student winner of the paper competition -- Christine Bond of the University of Washington (Article summarized in this issue).

Of course, we also received some disagreement with the arguments laid out in the memo. A common lament coalesced around the notion that "sociology left criminology." My personal response is to see some truth in that, but also to fight back on the part of criminology. I made an additional attempt in this year's volume of the Annual Review of Sociology to address the question, "Whither the Sociological Study of Crime?" **Send your thoughts on the memo and emerging debate to the newsletter, via the editor, Gary Jensen.** We can't publish everything, but we will strive to represent key positions.

There is much other good news. At the Washington meeting the CLD Council debated and then established a new distinguished article award to be given every other year, starting in 2002. It will be named after our esteemed colleague and loyal member, James F., Short Jr. Thanks go to George Bridges for the original proposal.

Plans are also afoot for an exciting slate of sessions for next year's meeting. The topics and session organizers for next year are listed in this newsletter. Please start thinking about papers you might submit or recommend that others submit (whether members of CLD or not).

I'll be honest and admit that Anaheim is a dreadful place for a conference, but we can make up for that with stimulating panel sessions and a lively CLD reception. We are looking into ways to make the reception a little different, California style. I should mention as well that our future is in superb leadership hands. Steve Messner, Chair of Sociology at SUNY-Albany, is waiting in the wings to take over after the 2001 meeting.

Finally, be thinking about nominating the best recent books in criminology for the 2001 Albert J. Reiss award for distinguished scholarly publication. The Reiss award is given every other year, and is supported by an endowment with assets over \$10,000. The 1999 winner of the book award, Simon Singer, will be chairing the committee and taking nominations.

Look for an announcement in the next newsletter, along with more on the Short award. In the meantime, send in your comments, as we will

use the newsletter in part as a forum for intellectual exchange on the future of sociological criminology.

Rob Sampson, Chair 2000-01

Graduate Student News

Sarah Goodrum, University of Texas, appointed Student Editor of the Crime, Law and Deviance Newsletter.



Hello, I am the new assistant editor of the Crime, Law, and Deviance Newsletter, and I have been asked to introduce myself.

I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin, and I plan to complete my degree in Spring 2001. My research focuses on the criminal justice system and victims of crime. In my dissertation, I look at people who have lost a loved one to murder. I use quantitative and qualitative data to assess the effects of sociodemographic characteristics, social relationships, and the criminal justice system on this type of bereavement. I received a National Institute of Justice Graduate Research Fellowship to help fund this research.

I recently presented a paper reporting preliminary findings from this dissertation at the American Sociological Association meetings in Washington, D.C. I reported that a criminal justice professional's perception of bereaved people is structured by the professional's organization in the criminal justice system (e.g., police department, prosecutor's office) and the professional's role within that organization (e.g., detective, counselor, prosecutor). In future analyses, I will examine bereaved people's perceptions of the criminal justice system.

In other research, I have used a symbolic interactionist framework to examine the male batterer's view of himself and others in domestic violence. This article is forthcoming in *Sociological Inquiry* in Spring 2001. In this work, I find that male batterers use strategies of denial and blame to dissociate (or separate) their violent self from their true self. They also demonstrate a range of role-taking abilities. Some of the most violent men in the study expressed a surprising degree of understanding for a partner's emotional and physical pain following violence. I argue that two possible explanations for this apparent contradiction involve the type of batterer who expresses empathy (i.e., dysphoric/borderline batterer) and the possibly selfish motivations for expressing such empathy (i.e., dissociation of the violent self from the true self).

As assistant editor, my major task this year is to design and maintain a website for the Crime, Law, and Deviance Section of ASA. Gary Jensen and I are just

beginning to construct this site, so we welcome your ideas about its organization and content. Please send me your suggestions via e-mail at sdg@mail.la.utexas.edu.

The winner of the student paper competition, Christine W. Bond of the University of Washington, received her award at the 2000 CLD Business meeting for her paper titled, "Does Gender Still Matter? Quantitative and Narrative Analyses of Gender Differences in Criminal Involvement and Pre-Trial Release."



