

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Winter and early spring have sped by at the CJRC. In late January, CJRC Affiliate Walter DeKeseredy of Ohio University presented his research on sexual assault among separating and divorced couples in rural Ohio. Walter's research illustrates the importance of qualitative research for understanding the experiences of residents of rural communities. Rural women are often socially isolated and powerless, and local police officers may be reluctant to intervene in the private lives of men and women they have known their whole lives. Walter described how these social processes impede efforts to prevent these crimes. Thank you, Walter, for a stimulating and thoughtful presentation.

In February, Paula Johnson, Professor of Law at Syracuse University, presented her research entitled, "Inner Lives: Voices of African American Women in Prison." While the overall rates of incarceration among women have increased, this increase has been borne disproportionately by African Americans, who struggle to maintain relationships with children and family while serving their sentences. Paula's presentation was of great interest to our CJRC audience, many of whom have an interest in the intersection of gender and incarceration. For those who missed the presentation or simply wish to learn more, Paula's book of the same title is available for purchase (and is now in paperback for those on a budget!) Thank you, Paula, for making the trip to Ohio.

The Walter C. Reckless Memorial Lecture was held on April 14th. Our speaker this year was Marc Mauer, Assistant Director of The Sentencing Project, a nonprofit organization that promotes reduced reliance on incarceration to reduce crime, in favor of more humane (and effective) alternatives. Marc's lecture highlighted the issues of racial disparities in incarceration, as well as the collateral consequences of imprisonment (such as restrictions on student loans and employment opportunities for those released from prison). Among his many insights, he noted that few legislators or voters today would have agreed in advance to the current system if its disparate racial impact had been an express, devised part of its design. Marc's presentation drew a lively discussion from attendees; though sobering, his shared knowledge will help us formulate future solutions. Please see <http://www.sentencingproject.org/> for additional information. Thank you, again, Marc.

In addition to Marc Mauer, this year's Reckless Lecture owes its success to many people. Thanks are due to all of you who attend and support the lecture with your gifts. We are grateful to Valerie Wright, Rita Van Buren, John Callery, Patrick Burke, and Danice Brown for all of their hard work in making this year's event a memorable one. Thank you also to Professor Joshua Dressler of the Moritz College of Law for his presentation of information regarding the Ohio State Journal of Criminal Law. This year's Reckless Lecture will again be published in an upcoming issue of the Journal.

UPCOMING EVENTS OF INTEREST

***Please also mark the following date for CJRC's 2003-2004 Seminar Series and other notable events on your calendar:

Friday, May 14th, 2004 from 1:45 to 3:15 p.m. (please note date and time change), when Stephen Levitt of the University of Chicago will be the presenter. The talk is to be held in Schoenbaum Hall, Room 320, and is cosponsored the Department of Economics, The Mershon Center, and CJRC. Title of the talk is forthcoming, as are details on any other activities.

What Center Participants are Doing

Mark S. Davis, Ph.D. (Associate Director, Institute for the Study and Prevention of Violence, Kent

State University) was recently appointed to the Ethical Issues Section of the American Society of Criminology.

Professor Stephen Gavazzi (Human Development and Family Science) has a new publication with coauthors Matthias Novak, Courtney M. Yarcheck, and Lawrence T. DiStefano entitled, "Assessing and Tracking Youthful Offenders with the Web-Based Global Risk Assessment Device" (Corrections Today, February: 64-67).

Professor David Jacobs (Sociology) and coauthor Richard Kleban have a recent publication in the journal Social Forces entitled, "Political Institutions, Minorities, and Punishment: A Pooled Cross-National Analysis of Imprisonment Rates" (Social Forces 80:725-755).

Professor Wendy Regoeczi (Cleveland State University, Sociology) has a newly published book with coauthor Terance Miethe entitled, Rethinking Homicide: Exploring the Structure and Process Underlying Deadly Situations (Cambridge University Press, 2004).

Professor Kenneth Steinman (Public Health) reports an upcoming publication in the Journal of Adolescent Health entitled, "Drug selling among high school students: Related risk behaviors and psychosocial characteristics."

Valerie Wright (Sociology) presented her paper entitled, "Examining Gender Differences and Theoretical Explanations of Desistance" at a session on Gender and Violence at the Southwestern Social Science Association Conference in Corpus Christi, Texas on March 17th-20th.

Dorian Wingard (Capital University, Law) was recently awarded the Dr. Bennet Cooper Scholarship by the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice, where he also co-facilitated a workshop on "Bridging the Gap between Community-Based and State-Based Public Policy." He was also recently named to participate in a Quality Assurance Task Force for the Bell Africentric Treatment Center with Columbus Area Community Mental Health, Inc.

CALL FOR PAPERS

Criminal Justice Studies: A Critical Journal of Crime, Law and Society, encourages submissions for its special issue on "Native Americans and the U.S. Criminal Justice System." Manuscripts should not revisit old themes, but must make a new contribution to the understanding of Native Americans in the grasp of the U.S. criminal justice system. Manuscripts may not exceed 30 pages in length. For additional information, please contact the co-editors, David V. Baker, Behavioral Sciences Department, Riverside Community College, e-mail: David.Baker@rcc.edu, and telephone: (909) 222-8208; and Donald E. Green, Department of Sociology, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, e-mail: dgreen@uwm.edu and telephone: (414) 229-4259.

