



Criminal Justice Research Center News



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Featured Article: An Interview with Townsend Price-Spratlen

From the Director's Desk



Hi, everyone. All of us here at CJRC are happy to be wrapping up a productive fall semester!

We had a stimulating and well-attended speakers' series this term. In September, our affiliate Mary

Thomas (Associate Professor, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies) shared her interesting ethnographic findings on working with incarcerated adolescent females. Angela Stroud (Assistant Professor, Sociology – Northland College) visited us on October 6th. She discussed her qualitative research on perceptions of threat among individuals who possess concealed carry gun licenses.

November was an especially eventful month. On the 7th we hosted our annual Institute for Excellence in Justice seminar. Our keynote speaker was David Kennedy (Professor, Anthropology; Director, John Jay College Center for Crime Prevention and Control), who talked about his two decades of crime prevention and control work with citizens and law enforcement officers in urban communities. Professor Kennedy was joined by our affiliate Deanna Wilkinson (Associate Professor and Associate Chair, Human Sciences) and Director of Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services, Karlton Moore, both of whom provided expert commentary on Kennedy's presentation. We were pleased to have over 90 people in attendance, including university and independent scholars, community members, and government, legal and law enforcement practitioners. On November 8th, we co-sponsored an African American and African Studies Department talk given by Dr. Monique Morris, a 2012 Soros Justice Fellow and legal policy consultant. She spoke about gender-inclusive justice reform for African American girls. The following week, several of our graduate student affiliates presented their work at the CJRC annual graduate research symposium.

Lastly, numerous CJRC-affiliated faculty and staff attended the annual American Society of Criminology meetings in Atlanta which took place from November 20-23. Ruth, Yolanda, and Amanda took part, as did our graduate students who received CJRC travel support awards for the conference: Jonathan Dirlam, Chris Keenan, Chad Malone, and Emily Shrider.

In other updates, we are pleased to welcome our newest faculty affiliate, Dr. Jamie Yoder. She is an Assistant Professor at the College of Social Work, and her research focuses on effective intervention strategies for sex-offending youths. Also, our undergraduate internship program has recently placed two students with the Criminal Intelligence and Crime Scene Units at the Columbus Police Department.

Please read on. Alaina has three insightful articles examining the work of our featured speakers, and Amanda writes about her discussion with our affiliate and faculty seed grant recipient, Dr. Townsend Price-Spratlen.

Stay tuned for forthcoming information in our next issue regarding our stellar Spring speakers' lineup! In the meantime, we wish all of you a very happy holiday season.

--- Dana

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A Discussion with Mary Thomas

By Alaina Clark, CJRC Undergraduate Intern



Dr. Mary Thomas

Mary Thomas, a CJRC affiliate and an associate professor of Women's Gender and Sexuality studies at Ohio State, gave a lecture on September 6th at CJRC entitled "This place saved my life": the myth of the savior prison and why it is appealing to incarcerated girls." Each week Dr. Thomas travels to the Scioto Juvenile Correctional Facility to conduct interviews with incarcerated juvenile girls for her ethnographic project on peer relationships in prison. Dr. Thomas' research takes a geographical approach to the study of young women in prison by examining the interaction between juvenile girls and the facility's environment. Dr. Thomas comments, "I am a geographer, so I am interested in the space and spatial context."

One component of Dr. Thomas's geographic research examines the impact of the prison's messages of "positive change" and "personal redemption" on the girls' lives. After conducting interviews with over thirty-five juvenile girls, Dr. Thomas came to the realization that the correctional facility's focus on positive change leads to girls' unrealistic, overly optimistic expectations for life after release.

A prominent prisoner rehabilitation program at the facility called Epiphany Ministry Inc., contributes to the girls' unrealistic expectations. The program focuses on exposing incarcerated individuals to "God's love." The religious volunteers also preach that "finding" God's love will result in greater life opportunities. Epiphany and other similar religion-based programs frequently hold group sessions that involve prayers, words of encouragement, baked goods, and many hugs. Subsequently, incarcerated youth tend view prison as a "life-saving" opportunity in which they are rescued by God's grace. According to Dr. Thomas, the belief that prison is a "life-saver" can be problematic. After being released from prison, the girls' positive expectations rarely translate into reality. Many girls are unable to access the opportunities that they were encouraged to pursue by prison staff and volunteers. In this way, the prison system is failing to prepare incarcerated youth for a successful life outside of the institution's walls.

