

ACJS Today

Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences

Content Analyses of Criminal Justice Textbooks: A Pedagogical Tool for Teaching Research Methods

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Like me, you probably have numerous introductory criminal justice-related texts collecting dust on your bookshelf. Some are likely more recent than others, but all have one thing in common—they have pictures in them. For those of you out there who teach research methods, those texts can serve as a way to teach several key aspects of research methods. This essay outlines an exercise that I have used for the past several years in my favorite teaching assignment—undergraduate research methods.

Well, I just let the secret out, research methods is my favorite course to teach. I know what you're thinking—is this guy nuts? I'm sure there are others out there like me, but I guess I'll tell you why I enjoy the course, and I'm sure others feel the same way. First, I have always loved a challenge. And teaching this course is a challenge: many students and instructors run from it like the

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President's Message



It has been an honor to serve on the ACJS Executive Board for the past six years. I am proud to report that after a year of trips, meetings, emails, and phone calls that ACJS continues to be on the move. We are growing in membership and are involved in a number of initiatives that will serve to enhance the viability of our organization for years to come.

During the past year we have continued to maintain a presence with international and regional academic organizations. In efforts to enhance our relationship with the European Society of Criminology, Past ACJS President Dick Bennett, at my request, met with ASC President Todd Clear, and Executive Secretary of the European Society of Criminology, Marcelo F. Aebi at the annual ESC conference and discussed ways the three organizations could work together. This is the first time such an initiative has taken place and further development is expected.

The board's relationship with our regional organizations is very important. I was able to attend three regional organization conferences this year. Janice Joseph, First Vice President, and Jim Marquart, Second Vice President, attended the other regional conferences. Your hospitality at each of the events is most appreciated. You are encouraged to communicate with your regional trustees or ACJS Executive Board members if there is any matter of concern to you. Your feedback is important and critical to the future of our organization.

In my previous ACJS Today message I referenced my interactions with the Task Force on Sociology and Criminology/Criminal Justice from the American Sociological Association. I attended an open hearing at the recent American Society of Criminology meeting to further discuss issues and concerns of the Task Force. Regrettably, that hearing was poorly attended. My assessment is that the organization's concerns are grounded in their perceptions of criminal justice programs and less so with criminology programs, assuming there are substantive differences between the two (and that is an entirely different discussion). I found the members of the Task Force very open and willing to discuss issues affecting both disciplines. Representatives of the Task Force will be conducting another open hearing to receive input from the membership of the ACJS. We have much in common and I

encourage you to participate in their discussions at the next ACJS conference in March in Boston.

As stated in my "visits" with the regional organizations, "You are ACJS" and your involvement will determine the future of ACJS. I encourage you to take the upcoming conference seriously; provide the chair of your panel with a copy of your paper at least a week in advance and have copies of your paper for those attending your panel. If you are chair, provide time, when possible, to discuss the presentations and provide authors with useful feedback. This is a tradition that has all but disappeared at conferences. I challenge each of you to make the panel presentation a more valuable experience. The ACJS Program Chair will be working with panel chairs and moderators to implement a system that will track "no shows." If you are unable to attend your panel please contact the program chair or your panel chair as soon as possible. I also suggest that you take advantage of the Research Showcase. This alternative to the traditional conference presentation format is gaining momentum and I encourage you to participate in the showcase on Friday (and thanks to several generous donors there's also an upscale brunch there!).

In recent years, the Academy has provided free lunch for students attending the conference and will continue doing so this year on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. The local arrangements committee has scheduled a series of events including tours of local correctional institutions and ride-alongs with the Boston Police Department. Their ability to accommodate conference participants will be limited so make sure you watch for upcoming announcements and sign up as early as possible. Sage is sponsoring several junior faculty attending the inaugural ACJS teaching professional development workshop. More information about the workshop will be forthcoming. There are also a number of panels addressing preparation for the job market and getting your work published. The Employment Exchange will be available again this year. If you are interested in advertising a position or seeking an academic position please contact Ralph Rojas at r.rojas@snhu.edu.

We need your help, your involvement, and your commitment to grow the organization. You are ACJS! There is much to be done. Feel free to contact me (william.w.johnson@usm.edu), executive board members (listed on the web <http://www.acjs.org/>), or our Executive Director, Mittie Southerland, if you want to get involved or if you have any concerns or observations about ACJS operations. We need and value your input. Remember.....THINK BOSTON!!! SEE YOU IN '09!!!

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plague. I presume instructors see the course as dull and fear students will give them bad evaluations because of its perceived level of difficulty. For students, the “word on the streets” is that it is a difficult course for which they can’t find its relevancy. In either case, this provides the opportunity for me to use my creativity, which is the second reason why I enjoy teaching this course. I can assure you that if you lecture in every session of research methods, you will hear some snores and you might be fighting a rebellion! This course requires you to come up with creative assignments and lectures that make the class fun. Yes, you read that correctly: FUN. Don’t get me wrong, there will be moments when things may get dull, but I try to keep those moments to a minimum. Third, even though I am not a sophisticated methodologist, I find the area fascinating, so in teaching the course I keep up to date on new methodological approaches. Doing so, again, challenges me to design creative exercises and lectures to present the material.

One methodological area for which I have created a useful exercise for teaching is content analysis. The remainder of this essay focuses on a brief overview of content analysis, which is followed by a discussion of the exercise, and some closing thoughts.