Deadline: August, 2004

The Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice has an upcoming special issue with a theme that may be of interest to CJRC participants. The theme of the May 2005 issue is "Why Study Youth Gangs?" Submissions are encouraged on the theoretical significance of studying gangs, definitional issues, and research methodology, as well as empirical findings and interpretations. Inquiries for this issue should be addressed to James F. Short, JCCJ Guest Editor, via e-mail (short@wsu.edu) or telephone (509-335-4707). Manuscripts are limited to 25 pages.

Deadline: September 15, 2004

FEATURED PARTICIPANT - CHIP PARTRIDGE, HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY SCIENCE

Chip Partridge is a doctoral candidate in Human Ecology in the Department of Human Development and Family Science, specializing in adolescent problem behaviors and program evaluation. After graduating from high school in Newark, Ohio, Chip served in the U.S. Marine Corps, and then earned his B.A. from Ohio State, with a major in English and minor in psychology.

After graduation, Chip worked for several years with emotionally and behaviorally troubled adolescents, as a senior youth development specialist at a residential treatment center. Charged with the responsibility to coordinate the efforts of clinical staff and youth personnel in implementing treatment plans for these youth to achieve maximum possible benefit, he came to appreciate the necessity for program evaluation and decided to enter the graduate program in Human Development and Family Science to explore his interest in adolescent problem behaviors and program evaluation for services designed to meet the needs of adolescents and their families.

The vast majority of his current research is applied. For example, one recent project involves an analysis of the concurrent validity of the Global Risk Assessment Device (GRAD), a web-based risk assessment device he helped to construct that is currently being used in juvenile courts. The GRAD measures 11 dimensions of adolescent risk, including one specific to family. With data on 100 families, Chip is evaluating the validity of the family dimension. His initial findings support validity, although he is still in the process of completing this research, which serves as the basis for his dissertation.

More broadly, however, Chip is interested in quantitative evaluation research and observing the ways that social systems respond to change. As he noted, "We can learn about human systems based on their response to our interventions." This neatly summarizes the role of evaluation in social service programming. Social service programming must remain flexible since it must address real human needs. As programs evolve, evaluators like Chip take note of what does and does not work, and suggest adjustments that will likely lead to better client outcomes. This process is one of "formative evaluation," a feedback loop between the program and its effects, modifications to that program and consequent effects, and so on. While the process is similar to that used in nonhuman fields (such as car manufacturing), its application in a human setting requires unique sensibilities, and an acute understanding of the unpredictability of human action.

Chip's skills in this area are brought to bear in his work as an evaluation specialist with the Center for Learning Excellence, located near campus on Kinnear Road. He is currently evaluating the State of Ohio's Challenge Grant Program, which funds 122 Alternative Education programs throughout the State for youth at-risk for dropping out of school. The program's purpose is to identify barriers to academic success for these adolescents, and either directly intervene or facilitate interventions that increase the likelihood of high school graduation and developmental growth. With high school graduation critical for entry into the job market, dropping out can have dire effects on an adolescent's future and ability to make a living or family wage. The types of districts participating in the program vary, from rural to suburban to urban, making its implementation (and evaluation) tricky. With the help of an evaluator, program administrators can identify the most effective elements of their program, and ways the program can be tailored to better meet the specific needs of clients, and focus their resources accordingly.

Chip is also interested in youth violence, particularly violence among young males and the ways in which the socialization of boys encourages violent responses to frustrating circumstances. He is pursuing grant funding to support an evaluation of the impact of alternative education programming that guides adolescent males into vocations that pay a living or (ultimately) family wage, on

adolescents' later violent behavior. Early adolescent males referred to alternative education programs for violence will be tracked longitudinally for violent behaviors throughout adolescence. It is thought that when family and friends in a boy's social network support his progress throughout middle school, high school/vocational school and/or a technical, trade school, or community college, into an occupation that pays a living (and ultimately a family) wage, he will be less likely to respond violently when other young men attack his "masculinity."

Although Chip is exceptionally busy with his work, his family is very important to him. He likes to spend time with his wife, Laura, and their two children, Abby, age 4 (a miniature doppelgänger of Laura, judging from the photo in his office), and Nick, age 2. The family regularly visits their local library and parks, walks in their Clintonville neighborhood and frequents the Columbus Zoo, COSI, and other Columbus sites such as the art museum. Chip and Laura also like to spend time with friends, "just hanging out," a luxury for any doctoral candidate.

CREDITS AND CONTACT

Thanks to all of you who sent your suggestions and announcements. We encourage you to keep us informed about any events that might be of interest to CJRC participants as well as any suggestions that you have for activities or programs. To contact the newsletter editor, please e-mail Lori at muccino.1@osu.edu. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please send Lori your e-mail address.