However, Dr. Thomas stresses that her project does "not blame religious groups for the focus on opportunity." Staff and volunteers who are not associated with religious organizations also create overly optimistic expectations for the girls. For example, girls are told that they should go to college even though they do not have the financial means to

afford higher education. Some girls have dropped out of high school, yet are encouraged to attend college. Other girls come from situations in which they are highly responsible for their siblings and/or their own children.

Dr. Thomas' research emphasizes the need for prisons to encourage the girls to pursue feasible aspirations. Dr. Thomas explains, "I think it is important to temper girls' expectations about their futures. Everyone needs to have a realistic goal to work toward." In order to push the girls in the right direction, Dr. Thomas recommends that prisons should focus on employability after release. She proposes that welding and other vocational programs would be extremely beneficial for juveniles in prisons. Such programs would equip prisoners with skills that are required for the jobs that will be most accessible to them after release.

In conclusion, Dr. Thomas' research highlights a significant problem in prison facilities: staff, volunteers, and religious organizations encourage the girls to work toward goals that they have little chance of achieving. The prison's focus on positive life choices such as attending college and "finding God" does not adequately prepare the girls to face the difficulties of their life circumstances. Dr. Thomas hopes that her work will generate greater thought about juveniles' needs. She comments, "I want to consider myself, most of all, a youth advocate. I'm really thinking about these kids and what would help them."

A Discussion with Angela Stroud

By Alaina Clark, CJRC Undergraduate Intern



Dr. Angela Stroud

The mass media has a tendency to focus overwhelmingly on violent crime. Many times, the stories with the most media coverage and the largest headlines are about crimes committed with firearms. The media's strong focus on crimes perpetrated with guns has sparked heated debates on the issue of gun licensure. The debate on concealed handgun licensure became a particularly contentious topic during the 2008 Presidential race. As a result of the controversy, the number of concealed handgun licenses in the U.S jumped dramatically after President Obama's election. Interestingly, at the same time, the nation experienced record low crime rates.

In 2008, Dr. Angela Stroud, now an Assistant Professor of Sociology and Social Justice at Northland College, was a graduate student at the University of Texas looking for an intriguing research topic. Growing up near the Mexican-American border, Dr. Stroud witnessed "profound poverty" and inequality. Exposure to significant social issues at the border influenced her decision to study sociology. For a sociologist, the widespread increase in concealed handgun licensure and the simultaneous decrease in crime was an "ideal starting place" for a project. Presumably, individuals will obtain a gun license when they feel threatened by crime. Thus, theoretically, licensure rates should increase with the crime rate. Dr. Stroud became interested in exploring the paradoxical relationship between the increased number of concealed handgun licenses and the decrease in crime rates in 2008.

Nearly five years later, on October 3rd, 2013, Dr. Stroud visited Ohio State University to lecture about one component of her large research project titled, "[The Visible Bad Guy: How Concealed Handgun License Holders Explain Crime Threat](#)." Dr. Stroud's lecture was focused on answering "how concealed handgun carriers perceive threat and how race, class, and gender shape perceptions of vulnerability." The project entailed interviews with thirty-six concealed handgun carriers and gun instructors in Texas to explore perceptions of threat and vulnerability. Dr. Stroud's interviews revealed an interesting discrepancy between the official rhetoric about vulnerability and the carriers' actual perceptions about crime threat.

The official rhetoric for crime vulnerability is that individuals can be victimized anytime or anywhere. However, the interviews suggest that concealed handgun carriers do not understand crime as a random, indiscriminate event. Instead, Dr. Stroud argues, "it is clear that concealed handgun carriers use certain cues to gauge who is a criminal and who isn't. Those cues are tied to race and class." One interviewee compared "cues" to an instinctive "spidey sense." Dr. Stroud found that carriers' "spidey senses" are more likely to be "tingling" in predominantly Black, Latino, and poor neighborhoods. In other words, carriers expressed increased feelings of defensiveness or vulnerability in racially segregated and/or economically disadvantaged spaces.

In closing, Dr. Stroud's strong interest in sociology has led to an intriguing study a previously under-researched topic. Dr. Stroud's lecture on the disconnect between handgun license instructors' official rhetoric and carriers' actual perceptions is just one component of her book-length project. Dr. Stroud hopes her research can be used to "shed light on important social problems in a way that can help us understand the implications of social policies."

