

# ACJS *Today*

## Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences

### The Copycat Phenomenon in the Aftermath of the Newtown School Shooting

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It has been more than four years since the horrific massacre of 20 first graders and 6 educators at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut captured the attention and the anxiety of the nation. Actually, there was greater public interest in the Newtown rampage than there had been in any previous school shooting since the horrific 1999 mass murder at Columbine High School in which 12 students and a teacher were shot to death by two students in Littleton, Colorado.

In the immediate aftermath of the Newtown slaughter—one of the largest in our country's history—the majority of Americans were hungry for information concerning the tragic event. Nearly six in every ten

*Continued on Page 4*

#### INSIDE

Page 1	Newtown School Shooting and the Copycat Phenomenon
Page 2	President's Message
Page 5	Annual Conference
Page 16	The Day You Find Out Why
Page 20	Demographics of ACJS Members, 2015-2016
Page 37	Editor's Pick: <i>Convict Cowboys</i>
Page 45	The Great Warming: Plutocratic Resistance and the Assessment of Threats
Page 53	ACJS National Office

## President's Message



*Lorenzo Boyd, President, ACJS\**

**G**reetings, ACJS members!

I hope that everyone is as excited as I am about the ACJS conference in Kansas City. We have some great things planned including a tour of the Leavenworth Federal Prison. There are also some innovative and groundbreaking panels and presentations. This year, we are trying to be extremely inclusive with all of our panels, workshops, presentations, and events. As always, students will find that there are many unique opportunities to learn and network. There will truly be something for everyone.

At the President's Reception, we will have a live jazz band for your listening enjoyment. After the presidential address, there will be time to wind down, chill-out, and just relax as you mix and mingle. There are receptions on Thursday night and Karaoke on Friday night. There will be lots of fun times in the evenings for people to chat and plan collaborations. The nightly receptions

also provide a venue for old friends to catch up, and to meet new ones as well.

While attending ACJS in Kansas City, I invite you to 'live tweet' using the hashtag #ACJS2017. We want to show everyone following on social media the progressive and inclusive nature of the participants of ACJS. I hope that you also download the ACJS app, on your mobile device. The app is a great way to stay connected and get notifications for upcoming events and changes to the program. We are planning to use technology to enhance the experience for members and conference participants.

There are lots of panels and presentations that include practitioners and academics. A few weeks ago, I moderated a 2 day long executive symposium for NOBLE (National Organization for Black Law Enforcement Executives). It was there I saw that many police agencies are yearning for practical application research on issues that affect them daily. It quickly appeared that NOBLE has become the social conscience of policing in America. As scholars, we have a duty to conduct science-based research and make it accessible to line officers, as well as command staff, so that they can make a positive difference in society. In looking at the current relationship between the police and the community, I implore police command staff to continue to follow the recommendation of the task force for 21<sup>st</sup> Century policing. These recommendations have proven to help increase the levels of professionalism in policing as well as to bridge the gap with the community.

With the election of a new president, many officers have said that *now they can be police*

*again.* This sentiment is a bit troubling, since the core mission of policing is not law enforcement, but rather order maintenance and service to the community. The implication is that in recent years the police have been too soft. I would counter that idea by saying that the true measure of a good police agency is not the amount of arrests it has made, but rather the number of crime prevented. A good police officer solves problems BEFORE they become crimes. With that in mind, the move away from a community ideal is not in anyone's best interest.

We need now, more than ever to find common ground and ways to increase the ideals of social justice. We should celebrate the differences in our society and celebrate diversity as we conduct science-based research in the

academy. The Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences is a place where inclusive research can be achieved and shared. If you are not a member of ACJS, I invite you to join. If you are already a member, I invite you to get involved and reap the benefits of membership and collaboration. I look forward to seeing you in Kansas City.

***\*Lorenzo M. Boyd, Ph.D.** is the current president of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. His PhD is in Sociology from Northeastern University. He is currently an associate professor and chair of the Department of Criminal Justice at the University of Maryland Eastern.*

*Continued from Page 1*

American adults told pollsters that they followed news about Sandy Hook very closely (Moos, 2012). According to Gallup (Auter, 2016), parents' fears concerning their children's safety following the massacre climbed to 33% of all respondents, where it remained for a couple of years before receding to a traditionally "normal" 28%.

Even several years later, Americans continued to grieve collectively for the Sandy Hook victims. On December 14, 2016—the fourth anniversary of the massacre—the residents of Newtown held a moment of silence as, across the state of Connecticut, flags were flown at half-staff and prayer services were organized. In a Facebook post, President Obama wrote that Americans continued to share the grief experienced by the members of the Newtown community and still received inspiration from the survivors and families who have worked so hard to reduce the level of violence against children ("Newtown Marks 4th Anniversary," 2016).

In this article, we examine the impact of media coverage on both the prevalence of school rampage murders and the public's reaction to them. In particular, we discuss the characteristics of school shootings with which the public is likely to become preoccupied, the importance of preventing epidemic thinking in relation to school violence, and the role played by excessive media publicity with respect to inspiring a copycat effect.

**Why the Preoccupation With Newtown?**

It is understandable that the mass media would have devoted considerable attention

to such a tragic event as the Newtown mass killing. The victims were young innocent children—society's most cherished members. Moreover, the body count was unusually large for a school shooting—28 lives lost including the killer's—second only to the 32 homicide victims gunned down at Virginia Tech in 2007. Also relevant was the location of Lanza's rampage. The Newtown massacre occurred in a middle-class community, not unlike the numerous small towns and suburbs in which millions of Americans reside and send their children to school.

The location of the crime—in a public school and a middle-income community—made Americans very nervous about their own safety and that of their children. Perhaps this explains why the Newtown massacre—unlike any previous school shooting in the United States—provoked a prolonged national discussion and debate regarding the need for new federal laws to reduce the prevalence of assault rifles and semi-automatic clips, to expand background checks that would prevent criminals and psychotics from being able to purchase firearms, and to provide more effective mental health services to potentially violent individuals.

Notwithstanding a lengthy airing of the issues nationally for more than a year following the Newtown mass murder, none of the proposed reforms in gun laws were adopted at the federal level. In more than 40 states, however, lawmakers were able to enact more than 100 laws that more strictly regulated the sale and possession of firearms. In New York and Connecticut, for example, semi-automatics and large-capacity magazines were banned. At the

*Continued on Page 6*

# ACJS 2017 Annual Conference

**“Linking Teaching, Practice”**

**March 21-25, 2017  
Kansas City Marriott Downtown  
Kansas City, Missouri**

Program Chairs: Nancy Marion, University of Akron, [nmarion@uakron.edu](mailto:nmarion@uakron.edu)  
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by its author, KCMODevin.*

The ACJS General Business Meeting will be held at the Kansas City Marriott Downtown, Kansas City, MO, on Friday, March 24, 2017, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM, Muehlebach Tower, Main Level Lobby, Truman B.



***Continued from Page 4***

same time, several state legislatures opted to go in the opposite direction, only weakening their gun control laws in the aftermath of the Sandy Hook shooting (Wing, 2015).

**Epidemic or Epidemic Thinking?**

The Newtown mass murder was obviously an event of tragic proportions, but it should be kept in perspective in order to avoid contributing to epidemic thinking and imitation. At a superficial level, it may seem as though the Sandy Hook tragedy is just a particularly deadly version of the several school rampage shootings that occur in the United States every year. In reality, the Newtown slaughter was nearly unique. In fact, the last massacre of elementary school children in the United States occurred more than 24 years earlier in Stockton, California, when a 22-year-old former student, Patrick Purdy, opened fire on first- and second-graders on the school playground, fatally shooting five of them and injuring scores of others.

Given its extraordinary circumstances, using the Newtown massacre as a model for reducing deadly violence at school would be relatively ineffective. Most school rampage shootings occur at middle and high schools. Few of the killers are outsiders, as was the case at Sandy Hook. Instead, they are typically students, already on campus, who aim to take the lives of their classmates and teachers. As a result, barricading the entrances would not eliminate those disgruntled or bullied students looking to get even with their schoolmates who are already in classrooms, corridors, or the cafeteria. Moreover, expending major resources to protect first graders would miss the overwhelming majority of school rampage shootings that target much older students—those in middle and high schools or

or even universities. Excessively publicizing the Newtown massacre leaves the incorrect impression that it represents the norm among school shootings and detracts from the much larger problem of preventing deadly school violence in general.

**Fueling the Copycat Phenomenon**

Excessive publicity also assures that a horrific mass killing will be imitated. The Newtown killer, Adam Lanza, turned out to be a 20-year-old former student at Sandy Hook who had been trained to shoot semi-automatic weapons by his mother—a gun owner and survivalist. Before driving to the elementary school where he took 26 lives and then committed suicide, Lanza first shot to death his mother as she slept in the bedroom of their local single-family home.

Lanza was particularly inspired by the 1999 Columbine High School massacre. Having been treated as an outsider by his classmates, he could identify easily with the Columbine killers, Harris and Klebold, who were reportedly bullied or ignored by their peers. Rather than interact with friends or family members, Lanza spent his days prior to the massacre in absolute solitude, obsessively playing violent video games and adding to his vast collection of news accounts of previous mass killings around the world.

Adam Lanza was not the only multiple murderer to find inspiration in previous mass shootings. The so-called copycat phenomenon has been a factor in a number of high-profile, high-body count crimes. In September 1988, for example, 19-year-old James Wilson opened fire in an elementary school in Greenwood,

South Carolina, taking the lives of two students and injuring another eight. When the police investigators went to Wilson's apartment, they found on the wall over his bed the *People* magazine cover featuring his "role model," Laurie Dann, the 36-year old resident of suburban Chicago who, some four months earlier, had walked into a Winnetka, Illinois elementary school and then shot six children, killing one of them. The man responsible for the shootings in Greenwood admitted in an interview with the police that he had imitated Laurie Dann's rampage in Winnetka.

Similarly, in October 1991, after 35-year-old George Hennard took the lives of 23 customers as they were having lunch in a Killeen, Texas Luby's cafeteria, the police went to the killer's home in nearby Belton. In Hennard's videotape player, they discovered a recording of James Huberty's 1984 massacre of 21 people at a McDonald's restaurant outside of San Diego, California. Hennard had viewed the tape of Huberty's massacre shortly before driving his pickup truck into Killeen where he committed his own brand of mass murder.

The 1999 Columbine massacre has become a model employed by disaffected students around the country (if not the world) who seek revenge against their classmates through the barrel of a firearm. Bullied students in the United States, but also in Finland, Germany, Australia, England, and Brazil, have referred to the 1999 Columbine High School rampage as an inspiration for their own school shooting sprees (Madfis & Levin, 2013).

