Letter from the editors

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In 2001, Todd Clear and Natasha Frost, the first editors of *Criminology & Public Policy (CPP)*, wrote in their inaugural editorial introduction:

> If crime and justice studies are ever to play a more meaningful role in public debates on crime and justice, criminal justice policy researchers must prepare and disseminate their work in ways that are more suitable to the policy-making audience. *Criminology & Public Policy* is meant to do just that. The central objective of the journal is to strengthen the role of research findings in the formulation of crime and justice policy by publishing and widely disseminating empirically based, policy-focused studies of important crime and justice policy questions. (p. 1)

Twenty years later, thanks to them and the editorial teams that followed, *Criminology & Public Policy* has become a highly ranked and impactful journal in our field. Although challenges continue in effectively translating and implementing research knowledge into policy and practice, there have also been substantial gains. Government and private funding have become more focused on encouraging research proposals that are practice-oriented, evidence-based, and that use the most rigorous scientific methods. University-based research centers and nonprofit think tanks have helped to strengthen the translation of evidence into practice. And criminal justice practitioners have become more engaged in partnerships with researchers and initiatives within their own organizations to facilitate the use of science in their daily work.1 *CPP* provides the essential home and dissemination mechanism to strengthen and support these efforts, as well as provides an important policy outlet for members of the American Society of Criminology.

As the new editors of *Criminology & Public Policy*, our vision for the future of the journal is to continue its mission to advance and strengthen the role of scientific research in criminal justice policy and practice. To this end, we seek rigorous empirical studies that address various aspects of program and policy development, theory, operations, impacts, and cost efficiency as they pertain to all areas of the criminal and juvenile justice systems. We welcome studies using a variety of quantitative and qualitative methodologies, original and replication studies, and high-quality reviews and syntheses of...
literature. Most importantly, as Clear and Frost (2001) first emphasized, submitted manuscripts must have a clear and strong connection to policy and practice.

We are deeply committed to finding ways to disseminate, translate, and institutionalize research into crime policy and the daily workings of our criminal justice system. This first issue of our tenure reflects this commitment. We believe that the prevalence of mass shootings is one of our most significant contemporary policy concerns that requires attention and investment from our field. As we transitioned into our roles last year, we partnered with former CPP editor, Daniel Nagin of Carnegie Mellon University, to obtain funding from the National Science Foundation to bring together experts from research and practice to write about what we know and need to know to best inform public policy on mass shootings. We also received Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation funding to implement a congressional briefing to disseminate these findings within the halls of Congress. Much of this effort has been supported and made possible by the fact that the journal now physically resides inside of the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy (CEBCP) at George Mason University, known for its infrastructure for dissemination and translating research into practice. These efforts reflect some of the approaches that we intend to use in pushing the envelope to disseminate work from Criminology & Public Policy into the field.

In the future, we hope to bring similar efforts and attention to other underdeveloped areas of crime policy research. For example, we currently have an active call for papers for a special issue that will focus on outcome evaluations of interventions intended to reduce disparity in the criminal justice system. While many studies have examined the occurrence and prevalence of disparity, the field lacks rigorous evaluations on how we can reduce or mitigate disparities in our justice-related systems and institutions. Other important yet understudied areas include partnership efforts to counter the opioid epidemic, the seeming growth of hate crimes and extremism, and the role of the Internet in facilitating or preventing crime. We would also like to receive more submissions evaluating the sustainability and long-term consequences of evidence-based programs in juvenile justice systems, policing, the courts, corrections, and community prevention practices.

We will strive to ensure that a diversity of viewpoints, backgrounds, criminological approaches, and research methods are reflected in the authors and articles published. First, in 2019, we transitioned to electronic submissions for the journal, which will help us to receive, track, and manage submissions efficiently as well as track and expand the reviewer base for the journal. We have also substantially increased the editorial advisory board to include even more scholars who focus on criminal justice policy and practice.\(^2\) We are expanding the reach of Criminology & Public Policy by capitalizing on social media and our partnership with the Criminal Justice Research Alliance to disseminate authors’ work and encourage manuscript submissions. Using the extensive policy and practice dissemination infrastructure here at the CEBCP, we hope to reach practitioners and policymakers as well as the research community about Criminology & Public Policy’s efforts.

Additionally, to meet the ASC membership’s growing demand for publication outlets for policy-related research, we intend to increase original research articles in Criminology & Public Policy and reduce the use of response essays. Although the journal’s traditional format of coupling research articles and response essays has facilitated important dialogue regarding policy and practice, we believe that this change will increase Criminology & Public Policy’s impact and ranking among criminology journals. We also believe that this change will encourage submissions from a wider variety of scholars in the field, as well as allow for more researchers to be heard. We will, however, continue to solicit response and policy essays for particularly important and controversial issues. When used, they will be solicited based on high-quality peer reviews of original articles, and they will be subjected to peer review, increasing their rigor and potential impact.
To accomplish these goals, we have put together one of the most diverse editorial teams among our field’s journals. Our associate editors are Cody Telep and Ojmarrh Mitchell (Arizona State University), Sue-Ming Yang (George Mason University), and Justice Tankebe (University of Cambridge). Our managing assistant editor is Xiaoyun Wu (George Mason University). Our team is honored to be serving the American Society of Criminology through the editorship of *Criminology & Public Policy*, and we are excited to be steering the journal into this next phase. We hope that you will consider the journal to be the outlet for your policy- and practice-oriented work, and we look forward to your contributions.

ENDNOTES

1 For example, the Societies of Evidence-Based Policing in the United Kingdom, United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. See also the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance’s Strategies for Policing Initiative (SPI).


REFERENCE


AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

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