



THE FELLOW

September 2006 | Volume 1 • Issue 1

EDITORIAL BOARD

Joel M. Caplan
Karen A. Zurlo

Peer Review
Page 2

Peer Cites
Dissertation Topics
Page 3

SP² Blotter
Fall Calendar
Sources & Tips
Page 4

The official peer-reviewed
newsletter of doctoral
students at the School of
Social Policy & Practice
at the
University of Pennsylvania

DSSC@sp2.upenn.edu

Welcome New and Returning Students!



It is with great pleasure and excitement that we present the inaugural issue of *The Fellow*, the official publication of the Doctoral Student Steering Committee (DSSC) at the School of Social Policy & Practice (SP2). As you know, the mission of the Ph.D. program in Social Policy is to prepare students to be teachers, researchers and leaders in the field of social welfare through individualized educational plans that build upon student interests and faculty expertise. *The Fellow* is designed to facilitate this mission by providing a medium for information sharing, interdisciplinary collaboration, and peer support.



We hope that *The Fellow* will become a valuable resource for all aspiring Ph.D.s at SP2 as we build our knowledge, careers and CVs together. *The Fellow's* content will be shaped by the demands of students, so be sure to provide feedback and/or join the editorial board. Also, remember to submit your papers, publications, grant awards, and favorite research tips and websites for inclusion in future issues. We look forward to working with you to make this academic year a great one.

Karen Zurlo and Joel Caplan
DSSC Co-Chairs

The wonderful days of summer are over. For some students it meant vacation time, trips or learning new skills. For other students it was a stressful period of taking the preliminary exams. I wish this could have been done without the stress. However, my colleagues all over the country tell me that no matter what system you use for testing--exams or papers, it is stress producing. I am glad that it is all over and am happy to welcome all those who wrote the exams.



Dr. Handy and I traveled to Korea and India this past summer. While lecturing and spreading Penn's fame, we met wonderful people and saw amazing sites and interesting cultures. We finished the summer with ten memorable days in Newfoundland and Labrador. Our itinerary, if it seems appealing, should serve as a signal for all of you that there is life after doctoral studies and it is fun and rewarding.

For now, a new academic year is ahead of us. Five new students are joining our program and I hope that everyone in the program will make them feel welcome. They come from a variety of backgrounds and from different countries. I wish for them to enjoy their time with us and to learn to collaborate rather than compete. My motto in this respect is "compete with yourself and collaborate with your peers." While the academic world values your individual contributions and looks for your original ideas, you can best enhance your efforts by collaborating rather than competing. After many years in the academic world of Social Work, I can attest that the scholars who collaborate, on average, have the most successful careers and the most fun.

Soon we will start the doctoral seminar series and doctoral parties. But until then, my door is open if you need me and I welcome ideas and suggestions as to how to make the program better.

Ram Chaan
Associate Dean for Research and Doctoral Education

PEER REVIEW

We all work hard writing papers for class, and many papers are worthy of more than just a letter grade. *The Fellow* provides an outlet to share unpublished manuscripts, essays, book reviews and editorials with colleagues in an effort to distribute ideas, spark debates, obtain feedback, encourage journal submissions, and support (interdisciplinary) collaborations. Full references are available upon request to the authors.

Disparate effects of mass incarceration

by Jason C. Matejkowski | matejkow@sp2.upenn.edu

The United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world. At the end of 2003, the incarceration rate in America was 714 per 100,000 residents (or one in every 140 Americans - Harrison & Beck, 2004). In contrast, other western democracies have locked-away between 50 and 145 residents per 100,000 of their population on any given day (Walmsley, 2005). The U.S. has earned the dubious distinction as the world's most prolific warden only recently. The incarceration rate (including jails) has sharply increased over the last 3 decades from 166/100,000 in 1970 to the current level (Center on Juvenile and Criminal Justice, 2002). It is important to note that the incarceration rate was relatively stable in the decades preceding 1970 and rose sharply over the next three decades; indicating a sea change in criminal justice policies. The escalating incarceration rate is reflected in the dramatic increase in the numbers of inmates in State and Federal Prisons.

The following is an excerpt from a paper submitted for SW803: History and Philosophy of Social Welfare. The paper reviewed the recent, rapid and sudden increase in the confinement of a large part of the American population seen between 1970-2000; the practices and policies that have been implicated in the rise of the prison population; and the effects they have disproportionately had on African Americans. The excerpt presented here will focus on politicization of crime as an election issue and determinate sentencing practices.