The impact of the copycat effect becomes particularly strong when a would-be imitator shares many characteristics with a previous

perpetrator (Phillips, 1979). For this reason, nearly all of the school shooters in the mid-1990s and 2000s were white boys with middle-class backgrounds (Kimmel, 2008; Kimmel & Mahler, 2003; Levin & Madfis, 2009; Muschert, 2007; Verlinden et al., 2000). These shootings were also more likely to occur in small, peaceful, and obscure low-crime towns (DeJong, Epstein, & Hart, 2003; Fox, Roth, & Newman, 2003; Harding, Mehta, & Newman, 2003; Newman et al., 2004). The most common characteristic of the killer was, and continues to be, a troubled past grounded in depression (Harding et al., 2003; Langman, 2009; Sullivan & Guerrett, 2003), or some sort of abuse at school or at home, such as bullying or family conflict (Vossekuil et al., 2002; Larkin, 2007; Levin & Madfis, 2009; Newman et al., 2004). These rampages also often ended in suicide (Fast, 2008; Langman, 2009; Newman et al., 2004).

Through photographs or anecdotal stories involving a high-profile killer's biography, the mass media often highlights the very characteristics shared by disgruntled workers, students, or family members who imitate one another (Fox & Burstein, 2010; Newman et al., 2004; Sullivan & Guerrett, 2003). This effect has also been found by scholars studying other forms of violence (see Coleman, 2004), including suicide and serial murder.

### **Giving Excessive Attention to a Mass Murder**

Before the mid-1990s, a deadly attack on one victim would have received lots of publicity but only in the community where it had occurred. Multiple-victim incidents are quite different. When 13 or 20 or 32 lives are suddenly snuffed out by random gunfire, it is a near certainty that the incident will receive national, even

international, attention. The possibility of imitation then increases dramatically. Rather than be inspired by a friend down the street, bullied youngsters are just as likely to imitate someone hundreds of miles from home, a total stranger who lives in a small, obscure community like Littleton, Colorado or Newtown, Connecticut. The copycat phenomenon feeds on excessive publicity. When the newspapers and magazines and websites are overflowing with news and opinions about a mass killing, the likelihood of imitation is vastly increased.

During the first week following the Newtown massacre, December 14–December 21, 2012, American newspapers and wire services published more than 4,000 articles—twice the number during the two weeks following the 1999 Columbine rampage—in which details of the Sandy Hook rampage shooting were reported. Overall, during the six-month period after the Newtown mass killing, there were more than 17,300 references to the Sandy Hook tragedy in American news sources. Even during the first two weeks of June—six months after the school massacre—443 articles continued to discuss the Sandy Hook victims and their killer.<sup>1</sup>

The most likely reason for excessive media attention is that reporters and producers are under severe pressure to beat their competition for the details of breaking news events. However, such coverage comes at a cost. In the aftermath of the Newtown tragedy, there was bumper-to-bumper, 24-hour daily television coverage of the massacre. As a result, a number of serious reporting errors were communicated to the public as though they were confirmed facts. For example, news sources originally reported incorrectly that two shooters were responsible for the carnage, and then that the shooter was not Adam Lanza but his 24-year-old

brother, Ryan. It was also reported erroneously that Adam's mother had been among those killed at the school (where, it was incorrectly reported, she was a substitute teacher) and that his father had been murdered in New Jersey. Actually, Lanza's mother was shot to death in her home and his father is very much alive, residing in Connecticut with his second wife.

To justify the massive amount of media attention, journalists who cover a mass killing are often eager to report that the latest tragedy sets a new record in terms of body count. Even if the latest mass murder is not record-setting, it is still possible to produce a "top ten" list of massacres in which the largest body count murders are graphically depicted. Somehow, the rationale for bumper-to-bumper attention given to Newtown and other mass murders can be found in convincing readers and viewers that a tragic episode is at the top of the charts in quantitative terms. The larger the victim count, the greater the justification for keeping an event in the news and ultimately sensationalizing it (Fox & DeLateur, 2014). From day one of the Newtown massacre, numerous reporters were asking whether it was the worst school shooting in American history.

### **Focusing on Killers Rather Than Victims**

Another factor responsible for maximizing the copycat effect is the extent to which journalists give killers celebrity status by featuring them, rather than the victims of a massacre. During the week following Columbine, for example, reporters focused on the two shooters—Harris, Klebold, or both—in 598 articles but on the victims in only 430. Similarly, in the immediate aftermath of the 2012 Newtown shooting, Adam Lanza was discussed in 1,780 news stories, the majority of which were published in the absence of any



details about the victims. In 1,144 articles, however, newspapers and wire services reported the details of one or more of Lanza's victims but did not mention the killer himself.

Adding to the celebrity portrayal is the fact that news, entertainment, and celebrity magazines have often produced cover stories in which a notorious killer is profiled. The entertainment magazine *Rolling Stone* featured the face of one of the two Boston Marathon bombers on its cover in July, 2013. During the April, 2013 marathon, this killer and his brother had planted two pressure cooker bombs near the finish line of the foot race, killing three and injuring another 264. Many Americans expressed outrage that a magazine claiming to specialize in the entertainment media would highlight an image of the murderer on its cover. Still, sales of the Boston Marathon issue of the magazine only soared.

This was not the first issue of *Rolling Stone* to dedicate its cover to a mass killer. In 1970, for example, the magazine devoted its cover story to Charles Manson, the career criminal and cultist who convinced his dedicated followers to brutally murder seven people in the Los Angeles area. Moreover, *People* magazine—arguably, the world's leading celebrity magazine—has displayed cover photos of dozens of killers including Jeffrey Dahmer, Ted Kaczynski (the Unabomber), Laurie Dann, O. J. Simpson, and Harris and Klebold (the Columbine killers). In 2015, a cover story in *People* was devoted to Charles Manson, now in his 80s but apparently still as fascinating as ever.

The courts have traditionally provided another venue where killers and alleged killers frequently receive inordinate media attention at

the expense of victims and their loved ones. The trial of O. J. Simpson, lasting from January to October 1995, was perhaps the most publicized criminal trial in American history. The proceedings cost Los Angeles County some \$9 million, an incredibly large expense when the result was to showcase the trial on TV like a national soap opera.

Simpson, who was ultimately found not guilty and released from confinement, had been a well-known professional football player and actor. In a Los Angeles County courtroom, he was accused of murdering his ex-wife, Nicole, and a waiter, Ron Goldman. Having allowed cameras in the courtroom, the entire proceedings were televised on a daily basis, preempting regular programming and providing an alternative form of entertainment for millions of viewers. The victims were dead; the alleged killer became the focal point of media attention on a daily basis for almost one year.

Certain of the lessons from the O. J. Simpson trial may have been lost on a new generation of media producers, reporters, and members of the public. More than 12 years later, the trial itself continues to grab tremendous public interest, recently being turned into a 10-episode television mini-series, "The People vs. O. J. Simpson: American Crime Story."

Also recently, cable television gave incessant coverage to the televised trials of accused murderers Jody Arias and Casey Anthony. At the July 2012 pretrial hearing for the defendant, James Holmes—the accused Aurora cinema mass murderer—the courthouse was packed with the major television networks—ABC, NBC, and Fox—as well as NPR and the *New York Times*, giving what should have been a

serious occasion more of a circus atmosphere. At a press conference down the hall, even the television show *Entertainment Tonight* was represented. Cameras lined both sides of the corridor outside of the courtroom. Reporters squeezed themselves into the courtroom and also into an overflow room where video was being fed. Unlike the O. J. Simpson trial, however, strict regulations were placed on TV networks' camera coverage, restricting the possibility that the Holmes trial would become a second incarnation of the Simpson circus.

Aside from issues related to the legal fairness of cameras in the courtroom to any defendant, there is another reason to limit their use. This becomes just another way to place the spotlight on the accused killer and to forget about the victims. Currently, 44 states permit television cameras in criminal trials.

### **Making Monsters Into Celebrities**

Placing killers in cover stories, especially when magazines are dedicated to celebrity and entertainment news, only increases the impact of the copycat phenomenon by according celebrity status to the worst among us (Coleman, 2004). The message of infamy has not been lost on bullied youngsters who seek to overcome, through the barrel of a gun, their profound feeling of powerlessness among their peers.

American popular culture has become saturated with images of evil, providing would-be killers around the world with role models for achieving global infamy. The undergraduate at Virginia Tech who, in April 2007, shot to death 32 students and faculty made sure to mail photographs of himself to NBC News in which he is depicted as a dangerous and powerful figure, as

someone you cannot afford to ignore or bully. Giving the killer exactly what he wanted, NBC released the photos to the public, allowing millions of Americans to access them on Google Images.

### **Changing the Mindset of Journalists**

Reporters have a responsibility to inform the public of the details of a hideous shooting spree. Attention to the elements of a massacre is entirely appropriate. Mass murder is newsworthy. However, excessive attention to the killer is not. Victims deserve to be featured at least as much as the criminals who have taken their lives. Human interest stories about the lives of victims can be just as appealing as biographical accounts of a despicable killer. Journalists should think twice about focusing so much attention on the background of a despicable killer, as though he deserves to be seen as a victim rather than a villain or as an anti-hero rather than a monster.

It is true, at the same time, that many decent people are fascinated by killers, whose crimes are so grotesque and extraordinary that they might as well be fiction. Reading true crime books and viewing TV programs and motion pictures about sadistic murder allow ordinary people to escape from the all-too-real problems of everyday life. For most people, there is nothing harmful about this sort of fascination. At the same time, there are always at least a few members of the audience who identify with a sadistic killer and receive motivation from the publicity given to him.

More recently, some popular magazines have reserved the fame associated with hideous crimes for those who are victimized. *People* dedicated an entire issue to the Newtown

massacre but, rather than feature Adam Lanza, placed on its cover the 20 Sandy Hook students who had lost their lives. In similar fashion, newspapers from the *New York Daily News* to the *National Enquirer* reported the details of the Newtown massacre, focusing their coverage not on the killer but essentially on his victims. The cover of the *New York Daily News* even included a portrait of a young teacher at Sandy Hook who had given her own life to protect her students.

The obsession with mass murder in popular culture is bound to have its impact. When we delve into every detail of a killer's biography, the message we send to our young people is all too clear: "Want to be famous? Want to make the headlines of a national newspaper or the cover of a celebrity magazine? No problem. Kill someone. And while you're at it, kill lots of people. The larger your body count, the more likely you are to make the cover of *People* or *Rolling Stone*."