(The selection committee this year was chaired by Brad Wright and included Simon Singer, Jay Meehan, Sara Steen, and Ross MacMillan).

Christine received her B.A., in sociology and English, and a law degree with honors from the University of Queensland in Australia. Before entering graduate school, she worked for the Queensland Criminal Justice Commission where her duties included evaluating policing programs. Her research interests include formal social control issues, the sociology of law, particularly

decision-making processes in criminal justice institutions, and quantitative methods. She expects to receive her Ph.D. in 2002. (cwdbond@u.washington.edu)

Christine's summary of the article follows:

This study was motivated by questions about the ways in which gender inequalities are manifested in the administration of justice. Despite an explosion of research in the last two decades, we have a limited understanding of how gender works as a mechanism of stratification, producing differential court outcomes. An enduring argument in the theoretical debate about the relationship between gender and punishment is the role of differential criminal involvement by men and women. Recent research has provided persuasive evidence that the traditional measures of criminal involvement of male and female defendants are flawed. The essential theme of these criticisms is that we have ignored differences in the meaning and variability of men's and women's offending, differences that may account for differences in punishment outcomes.

Using pre-trial and bail decisions of the King County Superior Court (WA) from 1994 to 1996, I examined the relationship between gender, the context of offending and criminal case outcomes. For a sample of 705 adult felony defendants, details about the circumstances surrounding the offending behavior were coded from their probable cause statements. I then estimated a multinomial logit model, comparing unconditional and conditional pre-trial release outcomes to bail. The key finding of this analysis was that, after

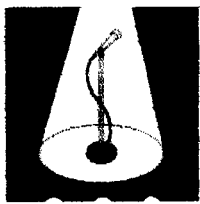
adjusting for detailed offense elements, there *remained* a significant gender effect across all pre-trial decision contexts. Male defendants were more likely to have bail imposed than females, while female defendants are more likely to receive unconditional pre-trial release. Although the defendant's criminal behavior was important, the more subtle differences surrounding the behavior did not fully mediate the relationship between gender and pre-trial outcomes—at least for pre-trial release decisions in felony cases.

Although a gender effect remained after introducing detailed offense elements into the model, these measures may not have captured the mix of circumstances critical in assessing the social seriousness of the offense. To address this concern, I selected a small matched sample of male/female pairs with *different* outcomes. The conclusion of this limited narrative analysis was that there was evidence of unexplained differences in pre-trial outcomes between matched male and female defendants, supporting the findings of the statistical analysis. Given the small size of this sample, the precise extent of this "gender effect" could not be determined. While disentangling gender from offense elements and social histories is difficult, differences in assessments of offense seriousness were not always sufficient in explaining disparate bail outcomes for male and female defendants.

These findings have three key theoretical implications for our understanding of gender and punishment. First, our theories of

gender and punishment need to account for the context or stage of the decision itself. Current and past research implies that different characteristics may be important at different decision stages in explaining the relationship between gender and punishment. Second, and perhaps most importantly, our research must give priority to incorporating measures of court officials' perceptions. How do court officials construct configurations of seriousness and evaluate blameworthiness and culpability? Finally, a clear implication of this analysis and past research is that both gender *and* criminal involvement matter. A defendant's criminal behavior has "meaning"—a meaning dependent on other social characteristics—for judges, court officials, and other defendants. Our essential task is the identification of the mechanisms through which gender and criminal behavior produce criminal case outcomes.

This research, based on my Master's thesis, was conducted under the guidance of Professors George Bridges and Daphne Kuo at the University of Washington.



Spotlight on Crime, Law, and Deviance Programs

CRIME/LAW/DEVIANCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

There are five faculty members in the Department of Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin who teach courses and conduct research in

crime/law/deviance: Sheldon Ekland-Olson (also Executive Vice President and Provost), William Kelly, Mark Stafford, Teresa Sullivan (also Vice President and Dean of Graduate Studies), and Mark Warr. Their research interests include: recidivism among parolees, death penalty, causes of homicide, bankruptcy, and delinquent peers.

