

Dear Readers,

It is with great delight that I write this note introducing the inaugural issue of the journal, *The Annual Review of Criminal Justice Studies* (ARCJS). While the department has expressed a desire for a student-run journal for several years, it took the enterprising spirit of our newest tenure-track faculty member, Dr. Albert de la Tierra, or Professor Lobo as his students call him, for this project to come to fruition. Without Professor Lobo inspiring his students or applying his many gifts in this area, this journal would have taken much longer to happen. Thank you, Professor Lobo, for this gift to the department, our students, and to all interested in current topics in Criminal Justice Studies.

Professor Lobo's inspiration is infectious, demonstrated by his ability to get three of our best and brightest students in the department to serve as the inaugural editorial board. Claudia Lomeli-Rodriguez, Grace Ann Cowherd, and Serena Raquel Gomez serve as the editorial committee and have set the bar high for the quality and caliber of the journal in its very first go-around. Together, these remarkable students have compiled a compelling and exciting first issue that traverses the wide range of topics that interest our students. And their editorial expertise is already on display, through the selection of the articles, the arrangement of the issue, and most importantly, through the compelling topics and ideas that are presented herein.

These compelling topics range from a series of opening papers to topics on policing, courts, and incarceration. Ximena Nieves starts us off with the first article in the issue, looking at what Nieves calls the “unholy trinity” of racism, capitalism and mass incarceration. This article sets the theoretical stage for understanding the terrain of criminal justice studies in the current moment, as Nieves chronicles how mass incarceration emerged from the crises of racism and capitalism in the 1960s. Lucien Tomlinson continues this theme, writing about the decline of the welfare state and the rise of the police state, that first began over forty years ago as the US embarked on mass incarceration. Tomlinson notes how the policies of mass incarceration specifically dismantled government programs to alleviate poverty, and thus, the welfare state was replaced with the police state. Gabriel A. Camacho continues this theme by opening a conversation about the “positive correlation between crime rate and poverty rate”, examining three competing perspectives on crime and showing how people’s ideological leanings influence how they view the poverty-crime correlation.

The next part of the issue turns to policing. Eszter Winkelmayer begins this review with a look at racism in US law enforcement, providing a historical overview and critique, before turning to how data-based solutions can helpfully intervene. Winkelmayer traces how police departments are shaped by implicit bias, and how reforms can seek to eliminate this bias using data and education. Maria Gonzalez seeks to understand how police brutality emerges from the lack of accountability, and the specific impact this has on Black citizens in the US. Specifically, Gonzalez traces how stereotypes of race and crime, combined with the lack of accountability for police officers enabled by prosecutors and

legal protections, create the conditions for Black citizens to be “disproportionately victimized by law enforcement.” Paola Saavedra Ramirez completes our review of policing by looking at how the abuse of power by law enforcement officers’ “plagues” the criminal justice system. Saavedra Ramirez examines recent scandals in the LAPD and the Dublin Correctional facility to show how similar behavioral patterns shape different agencies, and the overarching theme of “control” that pervades these abusive behaviors.

Mario Alvarez Chavez begins the review of the courts, with a piece that examines wrongful convictions of innocent people. Alvarez Chavez shows how racial bias in policing and eyewitness accounts can lead to misidentification and wrongful convictions. Estafany Romero examines the role of plea bargaining in the courts, noting that this practice “continues to oppress marginalized communities.” Romero further explains how this practice is traumatic for those who must go through it, and the mental and physical damage that comes from the need to accept a plea bargaining because one has few resources. Isaac Hoffman ends this section with a look at drug policy, specifically examining how reform and rehabilitation are opportunities to save lives. Hoffman examines how an emphasis on rehabilitation has the potential to decrease criminal behavior and also improve the socioeconomics of people subjected to drug prohibition policies. Editorial committee member, Grace A. Cowherd, concludes this section on the courts by examining how white supremacist values are embedded in court practice. Cowherd examines the practices of jury selection and sentencing to show how coloniality infuses court processing, working to disenfranchise Black citizens and preserve the hierarchical power of whiteness.

The final section reviews incarceration and begins with an article by one of the journal’s editors, Claudia Lomeli-Rodriguez that provides an overview of how sexual abuse takes place in the federal system through the abuse of power by correctional officers. Lomeli-Rodriguez further examines a single prison, showing how the culture of an institution can “foster an environment where sexual abuse...is rampant.” Heighley A. Hernandez continues this look at incarceration by looking at one of the most severe aspects of imprisonment, solitary confinement and its incredibly negative impacts on people who experience it. Hernandez writes forcefully that this practice should be abolished, and that society should create legal and legislative reforms to address. Finally, Eduardo Hernandez concludes this section, and this excellent first issue, by looking at how mass incarceration emerged from the U.S. imperial regime. Specifically, Hernandez looks at how mass incarceration and the prison industrial complex emerged directly from the military industrial complex, showing the roots of mass incarceration in warfare, counterinsurgency, and imperialism.

As you can likely already tell, this is an issue demonstrating the superb intellect of the students in the Criminal Justice Studies program at San Francisco State University. Each of these articles is also a testament to the future of what criminal justice policy may look like in the United States in the generations to come. Each article reveals how the future leaders of the system are already taking a close look at the ways the system has facilitated injustice and how they might work towards its undoing. I hope you read these articles and find what I have found—the collection of authors in this issue are inspiring, deeply engaged with the many issues that plague our systems, and hopeful about paths forward. With the

leadership of the authors in this journal, I am confident that the future holds a place where safety and security are enabled for all, and the criminal justice system is a mechanism for creating social justice, instead of injustice.

Sincerely

Dr. Liz Brown

Chair, Department of Criminal Justice Studies