A Discussion with David Kennedy

By Alaina Clark, CJRC Undergraduate Intern



Professor David Kennedy

On November 7th, CJRC welcomed Professor David Kennedy to speak about his two decades of groundbreaking work with law enforcement and communities. Beginning in the mid-nineties, David Kennedy and his colleagues embarked on a mission to redress the problem of violent crime, particularly gun violence, which plagued, in Kennedy's words, "the poorest, hard-hit black neighborhoods." As the Director of the Center for Crime Prevention and Control and a Professor at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Kennedy has been instrumental in the creation of revolutionary crime control strategies. Kennedy's approach to firearm violence reduction, dubbed Operation Ceasefire, is credited with simultaneously decreasing violent crime rates and arrest rates. Most notably, the Operation Ceasefire project was praised for helping to reduce the youth homicide rate in Boston by over sixty percent.

Operation Ceasefire recognizes the unintended consequences of high arrest rates. The United States currently imprisons over 2.2 million men and women – an inmate increase of 500 percent in the past three decades, according to the [Sentencing Project in Washington, DC](#). They assert that this mass incarceration has devastating effects on disadvantaged communities and places a drain on courts and correction, all without really having a direct, significant impact on reducing crime. Kennedy argues that the profound impact of mass incarceration and violent crime is felt most powerfully by impoverished black neighborhoods. The gravity of the situation cannot be overstated. Kennedy explains, "If you are born black and male in this country and do not graduate from high school, you serve a 70% chance of going to prison in your life." Even more frighteningly, "If you are black and male in our nation's capital the current statistics says that your likelihood of at least serving one jail term during your life time is approaching one hundred percent."

Rather than focusing on mass incarceration of individuals, Operation Ceasefire targets several key groups that are responsible for the vast majority of the homicides in certain neighborhoods. According to Kennedy, simply offering support, establishing a constant community presence, and informing the few

individuals inflicting the preponderance of violence about consequences should they continue, prove to be extremely effective. This technique was implemented in New Orleans last year and the results have been dramatic: The homicide rate in New Orleans is down by twenty-five percent and the gang homicide rate has decreased by fifty-percent, according to Kennedy.

A self-taught criminologist, Kennedy garnered a genuine interest in reducing violent crime rates during his work as a researcher and journalist at Harvard. Prior to landing a National Institute of Justice grant to establish the makings of Operation Ceasefire, Kennedy performed fieldwork in crime-ridden Boston neighborhoods for a journalism project on policing issues. He was appalled yet captivated by the conditions in neighborhoods plagued by violent crime. In the years since, Kennedy has been awarded the Ford Foundation Innovations in Government award, the Herman Goldstein International Award for Problem-Oriented Policing, and the International Association of Chiefs of Police Webber Seavey Award for his work in reducing violent crime. Despite his accolades, Kennedy maintains a modest perspective. He explains, "It has been an amazing collective effort. We all focus on how far we are from where we need to be and what needs to happen next....we are not nearly successful enough to rest."

Kennedy's campaign against violent crime and work with Operation Ceasefire are chronicled in his 2011 book, [Don't Shoot: One Man, A Street Fellowship and the End of Violence in Inner-City America](#) (Bloomsbury Publishers).

What Center Participants are Doing



Audrey Begun (Former CJRC Summer Research Institute Mentor; Associate Professor, Social Work – OSU) presented “Getting into a Doctoral Program” at the National Association of Social Workers Ohio Chapter Annual Conference, held on November 21-22 in Columbus, Ohio.

Eileen Bjornstrom (Assistant Professor, Sociology – University of Missouri, Ph.D. alumna in Sociology – OSU) has two new publications to report, one of which is co-authored with fellow OSU Ph.D. alumna Danielle Kuhl (Assistant Professor, Sociology – Bowling Green State University):



Bjornstrom, Eileen E. 2013. "Why and How Neighborhoods Matter for Health." Pp. 243-51 in *Epidemiological Criminology: Theory To Practice*, edited by E. Waltermaurer and T.A. Akers. New York: Routledge.

Bjornstrom, Eileen E., Margaret L. Ralston and Danielle C. Kuhl. 2013. “Social Cohesion and Self-Rated Health: The Moderating Effect of Neighborhood Physical Disorder.” *American Journal of Community Psychology* 52(3-4): 302-312.