Politicization of crime as an election issue: Zimring (2001, pp.162-164) identifies three characteristics of the political landscape that have promoted mass incarceration. First to be implicated is the often "loose linkage" between the two purposes of enacting legislation regarding criminal punishment; (1) the symbolic denunciation of criminals and crime and (2) overhaul of the criminal justice system. Laws passed with symbolism foremost are often not linked well to operations within the criminal justice system and are difficult to apply. However, such ill-designed laws may also be applied outside their intended purpose. First, Zimring illustrates this with the example of the "three strikes" laws passed by both the Federal system and by the State of California in 1994. While both laws contained similar language to extend sentences for repeat offenders, the Federal law had been practiced in 35 sentences by 1998, the California statute had been applied in 40,000 sentences during the same term. Second, Zimring highlights adherence to the notion of a zero sum relationship between victim and victimizer in the development of justice policies. This 'logic' posits that anything that hurts offenders, by definition, helps victims. The assumption of such a relationship promotes endless cycles of increased suffering amongst criminals. Third, Zimring identifies the politics of government distrust as part of the backdrop for criminal justice policymaking. This concept is described as a disbelief in governmental officials (e.g. judges, parole officials, police) to effectively punish and monitor criminals which has resulted in the establishment of harsh punitive measures (e.g. mandatory minimums, truth-in-sentencing, and sex offender registries).

Tonry (1999) argues that the call for such policies does not come from the citizenry, but from the media or, more likely, from politicians themselves and that incarceration rates in America rose "because American politicians wanted them to rise" (Tonry, p. 422). In support of this argument, he cites a study on the media, politicians, and public opinion of crime issues by Katherine Beckett (1997) which showed that first, either politicians focus on crime policy and/or media increase coverage of crime issues and, in turn, surveys begin to show

increased concern about crime and heightened support for tougher policies. After stoking the fires of public fear of crime, partisan politicians then offer harsh policies to dampen those fears and collect votes as a reward for protecting their constituents.

Determinate Sentencing: The modus operandi just described has led to the passage of laws that provide fixed (i.e. no judicial discretion), and often increased, sentences for specific types of offenses in the form of mandatory minimums, and three-strikes laws. Prior to the period currently under discussion, indeterminate sentencing had been the norm since the early 20th century.

After the fall of indeterminate sentencing (due primarily to Zimring's 'politics of government mistrust'), most states enacted mandatory minimums and "truth-in-sentencing" laws requiring violent offenders to serve a fixed portion (usually 85%) of their prison terms. Many states passed three-strike laws that mandated long prison terms, without parole, for habitual offenders. The rapid increase in the numbers of the incarcerated are widely attributed to these policies (Oliver, 2001; Parent & Barnett, 2004).

America's prison population continues to rise as admissions outpace releases (Harrison & Karberg, 2004). States have restricted discretionary release through parole resulting in offenders "maxing out" of prison rather than being released based upon an assessment of rehabilitation (Maxwell, 1999). High profile crimes (e.g. Alan Matheney in Indiana and Willie Horton in Massachusetts) that have occurred while inmates were out on furlough were fodder for those who wished to politicize such tragedies to their advantage. From such events arose calls for reductions or elimination of 'good time' credit allowed inmates for participating in educational, vocation and other pro-social programs (e.g. Governor George Allen of VA, 1995). This has further extended the amount of time prisoners now spend behind bars. While the numbers of those incarcerated has continued to increase over the past 20 years, the number of offenders released to parole supervision has plateaued since the early 1990s (Travis & Lawrence, 2002).

One of the major arguments for the abolition of indeterminate sentencing was the evidence of racial disparities in sentencing and correctional practices. Unfortunately, these disparities still exist. In their review of the literature on racial disparities in sentencing, Kansal and Mauer (2005) found that race consistently figures into the sentencing process. As such, African-American and Latino males are sentenced particularly harshly when compared to similarly situated white defendants, especially for drug and property crimes. According to Human Rights Watch (HRW, web page, 2003), African Americans are being arrested, prosecuted, and imprisoned at a disproportionate rate. The organization cites as an example that while the proportion of all drug users who are African-American ranges from 13 to 15%, African-Americans "constitute 36% of arrests for drug possession and 63% of all drug offenders admitted to State prisons". Consequently, HRW reports ratios of the incarceration of African-American men age 18-64 to white men of the same age as high as 29 to 1 in the U.S.

Breaking the link between substance abuse and crime in Philadelphia:

Creating a community-based drug court

by Sara Wiesel Cullen | swiesel@sp2.upenn.edu

According to a report by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs (OJP, 2000), alcohol and other drug problems are the common denominator for most offenders in the criminal justice system. While research has not explicitly

demonstrated a causal relationship between the two, there is a clear link between substance abuse and crime. Thus, treatment of criminal offenders would be an efficient and effective way to break this link and address the burgeoning prison population.

