

Criminal Justice Research Center News

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This issue's feature:
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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Hello, everyone. As we approach the end of Spring Quarter 2008, I want to take a moment to CONGRATULATE you all on another successful academic year. Coming up this Friday, June 6, 2008, is CJRC's final symposium of 2007-2008 (see time and place below). On the second anniversary of the establishment of the "Excellence in Justice" symposium series, Creasie Finney Hairston, Dean and Professor of the Jane Addams College of Social Work at the University of Illinois-Chicago, will provide a keynote address on "Coming Home from Prison: Family Matters." Professor Hairston's address will be followed by comments from: Kim Hettel (Ohio Governor's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives), Stephen Gavazzi (Human Development and Family Science, Ohio State University), and Rachael Woldoff (Sociology and Anthropology, West Virginia University). Undoubtedly, the 7th IEJ seminar will be as thought-provoking and important as the six that preceded it. I look forward to seeing all of you there.

Looking beyond the spring term, Summer Quarter 2008 will be a busy and productive time for CJRC. Notably, we turn our attention to the "Crime and Justice Summer Research Institute" (see below), "Racial Democracy, Crime and Justice Workshop (see below)," and to making headway on new and continuing research projects before the rush of Fall Quarter sets in.

As summer is every year, Summer Quarter 2008 will be a transition time for CJRC. We will lose several of our "steady as rocks" graduate affiliates as they move on to the next stages of their professional careers. Crystal Stephens has already defended her dissertation.

CONGRATULATIONS DR. STEPHENS!!! Harry Weiss will follow within the next few weeks, and Lori Burrington will take her turn later in early summer. Each of these young scholars will be sorely missed at CJRC. They have been a part of the community of "residents" of Journalism 151 for the past several years, and their good citizenship has contributed to the positive intellectual environment that we hold dear. Collectively, they have hardly ever missed a seminar; they have welcomed and interfaced with each of our speakers in terms of their research; they have given talks on their own research; and as is well-known, Harry has been our official "unofficial" photographer, documenting all of our activities, and Lori served as the editor of *CJRC News* until we had to have her help with conducting research and managing a new project. Besides these transitions, Renee Amacher, an undergraduate assistant for CJRC is also graduating. OLE, OLE, OLE RENEE!!! This outstanding young woman has assisted us with a myriad of administrative and research tasks. Fortunately, she will not abandon us fully until after the summer institute and the RDCJ-N workshop. *On behalf of CJRC affiliates throughout the university, I congratulate each of you on this major accomplishment, and wish you the best in your new endeavors.*

Despite the bittersweet loss of these members of the CJRC community, the transition into and out of the summer should be a relatively smooth one as we will have more than the usual amount of continuity. There is no change in our professional and administrative staff this year. At this writing, we indeed are celebrating the first anniversary of Debbie Flower-Smith's (Administrative Associate [AA]) and Mark Davis' (Research Scientist) tenure at CJRC, and they are continuing in their roles, as are Susan Pennington (Human Resources and back-up AA), Derrick Bryan (newsletter editor), and Jason Whitesel (web master). Laurie and I will be here too.

--Ruth

UPCOMING CJRC EVENTS OF INTEREST

Friday, June 6, 2008

Institute for Excellence in Justice Symposium on "Family and Corrections: The Role of Family during Incarceration and Reentry"

Featured Speaker: **Creasie Finney Hairston (Social Work, University of Illinois at Chicago)**; Discussants: Steve Gavazzi (Human Development and Family Relations, Ohio State University), Kim Hettel (Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction), and Rachael Woldoff (Sociology, West Virginia University). **OSU Main Campus, Page Hall, Room 10, 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Coffee, juice and refreshments will be served.**

July 7-25, 2008

Crime & Justice Research Institute 2008

Faculty from underrepresented groups working in areas of crime and criminal justice will converge upon The Ohio State University's campus to complete an ongoing project (either a research paper or grant proposal) in preparation for journal submission or agency funding review. In addition, participants will gain information that will serve as a tool-kit tailored to successful navigation of the academic setting. The institute will culminate in a research symposium where participants present their completed research before a scholarly audience.

July 24-25, 2008

Racial Democracy, Crime & Justice Workshop 2008

On July 24-25, 2008, the Racial Democracy, Crime and Justice Network (RDCJN) will hold its 4th Annual Summer Workshop at Ohio State University. The activities of this network is geared to (1) advancing research on issues of citizenship and democratic participation at the intersection of race, crime, and justice; and (2) promoting racial/ethnic democratization of academe by supporting junior scholars of color in advancing their academic careers. Among other activities, this year's workshop will feature: research presentations by faculty participants in the SRI (see above) and other crime and justice faculty from around the country; opportunities to discuss and work on collaborative projects; and workshops on future/new directions in crime and violence research, and acquiring funding to support research. (The workshop is funded through a grant from the National Science Foundation.)