Brad Bushman (Professor, Communication and Psychology, Margaret Hall and Robert Randal Rinehart Chair of Mass Communication – OSU) recently co-authored (with Alessandro Gabbadini, Paolo Riva, Luca Andrighetto, and Chiara Volpato) an article entitled

“Interactive Effect of Moral Disengagement and Violent Video Games on Self-Control, Cheating, and Aggression” in *Social Psychology and Personality Science*, published online on November 8th.

Jennifer Cobbina (2009 CJRC Summer Research Institute Participant; Racial Democracy, Crime and Justice Network member; Assistant Professor, Criminal Justice – Michigan State University)



was given the Division on People of Color and Crime (DPCC) New Scholar Award at the annual DPCC Awards Luncheon during the American Society of Criminology meetings in Atlanta in November. The New Scholar Award recognizes an individual who is in the early

stages of her or his career and has made significant, recent contributions to the literature on race/ethnicity, crime, and justice.



Sharon Davies (Professor, Moritz College of Law; Executive Director, Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity – OSU)

interviewed bell hooks, a distinguished visiting professor at OSU and internationally known author, on Oct. 4 at a public forum in the Saxbe Auditorium at Moritz College of Law. They discussed the

George Zimmerman verdict and its implications on race, gender, and equality in our society.

Walter De Keseredy (Professor, Criminology – University of Ontario Institute of Technology) is



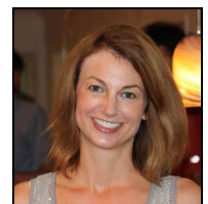
moving to West Virginia University's Department of Sociology and Anthropology to take the position of Anna Deane Carlson Endowed Chair of Social Sciences and Professor of Sociology in January 2014.

Theresa Early (Former CJRC Summer Research Institute Mentor; Associate Professor, Social Work – OSU) was invited to attend the White House event “Addressing the Social Determinants of Health in a New Era: The Role of Social Education.” The event was hosted by the White House Office of Public Engagement and

Council on Social Work Education.

Dana Haynie (Director, CJRC; Professor, Sociology – OSU) was

named the fourth most prolific female scholar in the article “The Most Prolific Female Scholars in Elite Criminology and Criminal Justice Journals, 2000-2010,” by Henrikka Weir & Erin Orrick. It appeared in *the Journal of Criminal Justice Education* Volume 24, Issue 3 (2013), pp. 273-289.



Christopher Keenan (Ph.D. candidate, Sociology – OSU) will start a new position in January as a Correctional Evaluation Researcher at the University of Wisconsin. The job is a joint position funded through both the Wisconsin Department of Corrections and the University of Wisconsin School



of Medicine and Public Health.

Mike Maltz (Professor Emeritus of Criminal Justice, University of Illinois-Chicago; Former CJRC Research Scientist) has two entries in the newly released *Encyclopedia of Criminology and Criminal Justice* (2014, Springer): "Visualizing Data: A Brief History," and "History of the Statistics of Crime and Criminal Justice" (with Kathleen Frey).



Meetings in Atlanta in November. The award recognizes outstanding student research on race/ethnicity, crime, and justice.



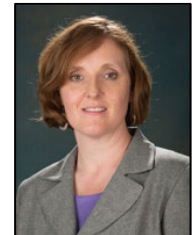
Terrell Strayhorn (Associate Professor, Higher Education – OSU) was selected as a 2014 American College Personnel Association (ACPA) Educational Leadership Foundation Diamond Honoree. Honorees are selected for giving distinguished service as teachers, administrators, writers, researchers, and association leaders.



Anthony Peguero (2007 CJRC Summer Research Institute Participant; Racial Democracy, Crime and Justice Network member; Assistant Professor of Sociology – Virginia Tech University) was given the Division on People of Color and Crime (DPCC) Cora Mae Richey Mann Award at the annual DPCC

Awards Luncheon during the American Society of Criminology Meetings in Atlanta in November. The Cora Mae Richey Mann award recognizes a member of the DPCC who has made outstanding contributions of scholarship on race/ethnicity, crime, and justice. In addition, Dr. Peguero is the 2014 Co-chair for the DPCC, sharing the honor with fellow Co-chair Dr. Elsa Chen (2008 CJRC Summer Research Institute Participant; Racial Democracy, Crime and Justice Network member; Associate Professor of Political Science – Santa Clara University).