Content analysis

In his classic text on content analysis, Ole Holisti (1969) defines content analysis as “a multipurpose research method developed specifically for investigating any problem in which the content of communication serves as the basis of inference (p. 2). According to a

recent research methods text, “Content analysis is the systematic qualitative and quantitative description of some form of communication” (Champion, 2006, p. 321). The technique is used two ways in the social sciences. First, it is used as an analysis technique for those persons who conduct interviews, and are seeking to discern themes from the interview transcripts. Content analysis is the procedure used to identify such themes. Second, in some research studies, content analysis is also used as the primary data collection method. So, for example, for those persons examining college textbooks, content analysis would be the method used to extract the desired data. In both instances, there are typically two types of content analysis approaches used.

The first such approach is manifest content analysis where the focus is on the number of times something appears in text. That is, the assessment of the selected form of communication is determined by a quantitative assessment of the items being scrutinized. The second approach, which is more qualitative in nature, is termed latent content analysis. Here, the focus is more on the general theme of the text being analyzed, and the overall assessment of the text rests less on quantification, but more on the essence of the contents of the text. As with most procedures, the ideal is when you can combine both approaches (Berg, 2007).

Contrary to what some may believe, content analysis is not a new procedure. It dates back to the 1700s in Sweden when a set of 90 hymns were published in a book called, *The Songs of Zion* (1743). Shortly after the book was published, a clergyman conducted a manifest content analysis of the hymns and reported that

they were blasphemous (Dovring, 1954-1955). Though these claims were later determined to be questionable, content analysis was born. In America, the technique surfaced in the late 1700s. During the period leading up to the ratification of the Constitution, several observers noted that there was a class-bias in the document. How did they come to this conclusion? You guessed it—they conducted a content analysis of the document. Their analysis revealed that words such as well-born, aristocracy, and great men, were frequently used in the document (see Berelson, 1952, p. 21).

Since these pioneering uses of the techniques, the tool has become widely accepted as a social science technique. Most notably, in the early 20th century, Thomas and Znaniecki's use of the technique to analyze letters in their classic text, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1927), showed the usefulness of the technique in the social sciences. Following their work, well known scholars such as Paul F. Lazarsfeld, began to apply the technique to the mass media. And during World War II, the technique was used by the military to determine how the press (newspapers, magazines, radios, and comic strips) were treating war-related problems. Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, the procedure was refined, and it was during this period that Berelson's classic on the topic appeared (Berelson, 1952). In the 1960s, as noted previously, Holsti (1969) also published his often cited treatise on the topic, and also there was the emergence of computer content analysis, which, because of the increasing amount of software geared to do these types of analyses, has today become more sophisticated and widely adopted.

Given its wide adoption as a standard technique in the social sciences, most introductory texts in general research methods courses devote either a chapter or portions of one to its application. Having used a variety of

approaches to teach the topic, several years ago I created an approach which I have found to be useful in teaching students the technique. The basics of that exercise are outlined in the next section.

The Exercise

The exercise is separated into several steps, which are outlined below. Following this discussion, some general limitations of the exercise are discussed.

Step 1: Separate the Students into Groups of 2-3

Normally when I teach methods, on the first day of class, I separate students into groups of 4-5 students. Given that I use an assortment of group exercises throughout the semester, it allows for students to get to know one another, and to work together to gain a better understanding of the material. In many instances, as a tertiary benefit, these groups turn into study groups.

For this exercise, I use subgroups from the initial groups I construct. That is, I split them into groups of 2-3 students. From there, the students and I discuss our focus for the study. We typically come up with one hypothesis that can be tested by using the numerous *Introduction to Criminal Justice* texts that I dust off and use for this exercise each semester. Typically, we construct a hypothesis that relates to the portrayal of racial minorities or women.

Step 2: Operationalization

From there, we discuss how best to operationalize positive, neutral, or negative portrayals. This requires us to determine how best to categorize each picture. This discussion reinforces the importance of conceptualization and operationalization. It also emphasizes the subjective nature of the assessment. That is,

even though our final assessment will be made on the total number of pictures that fall into each category (quantitative assessment), the initial assessment is based on a qualitative judgment.

Step 3: Data collection

Once all the particulars are completed, students start collecting the data. Typically, this involves someone being dedicated to recording the name and the author of the text to be analyzed, and the number of counts, with the other group members actively engaged in going through the texts. Inevitably, there will be questions surrounding how to classify pictures. In these instances, rather than tell them how I would classify the picture in question, to maintain the integrity of the exercise, I stop class and solicit the opinions of the entire class. This process normally results in some agreement regarding how to classify the pictures in question.

Step 4: The Swap

When all groups are completed, the students presume the exercise is complete; however, it is only half over! I then have the groups swap texts and have each group analyze a new text. Again, the group should record the name and author of the text, and the counts from the new text. In actuality, I don't use the second assessment in the final analysis of the data, but, having students do this second analysis serves as a powerful way to teach reliability and validity.

Step 4: Analyzing the data

Once the second analysis is complete, I ask the group recorders to turn in their tally sheets. Then I tabulate the data and put a cross-tabulation on the board with the counts (Ns) and percentages for each classification. In so doing, students see how the data stacks up against the formulated hypothesis. Here, I have also talked about the nature of the data and the type of

analysis that would be most suitable. Instructors can go as far as they like here. However, the students are usually very interested in the results. As such, there are numerous "teaching moments."