WHAT CENTER PARTICIPANTS ARE DOING

Michael Maltz (Sociology) will be the Forchheimer Visiting Professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem during Spring Semester 2009. He will be affiliated with the Institute of Criminology in the Faculty of Law.

Kenneth Steinman (Public Health) has been directing the Ohio Family Violence Prevention Project (OFVPP) for the past 16 months. The Ohio Family Violence Prevention Project (OFVPP) began in January 2007 with three specific aims: (1) to identify realistic and promising policies and programs for preventing family violence in Ohio; (2) to increase awareness of family violence in Ohio across a broad range of key elected officials, agency, personnel, funding organizations and community leaders; and (3) to build support for prioritizing and implementing recommended policies and programs.

Walter DeKeseredy (University of Ontario Institute of Technology) has several recent publications. The first is entitled "Canadian crime control in the new millennium: The Influence of neo-conservative U.S. policies and practices.", and can be found in *Police Practice and Research*. The second "Patterns of Violence in the Family." In M. Baker (Ed.), *Families: Changing trends in Canada*, 6th ed. Whitby, Ontario: McGraw-Hill Ryerson. Lastly; "Male Violence Against Women in North America as Hate Crime. In B. Perry (Ed.), *Victims of Hate Crime*. New York: Praeger.

Jim Taylor (Sociology) has accepted a tenure-track appointment as Assistant Professor of Sociology with Ohio University, Zanesville. He will begin his appointment Autumn quarter 2008.

Stephen Gavazzi (Human Development and Family Science) has a new publication entitled "Global Risk Factors and the Prediction of Recidivism Rates in a Sample of First-Time Misdemeanant Offenders." This article is published in the *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*. Steve also gave three presentations at the recent Society for Research on Adolescence Biennial Conference held March 6-9 in Chicago:

Lim, J.Y.; Gavazzi, S.M., & Peguero, A.A. (2008). The Impact of Neighborhood Environments on Peer Related Risks among Juvenile Delinquents.

Khurana, A., Sullivan, J.M., & Gavazzi, S.M. (2008). Cross-Jurisdictional and Cross-Perspective Validity of Recidivism Prediction from Dynamic Risk Factors in Juvenile Offenders.

Khurana, A., Sullivan, J.M., Cooksey, E.C., Gavazzi, S.M. (2008). Assessment of the Multi-Contextual Risk Factors Associated With Risky Sexual Behaviors Among Court -Involved Adolescents.

Deanna Wilkinson (Human Development and Family Science) has several upcoming publications. The *Journal of Community Psychology* is set to publish her article entitled "Violent youth's responses to high levels of exposure to community violence: What violent events reveal about youth violence." This article is co-authored with Patrick J. Carr of Rutgers University. Deanna also has another publication entitled "Youth Violence, Access to Guns, and Guns in schools. This is part of the Research Brief Series Consortium to Prevent School Violence and can be found at <http://www.ncsvprp.org>

CALLS FOR PAPERS, CONFERENCES, AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

On 5-30-08 the *Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services* (OCJS) will release their solicitation for the **Edward J. Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant (JAG)** Program. The JAG fundable program areas include: law enforcement; prevention and education; corrections and community corrections; prosecution, court, and victim services programs, and; research, evaluation, and technology improvement. A match of 25% is required of grantees. For further information go to <http://www.ocjs.ohio.gov/> . **Proposals are due 7-2-08**

The next deadline for the *Law and Social Science Program of the National Science Foundation* is 8-15-08. This program supports social scientific studies of law and law-like systems of rules, institutions, processes, and behaviors. These can include, but are not limited to, research designed to enhance the scientific understanding of the impact of law; human behavior and interactions as these relate to law; the dynamics of legal decision making; and the nature, sources, and consequences of variations and changes in legal institutions. More information about the this program is available at: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5422&org=SES&from=home . **Proposals are due 8-15-08.**

The Criminal Justice grant program of the *JEHT Foundation* works to strengthen the voice for systemic criminal justice reform in the United States by:

- promoting equity and fairness in the criminal justice system for all people, with an emphasis on reducing discrimination and other practices that lead to racial and ethnic disproportionality in the system;
- reducing incarceration and recidivism in the U.S. prison system without risk to public safety; and
- redirecting savings from reduced incarceration and recidivism into programs serving at risk persons and former prisoners in communities impacted most by crime.

JEHT reviews grant requests on an ongoing basis and makes funding decisions twice a year. For more information go to: <http://www.jehtfoundation.org/criminaljustice/>

July 21-23, 2008 The National Institute of Justice Conference 2008.