Deanna Wilkinson (Associate Professor and Associate Chair, Human Sciences – OSU) was



awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Ohio Office of the Attorney General for Men for the Movement, a 501(c)3 violence intervention street outreach partnership. The group is led by community leader Cecil Ahad. The grant will allow the non-profit group to hire paid street outreach workers who will assist with community mobilization as well as violence intervention and de-escalation with high-risk individuals. Dr. Wilkinson also presented "Achieving Social Science through Collaboration with the Community" during the Annual National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice conference on October 21 in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Alex Piquero (Racial Democracy, Crime and Justice Network member; Ashbel Smith Professor of Criminology – University of Texas-Dallas) was recently named as the second most-cited criminologist in the book, *Most-Cited Scholars in Criminology and Criminal Justice, 1986-2010*, co-edited by Ellen Cohn,



David Farrington, and Amaia Iratzoqui (2014, Springer). In addition, Dr. Piquero co-authored a recent article (with Bianca Bersani and Thomas Loughran) entitled "Comparing Patterns and Predictors of Immigrant Offending Among a Sample of Adjudicated Youth." The article includes the finding that "first generation immigrants are less likely to be involved in serious offending and to evidence persistence in offending, and appear to be on a path toward desistance much more quickly than their peers" (quote courtesy of the authors). The study appears in the October 2013 issue of *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*.

Zahra Shekarkhar (Racial Democracy, Crime and Justice Network member; Ph.D. candidate, Sociology and Criminology & Law – University of Florida) was given the Division on People of Color and Crime (DPCC) Outstanding Student Award at the annual DPCC Awards Luncheon during the American Society of Criminology

Opportunities, Calls for Papers, and Conferences

The OSU John Glenn School of Public Affairs is offering a spring graduate level class, PUBAFRS 7507 - Criminal Justice Policy (3 credits), which meets Wednesdays from 5:30-8:18 in Hagerty Hall 0062. This class is devoted to increasing the student's understanding of crime and society's responses to crime based on public policy and the criminal justice system. The course will also examine the bureaucratic nature of government organizations and how this impacts the goals and effectiveness of the criminal justice system and its individual components. The instructor for the course is Kent Shafer, who spent 33 ½ years with the Columbus, Ohio Division of Police, including 18 years as a commander, retiring in July 2012. He has held assignments in patrol, traffic, gang, street crime, narcotics and administrative units. He is also an author of publications on leadership, criminal justice, and public safety issues.

The American Journal of Criminal Justice invites submissions for a special issue, "Current Issues and Controversies in Capital Punishment," edited by Drs. Tara N. Richards and M. Dwayne Smith. Currently, the number of individuals on death row have reached a 20-year low, many states have established moratoriums on capital punishment, and others have repealed the death penalty altogether. However, 32 states continue to use capital punishment. In light of the evolving position of capital punishment in the American criminal justice system, the editors seek papers that address a variety of topics related to the death penalty that have not been addressed or have received limited attention in the previous criminological literature. Topics could include the cost/benefit of the use of capital punishment, legal themes regarding contemporary appeals in capital cases, analysis of wrongful conviction, or reasons for extended stays on death row. They also welcome critiques of previous findings, methodologies, or theoretical orientations used in the extant death penalty literature. A discussion of policy and practice implications should be included in all submissions. All manuscripts will undergo blind peer review. Manuscripts should not exceed 25 double-spaced pages with one-inch margins, including figures, tables, and references. **Manuscripts should be received no later than February 15th, 2014.** Please send two electronic copies (one complete version and one blind copy with all of the author/s identifying information removed) to Dr. Tara N. Richards at trichards@ubalt.edu. Style and formatting guidelines for authors and additional information are available by clicking [here](#).