### Notes

The data were collected through a LexisNexis search of major US newspapers and restricted by week, beginning the week of the massacre up to week 31, which included the six-month anniversary of the mass murder. The initial search was further restricted to particular keywords producing four separate datasets of articles: about the shooting in general, those referencing the shooter, referencing one or more victims, and referencing both the shooter and one or more victims. This method was used to search for articles about both Newtown and Columbine.

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**\*Jack Levin, PhD** is professor emeritus in the Department of Sociology at Northeastern University, where he co-directs its Brudnick Center on Violence and Conflict. He has published more than 30 books, including *The Violence of Hate*; *Extreme Killing: Understanding Serial and Mass Murder*; *Mass Murder: America's Growing Menace*; and *Serial Killers and Sadistic Murderers: Up Close and Personal*, and more than 250 articles in both professional journals and major newspapers.

**\*\*Ashley Reichelmann, MSc** is a PhD candidate in the Sociology Department at Northeastern University, focusing on conflict, violence, and social psychology. She has co-authored articles in *Homicide Studies*, *American Behavioral Scientist*, and *Social Psychology Quarterly*. Currently she is completing her dissertation on the role that collective threat plays in white Americans' reactions to representations of slavery and its relationship to contemporary racial attitudes. In the fall, Reichelmann is scheduled to join the faculty at Virginia Tech.





## ACJS Seeking Committee Volunteers for 2018-2019

Faith Lutze, ACJS 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, is actively seeking Committee volunteers to serve during her presidency, March 2018 – March 2019. If you are interested in learning more about how to be actively involved in service to ACJS, contact Faith at [lutze@wsu.edu](mailto:lutze@wsu.edu) to volunteer. Every ACJS member who volunteers will be placed on a standing or *ad hoc* Committee, to the extent possible.

Committee membership is limited to ACJS members. The composition of all committees will be as diverse as possible with regards to gender, race, region, and length of Academy membership.

Every year, ACJS needs volunteers for the Academy's Standing Committees. Committee volunteers usually serve for one year, beginning with the Friday of the Annual Meeting after the Executive Board meets. Appointments to the following ACJS Standing Committees are for one year, unless otherwise stated:

- **Academic Review** (members serve three-year terms and membership is restricted to trained certification reviewers)
- **Affirmative Action**
- **Assessment** (members serve three-year terms)
- **Awards**
- **Business, Finance, and Audit** (members are appointed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President)
- **Committee on National Criminal Justice Month**
- **Constitution and By-Laws** (members are appointed by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President and serve three-year terms)
- **Ethics** (members serve three-year terms and are nominated by the Trustees-At-Large and appointed by the ACJS Executive Board)
- **Membership**
- **Nominations and Elections** (members are appointed by the Immediate Past President)
- **Program**
- **Public Policy**
- **Publications**
- **Student Affairs**
- **Crime and Justice Research Alliance (CJRA)**

*The success of ACJS depends on having a dedicated cadre of volunteers.  
Committee membership is an excellent way to make a  
difference in the future of ACJS.*



## ***Justice Quarterly Review***

### **Call for Papers**

*Justice Quarterly*, an official journal of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, is inaugurating annual thematic special issues commencing with Volume 34 (2017).

Jeffery Ulmer, the new *JQ* Special Issues Editor, is pleased to invite submissions for the first special issue: *Police and Minority Communities*. We invite manuscripts that examine topics such as:

- Police behavior and discretion toward minority individuals, including differential use of force and arrest decisions
- Relations between police and communities of color
- Organizational dimensions of policing and their consequences for minority communities
- Consequences of police policy for people of color, as well as other, similar lines of inquiry
- Police accountability and oversight



We will consider theoretical as well as empirical papers, and we welcome quantitative, qualitative, and multimethod research. All submissions will be subject to peer review and are due no later than April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017. Please submit manuscripts through the Scholar One system following the basic instructions for *Justice Quarterly* Submissions. In your cover letter please note that your submission is specifically for *Justice Quarterly Review* so that it is assigned to the Special Issues Editor. If you have questions, please submit them to Jeffery Ulmer by email at [JTU100@psu.edu](mailto:JTU100@psu.edu).

For more information about *Justice Quarterly*, please visit [www.tandfonline.com/rjqv](http://www.tandfonline.com/rjqv).

*Justice Quarterly* uses ScholarOne Manuscripts to manage the submission and peer review process. To submit your manuscript please visit [JQ's submission page](#).

## The Day You Find Out Why

Risdon N. Slate, Florida Southern College\*



*Risdon N. Slate\**

I grew up in a textile mill village in North Carolina. My mother recorded in my baby book that one of my favorite sayings was “Turn out the lights and call the law.” From an early age, I wanted to work in the criminal justice system. It seemed the law was in the know, and they still are today. For all the wrong reasons, I wanted to be a North Carolina State Trooper. They had beautiful uniforms and awesome cars. In high school, there was a picture of a handsome state trooper and his automobile in my senior annual. It was on that page that I signed my goodbyes to my classmates. I decided to go on to college, as I thought it would help me advance through the ranks with the Patrol. However, my senior year of college I learned when I went to apply with the Highway Patrol that I did not meet the uncorrected eyesight requirements with this agency (this was before the prospects of Lasik surgery). I learned a valuable lesson: **“One must not tie a ship to a single anchor, nor life to a single hope” – Epictetus.** In essence, I was forced to go to graduate school.

Having my dream of becoming a state trooper shattered turned out not to be the end of my world. As I headed off to graduate school, I remembered the Introduction to Sociology class that I had taken as an undergraduate. There I had seen a table reflecting the rankings of the most prestigious jobs in America. A United States Supreme Court Justice was ranked number one at that time in terms of prestige, and a college professor came in at number two. Not anticipating an Ivy League legal education in my future, I thought to myself it would not be bad to be a professor. I even had mentors along the way who reassured me that this boy from the textile mill village could do it.

I completed my master’s degree in criminal justice at the University of South Carolina; though I was still desirous of one day becoming a professor, I had nuptials pending and felt I needed to get some criminal justice work experience. I walked out of the ivory tower, so to speak, into an administrative assistant to the warden position at a medium/maximum death row prison with the main building that housed inmates constructed in 1866. I dealt with the inmates the warden did not want to, interviewing inmates, handling grievances, disciplinary appeals, and preparing all correspondence for the warden’s signature. I came to realize that **“Everything cannot be placed in a textbook or taught in a classroom.”** We readied ourselves for the first execution in the state of South Carolina in

more than 20 years. No one on the warden's staff had ever experienced an execution. The warden flew to Florida and witnessed an execution. Upon his return, we rehearsed killing someone for three months. A correctional officer about the size of the condemned inmate was marched from the death house and strapped into the electric chair. Everything in the process was followed except for turning on the electricity. I saw the emotional and physical toll the drills took on the individuals responsible for carrying out the penalty; although my role was to answer the phone in the warden's office, I too was negatively affected by the experience. My time at the penitentiary heavily influenced my eventual dissertation topic focusing on the stress levels of correctional personnel. **Finding a dissertation topic and conducting research that you are passionate about will feel less like work and more like self-actualization.**

My baby book that my mother was given so long ago in the hospital had a mock up diploma so the details of the acquisition of a PhD could be filled in, along with a place to record all grades from first grade through a doctoral program. If we could implant this power of suggestion in others from an early age, this might prove positively life changing for many. Even while working at the prison, I had written "PhD" on each sheet of my page-a-day calendar to remind me of my ultimate goal of becoming a college professor. According to Denis Waitley, **"Most people don't achieve their goals in life because they never really set them in the first place.... Life is a self-fulfilling prophecy; you won't necessarily get what you want in life, but in the long run you will usually get what you expect."** By the PhD mnemonic device, although I was not there yet, I was able to remind myself daily of my goal and expectations for the future. As noted by Napoleon Hill, **"Whatever the mind ...can conceive and believe it can achieve."**

I would leave the prison for what I thought was my dream job as a United States probation officer. Even in my new workplace, I kept my calendar with "PhD" written on each page. Although I had interned at U.S. Probation while in graduate school, my job there would soon end in a nightmare. I experienced a manic episode, was diagnosed as bipolar, and left for medical reasons during my first six months on the job. While I was hospitalized, my wife left me and ultimately divorced me. I went back to my mom's home; after a few months of being stabilized on medication, I was able to begin teaching part-time at a local community college. I was fortunate, as I already had a master's degree.

I was encouraged by my mentor, Ron Vogel, to consider going back to pursue my PhD. After teaching for about a year, I was accepted into the criminal justice doctoral program at Claremont Graduate School in Claremont, California, with a full fellowship and a stipend for living expenses. All the while I remained in the closet about my mental illness, telling only significant others and doctors who prescribed medication for me. I would go on to teach at the University of Maine at Augusta and finish my dissertation while there. Again, I was telling no one but those who needed to know about my mental illness. I was ashamed and running from the stigma of mental illness. As Joyce Burland has noted, people do not tend to show up with a covered dish when one is diagnosed with a mental illness.

After four years in Maine, I left for the warmth of Florida and arrived at Florida Southern College (FSC). There I learned

from my colleague Pat Anderson to establish a life outside of the academy. However, before I could fully realize that opportunity, upon finding a doctor in my new locale who decided erroneously that I was not mentally ill and took me off my medication, I experienced the second manic episode of my life. This time I was jailed by deputies, jailers, and a magistrate who were not trained to deal properly with a person with mental illness in crisis. My bail was set at \$500, but I had thrown my wallet away and was in no shape to make bail. A federal probation officer, Ron Hudson, whom I had worked with some eight years before, heard I was in jail. He came down there, and with no authority whatsoever, flashed his badge and demanded my release. He said the jailers informed him that they had no idea how to deal with me in my manic state. He took me immediately to an emergency room, and I was hospitalized. The arrest was expunged, I found a new doctor, and returned to FSC as a professor. In terms of employment, academe can be much more forgiving of mental illnesses than the criminal justice system.

Ron Hudson, in all probability, saved my life and remains one of my heroes today. Mark Twain has been attributed as saying, **“The two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why.”** After being jailed, it took me a while to put myself back together, but I decided to come out of the closet about my mental illness. I reasoned that if I, a college professor with a PhD in criminal justice and work experience in prison and as a federal probation officer, could be thrown in jail, it could happen to anyone. The more research I did, the more I saw that it *was* happening to many persons less fortunate than me. They did not have the contacts and resources that I have. I decided to face the stigma and shame of my mental illness and come forward to strive for the implementation of formal structures to

divert persons from the criminal justice system and link them to treatment. A person should not have to commit a crime to receive mental health treatment.