Step 5: Reliability and Validity

Once we discuss the results, I normally get into issues related to validity and reliability. Why not discuss this before hand? Because in my experience, it is best to have them do the exercise first and, either along the way or after the exercise is complete, they naturally arrive at a basic understanding of these issues. Nevertheless, since the next chapter in the text I use (Hagan, 2007) is on reliability and validity, it serves as a perfect segue into that chapter. More specifically, I introduce them to inter-rater reliability by comparing the data from the analyses of the same texts by two different set of raters. To date, you guessed it, in every instance the counts have been different, which speaks to reliability and validity concerns. This discussion is so much more meaningful after students have engaged in an exercise where this was an issue.

A Note on Content Analysis and the Unit of Analysis

One other discussion I have related to content analysis relates to the unit of analysis. For the exercise, I indicate the unit of analysis is textbook pictures. However, to better understand issues related to the unit of analysis and content analysis in similar studies, I simply turn to the literature. As an example, a recent article in *JCJE* highlighted the methodological approaches in top criminology and criminal justice journals (Tewksbury, DeMichele, & Miller, 2005). The study employed a content analysis of the articles, and used page counts as the unit of analysis to determine the length of journal articles in each of the top journals. To

emphasize the importance of the unit of analysis, I first read the following passage by the authors:

Table 2 shows that there are some important variations in the mean number of pages per article across the five journals...in regard to the mean length of articles, it is notable that the *Journal of Criminal Justice* tends to publish significantly shorter pieces than the other journals. In fact, the mean length of articles in *Criminology* is nearly two and a half times as long as those in *Journal of Criminal Justice*. And, *Criminal Justice and Behavior* also tends to have noticeably shorter articles than *Criminology*, *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, and *Justice Quarterly*. (Tewksbury, DeMichele, & Miller, 2005, pp. 273-274).

Next, I pull out an issue of each of the journals and ask students what might be the problem with using page counts as the unit of analysis. Students note the physical size and layouts of the journals. That is, the *Journal of Criminal Justice* is physically bigger than the other journals, and presents the articles with two columns on each journal page. In addition, the students mention concerns regarding the varying font sizes of the journals. By the end of the discussion, students are clear which unit of analysis could have been more precise (word count), and, why using the wrong unit of analysis could, at times, result in misleading results. Here again, the goal is to move away from lecturing and have students engage in active learning (Robinson, 2000).

Concluding thoughts

Is this exercise perfect? Nope. The biggest pitfall I have experienced is that the exercise can sometimes lead to too much discussion! Often times, the pictures are so graphic or depict well-known persons (both famous and infamous), that, without intervention, they tend to produce extended discussions. On a more minor note, the exercise can take two class periods to complete. Therefore, if you're one of those instructors on a strict schedule, this exercise might not be for you.

In general, though, I have found the exercise to be very effective. It teaches students the process of doing content analysis, while also reinforcing some rudimentary aspects of research methods. As a bonus, it gets students interacting with one another (which is *almost* never a bad thing), and also takes the focus away from the technical aspects of methods. Nevertheless, it is important to note that I teach at a smaller college where our methods courses are capped at 25 students. This might be the type of setting in which this type of activity works best. Even so, I encourage faculty from larger programs to give it a try. What do you have to lose?

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An Academic View of the Correctional Officer and the Inmate

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Introduction

Authors, in numerous forms, address reintegration as it pertains to offenders, with the most common assessment maintaining that employment, housing, health services, family integration, and financial matters are the most difficult obstacles. However, those who have moved from the cellblock as correctional officers to the classroom as college professors face a similar experience: “How does one transition from the ‘real world’ to the academic environment without appearing jaded?” College professors address, present, and summarize various topics to numerous students each academic year, and students, at one time or another, may suspect that a professor appears apathetic to the needs of inmates, uninformed of the psychology of correctional officers, and/or question their lack of success as a correctional officer (i.e., “those who cannot do, teach”). This writer has heard similar types of questions by students regarding these topics, and the answer, which may surprise you, is based on three areas: correctional officer outcome success, coping factor, and understanding the games that criminals play. These three areas are the basis of this document and an academic insight from this current professor to the current practitioner.

Literature Review

Socialization Outcomes

Crouch and Marquart (1990) presented four

basic outcomes of guard socialization, which result after a correctional officer completes his or her rites of passage, among correctional officers. These authors advance that a correctional officer becomes either a/an (1) *Abject*, (2) *Ritualist*, (3) *Successful Officer*, or (4) *Insider*. Similar to the inmate subculture (or mini-society), guards experience their own form of occupational socialization. This process not only teaches a new hire the formal procedures (policies), but, and perhaps more importantly, the informal procedures. The latter was best represented in *Shawshank Redemption* when Warden Norton exclaimed, “[T]he other rules you’ll figure out as you go along.” This can best be addressed and alleviated by understanding the games that criminals play. Although experiences among correctional officers vary from state to state, at least all can find application to one of the listed socialization outcomes within their correctional organization.

Imagine if you will, a recently groomed employee, fresh from training, and ready to tackle the corrections field. The issue, in this case, is not the training, per se, but rather addressing what officer category the employee will fall into once he or she begins employment at a correctional facility. Years ago, a “new staff” (a common label given to newly hired staff by the juvenile residents), witnessed his “first force cell” (i.e., physically removing a resident from a cell). He was obviously disturbed by this action within the facility and a week later he resigned after four weeks of employment.