The National Science Foundation is seeking a candidate for a Program Director position in the Law and Social Sciences (LSS) Program within the Division of Social and Economic Sciences (SES), Directorate for Social, Behavioral, and Economic Sciences (SBE). SES supports research to develop and advance scientific knowledge focusing on economic, legal, political and social systems, organizations and institutions. In addition, SES supports research on the intellectual and social contexts that govern the development and use of science and technology. SES programs consider proposals that fall squarely within disciplines, but they also encourage and support interdisciplinary projects, which are evaluated through joint review among Programs in SES, as well as joint review with programs in other Divisions, and NSF-wide multi-disciplinary panels, as appropriate. Candidates must have a Ph.D. in Law or Social Sciences, plus after awarding of the Ph.D., six or more years of successful research, research administration, and/or managerial experience pertinent to the position. **The open application period is from Monday, November 25, 2013 to Tuesday, February 25, 2014.** For further information and access to the application materials, click [here](#).

Homicide Studies announces a call for papers for a special issue on measurement issues in homicide research. Murder typically is viewed as one of the most accurately reported crimes, but improvements can be made in the measurement of murder in particular and the related correlates used by researchers and policymakers. The goal of this special issue is to explore measurement issues related to the study of homicide. The focus concerns not only identifying where problems lie but providing a context for understanding the ways these problems affect policy or avenues for addressing these limitations. Topics of interest include homicide specifically as well as its correlates and risk factors. Papers examining measurement issues from an international or comparative perspective are particularly welcome. Manuscripts must follow the editorial submission guidelines for *Homicide Studies*. **The deadline for submissions is April 1, 2014.** All manuscripts must be submitted through ScholarOne, which can be accessed [here](#). Select "Special Issue Manuscript" for the manuscript type.

~Featured Article~

An Interview with Townsend Price-Spratlen

By Amanda Kennedy

Last month I had the opportunity to talk with Dr. Townsend Price-Spratlen, Associate Professor of Sociology at Ohio State and a long-time CJRC affiliate. We explored his path to becoming a social scientist, his recently published book, and his current research project.

Townsend and I first discussed how he came to Sociology as his chosen field of study. "As an undergrad, I was in flux," he explained. After trying a couple of different majors on for size, Townsend took a Psychology 101 course as a general education requirement. His instructor for the course was a gifted graduate student whose paraplegia inextricably informed her teaching lens. "She was broadly defined, of course, and a wonderful instructor. But it was clear to me that her life circumstances deeply shaped her perspectives," Townsend said. At the same time, he was taking a Women's Studies course. In it he was introduced to Audre Lorde's work regarding identity and intersectionality. Through these experiences, he came to understand the meaning of the second-wave feminist cornerstone that the "personal is political," an ideal that has stuck with him throughout his professional career. "I came to value the dialogue between the Humanities and Social Sciences, and the

contributions that each have made to questions regarding personal identity, health, and wellness issues.”

Townsend went on to earn his Bachelor of Science in Community Psychology at University of Washington. He then worked as a Literacy Coordinator at Goodwill Industries in Seattle. “At the literacy initiative, my focus was on outreach to adult new readers. The vast majority of our clientele were born in the United States and native English speakers. But they were largely poor, and had fallen through the institutional cracks; cracks that were there by design.” Townsend was working part-time at a halfway house for adults with mental illness, many of whom were former felons. “There were relationships I was being exposed to vocationally – the role of the criminal justice system in perpetuating inequality, and the roles of other forms of institutional discrimination, of poverty, in profoundly shaping life outcomes.”

While making these intellectual connections between his bachelor’s-level studies and his observations during human services work, Townsend got the itch to go to graduate school. He was uncertain which discipline of social science he should pursue, so he spoke with faculty members in various disciplines. He ended up having a fruitful conversation with Dr. Robert Crutchfield, a Sociologist at UW who is now a Racial Democracy, Crime and Justice affiliate at CJRC. Soon after, Townsend was admitted to, and then enrolled in the graduate program in Sociology at UW. He wrote his master’s thesis on the negative impacts of criminal justice adjudication in later adolescence, with Prof. Crutchfield as his advisor. In his doctoral studies, Townsend focused on Demography. “I wasn’t sure if demography would be the concentration for me. In fact I was pretty sure I was going to hate it. But my mom, Dr. Lois Price-Spratlen, a Nursing professor, said to me ‘Just you wait. You might really like it.’ And of course she was right,” Townsend shared. Dr. Avery M. “Pete” Guest was his dissertation advisor. He did his doctoral research on the “Great Migration” of African Americans to 136 urban areas throughout the U.S. during the 1930s, 1950s, and 1970s. Consistent with migration research and like other groups, “They moved to places primarily due to family ties and economic opportunities, so I explored how non-economic destination characteristics also served as motivators” after economic and demographic factors were controlled. He found that community organizations and other resources of “social uplift” were also significant influences on urban migration flows.