Governor Jeb Bush appointed me to Florida’s Mental Health and Substance Abuse Commission. I testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Subcommittee on the impact of the criminal justice system on persons with mental illness. I testified with Kim Webdale. Her sister Kendra was pushed in front of a subway train and killed in New York City by a man with schizophrenia. Kim testified that when she learned of the circumstances of her sister’s death, she knew it had to be a sick man who had done this, but the more she delved into what had happened, she came to realize it had been an equally sick system that had allowed this to occur. Kim and I, coming from two different perspectives, were on the same page regarding our recommendations. What emerged from the testimony was the first federal funding for mental health courts.

I have since gone on to direct most of my research and publications toward the interface of the mental health and criminal justice systems and stress levels of criminal justice personnel, and I have trained police officers, judges, correctional officers, and probation officers regarding the intersection of mental illness and criminal justice. I have even developed a class on the criminalization of mental illness. **Again, be passionate about what you do.** Whether you have prior criminal justice system experience or you are a researcher studying the system, **your goal should be to improve the system.** Whatever your background, to have a meaningful and



consequential impact on the criminal justice system and its practitioners, **your research should be presented in an understandable way.**

I started my memoir 15 years ago, and I hope to finish it this summer. Having a supportive English professor wife, Claudia, I believe it will come to fruition. It is like I'm performing on the highwire with a net below with her support. I have come to realize, in the words of Ernest Hemingway, who was believed to have had bipolar disorder, **"The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong at the broken places."** Even though I thought my world had ended with the inability to be a state trooper and my two manic episodes, in the words of Louis L'Amour, **"There will be a time when you believe everything is finished. That will be the beginning."**

Wes Johnson, my friend and co-author on several endeavors, nominated me for the ACJS Corrections section John Howard Award last year. I was fortunate enough to receive this honor. Recipients must have made significant contributions to the practice of corrections, but also can have made significant contributions in scholarship, teaching, policy, or service.

You, like me, have undoubtedly had a number of people who have helped you get where you are today. Never forget them, and, although you likely cannot repay all of them, I encourage you to **pay it forward**. I will leave you with this poem from the back of my baby book:

### Building for Others

An old man going a lone highway,  
Came, at the evening cold and gray,  
To a chasm vast and deep and wide.  
The old man crossed in the twilight dim,

The sullen stream had no fear for him;  
But he turned when safe on the other  
side  
And built a bridge to span the tide.

'Old Man,' said a fellow pilgrim near,  
'You are wasting your time building  
here;  
Your journey will end with the ending  
day,  
You never again will pass this way;  
You've crossed the chasm, deep and  
wide,  
Why build this bridge at evening tide?'

The builder lifted his old gray head;  
'Good friend, in the path I have  
come,' he said  
'There followed after me to-day  
A youth whose feet must pass this  
way.  
This chasm has been as naught to me,  
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall  
be,  
He, too, must cross in the twilight  
dim;  
Good friend, I am building this bridge  
for him!' —Anonymous

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## Demographics of ACJS Member, 2015-2016

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For the past five years, members of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) have been surveyed about their demographics in a questionnaire administered by ACJS. As a means of better serving the membership, the Executive Board approved the development and administration of this questionnaire at the Midyear 2012 meeting, as part of the membership application. The data compiled for this 2015–2016 report were gathered from the applicants for ACJS membership in October 2015 to January 2016 (first collection of data) and fall 2016 (second collection of data). The questionnaire for this year was collected in two waves and could be completed in either a hard copy or online format. A total of 975 respondents filled out the questionnaire between the two waves. Therefore, we estimate that fewer than 50% of eligible respondents completed some part of the membership questionnaire for each wave. This report presents the demographic data of ACJS membership gathered for the year (see tables below).

As indicated in Table 1, the majority of ACJS members who responded in all waves of the survey were white, middle-aged men. The majority of respondents typically held a PhD, were employed at some level of the professoriate, and earned an average salary between \$60,000 and \$80,000 per year. Members were more likely to be affiliated with the Southern region compared to the other regions. Similar to the 2015 survey and because of limited space on the hard copy

questionnaire, the ASC membership question was excluded for this year. Compared to previous years, the demographics of ACJS members remained relatively close to the membership demographics recorded for 2015.

Table 2 specifies the average yearly salary of ACJS members by their position, educational level, and demographics. Emeritus professors, although few in number, have the highest salaries of all positions, followed by professors. Members with a PhD reported yearly earnings that averaged between approximately \$75,300 and \$80,500. Members who identified as students working on their undergraduate or graduate degrees, or those who had an associate's degree, reported the lowest salaries.

Also shown in Table 2 is the breakdown of salary across race and gender. As indicated by the data presented in this table, for 2012 to 2014, white respondents consistently earned the largest salaries (between \$68,400 and \$76,500). Similarly, male members accounted for almost double that of females in survey responses on salary, and they reported earnings that were at least \$15,000 more than female respondents' earnings across the three survey waves. It should be noted that white, male members occupied a greater proportion of the higher paying positions (full professors and administrators; see Tables 2 and 3).

As with the 2015 survey, respondents were asked to select their salary range. Table 4 presents the average salary range for ACJS members by their positions, level of education, race, and gender for 2016. Responses for 2016 were relatively similar to 2015. Members who had a PhD earned the most per year. Full professors typically earned more than \$100,000 per year. For 2016, there was an increase in the number of full professors who selected the “over \$100,000” category, compared to 2015. Associate professors typically earned between \$60,000 and \$80,000 while others earned between \$80,000 and \$100,000. Assistant professors typically earned between \$60,000 and \$80,000 while others earned between \$40,000 and \$60,000. Those who were white typically earned higher salaries compared to all other races and ethnic groups. Like 2015, those who identified as multiracial had higher salaries compared to past survey responses.

Tables 5 through 10 display the demographics for ACJS members by their position. As indicated in Table 5, assistant professors between the ages of 30 and 39 were the largest group for 2016. Associate professors were primarily split between the age groups of 40–49 and 50–59. Most full professors were between 60 and 69 years old. Most undergraduate and graduate students were between ages 20 and 29. Most of the 2016 survey responses were relatively similar to the previous survey responses. Compared to previous survey responses, the age range for assistant professors and full professors has remained relatively constant (except for 2014, when most assistant professors were between ages 40 and 49). Additionally, unlike the previous survey responses, one notable change for 2016 is the almost even split between the 40–49 and 50–59 age groups for associate professors.

Most members who completed the questionnaire identified as academics and as white (see Table 6). Compared to previous years, the number of those who identified as African American or coming from a multiracial background increased. There was a substantial increase in those identifying as multiracial from 2015 to 2016, moving from 159 to 266 respondents. The numbers of those who identified as Hispanic, Asian American, or American Indian remained similar to previous survey responses.

With regard to gender, the findings in Table 7 indicate that while most member respondents were male, the majority who were either an undergraduate or graduate student identified as female for the past five years of the questionnaire administration. Similar to 2015, there was almost an even split between males and females at the assistant and associate professors levels. Full professors were predominantly male. Of our practitioner members, most were between the ages of 40 and 59 years old, were either white or coming from a multiracial background, and mostly male. One notable change from 2015 is more members identified as female in 2016, moving from 351 to 421.

The findings presented in Table 9 suggest that a majority of ACJS members have a PhD, followed by a master’s degree, and then either a JD or bachelor’s degree. The positions of assistant professor and full professor had the most members with a PhD, followed by associate professors. Also similar to previous survey responses, respondents who have either a PhD or JD were typically employed as a professor. Also, respondents who have a master’s degree were typically

employed as an instructor. Unlike previous survey responses, those who have a master's degree were also employed in another position that was identified as being outside of academia and not identified as a practitioner for 2016. For 2016, most practitioners reported having at least a master's degree while some had a PhD.

Lastly, Table 10 findings include the characteristics of regional members of ACJS.

Most identified as belonging to the Southern region, and then to the Midwestern, Northeastern, Southwestern, and Western regions in 2016. There was an increase in the number of graduate students who attended more than one regional conference in 2016. Additionally, there were more assistant and associate professors attending more than one regional conference in 2016. As in 2015, the Southern was the most attended regional conference in 2016.

**Table 1 – Membership demographics**

Year		2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Number of Responses</b>		<b>889</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>1,246</b>	<b>1,110</b>	<b>975</b>
<b>Age</b>						
	Range	20-83	20-83	19-96	20-87	19-86
	Mean	48.03	46.76	47.13	46.40	45.57
	Standard Deviation	13.24	13.29	13.82	13.78	13.89
<b>Gender</b>						
	Male	60.7%	59.2%	54.7%	55.8%	54.8%
	Female	37.2	39.8	42.1	42.2	45.2
	Missing	2.0	1.1	3.3	2.5	
<b>Race</b>						
	White	79.1%	76.2%	77.6%	55.6%	54.6%
	African-American	7.1	8.9	7.5	9.4	10.3
	Hispanic/Latino/Latina	3.5	3.4	2.4	-- <sup>4</sup>	--
	Asian	2.2	2.3	3.1	3.4	3.1
	Pacific Islander	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.6	0.1
	American Indian	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.0
	Multiracial	1.0	1.9	1.8	21.0	29.4
	Other	0.3	0.4	1.1	2.0	2.5
	Missing	5.7	7.0	5.9	7.7	5.8
<b>Identified as Latino, Latina, or Hispanic</b>						
	Yes	--	--	--	4.7%	4.1%
	No	--	--	--	73.4	95.9
	Missing	--	--	--	23.0	12.8
<b>Position</b>						
	Undergraduate Student	1.6%	2.2%	1.5%	1.9%	1.6%
	Graduate Student	12.9	16.6	15.5	14.0	15.4
	Instructor	7.3	7.3	6.4	3.2	9.7
	Adjunct Professor	1.2	1.3	1.1	-- <sup>5</sup>	--
	Assistant Professor	21.6	20.6	20.5	16.0	21.1
	Associate Professor	16.1	16.1	14.3	12.7	15.6
	Professor	19.3	16.4	17.4	14.7	18.0
	Emeritus	2.5	1.7	2.1	1.2	2.4
	Administration	5.6	5.8	6.0	0.4	3.2
	Practitioner – Line	0.4	0.4	1.1	8.5 <sup>6</sup>	6.4
	Practitioner – Management	2.4	2.3	2.7	--	--
	Researcher	1.1	1.2	0.8	-- <sup>7</sup>	--
	Other	1.3	1.5	1.4	2.9	6.6
	Missing	19.7	23.3	9.2	24.7	4.1