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Crouch and Marquart (1990) would have categorized this employee as *The Abject*. Why? Employees resign positions for various reasons. These reasons range from fear to racial or sexual discrimination; in this instance, the construction of fear applied.

According to the Department of Labor (www.dol.gov), the median salary for a correctional officer is \$33,600 per year, which one could naturally suspect as “attractive” to a newly hired employee. This “attraction” is what may keep certain correctional officer types employed. This certain “type” is known as *The Ritualist*; one who simply shows up to work for a paycheck, which results in the tendency of some correctional officers retreating from the seriousness of their job. Obviously, this outcome has serious effects on safety and security issues within a facility. Furthermore, correctional officers that fall into this category may present grandiose institutional plans and/or a “look out for number one” mentality.

Thirdly, almost every newly hired correctional officer has visions of running a facility. This writer had a similar objective during the corrections tenure. Although this writer was, and most are, reluctant to admit this, all will admit that a level of hierarchy exists at every institution. The level of hierarchy (e.g., managers and supervisors) is not what you might suspect. Rather, there is a hierarchy of *Insiders* among the line staff. *Insiders* are those who have achieved mobility within the prison. The debate is not over promotion, but the circumstances of which the promotions were granted. For instance, many correctional officers believe that the *Insider* success has less to do with merit and more to do with organizational politics (Jacobs, 1977).

The Successful Officer is, in the opinion of this

writer, the ideal category for correctional staff. Although there is a common link between *Insider* and *Successful* correctional officers (e.g., promotion), similar to *Insiders*, *Successful Officers* are not liked by all. Where the difference lies is that *both* colleagues and inmates respect *Successful* correctional officers. The *Successful* staff best represents the role of a correctional officer in every facet (e.g., fair-minded and mature). Consider one instance that describes the *Successful* category. A juvenile inmate asks, “Why are you so mean?” An appropriate reply: “You need to understand the difference between “being mean” and “being fair.” One important facet that does not seem to gather steam is the staff/inmate relationship among correctional staff. Certainly, there are correctional officers who fall more towards the counselor ideology than guard ideology. The goal of a *Successful* officer, however, is to determine where they fall on the counselor versus guard continuum, and the best way to address these outcomes is not only acknowledging that the challenge exists, but more importantly, understanding the coping factors for guards.

Coping Factors

In the never-ending endeavor to address and combat the former practitioner/current professor category of “apathy,” a correctional officer needs to have a working knowledge of supportive systems to invalidate the historically constructed stereotype of psychologically/socially produced “guard-as-villain mentality.” Furthermore, Josi and Sechrest (1998:11) explain: “Correctional officers today must find a balance [i.e., jailer versus counselor] between their security role and their responsibility to use relationships with inmates to change their behavior constructively.” In addition, and within the prison literature, authors have addressed the

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issue of quality interpersonal relations with colleagues within the work environment and that relationship to job success (Gardner, 1981; Veneziano, 1984). Although research on coworker relationship outcomes is somewhat ambiguous, it is safe to conclude that favorable relations with fellow officers diminish alienation and cynicism among correctional staff (Poole and Regoli, 1981).

If the presence of a “guard subculture” is able to produce “apathetic” correctional officers via the teachings of inmate perception and inmate management (Crouch and Marquart, 1990), should that same subculture produce knowledgeable and understanding officers who fall into the desired socialization outcome? Kauffman (1988) identified a distinct correctional officer subculture within prisons where beliefs and values of correctional staff produce an “officer code,” which included aiding and supporting fellow colleagues. Education may be the key to addressing apathy. A level of education not only provides the tools to answer the “why” questions, but also facilitates coping tools for the correctional officer. Additionally, with education comes knowledge and that knowledge lies in an understanding of the games that criminals play.

Understanding the Games that Criminals Play

Allen and Bosta (1981) wrote *Games Criminals Play: How You Can Profit By Knowing Them*. The authors present a critical examination of how criminals control the behavior of their victims (prison staff); and they emphasize that correction professionals, not just prison staff, should recognize and prevent such co-optation. Within the socialization of correctional officers, the struggle between good guard versus bad guard, and inmates’ games, Allen and Bosta offer

sound advice for the correctional staff, which provides the reader an ability to identify and acknowledge that once the “game playing” stops, rehabilitation, in any form chosen, is possible. Similar to the game playing within the inmate subculture, game playing exists within the socialization categories of the guard subculture. Although correctional departments realize that people change people, *Games Criminals Play* explains, subtly, that the inmate tests to see if a yard can be taken from an inch. As stated, “[I]f an employee gives an inch, why not take the mile” (Allen and Bosta, 1981:13). The understanding of the set-up and downing a duck tools, as well as other tools presented, are critical to the understanding of the prison organization and all that it encompasses.

Conclusion

A portion of this understanding is not only recognizing the games, but recognizing the theoretical aspects of inmate and guard psychology. Sykes (1958:63-83) introduced the *pains of imprisonment*, which addressed how an inmate adjusts to the correctional environment. Similar to the on-going debate over inmates, deprivation versus importation models, a similar debate exists for guards. Numerous authors (e.g., Irwin and Cressey, 1964; Jacobs, 1977), who have addressed issues such as what attributes might lead a guard to one specific outcome, challenged these models dealing with deprivation. How does a correctional officer adapt to working within the organization of jail? Were the ideologies toward inmates generated prior to employment (importation) or subscribed to during the socialization process (deprivation) through training?