After a post-doctoral position at Penn State, Townsend became a faculty member at Ohio State in 1995, continuing his research on migration, homelessness, and other urban themes. In 2009, Townsend received a seed grant from CJRC to conduct an organizational case



Dr. Townsend Price-Spratlen

study examining Reconstruction Inc., a non-profit organization in Philadelphia founded by former felons. The organization works with ex-offenders, their families, and interested others to improve desistance, community outcomes, and quality of life. That project culminated in his 2012 book, *Reconstructing Rage: Transformative Reentry in the Era of Mass Incarceration* (Peter Lang Publishers), co-written with William Goldsby, the founder and Chair of Reconstruction, Inc. In a “small world” story, Townsend shared that he met William Goldsby when he was a teenager. Several years earlier, and independently, William had been a research assistant for his mom, Lois Price-Spratlen’s work on neighborhood health resources and adolescent health outcomes. “You can’t make that stuff up!” Townsend exclaimed.

Reconstruction, Inc. began as a satellite initiative of the Community Relations Division of the Quaker organization, American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). “They (AFSC and Reconstruction, Inc.) initially sought to address the rage that black men felt in being socially marginalized, criminally sanctioned and discriminated against in society, and the limited opportunities and resources available to them given this marginalization,” Townsend said. By 1992, Reconstruction, Inc. became an autonomous non-profit. The first cohort of twenty-five men was comprised of two-time violent felons in the last two years of their sentences. The cohort was a product of a collaboration between Reconstruction, Graterford (PA) Prison administrators, and an Advisory Board of lifers at the prison. Goldsby intentionally assembled the group on the heels of the “three strikes law” phenomenon. He wanted to afford these individuals the opportunity to greatly improve their outcomes and avoid the draconian legislation that could put them away for life if they reoffended.

The book is an analysis of the generational history of the organization’s contributions - “the individual, familial and neighborhood challenges of reentry and the resource partnerships and other (formal and informal) collaborations” returning citizens are using to address them, then and now. As one objective indicator of success, only four members of the first cohort returned

to prison, and only one did so on a new charge. This 16% recidivism rate over nearly twenty years is in stark contrast to the U.S. average of nearly 7 in 10 African American men being re-arrested, with approximately 50% returning to prison within three years. In short, the Reconstruction mission works, and works well. *Reconstructing Rage* analyzes how the organization nurtures principled transformations beyond desistance, and suggests best practices for public policy and future research. "I'm proud of what came together for the book. And I give a primary shout out to Ruth Peterson as the CJRC director at the time. That book wouldn't exist without her vision, leadership, and willingness to take a chance on the project," Townsend said.

In September of this year, Townsend embarked on another mixed-methods case study centered on the "DOPE Ministries (pseudonym)." It is an addiction recovery-focused ministry in Columbus, with former felons and their family members being among its most consistent affiliates. He explained that the overwhelming majority of Public Health studies on recovery focus on Alcoholics Anonymous participation, and are typically quite limited in analyzing relationships between faith, social support, reentry, and recovery. Conversely, this project "focuses on a fully functioning church which has a Cocaine Anonymous component among their holistic resources." Again, organizational collaborations and the many uncertainties of quality of life outcomes will be explored. Townsend received another seed grant from CJRC for the project, and CJRC Program Assistant and OSU Sociology undergraduate alumna Yolanda Gelo is Townsend's Research Assistant. The two are employing in-depth interviews, surveys focus groups, and participant observation to carry out their analyses. According to Townsend, the project will "bring together criminology, public health, and an examination of socioeconomic inequality. In a Columbus neighborhood of severe economic and health disparities, what role can an initiative such as the DOPE Ministries play in addressing those disparities?" He and Yolanda plan on making significant headway on their data collection by the end of the academic school year, and are excited to see the outcomes that emerge from the research as the study progresses.

Thanks to Professor David Kennedy, Dr. Townsend Price-Spratlen, Dr. Angela Stroud and Dr. Mary Thomas for sharing their valuable time and insights for our articles, and to all of you who sent 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 email [Amanda Kennedy](mailto:Amanda.Kennedy@osu.edu). If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please send Amanda your e-mail address.