For more than a decade, NIJ's annual conference has brought together criminal justice scholars, policymakers, and practitioners at the local, state and federal levels to share the most recent findings from research and technology. The conference showcases what works, what doesn't work and what the research shows as promising. It puts a heavy emphasis on the benefits to researchers and practitioners who work together to create effective evidence-based policies and practices. The DNA Grantees Workshop, formerly a separate event, is now an integral part of the NIJ Conference. Combining the former DNA Grantees Workshop with the NIJ Conference allows us to feature innovations in forensic sciences and related policy and resource issues. For more information about the conference please visit the following link:

http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/events/nij_conference/welcome.htm.

July 24-25, 2008 Add Health Users Conference 2008.

You are invited to register for the 2008 Add Health Users Conference, to be held July 24-25, 2008, in the **Natcher Conference Center** on the main campus of the **National Institutes of Health (NIH), Bethesda, Maryland**. The conference program will feature approximately 50 presentations by investigators who are conducting research on the health and well-being of adolescents and young adults using data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (Add Health). The principal goal of the conference is to give researchers who are working with the data an opportunity to share research goals, experiences, and results. It will also provide an opportunity for those interested in working with the data to learn how they are being used by others. Special presentations by Add Health investigators will focus on the unique data collected in Add Health, made possible by its design, including genetic and new biological data, environmental data, and the educational supplement. For more information about the conference please visit the following link: <http://www.cpc.unc.edu/projects/addhealth/news>.

This Issue's Feature:

A New Data Set Available through CJRC

By: Mike Maltz

So you think you know how to analyze time series! Well, how would you like to test your mettle on over 400,000 time series, each with up to 540 data points? The time series in question are monthly data from 1960-2004, for over 17,000 police departments, for seven crime types (murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, vehicle theft), as well as their sum (the so-called Crime Index), and an additional 19 subcategories – e.g., robbery with a gun, knife, personal weapons (hands, feet, etc.), or other; attempted rape; auto, truck or bus, or other vehicle theft. Or you can just view the data in different cities over time and see whether it rises and falls with various tides (unemployment, immigration, poverty, age or ethnicity distribution, etc., whatever your pet theory is). I've put all of the files and a plotting utility (so you can see each agency's crime history) in a zipped file.

Download it from <http://sociology.osu.edu/mdm/UCR1960-2004.zip>.

The data consist of monthly counts of these crimes reported by police departments throughout the country to the FBI as part of its Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. Since reporting to the UCR Program is entirely voluntary, some agencies are less than diligent in doing so, but for the most part they comply. However, major gaps still remain; for a discussion of these gaps, see "[Bridging Gaps in Police Crime Data](#)," published by the US Bureau of Justice Statistics. Under a series of grants from the US National Institute of Justice, Harry Weiss, a graduate student here at OSU, and I cleaned the data as best we could.

Some of the gaps are just inadvertent (or, as statisticians would say, MCAR, missing completely at random). These can usually be filled in using relatively simple algorithms. The more significant problems, however, are those that are on purpose, as when the City of Atlanta was bidding (successfully) for the Olympics and lowered its crime statistics in a more, shall we say, “interesting” way (see <http://www.cnn.com/2004/US/South/02/20/atlanta.police.audit.ap/index.html>); Philadelphia and Boca Raton also have had their own reporting scandals (<http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9F06E2D91F38F930A3575BC0A96E958260>); and according to the creator of HBO’s “The Wire,” Baltimore is even better at it (http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-simon/the-wires-final-s_b_91926.html):

"In Baltimore, where over the last twenty years Times Mirror and the Tribune Company have combined to reduce the newsroom by forty percent, all of the above stories pretty much happened. A mayor was elected governor while his police commanders made aggravated assaults and robberies disappear.

"... It would not have been easy for a veteran police reporter to pull all the police reports in the Southwestern District and find out just how robberies fell so dramatically, to track each individual report through staff review and find out how many were unfounded and for what reason, or to develop a stationhouse source who could tell you about how many reports went unwritten on the major's orders, or even further -- to talk to people in that district who tried to report armed robberies and instead found themselves threatened with warrant checks or accused of drug involvement or otherwise intimidated into dropping the matter.

"...That kind of trust comes slow."

Not all cities manipulate crime statistics. Even so, you might want to get rid of all of your preconceptions of how to deal with these data. It's for that reason that a plotting utility is the centerpiece of the data set. You have to look at the data, not just throw it into the computerized maw and let Stata or SAS or SPSS give you some p(ee) values. By visually inspecting the data, you might see what the effect of a new policy, or police chief, or law has on crime. You might compare different cities with different characteristics. Whatever you do, it's a relatively new data set that hasn't yet been used much at all, so you're getting in on the ground floor.

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 Derrick Bryan at bryan.127@osu.edu. If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please send Derrick your e-mail address.