A recent addition in the Department of Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin is The Center for Criminology and Criminal Justice Research. This is a multi-disciplinary center for conducting basic research on the causes and consequences of crime, as well as policy and program evaluation research in criminal justice.

The primary objectives of the Center include providing a forum for the exchange of information and expertise about crime and criminal justice, facilitating collaborative research with local and state criminal justice agencies, and enhancing graduate research and training opportunities in criminology and criminal justice.

The Center combines the talents and expertise of Faculty Research Associates and undergraduate and graduate students from the College of Liberal Arts, including Sociology, the Lyndon B. Johnson School for Public Affairs, the School of Law, the College of Business Administration, and the School of Social Work. Faculty Research Associates are: William Kelly, Director (Sociology) Ronald Angel (Sociology), William Black (LBJ), Michael Churgin (Law), Robert Dawson (Law) Jack Gibbs (Sociology, Centennial Professor Emeritus at Vanderbilt University),

George Holden (Psychology), Susan Klein (Law), Jonathan Koehler (Business), Michael Lauderdale (Social Work), William Spelman (LBJ), David Springer (Social Work), and Mark Stafford (Sociology). Daniel Mears, a recent Ph.D. recipient in Sociology from the University of Texas at Austin, is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Center.

Recent funded research projects in the Center are: a process and outcome evaluation of the Texas Youth Commission's Chemical Dependency Treatment Program; a collaborative evaluation with the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission of the assessment and referral process for juvenile offenders; an impact analysis of public order offending in Austin; a GIS analysis of the relationship between public order crime and more serious crime; an assessment of the impact of incarcerating juvenile offenders at the Texas Department of Criminal Justice; and an assessment of the feasibility of developing a community court in Austin. Moreover, the Center has constructed and maintains a website for the Bureau of Justice Statistics to provide information about use of BJS data sets.

The Center does not offer a degree in criminology or criminal justice. Students affiliated with the Center seek a degree in an academic department or college, such as sociology, psychology, social work, or law, where they take such courses as juvenile delinquency, criminology, criminal justice, theories of crime causation, social control, deviance, juvenile justice, sociology of law, social work in criminal justice,

youth gangs, and probability and scientific information in the courtrooms. The Center coordinates a variety of undergraduate internships with state and local criminal justice agencies.

There are 13 crime/law/deviance graduate students in Sociology at the University of Texas at Austin, and they have come from such institutions as Texas A&M University, the University of Maryland, Kansas State University, the University of Southern Maine, the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, and the University of Texas at Austin. All of the graduate students are actively involved in research, either alone or in collaboration with faculty, and many have published in such journals as *Criminology*, *Sociological Inquiry*, and *Population Research and Policy Review*. Also, many have received prestigious awards to support their studies and research, including fellowships from the National Science Foundation, Center for Spatially Integrated Social Sciences, Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, National Institute of Justice, and Social Science Research Council.

LETTERS TO SECTION MEMBERS

The letter encouraging people to join or rejoin the Crime, Law and Deviance Section is reprinted below with the hope that it will prompt some dialogue about the link between criminology and sociology. Send responses or comments to:

jensengf@ctrvax.vanderbilt.edu.

To: Members and/or Affiliates of the American Society of Criminology

From: Karen Heimer, University of Iowa and Chair, American Sociological Association (ASA) Section for Crime, Law and Deviance (CLD)

Robert J. Sampson, University of Chicago and Chair-Elect of ASA Section for CLD; Joachim J. Savelsberg, University of Minnesota and Chair, Membership Committee, ASA Section for CLD