Offenders who receive substance abuse treatment recidivate at a rate that is between one-third to one-half the rate of offenders who do not receive treatment (Dyria and Sung, 2000; National Drug Control Strategy, 2003). Individuals in court-mandated treatment tend to stay longer and perform as well if not better than those who enter treatment voluntarily; this is attributed to the threat of criminal sanctions, which can serve to motivate clients into treatment until they derive their own internal motivations for staying clean (OJP, 2000). Treatment for substance abuse provides an opportunity to alter the cycle of addiction and crime, as well as promote financial savings to the criminal justice system. With regards to economic cost alone, the most expensive drug treatment programs cost around \$10,000 per year per offender compared with around \$20,000 per year of incarceration per offender (OJP, 2000), representing at minimum a \$10,000 cost savings. However, in addition to the cost of incarceration, there are additional societal savings including the public health, insurance, medical, and social costs associated with substance abuse.

Despite the fact that the number of substance-involved offenders in state and federal prisons has increased annually, the percentage of prisoners receiving treatment has decreased nationwide. Less than 15% of state and 11.7% of federal prisoners abusing drugs or alcohol received treatment. For individuals who were using drugs at the time of their offense, the percentage that received treatment while incarcerated dropped from 40% in 1991 to 18% in 1997 (Mumola, 1999). Without treatment, three in four substance-involved offenders are rearrested within three years (OJP, 2000). The scarcity of treatment within the prison system highlights the need to provide alternative access to treatment. Drug-courts serve to divert substance-involved individuals into treatment upon entering the criminal justice system, but prior to entering the prison system.

According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), Philadelphia has approximately 300 open-air drug markets and remains a center of activity for the importation, wholesale distribution, and street level sales of illegal drugs on the East Coast. In 2002, 76.2% of Philadelphia adult male arrestees tested positive for drugs and approximately 63% of the Philadelphia adult males arrestees who committed violent offenses tested positive for drugs (ONDCP, 2003). Compared with other cities, Philadelphia had the highest percentage of

male arrestees testing positive for drugs among 34 tracked cities in 1997 (OJP, 2000). For almost half of the 7,913 inmates in the Philadelphia prison system in 2002, the most serious offense committed was a drug offense (ONDCP, 2003).

However, unlike other large cities, Philadelphia only has one drug court, which is located in center city. Since a high proportion of drug activity occurs in other areas of the city, additional community-based drug courts located in these areas could target the problem more efficiently and effectively. Drug courts, which emphasize diversion and provide substance abuse treatment, are a viable way to break the link between addiction and criminality (Spohn, Martin & Frenzel, 2001). Offenders who participate in drug court have a recidivism rate that is less than half that of similar offenders who were imprisoned (National Drug Control Strategy, 2003).

This paper was written for SW861: Policy Analysis and used the Cartographic Modeling Lab's GIS system to identify drug "hot spots" in Philadelphia based upon narcotic arrests. The top five "hot spots" are clustered together in an area of central North Philadelphia (east of Broad). In order to further contextualize the need for an intervention in this geographic area, this paper reviewed rates of aggravated assault, arson, housing vacancy, change in residential sale prices, poverty, and educational attainment for the five "hot spots". The data revealed that this part of North Philadelphia is an area that could benefit from an intervention addressing substance abuse and drug-related crime. The paper concluded with recommendations for a targeted community-based drug court; a review of the basic goals, structure, costs and savings associated with drug courts; and a summary of the effects of drug courts on recidivism, substance abuse relapse, and public safety.

Work published in The Fellow is not copyrighted by the newsletter, and publication in The Fellow does not limit, in any way, the publication in other venues of work contained herein. Opinions and ideas expressed by the contributors are their own and not necessarily those of the editorial board, the School of Social Policy & Practice, or the University of Pennsylvania.

Submit print-ready papers to: DSSC@sp2.upenn.edu
Papers under 600 words will be published on a first-come-first-serve basis and will be edited only to conform to newsletter styles and formats.

PEER CITES *In alphabetical order by SP2 student's last name*

As the next generation of educators, practitioners and researchers, let's make a conscious effort to read and reference **recent peer publications** so that we can get our ideas out there!

Bradley, M. C. & Mandell, D. (2005). Oppositional defiant disorder: A systematic review of evidence of intervention effectiveness. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 1, 343 - 365.

Zief, S. G., Maynard, R. A. & **Bradley, M. C.** (September 2005). *A systematic review of market-based choice plans*. Berkley, CA: MPR Associates. Available at www.mprinc.com/pubs/pdf/Choice_Plans.pdf

Carr, B.G., **Caplan, J.M.**, Pryor, J.P., and Branas, C.C. (2006). Benchmarking Pre-Hospital Care Times for Trauma: A Meta-Analysis. *Prehospital Emergency Care*, 10 (2), 198-206.