**Table 1 – Membership demographics (continued)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>
<b>Number of Responses</b>	<b>889</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>1,246</b>	<b>1,110</b>	<b>975</b>
<b>Education</b>					
Less than AA Degree	0.2%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.3%
Associate's Degree	0.3	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.3
Bachelor's Degree	4.8	5.4	4.0	4.8	4.4
Masters	23.6	26.2	26.5	27.0	27.4
JD or L.L.M.	4.6	5.1	5.2	4.5	5.5
Ed.D.	1.9	1.8	1.8	3.1	2.9
PhD	59.5	55.1	56.6	55.9	57.9
JD, PhD	1.2	0.9	0.2	-- <sup>8</sup>	--
Other	0.6	0.5	--	1.1	1.2
Missing	3.1	3.9	4.7	2.7	1.3
<b>Salary</b>					
Range	\$2,000 - \$175,000	\$2,000 - \$170,000	\$2,000 - \$170,000	-- <sup>9</sup>	--
Mean	70,687	67,520	69,086	--	--
Standard Deviation	31,644	30,838	32,222	--	--
<b>Regions</b>					
Southern	7.2%	7.7%	6.2%	6.1%	6.2%%
Midwest	5.7	5.1	3.5	4.6	3.9
Northeast	5.4	4.2	3.9	4.6	4.2
Southwest	3.7	3.8	2.8	3.8	3.3
West	3.4	3.1	2.3	2.2	2.8
Multiple	1.6	1.2	1.4	0.7	1.1
Missing	73.0	74.9	79.9	78.0	78.6
<b>ASC Member</b>					
Yes	55.5%	51.7%	55%	-- <sup>10</sup>	--
No	44.5	48.3	45	--	--



**Table 2 – Average Yearly Salary by Position, Education, Race, and Gender<sup>11</sup>**

	N	2012	N	2013	N	2014
<b>Total Responses</b>	436		658		576	
<b>Position</b>						
Undergraduate Student	6	\$29,000	11	\$32,409	8	\$37,625
Graduate Student	53	34,990	106	33,504	87	29,281
Instructor	38	58,421	57	58,807	52	52,875
Adjunct Professor	2	46,000	4	30,500	5	56,250
Assistant Professor	105	60,885	147	61,374	131	62,908
Associate Professor	75	72,906	112	73,982	86	74,436
Professor	87	97,011	115	93,495	114	96,526
Emeritus	7	106,857	10	104,300	8	118,000
Administration	22	91,818	40	89,387	30	97,933
Practitioner – Line	2	37,500	3	51,667	8	64,875
Practitioner – Management	10	86,000	12	78,333	14	87,285
Researcher	5	63,200	6	59,333	3	86,655
Other	5	94,000	7	79,714	5	79,000
<b>Education</b>						
Less than AA Degree	--	-	2	\$50,000	2	\$22,500
Associate's Degree	2	\$47,000	4	60,375	2	77,000
Bachelor's Degree	15	32,266	32	37,656	23	34,652
Masters	105	57,061	176	51,701	165	50,506
JD or L.L.M.	18	69,833	27	73,925	18	75,222
Ed.D.	10	69,200	12	69,750	13	64,307
PhD	259	79,185	375	77,593	342	80,587
JD, PhD	9	75,333	9	75,333	2	77,500
Other	4	97,500	6	82,500	-	-
<b>Race</b>						
White	369	\$76,536	559	\$68,438	466	\$70,546
African-American	29	63,086	53	59,971	41	67,670
Hispanic/Latino/Latina	16	58,875	26	60,692	17	47,235
Asian	6	87,500	10	67,800	19	59,210
American Indian	2	62,500	4	93,750	5	86,000
Multiracial	6	48,166	6	62,333	13	64,307
Other	2	61,500	3	55,000	5	65,000
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	276	\$77,398	413	\$73,199	346	\$75,296
Female	154	58,882	245	58,257	225	59,984

**Table 3** – 2015 Yearly Salary by Position (N=667), Education (N=862), Race (N=831), and Gender (N=860)

<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>Under 20K</b>	<b>20-40K</b>	<b>40-60K</b>	<b>60-80K</b>	<b>80-100K</b>	<b>Over 100K</b>
<b>Position</b>						
Undergraduate Student	10	2	2	1	1	1
Graduate Student	69	31	16	9	3	5
Instructor	1	2	13	7	2	2
Assistant Professor	1	0	59	70	11	5
Associate Professor	0	1	9	54	33	8
Professor	0	0	10	26	33	53
Emeritus	0	0	2	1	3	1
University Administrator*	-	-	-	-	-	-
Practitioner	6	4	14	18	15	30
Other	1	4	6	6	4	2
<b>Education</b>						
Less than Associate's Degree	2	0	1	0	0	0
Associate's Degree	3	1	0	0	1	0
B.A./B.S.	21	4	11	4	2	3
Master's	54	34	62	47	29	27
JD or L.L.M.	2	2	7	9	8	5
Ed.D.	1	1	3	10	6	7
PhD	10	12	90	194	93	85
Other	1	0	1	4	3	2
<b>Race</b>						
African-American	6	4	21	31	16	7
Asian	13	1	3	10	3	2
Native American/American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0	1	2	1	0
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	1	0	1	1	1	3
White	32	32	83	154	85	87
Multiracial	29	14	53	59	33	25
Other	3	1	3	8	1	1
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	38	25	83	145	90	96
Female	57	29	90	124	49	34

\*University administrators did not answer the salary question.

**Table 4** – 2016 Yearly Salary by Position (N=792), Education (N=809), Race (N=787), and Gender (N=801)

<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>Under 20K</b>	<b>20-40K</b>	<b>40-60K</b>	<b>60-80K</b>	<b>80-100K</b>	<b>Over 100K</b>
<b>Position</b>						
Undergraduate Student	8	1	1	0	1	0
Graduate Student	52	37	17	8	6	5
Instructor	9	8	33	13	5	10
Assistant Professor	0	1	60	87	16	9
Associate Professor	1	0	20	59	29	14
Professor	0	0	3	25	34	77
Emeritus	2	1	1	1	4	8
University Administrator*	0	0	1	3	12	9
Practitioner	3	3	15	7	7	17
Other	3	5	10	8	5	18
<b>Education</b>						
Less than Associate's Degree	2	0	0	1	0	0
Associate's Degree	1	0	2	0	0	0
B.A./B.S.	15	9	6	2	2	2
Master's	45	37	64	31	22	31
JD or L.L.M.	1	0	11	13	8	7
Ed.D.	0	1	7	8	6	4
PhD	14	6	78	162	79	121
Other	0	3	2	1	2	3
<b>Race</b>						
African-American	11	3	21	21	13	9
Asian	7	2	4	5	3	4
Native American/American Indian/Alaskan Native	0	0	0	1	0	0
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	--	--	--	--	--	--
White	25	28	91	113	73	95
Multiracial	30	20	43	70	27	50
Other	3	0	4	5	2	4
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	35	26	76	125	73	114
Female	42	30	92	92	45	51

**Table 5 – 2016 Position and Age (N=833)**

<b>Position</b>	<b>20-29</b>	<b>30-39</b>	<b>40-49</b>	<b>50-59</b>	<b>60-69</b>	<b>70+</b>
Undergraduate Student	8	1	1	1	0	0
Graduate Student	57	44	24	8	3	2
Instructor	4	14	13	18	28	5
Assistant Professor	9	82	41	29	18	0
Associate Professor	0	23	37	35	28	9
Professor	0	2	39	35	52	13
Emeritus	0	0	0	0	9	11
University Administrator	0	2	8	7	9	0
Practitioner	3	7	20	17	9	1
Other	5	7	13	13	7	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>43</b>

**2015 Position and Age (N=744)**

<b>Position</b>	<b>20-29</b>	<b>30-39</b>	<b>40-49</b>	<b>50-59</b>	<b>60-69</b>	<b>70+</b>
Undergraduate Student	15	2	2	2	0	0
Graduate Student	65	53	17	6	2	0
Instructor	3	4	7	8	10	1
Assistant Professor	8	74	36	21	16	0
Associate Professor	0	20	43	29	26	2
Professor	0	8	29	35	53	15
Emeritus	0	0	0	1	7	3
University Administrator	0	0	1	2	1	0
Practitioner	5	17	26	26	13	2
Other	2	10	4	6	5	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>24</b>

**2014 Position and Age (N=1,189)**

<b>Position</b>	<b>20-29</b>	<b>30-39</b>	<b>40-49</b>	<b>50-59</b>	<b>60-69</b>	<b>70+</b>
Undergraduate Student	1	12	3	4	0	0
Graduate Student	11	89	71	22	10	1
Instructor	5	4	17	19	21	17
Adjunct Professor	0	0	1	2	3	5
Assistant Professor	33	15	95	59	37	24
Associate Professor	24	0	25	70	30	34
Professor	32	1	7	48	50	82
Emeritus	2	0	0	0	1	17
Administration	16	0	3	18	19	16
Line Practitioner	2	3	1	4	2	2
Management	6	0	0	10	14	6
Researcher	3	0	0	4	1	2
Other	3	0	2	2	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>225</b>	<b>262</b>	<b>192</b>	<b>210</b>

## 2013 Position and Age (N=1,052)

<b>Position</b>	<b>19-29</b>	<b>30-39</b>	<b>40-49</b>	<b>50-59</b>	<b>60-69</b>	<b>70+</b>
Undergraduate Student	16	7	4	0	0	0
Graduate Student	91	69	30	15	2	0
Instructor	4	13	18	20	21	1
Adjunct Professor	1	2	0	4	2	1
Assistant Professor	16	104	58	38	13	1
Associate Professor	0	34	65	39	43	5
Professor	0	8	38	55	75	9
Emeritus	0	0	0	1	10	10
Administration	0	6	15	21	13	1
Line Practitioner	0	2	2	0	1	0
Management	0	2	7	9	2	0
Researcher	0	4	4	2	2	0
Other	0	1	4	5	3	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>31</b>

## 2012 Position and Age (N=819)

<b>Position</b>	<b>19-29</b>	<b>30-39</b>	<b>40-49</b>	<b>50-59</b>	<b>60-69</b>	<b>70+</b>
Undergraduate Student	9	2	2	0	0	0
Graduate Student	51	31	16	5	1	0
Instructor	3	10	13	13	18	1
Adjunct Professor	0	1	0	3	2	1
Assistant Professor	11	73	39	22	7	1
Associate Professor	0	18	42	27	32	4
Professor	0	5	27	34	65	6
Emeritus	0	0	0	1	9	10
Administration	0	2	14	12	8	1
Line Practitioner	0	3	0	0	1	0
Management	0	3	4	7	4	0
Researcher	0	2	4	2	0	0
Other	1	0	3	3	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>144</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>26</b>