Subject: **The state of criminology and membership in the CLD Section**

Date: April 17, 2000

We write to you as a member (or recent meeting attendee) of the American Society of Criminology who is not currently a member of the Crime, Law and Deviance Section of the American Sociological Association. We wish to invite you to join this section. Below we lay forth reasons why we believe doing so is beneficial to you as a criminologist and to criminology as a field. We also call to your attention the most recent newsletter of the ASA Crime, Law, and Deviance Section. Our memo is an excerpt from the newsletter, summarizing a panel on "Mutual Engagement: Criminology, Sociological Specialties, and Sociological Theory" by Joachim Savelsberg, John Hagan, Robert J. Sampson, James F. Short Jr., Susan Silbey, and Diane Vaughan. This panel, from the 1999 ASA meeting in Chicago, documents the benefits criminology can draw from being linked to specialties in sociology such as organizations, law, stratification, and urban sociology as well as general sociological theory. Personal benefits of ASA membership include a subscription to the *American Sociological Review* and a second ASA journal of your choice, along with notification of ASA events such as the Annual Meetings and workshops.

We believe that criminology is at a crossroads. We summarize here several theses that we recently formulated in response to the lively discussion generated at the ASA session.

First, criminology has grown as a multi-disciplinary field out of parent disciplines, especially sociology. The history of criminology is well known to you. Criminology has for long been an academic field to which scholars from many disciplines have contributed. Classic examples include the philosophers Jeremy Bentham and Cesare Beccaria, the statistician Adolphe Quetelet, and the sociologist Emile Durkheim. In the United States a central source was sociology with its early pragmatist focus on social control during times of massive immigration and urban growth. Landmarks include Edward Ross' famous book on social control, the early Chicago school of urban sociology, Merton's anomie theory, Edwin Sutherland's work, notably his first *Criminology* textbook, and famous contributions by many of his students. But other disciplines also made important contributions to American criminology. They include early 20th century strands in jurisprudence such as Roscoe Pound's sociological jurisprudence and Karl L. Llewellyn's legal realism, the Law and Society movement beginning in the 1960s, psychologists, political scientists, as well as groups of historians who began to correct sociological assumptions based on short-term views by contributing to our understanding of long-term processes. In short, criminology has benefited greatly from contributions by scholars in sociology and other disciplines. In fact, it was built on them.

Second, criminology has increasingly isolated itself from sociology. Ron Akers has recently analyzed, in his Presidential Address to the Southern Sociological

Association (published in 1995 *Social Forces*), the immense organizational gains of criminology and criminal justice studies vis-à-vis sociology during recent decades. He describes how the field exploded after the first non-sociological degree program in criminology was established in 1966 at the University of California at Berkeley. By the middle 1970s 729 associate of arts criminal justice programs had been established. The number of upper division programs grew tenfold to 376 Bachelor of Arts programs. By the early 1990s, the annual number of criminology Bachelor of Arts degrees began to surpass that of sociology degrees. The institutional separation from sociology also occurred at the graduate level. The number of masters program grew tenfold to 121. Finally, six non-sociological doctorate programs were founded in criminology and criminal justice by the early 1990s. Much of this growth coincided with massive funding by the U.S. Justice Department's Law Enforcement Assistance Agency. We also know that the major criminology and criminal justice associations grew to become manifold larger than the crime related sections in the disciplinary associations such as the American Sociological Association. Criminology's attempt at organizational self-sufficiency has made great strides—often at the expense of its connection to the disciplines.

Third, criminology is not a discipline, as it does not have an intellectual core. Our point here is a simple one, although we are sure one to provoke disagreement. Namely, criminology has a fascinating subject matter but no unique methodological commitment or paradigmatic theoretical framework. We all know about the challenges to theory integration even within social-science criminology. There are no common assumptions or guiding insights, no common ideas that animate criminological inquiry. It is true, of course, that disciplines vary along these criteria, such that economics

is obviously more unified than sociology. But even sociology has a core. Note also that there are a multiplicity of specialty areas within sociology, such as social movements, the family, and medical sociology. Many operate like criminology and run their own journals. Some may even have set up problematic intra-disciplinary boundaries. Yet, none claim to be a discipline. Rather than making false claims, we believe that criminology is best served within an embedded disciplinary structure. We do not claim that sociology is the only discipline of relevance. One could imagine a similar exercise with respect to economics or anthropology, for example, two "underrepresented" disciplines in current criminological discourse.