The attitude, education, and skill level of the former practitioner and current professor role is not only vital, but also necessary. The practical

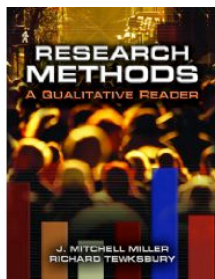
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experience gained as a correctional officer facilitates more successful course instruction by minimizing the disconnect between theory and application, thereby enhancing the benefits to students. Furthermore, good course instruction is designed to influence imagination. The pedagogy of individualism, existentialism, social reconstructionism, and the dimensions of imagination adopted from Carl R. Rogers (1961), addresses teaching as an art form. In other words, the enormous dimensions of imagination wherein teaching is similar to an artist looking at a bare canvas (the student), thereby adding colors (information), which in turn creates figures (education) that eventually evolves into the final masterpiece (knowledge). Bringing real life examples and problems from the cellblock to the classroom challenges the imagination of students towards a greater knowledge, creative solutions, and practical applications.

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Book Review



Miller, M., & Tewksbury, R. (2006). *Research methods: A qualitative reader*. New Jersey: Pearson

Submitted by:
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Research Methods: A Qualitative Reader provides a wealth of information establishing the need for a revival of the “criminological ethnographic enterprise” which is the simultaneous use of traditional and alternative methods of qualitative research in order to study crime and deviance. The authors argue in favor of ethnography as a vital and complementary component to criminology. Drawing upon the traditional Chicago School, the authors address the debate that somehow qualitative methods are inferior to quantitative methods. Venturing beyond praise of qualitative methods this book provides the reader an inside view of issues facing qualitative researchers via practical applications. The book leads the readers on a “step-by-step” journey through the “how-to’s” of qualitative research. The uniqueness of this text is in the presentation of the readings, which capture the reader’s attention through “true crime” experiences. This book contains a preface and three sections. Each section is divided into topics comprised of published research, each topic is introduced, and each section contains “Questions to Consider.” Thus, the authors provide readers with tools relevant to the realities of research and

experiences researchers may encounter regardless of methodology.

Qualitative research is not promoted as competing with quantitative research. The authors propose that neither is “the best” and both are “better.” They encourage researchers to delve deeply into research, which often reveals a kaleidoscope of findings. This ethnos is encompassed in a holistic methodological approach to research, which is the goal of a systemic approach to research.

This vicarious journey through qualitative research provides a smooth transition from each topic such that the progression toward the end of the process flows naturally. Historically accepted traditions of ethnography are traced; the progression toward the rise of positivism as the leading philosophy of science. The authors explain the demise of qualitative research whereby quantitative approaches involving statistical analyses of relationships among variables are posited as representing social reality leaving many scholars viewing qualitative research as lacking value.

Part one provides a biographical account of a study conducted by Tewksbury. He provides “do-able” approaches to participant-observation traditionally limited by problems gaining access to hidden environments; presents alternative approaches to covert participant observation through his role as potential participant. Observational data collection is emphasized and the article presents dangers and ethical dilemmas, which often result when studying, marginalized environments. He combines aspects of complete participant observation with covert observational research design and draws upon applications of the potential participant role in two sexualized environments. This article focuses on the utilization of inherent obstacles to sexology and addresses maintaining professional ethics while participating in this role. Tewksbury presents a

Book Review

solid case for research in hidden sexual environments.

J. Mitchell Miller quotes Denzin (1968) “The goal of any science is not willful harm to subjects ... advancement of knowledge and explanation.method that moves us toward that goal is justifiable” (p.12), and observes that researchers ignore this technique; the majority of qualitative texts provide little information. The end result: abandonment of covert observation. Miller posits that it is unfortunate that covert research is the least used of qualitative methods since covert identities allows in-depth scrutiny of closed environments in social life, particularly criminal and deviant environments.

Jeff Ferrel describes “going native” in illegal field research by “crossing over” into the criminal world and provides a framework for this type of investigation. He spent two years with members in a local graffiti underground as a participant observer and leads the reader on an adventure akin to an action film; sitting on the “edge of your seat” drama including foot pursuit(s) and an arrest. Using Weber’s idea of criminological *Verstehen*, Ferrell recommends broader applications of this methodology.

Part two is comprised of readings, which illustrate marginal, dangerous, and “different” qualities that this method entails. These labels are inaccurate as given by the “quants.” “Quants” fail to recognize that when studying individuals and communities that are deviant and/or “different” qualitative research may be the most beneficial method for gaining understanding of diverse populations. The first reading focuses on ways researchers are viewed by participants and environments in which they work; specifically how researchers can manage their actions in order to increase their chances of being positively perceived and accepted by the population.

Articles in this section include a study of active burglars engaged in breaking and entering and a study of roles of women in outlaw motorcycle gangs. Approaches such as these (dangerous) could not be repeated using quantitative methods. These articles demonstrate how these settings operate as social environments dictating how actors in these worlds behave endemic to closed environments.

The process of disengagement from the field recognizes that ending a research project is more than just ending an interview. The process of ending an imbedded research project is likely to involve personal and professional concerns about ethics and responsibilities. Part three addresses these barriers. Many topics studied using qualitative approaches are considered unethical and immoral. Negative attention is often the plight of researchers who invest time and resources’ attempting to advance knowledge yet their work is often viewed as disreputable. Some face grave danger. Research settings cannot be predicted; reactions cannot be foreseen. These articles reveal that proactive planning in advance for what *might* take place can help researchers handle trouble.