**Table 6 – 2016 Position and Race/Ethnicity (N=881)**

Position	White	African-American	Hispanic <sup>12</sup>	Asian	American Indian	Multiracial	Other
Undergraduate Student	2	3	2	0	0	5	2
Graduate Student	54	21	5	9	0	51	4
Instructor	46	4	6	1	0	30	3
Assistant Professor	95	20	8	8	0	59	4
Associate Professor	78	17	4	6	1	32	4
Professor	115	11	3	3	0	30	1
Emeritus	20	0	0	0	0	2	0
University Administrator	14	2	1	0	0	12	0
Practitioner	27	7	3	0	0	21	2
Other	21	6	1	1	0	24	3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>472</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>23</b>

**2015 Position and Race/Ethnicity (N=777)**

Position	White	African-American	Hispanic <sup>13</sup>	Asian	American Indian	Multiracial	Other
Undergraduate Student	6	2	2	0	0	10	0
Graduate Student	64	19	7	13	0	41	5
Instructor	24	2	1	0	0	5	1
Assistant Professor	112	14	4	6	0	30	4
Associate Professor	85	17	3	4	2	20	5
Professor	110	11	4	2	1	26	1
Emeritus	10	0	0	0	0	2	0
University Administrator	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Practitioner	52	11	3	1	1	21	1
Other	20	1	2	3	0	4	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>487</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>18</b>

## 2014 Position and Race/Ethnicity (N=1,144)

Position	White	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian	Multiracial	Other
Undergraduate Student	14	2	3	0	0	1	0
Graduate Student	147	18	9	13	1	8	1
Instructor	65	10	2	0	0	4	0
Adjunct Professor	12	2	0	0	0	0	0
Assistant Professor	204	24	9	10	0	3	7
Associate Professor	148	18	4	7	3	1	0
Professor	198	12	2	5	0	2	1
Emeritus	26	0	0	0	1	0	0
Administration	63	4	0	3	1	0	1
Line Practitioner	12	0	1	0	0	0	0
Management	31	0	1	1	0	2	0
Researcher	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	17	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	946	90	31	39	6	21	10

## 2013 Position and Race/Ethnicity (N=986)

Position	White	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian	Multiracial	Other
Undergraduate Student	15	6	5	0	0	3	0
Graduate Student	164	30	13	11	1	2	2
Instructor	73	7	3	0	0	0	2
Adjunct Professor	12	0	1	0	0	0	0
Assistant Professor	219	20	10	11	1	3	0
Associate Professor	167	24	4	3	3	1	0
Professor	184	15	7	4	1	3	1
Emeritus	22	0	0	0	1	0	0
Administration	65	5	1	0	1	0	0
Line Practitioner	2	1	0	1	0	0	0
Management	20	3	1	1	0	0	0
Researcher	11	1	0	0	0	0	1
Other	17	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	971	112	45	31	8	12	6

## 2012 Position and Race/Ethnicity (N=776)

Position	White	African-American	Hispanic	Asian	American Indian	Multiracial	Other
Undergraduate Student	7	3	2	0	0	2	0
Graduate Student	79	14	7	6	1	1	2
Instructor	50	6	4	0	0	0	1
Adjunct Professor	8	0	1	0	0	0	0
Assistant Professor	159	7	7	7	0	2	0
Associate Professor	109	16	3	2	3	1	0
Professor	148	6	4	3	0	2	0
Emeritus	20	0	0	0	1	0	0
Administration	42	3	1	0	1	0	0
Line Practitioner	2	1	1	0	0	0	0
Management	18	1	1	1	0	0	0
Researcher	7	0	0	0	0	1	1
Other	9	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	654	56	29	19	6	8	4

Table 7 – Position and Gender

Position	2012 (N=807)		2013 (N=1,255)		2014 (N=1,172)		2015 (N=819)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Undergraduate Student	4	10	12	18	10	10	9	12
Graduate Student	57	57	112	117	76	126	63	91
Instructor	44	21	58	31	49	34	23	11
Adjunct Professor	10	1	13	2	12	2	--	--
Assistant Professor	89	98	137	143	127	138	90	81
Associate Professor	87	55	126	95	92	92	77	62
Professor	129	40	167	58	160	66	117	42
Emeritus	18	4	19	5	20	7	9	4
Administration	36	14	54	25	48	28	3	1
Line Practitioner	3	1	3	2	8	5	63	29
Management	17	4	20	5	25	10	--	--
Researcher	3	5	7	7	6	4	--	--
Other	7	5	11	8	12	5	14	18
TOTAL	496	311	739	516	645	527	469	351

<b>Position</b>	<b>2016 (N=921)</b>	
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
Undergraduate Student	5	10
Graduate Student	55	85
Instructor	54	34
Adjunct Professor	--	--
Assistant Professor	98	97
Associate Professor	75	71
Professor	111	53
Emeritus	18	4
Administration	18	12
Line Practitioner	36	24
Management	--	--
Researcher	--	--
Other	30	31
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>421</b>

**Table 8 – Position and ASC Membership<sup>14</sup>**

<b>Position</b>	<b>2012 (N=714)</b>		<b>2013 (N=1,261)</b>		<b>2014 (N=1,097)</b>	
	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
Undergraduate Student	3	11	3	27	5	15
Graduate Student	67	48	119	110	120	84
Instructor	26	34	32	57	36	49
Adjunct Professor	6	4	7	8	4	10
Assistant Professor	122	70	176	105	178	92
Associate Professor	84	59	129	93	105	84
Professor	107	65	137	89	157	73
Emeritus	10	12	10	14	13	15
Administration	29	21	35	44	34	45
Line Practitioner	0	3	0	5	4	10
Management	5	15	8	17	12	24
Researcher	6	3	10	5	8	2
Other	5	5	10	11	8	10
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>470</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>585</b>	<b>684</b>	<b>513</b>

**Table 9 – 2016 Position and Level of Education (N=924)**

Position	Less than Associate	AA	BA/BS	MA/MS	JD/LLM	PhD	EdD	Other
Undergraduate Student	2	2	8	0	0	0	0	0
Graduate Student	0	0	20	101	4	16	0	3
Instructor	0	0	4	53	5	24	1	2
Assistant Professor	0	0	0	21	7	159	7	2
Associate Professor	0	0	0	12	12	114	5	1
Professor	0	0	0	8	8	142	9	0
Emeritus	0	0	0	2	1	18	0	0
University Administrator	0	0	0	7	6	15	2	0
Practitioner	0	1	2	35	0	17	3	2
Other	1	0	8	16	4	29	1	2
TOTAL	3	3	42	255	47	534	28	12

**2015 Position and Level of Education (N=820)**

Position	Less than Associate	AA	BA/BS	MA/MS	JD/LLM	PhD	EdD	Other
Undergraduate Student	5	4	10	0	0	0	0	1
Graduate Student	0	0	26	105	3	17	0	1
Instructor	0	0	0	21	1	12	0	0
Assistant Professor	0	0	0	20	7	137	9	1
Associate Professor	0	0	0	4	10	116	6	2
Professor	0	0	0	19	10	124	7	1
Emeritus	0	0	0	2	1	10	0	0
University Administrator	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0
Practitioner	0	1	3	53	5	20	6	4
Other	0	0	6	14	0	11	0	1
TOTAL	5	5	45	238	37	451	28	11

**2014 Position and Level of Education (N=1,157)**

Position	AA	BA/BS	MA/MS	JD, LLM	PhD	JD, PhD	Ed.D	Other
Undergraduate Student	6	10	0	0	0	0	0	3
Graduate Student	0	28	142	7	20	0	0	0
Instructor	0	1	54	4	20	0	1	0
Adjunct Professor	0	0	10	0	4	0	0	0
Assistant Professor	0	0	25	13	218	0	5	0
Associate Professor	0	0	11	11	155	0	6	0
Professor	0	0	19	10	187	2	8	0
Emeritus	0	0	3	1	23	0	0	0
Administration	0	0	13	13	49	0	3	0
Line Practitioner	2	1	5	1	3	0	0	1
Management	0	2	17	2	12	0	0	0
Researcher	0	0	5	1	4	0	0	0
Other	0	3	2	0	11	0	0	0
TOTAL	8	45	306	63	706	2	23	4



## 2013 Position and Level of Education (N=1,030)

Position	AA	BA/BS	MA/MS	JD, LLM	PhD	JD, PhD	Ed.D	Other
Undergraduate Student	1	1	6	0	0	0	0	0
Graduate Student	0	6	13	0	1	0	0	0
Instructor	0	3	59	5	27	0	2	0
Adjunct Professor	0	0	8	4	4	0	0	0
Assistant Professor	1	0	29	14	228	1	3	2
Associate Professor	0	0	14	11	184	4	5	2
Professor	1	0	14	10	182	5	7	0
Emeritus	0	0	1	0	22	0	0	1
Administration	0	1	16	9	43	2	6	0
Line Practitioner	0	1	4	0	1	0	0	0
Management	0	5	15	1	7	0	0	0
Researcher	0	0	7	1	9	0	0	0
Other	0	6	3	2	9	0	0	1
TOTAL	3	23	189	57	717	12	23	6

## 2012 Position and Level of Education (N=698)

Position	AA	BA/BS	MA/MS	JD, LLM	PhD	JD, PhD	Ed.D	Other
Undergraduate Student	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Graduate Student	0	2	5	0	1	0	0	0
Instructor	0	2	34	3	21	0	2	0
Adjunct Professor	0	0	6	1	3	0	0	0
Assistant Professor	0	0	19	8	157	1	3	1
Associate Professor	0	0	13	6	117	3	1	1
Professor	1	0	10	6	140	5	7	0
Emeritus	0	0	1	0	20	0	0	1
Administration	0	0	9	7	28	2	2	0
Line Practitioner	0	1	3	0	0	0	0	0
Management	0	2	11	1	6	0	0	1
Researcher	0	0	3	1	6	0	0	0
Other	0	5	1	1	5	0	0	0
TOTAL	2	13	115	34	504	11	15	4

**Table 10 – 2016 Position and Region (N=201)**

Position	Northeastern	Southern	Midwestern	Southwestern	Western	More than one
Undergraduate Student	0	0	0	0	0	0
Graduate Student	4	6	1	2	4	4
Instructor	1	4	2	2	0	0
Assistant Professor	7	13	12	15	4	2
Associate Professor	9	15	9	4	5	2
Professor	12	16	8	7	7	3
Emeritus	4	2	1	0	3	0
University Administrator	1	1	0	0	0	0
Practitioner	1	0	1	0	0	0
Other	1	2	2	1	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>11</b>