Fourth, criminology's isolation from sociology comes at great cost. The evidence is clear that over the past two decades criminal justice and criminology programs have proliferated at an increasing rate (see thesis 2). The American Society of Criminology has grown as well, a point of some pride among many criminologists. But is unrestricted growth necessarily good? We believe that criminology runs a risk with its increasingly inward focus on its own social reproduction -- especially the rapid proliferation of criminal justice Ph.D. programs. What seems to have happened is that many criminology programs seek validation by hiring their own (i.e. criminal justice or criminology) Ph.D.'s, yielding the paradoxical effect of undermining interdisciplinary research and paradigmatic insights from parent disciplines. The original argument in favor of criminology programs may thus come back to haunt its intellectual credibility.

Fifth, criminology is at risk of opening itself up to extra-scholarly influences, especially those of the State. As such it is at risk of losing its academic integrity. We are deeply disturbed by what appears to be an

increasing encroachment of State concerns into the intellectual framework of academic criminology. One of the strengths of much classic criminological research was its "arm's length" stance regarding governmental definitions and centrally controlled research agendas. As but one example, labeling theory may have run a bit amok, but its insights were profound and the implications foundational for understanding the social construction of criminological knowledge. It seems to us that the vast increases in extramural funding of criminological research over the past two decades have come at a cost. So much so that some criminology departments have recently taken to trumpeting the total amount of grant dollars per faculty member as a sign of "success." That the volume of State funding has nothing (inherently) to do with the quality of criminology is both obvious and yet ignored in everyday practice.

Sixth, concern with disciplinary credentials – sociology included – should be replaced by a renewed focus on intellectual ideas. We argue that because of the trends noted above, criminology in particular needs to break away from credentialism and return to the rich tradition of ideas leading research. Truth be told, the "classic" school of sociology was itself a messy affair dominated by intellectual rogues. Consider, for example, the unusual lineage of some famous "sociologists" in the early Chicago School, including Albion Small (Economics), W. I. Thomas (English), and Robert Park (Philosophy, Journalism). Then, as now, the sociological imagination was not limited to a sociology Ph.D. We end, then, with a plea for the importance of ideas, especially those that are linked to (multi) disciplinary frameworks. It is here that we should put our intellectual emphasis, not the

disciplinary credentials or even the status of authors.

All three of us are active and loyal members of the American Society of Criminology. We believe that the ASC can and must play a major role as a field of exchange where criminologists with a diversity of disciplinary backgrounds engage in fruitful exchanges for the benefit of criminology. Yet, we believe that criminology restricts rather than enhances multi-disciplinary exchange if it cuts itself off from the diverse disciplines that have, in the past, contributed to it. We encourage you to counteract this trend by adding membership in the ASA Crime, Law and Deviance Section to your membership in the ASC.

For ASA membership application see: <http://www.asanet.org>.

ASA Sessions and Roundtables for the 2001 ASA Convention

Session 1. Cities, Neighborhoods and Crime in the 21st Century

Jeffrey Morenoff
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Session 2. Crime and Deviance over the Long-term: Macro-level and Life-Course Perspectives

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Section 3. Law and Societal Reaction

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Washington, D.C. ASA Convention, 2000.

Rob Sampson filled in at the Council and Business Meeting for Karen Heimer who was expecting a baby in the very near future (Note: All went well for Karen and the meetings).



Steve Messner is Chair-elect.



We had a well-attended reception, sponsored by the CLD section, Comparative Historical Sociology, Sociology of Law, and Sociology of Sexualities.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ronald Akers and Gary Jensen are soliciting manuscripts for the 2001 Issue of Advances in Criminological Theory

Social Learning Theory and the Explanation of Crime: A Guide for the New Century

The deadline for submission of manuscripts for consideration has been extended to May 1, 2001.