Sex topics are often considered “sinful” by the general population. Often, those who chance “taboo” research are labeled as perverted. Stigmatization can be handled; is not an excuse to abandon research. Eric Goode presents a confessional story about engaging in sexual relations with his subjects and raises questions for the reader about what is acceptable. He argues that sexual activity with subjects is not unethical and may benefit research. The reader is prompted to think carefully, self-reflect, and consider a full range of consequences of these projects.

The authors may wish to consider a workbook where research scenarios can be

Book Review

utilized in the form of “What would you do?” scenarios where the reader determines appropriate methodology(s) to use.

Through a diversity of enthralling topics, these authors present issues at the forefront of the “quants” vs. “quals” debate currently gaining momentum (Kraska, 2008). They do not sacrifice dissemination of knowledge for ethnographic drama; facts are of such interest that the “average Joe” would enjoy this book. The authors detail problems, ethics, and the “taboo.” Truths are not minced; many find truths offensive. The inclusion of “Questions to Consider” at the end of each section, and a history of the theoretical underpinnings and emergence of qualitative research creates balance. This text can be used as primary and supplementary works at post-secondary levels, is useful in criminal justice methods classes and in other disciplines. This work contributes a pedagogically sound text as an enjoyable reading experience. The authors demonstrate depth of understanding of and make significant contributions to the discipline of qualitative research.

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Book reviews should provide a detailed description of the book to help the readership determine how useful it will be for teaching particular courses. Please identify how the book is applicable to criminal justice, criminology, sociology and other related curriculums. Also identify the course and level of students for which the book will be most useful. Submission of a review to *ACJS Today* implies that the review has not been published elsewhere nor is it currently under submission to another publication.

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May 15th
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November 15th

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Article Guidelines

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Minimum length: 700 words
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Photos: jpeg or gif
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Announcements

Call for Manuscripts

Do you have a manuscript that pertains to assessment in criminal justice higher education? If so, the ACJS Assessment Committee invites you to submit it for electronic publication on the ACJS website in a new forum devoted to assessment. Manuscripts should be a maximum of 15 pages in length, double-spaced with 12-point font, and conform to APA style for all formatting. All manuscripts will go through a peer-review process. This is an opportunity for scholars who are doing research on student learning and/or assessment in higher education in criminal justice to have a venue for their important work. ACJS members will also be able to share ideas and collaborate with others through these electronic manuscripts. For additional information, please contact Barbara Peat, Chair, ACJS Assessment Committee, at bpeat@iun.edu or 219-981-5645. Deadline for submission is January 15, 2009.

ACJS Members: Check Your Emails!

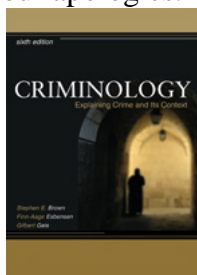
ACJS periodically sends email announcements to members that contain important information about upcoming meetings, events, surveys, and other information. If you are not receiving these emails, please be sure to do the following:

1. Check the ACJS member directory at www.acjs.org to be sure that we have your current email address. If the email is incorrect, please notify the Association Manager (manager@acjs.org) of your current email address.
2. Check your junk mail folder to see if the ACJS emails are being delivered in that folder instead of your inbox. If so, you will need to reset your junk mail properties.
3. If the emails are being blocked by your institutional system, check with your IT department to see what can be done to remove the delivery restrictions from correspondence from ACJS. If, after all these steps, you still are not receiving the ACJS emails, contact the Association Manager and she will send you the text of the mass email in a format that you can hopefully view.

Thanks so much! Cathy Barth

Sincere Apologies

In the October 2008 issue of ACJS Today, we inadvertently published the incorrect photo of Criminology: Explaining Crime and Its Context by Stephen E. Brown, Finn-Aage Esbensen, and Gilbert Geis. Please accept our apologies.



The International Association of Chiefs of Police and the Bureau of Justice Administration Announces the Discover Policing Initiative

Recruitment of police officers is a long standing concern of police agencies nationwide. Finding, attracting, and hiring quality officers from diverse backgrounds are top priorities for all law enforcement agencies. The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and the Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice (BJA), have partnered to address this important issue through the creation of an innovative career website called DiscoverPolicing.org. DiscoverPolicing.org is the cornerstone of a nationwide initiative that will market the benefits of careers in law enforcement to a broad and diverse audience, from young applicants to those seeking a career change or exiting military service. Through a clear and accurate portrayal of the full range of police service opportunities, Discover Policing will convey an accurate image of policing, expand the pool of potential applicants, and provide an effective means for candidates and hiring agencies to connect.

Discover Policing offers a robust career information database along with a built-in Career Center. The career database is divided into four easy-to-navigate and informative categories: "Why Policing?", "What's It Like?", "What Does It Take?", and "Find Your Career" Here users will find a wealth of information about policing including: an outline of why policing is a great career; examples of the variety of agencies and job opportunities; first-person accounts of what it is like to be a police officer; and an overview of the hiring, selection, and training processes. Visitors to the site can also look up contact information for nearby agencies and access links to resources of interest in all 50 states and worldwide. No other site on the Web offers a more comprehensive window into police service (Source: IACP Discover Policing).