Hutchinson, M. K., Thompson, A. C., & **Cederbaum, J. A.** (2006). Multi-system factors contributing to health disparities in preventive health care among lesbian women. *Journal of Obstetrics, Gynecologic, and Neonatal Nursing*, 35, 393-402.

DISSERTATION TOPICS

Julie Cederbaum

The Impact of HIV serostatus on Mother-daughter Communication and Parental Monitoring

Cay Bradley

Home Visiting Services and Early Child Bearing: Impacts on Children

SP²Blotter

As of September 2005. . .

Beverly Frazier received a generous grant from the City of Philadelphia to study services available to returning-prisoners.

Joel Caplan received University of Pennsylvania GAPSA-Provost's Grant-Fellowship Award for Interdisciplinary Innovation, **and received** Horowitz Foundation for Social Policy Grant. Both to study the effects of victim input on parole release decisions.

Julie Cederbaum received NRSA Predoctoral Training Grant, National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) (1 F31 MH076697-01A1). To study the impact of maternal HIV status on maternal influence behaviors and its effects on daughters' beliefs and engagement in HIV sexual risk behaviors.

Michele Belliveau accepted an Assistant Professor position at West Chester University.

Nicole Ives accepted an Assistant Professor position at McGill University

Rachel Fusco and Staci Perlman presented at the Administration For Children's Convening of the Doctoral Fellow Grantees. Both made outstanding presentations.

Sara Bressi accepted an Assistant Professor position at Bryn Mawr College.

Cay Bradley was selected as an IES Pre-Doctoral Fellow for the GSE Pre-Doctoral Training Program in Interdisciplinary Methods for Field-based Research in Education (PIMFER) in AY2005-06, and reappointed for AY2006-07.

Kim, Tae Kuen authored a statistics book. It was published in Korea this past summer, 2006.

Karen Zurlo received at the John A. Hartford Foundation's Pre-Dissertation Award for doctoral student research in Gerontology.

Fall Calendar

Weekly and Notable Events

Mondays: IES meeting, 12-1pm @ GSE room 322
www.gse.upenn.edu/pimfer

Mondays: Anthropology Colloquium, 5:30pm @ Museum

Fridays: Leonard Davis Institute of Health Economics Seminar Series, 12-1:30pm @ Colonial Penn Cntr Aud. www.upenn.edu/ldi/calendar.html

September

13th (W): DSSC Meeting, 12-1pm. Lunch provided.
Location: 3815 Walnut, 2nd Floor Conference Room

October

(W): SP2 Colloquium, 12-1:30pm. Lunch provided.
Date/Location: TBA

November

15th (W): DSSC Meeting, 12-1pm. Lunch provided.
Location: 3815 Walnut, 2nd Floor Conference Room

December

(W): SP2 Colloquium, 12-1:30pm. Lunch provided.
Date/Location: TBA

15th (F): Deadline for SP2 Ph.D. Admissions

Using Research Tools to Learn More About Your Topic

Background sources -- mainly reference works that can be found in the reference section of the library or online -- can quickly provide a great deal of information on many topics. **To best make use of background sources, keep the following in mind:**

Look beyond titles. If you are looking for information about assisted suicide, for example, you should also check for articles titled "euthanasia," and "death and dying."

Think relatedly. For example, you won't find an *Encyclopedia of Plato*, but you will find an *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* with information about Plato.

Find useful concepts, terms and names. Use them to search other resources for useful information.

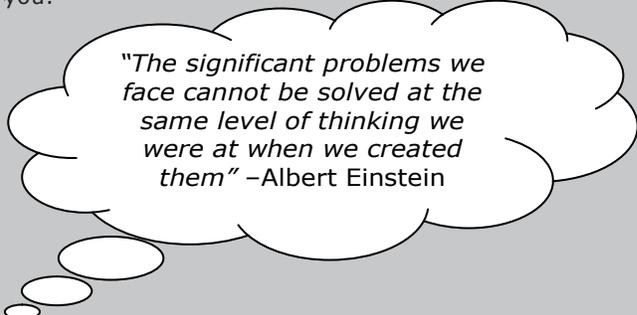
Look for bibliographies. These are lists of relevant resources that will point you to some of the best work on the subject.

Adapted from the Penn Online Research Tutorial at <http://gethelp.library.upenn.edu/PORT>

www.mentalmaps.info

Mental maps visualize the imaginary maps people carry in their minds to navigate geographic space. Sorin Matei, M.A. has found an efficient way to make these maps visible and analyzable with quantitative methods. This site is dedicated to presenting this novel mental mapping methodology.

Did you know... you can search a webpage for words and phrases. In Netscape or Internet Explorer, hold down **Ctrl** and hit **F** at the same time. Type in the word or phrase and let the "Find" feature do the looking for you.



"The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them" -Albert Einstein