**2015 Position and Region (N=186)**

Position	Northeastern	Southern	Midwestern	Southwestern	Western	More than one
Undergraduate Student	0	0	1	0	0	0
Graduate Student	8	7	8	4	4	0
Instructor	1	2	1	0	0	0
Assistant Professor	11	13	5	10	6	1
Associate Professor	7	11	7	13	5	4
Professor	7	14	6	5	6	3
Emeritus	0	1	0	0	0	0
University Administrator	1	0	1	0	0	0
Practitioner	2	1	4	2	0	0
Other	0	1	1	1	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>8</b>

**2014 Position and Region (N=884)**

Position	Northeastern	Southern	Midwestern	Southwestern	Western	Multiple
Undergraduate Student	1	0	1	0	1	1
Graduate Student	11	20	11	8	8	1
Instructor	4	6	8	1	2	1
Adjunct Professor	0	0	1	0	0	1
Assistant Professor	22	31	15	13	11	1
Associate Professor	15	17	13	15	8	1
Professor	11	28	13	10	10	8
Emeritus	3	6	0	2	1	0
Administration	8	2	7	1	3	2
Line Practitioner	1	0	0	0	0	0
Management	3	3	0	0	1	1
Researcher	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	1	2	1	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>17</b>

## 2013 Position and Region (N=305)

<b>Position</b>	<b>Northeastern</b>	<b>Southern</b>	<b>Midwestern</b>	<b>Southwestern</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>Multiple</b>
Undergraduate Student	0	1	0	1	0	0
Graduate Student	1	1	2	0	1	0
Instructor	3	2	2	2	1	1
Adjunct Professor	3	2	2	2	1	1
Assistant Professor	17	26	16	15	12	3
Associate Professor	11	25	20	12	8	3
Professor	14	27	15	10	11	6
Emeritus	1	4	0	1	0	0
Administration	5	6	2	3	2	1
Line Practitioner	0	0	0	0	0	0
Management	0	3	1	2	3	1
Researcher	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	1	1	0	1	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>13</b>

## 2012 Position and Region (N=214)

<b>Position</b>	<b>Northeastern</b>	<b>Southern</b>	<b>Midwestern</b>	<b>Southwestern</b>	<b>Western</b>	<b>Multiple</b>
Undergraduate Student	0	0	0	0	0	0
Graduate Student	0	0	2	0	0	0
Instructor	3	2	2	2	1	1
Adjunct Professor	0	0	0	0	0	0
Assistant Professor	14	15	15	8	8	1
Associate Professor	8	11	12	8	8	4
Professor	12	20	10	7	8	5
Emeritus	1	3	1	0	0	0
Administration	5	5	2	2	1	1
Line Practitioner	0	0	0	0	0	0
Management	1	2	0	1	0	0
Researcher	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	1	0	1	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>12</b>

## Book Review: Editor's Recommendation

*Convict Cowboys: The Untold History of the Texas Prison Rodeo.* Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 2016. ISBN: 9781574416527 (hardback).

### FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK



*Robert M. Worley\**

In his book, *Convict Cowboys*, criminal justice historian Mitchel P. Roth analyzed thousands of pages of archival data and conducted extensive face-to-face interviews in order to tell the story of the Texas Prison Rodeo (TPR), a tradition which began in 1931 and would continue every October (except 1943) for the next 55 years. Roth contends that Americans have always had a fascination with correctional facilities, an observation which has been made by other scholars (Ross, 2015; Welch, 2015). He refers to this as “prison tourism” and argues this phenomenon dates back to 1839, when up to 7,000 people per year paid 25 cents (roughly eight dollars today) to visit New York State’s Auburn Prison. In its early years, TPR, which was also referred to as “The Battle of the Outlaws,”

attracted considerable public attention, not solely because it featured inmate performers but also because it paid homage to cowboys and the Wild West, a subject matter that has traditionally been of interest to Americans and particularly to Texans.

Although many historians, most notably Robert Perkinson (2010), have written extensively about Texas’s convict leasing system, Roth begins the story of the TPR by pointing to a 1927 state constitutional amendment passed by the 40th Legislature, which essentially removed politics from the penal system. As a result of this amendment, a new prison board, which consisted of nine private citizens, was created. The board, along with an appointed general manager, controlled the Texas prison system and its vast properties. Roth asserts that it was this unification and consolidation that would, indeed, help to set the stage for creation of the TPR four years later. With the establishment of the prison board, a new organizational culture would flourish, one that would value both prison athletics and legitimate recreational opportunities for inmates.

Though the first TPR in 1931 was a modest affair, at which only 10 to 15 convicts performed in front of 200 spectators, Marshall Lee Simmons, the Texas Prison System general manager, quickly realized that it had the potential to generate revenue that could be used for educational, recreational, and rehabilitation programs that the Texas legislature would not support. Roth argues that correctional administrators made plans for future prison rodeos to take place in October, when the Texas heat was usually in retreat. Also, it was decided that Sundays would be the best day to hold rodeos, since this was typically regarded as a day

of rest and leisure for most inmates. Interestingly, the Texas Prison System general manager realized fairly quickly that it would be crucial to gain the support of local religious leaders; therefore, he sought and received the blessing of every preacher to hold the rodeo on a Sunday.

According to the book, in the early years of the TPR, correctional officers and local peace officers were given free passes while outside visitors were expected to pay an admission fee of 25 cents for children and 50 cents for adults. Nevertheless, this was a very low price, especially since similar rodeos typically charged \$1 for adults. In its seventh year, the TPR began to offer reserved seating for one dollar; this was done primarily as a way for management to accommodate repeated requests for reserved seating arrangements. By this time, the rodeo had approximately 30,000 visitors, with 2,800 of them being inmates (which was roughly 44% of the entire Texas prison population). Only inmates with good conduct records were permitted to travel under the watchful eye of the Texas Highway Patrol to Huntsville to attend the rodeo. It was around this same time that a new prisoner classification system was established in order to enhance safety and institutional security (Trulson & Marquart, 2009).

In his book, Roth notes that in its early years, the TPR permitted inmates of all races to compete. As the author explains, this is nothing short of extraordinary given that “during the 1930s, racial segregation was a fact of life almost everywhere in America; everywhere that is, except for the TPR arena” (Roth, 2016, p. 98). Around this time, African American prisoners comprised roughly 40% of the inmate population and were overrepresented in prisons by a rate of three times their statewide population (see Perkinson, 2010).

In addition to competing for cash prizes, African American inmates also sang in the rodeo choir (known as the “Cotton Pickers’ Glee Club”) and performed as rodeo clowns. The first (and only) convict cowboy to die from injuries sustained in the prison rodeo was H. P. Rich, an African American prisoner, who was thrown from a steer and dragged around on the ground before the other riders could come to his rescue. The author asserts that little news coverage was devoted to this incident and opines that this may have been because of the inmate’s race.

Even though prison officials declared that many of the inmate contestants were seasoned performers who had competed in outside rodeo shows, Roth argues that inmates rarely had true cowboy experience, with the exception of those who worked as farmhands prior to their incarceration. Given the contestants’ lack of experience, it is not surprising that inmate convict cowboys had to pass a physical exam and sign a release in order to absolve the prison system of any potential liability. In spite of the potential danger, many inmates eagerly auditioned for a chance to perform in the TPR. Roth suggests that prisoners may have been motivated to participate for the chance to win prize money, which could often be substantial. He asserts that convict cowboys were also given “day money,” which could be used to purchase items in the commissary. For example, at the ninth annual TPR in 1940, “each rider was guaranteed three dollars per day...as they competed for even more prize lucre while proudly garbed in traditional cowboy regalia” (Roth, 2016, p. 109).

While the TPR initially had the approval of local religious leaders, beginning in the 1940s, several of the state’s largest religious denominations became disenchanted with the



rodeo and urged the Texas Prison Board to abolish it. Roth maintains that these groups were critical of the fact that the rodeo occurred on a Sunday. According to the book, some of these religious groups went as far as to petition the governor to hold the rodeo on weekdays rather than on a day of worship. Nevertheless, initially little was done to placate religious critics, and tens of thousands of patrons continued to attend the Sunday rodeos from virtually every part of the United States. The TPR, in fact, began to generate a substantial amount of money that was used to fund ventures integral to the lives of inmates. Ironically, Bibles, hymn books, and Sunday school lessons were even purchased with rodeo-generated dollars. According to Roth, the October 1941 rodeo would add \$50,000 to the prisoner welfare fund. This is, indeed, substantial, considering that a brand new Ford pickup could be purchased during this time for around \$625.

According to the book, inmate escape attempts rarely occurred at the TPR. The author, in fact, suggests that civilians were often more likely to create trouble than the prisoners, who were seated together in a large cage with oversized chicken wire. Indeed, some inmates even worked as peanut and soda vendors, ushers, ticket sellers, and stock boys. As the author insightfully observes, there is little doubt that visitors paid not only to watch the rodeo but to experience the thrill of being in close proximity to hardened convicts. Inmates seemed to sense this and often lived up to their stereotypes by scowling at female patrons or booing each time a uniformed police officer entered the stands. Surprisingly, it was also not uncommon for former prisoners (also known as “Texas exes”) to frequent the rodeos. Roth contends that these individuals were particularly known for wreaking havoc from the free world grandstands and would

often toss coins, bills, and tobacco to the inmate performers.

In its 55-year history, the TPR was held outside of Huntsville only once. As it states in the book, the 20th rodeo was held at the Texas State Fair in 1950 and proved to be quite successful. Roth notes that advance ticket sales alone generated \$30,000, more than any other attraction in the Texas State Fair history, besides *Annie Get Your Gun* in 1947. Though the rodeo was a financial success, it was a daunting task for correctional officials to transport almost 150 convict cowboys (11 of whom were serving life sentences) to Dallas. As the author asserts, the inmate performers were escorted by a caravan of 25 police vehicles. Also, as a special precaution, a double fence was built around the arena, and shotgun-toting guards were stationed throughout the facility. Although there was heightened security at the 20th TPR, Roth points out that “nothing contrasted more with the prison regime than the quality of chow consumed by the trucked-in convicts, especially that first Friday night as they feasted on fried chicken, mashed potatoes, cream gravy, peas, salad, ice cream, cake, and coffee and milk—more akin to a last meal on death row than the normal prison fare” (Roth, 2016, p. 177).