Visit www.discoverpolicing.org to explore what DiscoverPolicing.org has to offer. Colleges and universities are encouraged to link this website to their career services websites. If you have questions regarding this program, contact the Discover Policing staff at 1-800-THE-IACP, or DiscoverPolicing@theiacp.org.

Submitted by; Dr. Jeffrey Magers, California University of Pennsylvania-Pittsburgh, (Chair, IACP Police Administration Committee) magers@cup.edu

Call for Participants

Proposal for the 90th Anniversary of the Police Strikes in the United Kingdom and Boston, August and September, 1919, at the ACJS Conference in Boston, March 10-14, 2009.

The annual ACJS conference is in Boston this coming year. 2009 will also be the 90th anniversary of two labor strikes that are significant historical events and cornerstones in Policing. Labor dispute between the Police officers and their employers, in both countries, was nothing new. Labor unrest for a variety of reason had been a reality for the “Modern Police” almost since their inception. What is different about the period of the First World War and immediately following it was the economic and social pressures that the Police, on both sides of the Atlantic, found themselves under.

Much has been written about the foundation of the “Modern Police” by Sir Robert Peel, its spread throughout the Western World and the changes it under went in the United States. These strikes (actually three August, 1918, July, 1919, UK and September, 1919, Boston), were to bring radical changes on the Police Services of both countries and continue to have their effects felt today.

I have proposed to ACJS, as part of our annual conference, a panel, or two, to mark this anniversary, especially since our meeting is in Boston. The Theme could well be titled, ***Police Strikes of the Early Twentieth Century and their effects on the Officers, Departments and the Public.*** As part of this, we are issuing this Call for Participants in this project. This call will look at the historical development of these forces, both in the United States and the United Kingdom and the situation that these officers found themselves in as WW1 came to a conclusion. Additionally, what were the outcomes of the strikes to both the officers and the Departments, the winner and losers? Indeed the then Governor Coolidge used the Boston Strike and his famous comment about “no right to strike”, to propel himself into the Presidency of the United States.

Of great interest is the final outcome to the Departments and its officers was the divergent outcome in these Strikes. The UK was given a “Policemen’s Charter”, the Desborough Report and the Police Act of 1919, assuring universal standards of employment and eventually a centralized police service for the entire country. In the US, the “Localness” of the various jurisdictions was reinforced and no national organization or force would emerge, even till today, to speak for the police.

My proposal could be expanded to include papers on the strikes in both counties and/or the various forces in the United Kingdom that took part in the strike of 1919. I would be happy to discuss these issues with anyone who is interested in this project. I can be reached at 212 237 8403 or jking@jjay.cuny.edu. Thank you; look forward to seeing you in Boston.



Sentencing Guidelines: Lessons from Pennsylvania

John H. Kramer and Jeffery T. Ulmer

"Impressive.... Kramer and Ulmer provide a rare combination of profound insider information and theoretical reasoning with sophisticated empirical work. Anyone concerned with sentencing guidelines or reform must read this book." —**Joachim J. Salvesberg, University of Minnesota**

"A fascinating story of one state's struggle to craft both meaningful and politically palatable sentencing guidelines. The authors provide a comprehensive and theoretically informed evaluation of the complex issues involved. The result is essential reading for anyone interested in sentencing reforms and their impact."

—**Cassia Spohn, Arizona State University**

Sentencing guidelines, adopted by many states in recent decades, are intended to eliminate the impact of bias based on factors ranging from a criminal's ethnicity or gender to the county in which he or she was convicted. But have these guidelines achieved their goal of "fair punishment"? And how do the concerns of local courts shape sentencing under guidelines? In this comprehensive examination of the development, reform, and application of sentencing guidelines in one of the first states to employ them, John Kramer and Jeffery Ulmer offer a nuanced analysis of the complexities involved in administering justice.

John H. Kramer is professor of sociology and crime, law, and justice at Pennsylvania State University. Formerly, he was executive director of the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing, and he served as staff director of the US Sentencing Commission in 1996-1998. **Jeffery T. Ulmer** is associate professor of sociology and crime, law, and justice at Pennsylvania State University. He is author of *Social Worlds of Sentencing* and coauthor (with Darrell J. Steffensmeier) of *Confessions of a Dying Thief*.

CONTENTS: Understanding Sentencing. Constructing Pennsylvania's Sentencing Guidelines. Pennsylvania's Commission Meets New Challenges. Sentencing Serious Violent Offenders. Racial, Ethnic, Gender, and Age Disparity. Location Matters: Variation Among Counties. Guilty Pleas vs. Trial Convictions: Unwarranted Disparity? Guidelines and Mandatory Minimums. Can Guidelines Change Sentencing Practices? Lessons from Pennsylvania's Struggle for Justice.

October 2008/273 pages

LC: 2008012826

ISBN: 978-1-58826-599-9 hc \$65

SHORT:

A comprehensive examination of sentencing guidelines that illuminates the complexities involved in administering justice.

KEYWORDS: Public Policy, Criminology



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Assistant Professor

The University of Macau is a government-funded institution located in the Macao Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. The Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities (FSH) invites applications for an academic position in the following area:

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We welcome candidates with strong methodological skills, a demonstrated record of research productivity, and a commitment to teaching excellence. Candidates who have experience with survey research and criminal justice program evaluations will be given preference. Familiarity with SAS, Strata and GIS software is welcome but not required. Holders of these positions will be expected to develop and conduct research projects with Macau communities and justice agencies.

