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Welcome from the Editors

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Welcome from the Editors

This volume of the Mid-Southern Journal of Criminal Justice contains valuable and insightful information on various topics related to criminology and criminal justice. Certainly, the need to search for answers to ageless questions about crime, criminals, rehabilitation, incarceration, programming and related criminal justice systems continues. The current volume seeks to explore “Changes in Criminal Justice” as it relates to several topics.

As the second quarter of this century nears, it is evident that the criminal legal system continues to face several challenges. The articles published in the 22nd edition of the Mid-Southern Journal of Criminal Justice tackle these multifaceted areas in which the system continues to change. The following three articles specifically highlight changes regarding emerging discussions on commercial sex work, the need for reform to reduce false confessions, and an in-depth analysis on one of the most prolific serial killers in U.S. history. Each student brings a unique perspective to progressing conversations for specific policy reforms as well as drawing attention to the need for more research pushing toward a greater good for the discipline.

Barry (2023) utilizes Agnew’s general strain theory to examine sex work through the perspective of “buyers.” Specifically, the article focuses on the factors, conceptualized as strain, that lead buyers (generally men) towards seeking out sex work. The article builds upon current research in the area and challenges us to reexamine previously established justifications for why a person engages in the sex work trade.

Alick (2023) draws our attention to an important topic that has troubled scholars and practitioners for decades. By grounding the discussion in previous literature, the article attempts to expand the conversation on necessary policy reform and the use of more advanced

technologies to combat the prevalence of false confessions. Specifically, Alick draws attention to the usefulness of DNA evidence in supporting exonerees while also calling for more intensive training for law enforcement to reduce the overall number of false confessions.

The third article of the edition provides a diverging format to address the need for changes in the field. Stephens (2023) provides an in-depth analysis of the life and crimes of Samuel Little, one of the most prolific serial killers in U.S. history. By highlighting potential factors that may have contributed to his heinous crimes, Stephens demonstrates the complexity and nuances of criminal behavior while also suggesting the usefulness of victimology in the creation of criminal justice policy.

The following edition provides a glimpse of the topics pertaining to the vital and evolving professional fields of criminal justice and criminology. Building on familiar topics, the views in this volume give insight to potential horizons described by innovative terms and historic foundations that continue to remain relevant. We welcome you to give thought to the information contained in this volume. Please find time to enjoy reviewing the interesting and timeless topics that are presented.

Editors,

Dr. Cassandra B. Whyte, EdD

Dr. Stephen T. Young, PhD

Note: The West Virginia Criminal Justice Educators' Association, as a professional organization, is proud to offer opportunities for students and professionals to publish up-to-date information on salient topics in the field of Criminal Justice. Providing reviewed information can potentially help readers identify ways to make a difference in the dilemmas presented. Sharing and professional dialogue are also crucial to making progress toward societal challenges. Therefore, the WVCJEA and this Journal's staff also are committed to offering some valuable information about criminal justice topics as well. We hope you enjoy the papers in this volume.