

Introduction to this Issue: International Perspectives on Juvenile Crime

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Globally citizens fret over crime, education, and taxes, while one issue unites all: crime. Around the world, delinquents commit a majority of crime (Sellin & Wolfgang, 1968), hence the topic in this issue of *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*. Across continents and countries, leaders, taxpayers, practitioners, and others seek practical solutions to predicting and preventing delinquency and estimates of the insurance and tax costs for planning. After a century of study, a clearer picture exists for decision-makers. There is evidence of how to find violent youth, what diverts delinquents, and what it costs. Worldwide, advances in diagnosis, education, and treatment of delinquents include the longitudinal work of Farrington (1997, 2000, 2007) at Cambridge, Moffitt (1993) in New Zealand, Loeber and Farrington (2000) in Pittsburg, and anti-bullying prevention by Olweus (1980) in Norway as well as advances in diagnosis and treatment of disorders of childhood that are associated with disruptive and antisocial conduct, as summarized by Herpertz-Dahlmann, Konrad, and Herpertz (2007a, 2007b) in Germany.

Moffitt (1993) showed that traumatized delinquents typically committing multiple offenses over time are the so-called “copycat” or “experimental” offenders that after committing delinquent acts return to normalcy in adulthood without persistent crime. These differ from “career” or “chronic” delinquents who were physically abused and become in adulthood the career criminals. She differentiated early- from late-career delinquents. Farrington demonstrated that the number of “copycats” increased over decades during the 20th century, while Loeber described three pathways among delinquents, crimes against persons, against property, and combined offending patterns. Elliott (1997), in Colorado with the *Blueprints for Violence Prevention*, changed the way policymakers approach teen offenders by focusing on empirical treatments “that work.”

Zagar and colleagues (2009), at the “first” juvenile court in the world, showed that by focusing scarce economic resources on the highest at-risk youths (dropouts, addicts-alcoholics, career delinquents, homicidal-prone), significant reductions in urban schools (shootings down 44% and fighting decreased 77%) could be achieved (Ahmed, 2010; Rossi, 2010; Saulny, 2009; Shelton & Banchemo, 2009). The cost of homicide is

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\$3.9 million in 2006 US dollars, a significant economic incentive for a more efficient policy focusing on the highest-at-risk globally. Zagar and Grove (2010) improved sensitivity and specificity in finding violent youths and adults including sex offenders, with area under the curve (AUC) = 0.91–0.99 from prior receiver operating characteristics (ROC) = 0.69–0.75, allowing wider application of risk assessment. International modern research on delinquent diagnosis, education, treatment, and costs has undergone great improvements since the days of the Kallikak family and the Gluecks at Harvard.

So, in this issue, researchers continue to offer pieces to the puzzle of delinquency and crime from around the globe, to make a safer society. From Rhode Island and China, there is research on homosexual homicide. From Norway and Great Britain, there is a work on assessment of aggressive and violent delinquents. From Germany, there is a review of the research on hyperactivity, conduct disorder, and delinquency. From Quebec, Canada, there is an evaluation of French-speaking delinquents. From China and Florida, non-violent and violent teen offenders are contrasted. From British Columbia, Canada, there is a study on delinquency and motherhood. From Montreal, Canada, there is work on the protective factors among sex offenders. From Colorado, there is an article on co-morbidity of hyperactivity among male and female prisoners. From Germany, there is a study of various assessments used among teen sex offenders. Regardless of the continent or country, the same challenges to society exist. Every generation rediscovers how to deal with delinquency and crime worldwide. The articles offered here fit into this pattern. Although much progress was made over the past century across the globe, the 21st century will see even greater advances in computerized internet actuarial diagnosis from childhood through adult years, better elucidation on empirical treatments that divert youth from crime, preventive policing in real time, cost-beneficial and effective approaches to prison and rehabilitation, and further improvements in quality of life for at-risk youth. Globally, there is much hope for a safer society thanks to many current and future researchers and others.

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