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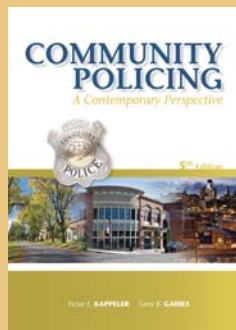
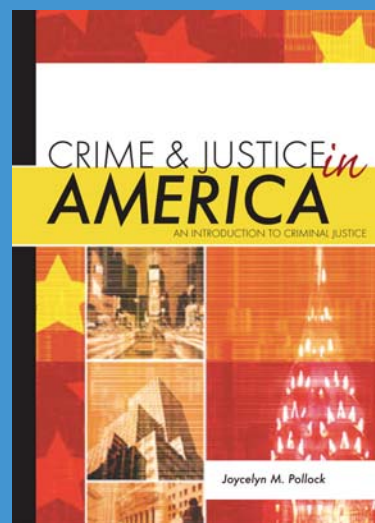
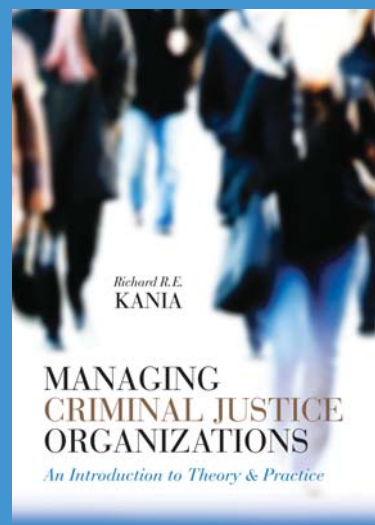
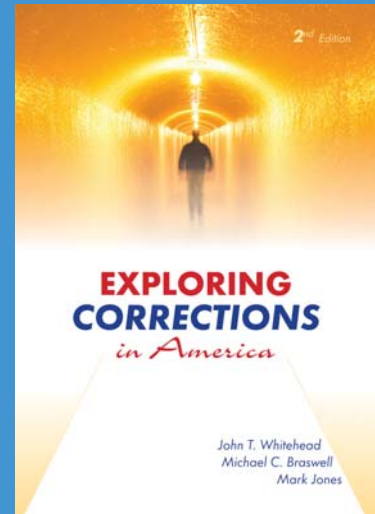
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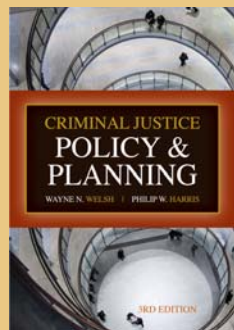
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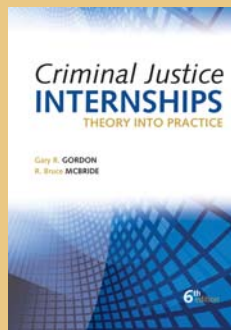
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2009 Workshops

Quantitative Analysis of Crime and Criminal Justice Data

Dates: June 23–July 18

Designed for faculty, professionals, and graduate students who wish to learn advanced quantitative data analysis methods practiced in the fields of criminology and criminal justice.

Competitively-selected participants will:

- Study methodology of major data collections sponsored by the Bureau of Justice Statistics including the National Crime Victimization Survey and various Uniform Crime Reporting System datasets
- Learn innovative statistical applications to analyze complex survey data
- Analyze data on one of any number of topics such as crime, victimization, law enforcement, sentencing, and correctional populations
- Design, conduct & present a quantitative research project
- Receive a lodging and travel stipend

Applicants must include a vita and cover letter describing their background and interest in using Bureau of Justice Statistics data resources housed at the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data. Review of application materials begins in early March. Space is limited to 12 students.

Using National Juvenile Corrections Data Files: 1997–2006

Dates: June 1–3

8:30am Monday to 12:00pm, Wednesday

Topics: Trends in juvenile corrections populations at the national and state levels, the residential facilities that hold them, the variations in practices in place, and the services provided to young persons in custody.

Audience: State and local juvenile justice researchers, academic researchers, and policy makers at the local, state, and federal levels. Jurisdictional teams are welcome.

Purpose: This inaugural workshop will make a wealth of national data from OJJDP's data collections from 1997–2006 available to researchers and practitioners along with the tools necessary to understand and use the data appropriately.

Objectives: Participants in this 3-day workshop will learn to analyze multi-year national data files on juvenile corrections using Secure Survey Documentation and Analysis (Secure SDA), a powerful online data analysis tool that enables descriptive to multivariate analysis of data from different surveys and over time.

Datasets: • Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement (CJRP) 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003, 2006 • Juvenile Residential Placement Facilities Census (JRFC) 1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006

Stipend: Stipend support of up to \$1,000 for travel and living expenses is available for a limited number of students admitted to the workshop. The workshop is limited to 25 participants.

Details and application will be available in early 2009 at www.icpsr.umich.edu/sumprog.

The ICPSR Summer Program in Quantitative Methods is a comprehensive, integrated program of studies in social science research design and statistics. The workshops are held in Ann Arbor, at the University of Michigan, and are managed by the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) and sponsored by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice.

Upcoming ACJS Annual Meetings

March 10-14, 2009

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Town & Country Resort &

Convention Center

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