Although much of the South was racially segregated during the postwar 1950s, the author argues that the prison rodeo continued to be perhaps the only competitive sport in Texas that encouraged African Americans to compete side-by-side with Caucasian performers. In fact, of all the convict cowboys ever to grace the stage of the TPR, “Daredevil O’Neal Browning,” an African American inmate, would become the most successful, winning the coveted Top Hand prize not once, but seven times. As it states in the

the book, Browning competed for 30 years and became a bona fide TPR legend. Even after suffering a broken leg from a bull ride in 1970, he managed to show up only one week later (on a brace of crutches) and ride in the prison rodeo. It is, indeed, fitting that African Americans were permitted to participate in the early prison rodeos, especially when one considers that they were crucial to the success of cattle drives in the late 19th century, a fact that is not lost on Roth. The author even suggests that at the pinnacle of the trail drive era, as many as 25% of the 35,000 cowboys who took part may have been African American. This is one of many examples throughout the book where the author employs a unique historical methodology to examine the underpinnings of Southern culture and the cowboy mystique.

According to Roth, at the January, 1959 Board of Corrections meeting, one of the first orders of business was the resolution to hire a talent agent to book celebrity appearances for the prison rodeo. As it states in the book, the talent agent was paid from the Inmate Educational and Recreational Fund (E&R Fund), which was perceived by board members as a “calculated risk” to attract more spectators to the prison rodeo. The 1959 show featured country music singer Johnny Cash, who was paid \$2,000 to make an appearance. Also, Steve McQueen, who was at the time an up-and-coming actor on the Western television show *Wanted Dead or Alive*, appeared at the 1959 show for \$1,500. The following year, John Wayne made a guest appearance on the fourth Sunday in October at the 1960 TPR. Wayne appeared pro bono (after learning that he was to be paid from the prisoner’s E&R Fund) and reportedly showed up to the rodeo inebriated, refusing to shake hands with any of the inmates. In a letter between the

the oil tycoon and Chair of the Texas Board of Corrections, Pete Coffield, and the soon-to-be Director of the Department of Corrections, Dr. George Beto, the movie star’s visit to the TPR was described as follows: “Wayne was like a fleeting deer when here...As usual, full of Hootch—only stayed 1 ½ hours, but he did bring us some business, and that was all we wanted anyway” (Roth, 2016, p. 238).

One of the joys of reading *Convict Cowboys* is that Roth includes excerpts from private correspondence, which is now publicly available through the George Beto Collection at Sam Houston State University. The author even provides readers with humorous, albeit slightly inappropriate, written exchanges that occurred between Coffield and Beto. For example, when Candy Barr, a voluptuous and buxom inmate, made her first appearance at the TPR, Beto (who was also a Lutheran minister) wrote to Coffield and playfully inquired whether Candy put on a private show for the board members. As Roth observes, Candy Barr “proved to be a topic of jovial conversation among Beto, Coffield, and their confidants, and whenever she performed there was sure to be good-natured badinage between the old friends” (Roth, 2016, p. 240). Indeed, Candy Barr captured the attention of virtually all the male spectators (especially the inmates) when she made her debut singing performance with backup from the Goree Girls Band. Even though the ex-stripper received one of the biggest standing ovations in the history of the TPR, Roth maintains that Barr only agreed to sing on the condition that she be permitted to work in the prison library. After being released from the Texas prison system, Candy Barr was in demand and made frequent appearances

throughout the Hollywood night club circuit. Nevertheless, the author notes that Ms. Barr still found time to sing at the rodeo, making her “only the second former TPR convict performer to return as a free world attraction” (Roth, 2016, p. 245).

In 1962, George Beto became the director of the Texas Department of Corrections and was responsible for managing 12,190 inmates in 13 correctional facilities. While his friend and mentor, Pete Coffield, had an affinity for the TPR, Beto had a love-hate relationship with it at best. As one of Roth’s interview subjects stated, Beto adamantly believed that the “state should pay for stuff the rodeo paid for” (Roth, 2016, p. 252). Because the TPR generated profits, which were deposited into the Inmate E&R Fund, the legislature was likely prevented from providing more resources to the prison system. At times, the rodeo also proved to be an unwanted distraction for Beto, who preferred to spend his energies working to slowly desegregate the inmate population and hire African American correctional officers (also see Horton & Nielsen, 2005). Aside from the logistical challenges of transporting inmates to and from the rodeo, prison officials also had to contend with wild convict cowboys who often had a proclivity toward gambling and drinking homemade chock beer. In fact, even the injured performers posed security risks, as many made every effort to smuggle narcotics and barbiturates out of the prison hospital. According to the author, the director’s wife, Marilyn, was also extremely busy every year during the TPR. As noted in the book, Mrs. Beto spent countless hours entertaining guests who dropped by the mansion before and after each rodeo and even put her tailor skills to work by fixing costumes or sewing buttons when the need arose. Roth writes, “like her husband,

she was not overly enthusiastic once October rolled around each year and would invariably check the calendar to see whether there were four or five Sundays that particular October” (Roth, 2016, p. 255).

Prior to the 1960s, prison officials were able to operate with virtually no outside interference. However, 1964 marks the beginning of what prison legal scholars refer to as the “hands-on doctrine,” when the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Cooper v. Pate*, gave prisoners the right to sue state officials in federal court (Smith, 2015). As a result of this landmark ruling, inmate writ-writers aggressively challenged the status quo of the Texas prison system throughout the late 1960s and 1970s. Given this, it is unsurprising that the Prison Board began to devote less and less attention to the TPR and instead focused on managing the turmoil surrounding various inmate lawsuits. Roth contends that during this same period, there was a sharp decline in Western-themed entertainment across America. For example, by the 1970s, network executives made few attempts to launch new Western television series. Instead, Americans were becoming consumed by the glam world of the disco movement, which was attributed to the success of films such as *Saturday Night Fever*.

As it states in the book, in the early 1980s, prison officials began to discuss ending the TPR. One of the board members suggested that the rodeo cost more than previously believed and may have even resulted in a cash loss. Also, even though inmate performers continued to sign release forms, it became questionable whether they would actually protect the prison system from lawsuits if an

offender was seriously injured. During 1984 and 1985, Texas correctional facilities also became extremely violent, with 52 inmates being murdered and 700 stabbed. Indeed, there was more violence in this two-year period than during the entire previous decade (also see Marquart & Crouch, 1985). Not surprisingly, some prison officials began to believe that the rodeo carried enormously high liability and security risks. On top of this, there was the very real possibility that animal rights groups would soon create problems for the prison system, as virtually every rodeo since the 1930s featured injuries to livestock. When engineers declared that the rodeo stadium was unsafe, this proved to be the straw that broke the camel's back, and the rodeo soon came to an end. The final TPR was held in 1986, marking the end of a 55-year tradition.

*Convict Cowboys* is a must-read for anyone who is interested in topics ranging from prisons and punishment to Texas history to popular culture to the sociology of sports. The author includes several intriguing facts throughout the book, which readers will enjoy immensely. For example, I was interested to learn that country music icon Johnny Cash played at the TPR more than a decade before recording his legendary live prison albums at Folsom and San Quentin. *Convict Cowboys* is likely to resonate with scholars who are both critical and supportive of the mass incarceration movement. At times, Roth condemns the Texas Prison System (as he should) for some of its egregious practices involving inmates. Yet, the author is fair. Although Roth is certainly not an apologist for Texas prison officials, he does credit them for using the TPR as a means to provide inmates with recreational,

educational, and rehabilitation programs that the state legislature simply would not pay for. Anyone who picks up a copy of Mitchel Roth's latest work is likely to finish it within a couple of days. *Convict Cowboys* is, without question, one of the finest academic books I have read within the past several years, and I am delighted to recommend it to others.

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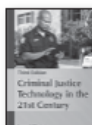
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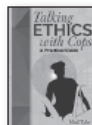
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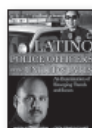
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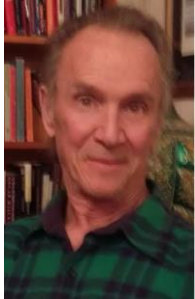


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# The Great Warming: Threat Assessment, Plutocratic Resistance, and the Green Movement



*John Crank\**

I was invited to write a short piece on global warming, a task I gladly took on. We live in an era in which plutocratic ascendants in the US government seek to stamp out research on global warming as if it were all scare tactics,

selling bad ideas that only serve the coffers of climate scientists. Both the president and congress have declared open season on global warming researchers, asserting that there is an absence of scientific agreement on the topic. I take a view sharply oppositional. We are not nearly scared enough. Until we recognize the potential threats we face from global warming and its cousin, climate change, we will not understand the urgency we need to bring to bear on the topic. If researchers seem to be using scare tactics, then likely their research is pointing them in that way. The topic of global warming, the area I turned to in the waning days of my career and continue to explore, is the most important issue facing the world today. Indeed, it is one of two areas that pose an existential risk to the human race, the other being the nuclear arms race.

Global warming is a massive exogenous event that will have sweeping consequences. All of our planetary ecologies are in trouble. There are no exceptions, except perhaps the mud at the floor of the deeper ocean regions. These ecologies include our farming and ranching regions, our

urban megacities on formerly ecologically rich mega-deltas, our wildlands that harbor what remains of the world's once great reservoirs of environmental diversity, our magnificent riparian basins, and the great delta regions that today have become the global magnets for human population growth. All these will be changed utterly. Many will become uninhabitable because they face the intersection of multiple threats: too much sheer heat for outdoor activity, desertification processes, coastal flooding and rising seas, soil salinification, expanding disease vectors, degradation and collapse of productive cropland, acidification of the seas and the killing of sea life through anoxic processes, loss of alpine snow loads for agriculture and municipal drinking water, the permanent draw-downs of aquifers and reservoirs, and the toxification of above-ground and underground fresh water from sea infiltration. Areas that today teem with human life will be vastly different, perhaps unrecognizable from our vantage. Some will be dead to life as we know it.

Global warming threat factors, moreover, do not occur on a blank slate. Their most significant impacts will be in areas already suffering severe environmental damage. Fear would be a good emotion for these times. Only by recognizing the added risks of global warming on existing problems related to the environment can we grasp the full range of threats facing the human race. For instance, desertification processes across the mid-latitudes will occur in many places where soil is already badly damaged from mismanagement, where water is already

scarce, and where the population is already outpacing its resource base. Global warming is a problem of our creation. All these other ecological problems are of a related family—they all represent the increasing misalignment of the human-environment fit through processes of environmental degradation.

The research support for global warming is substantial; the research against it is thin to none. I am not going to cite percentages of scientists in agreement with the core concept of anthropomorphic global warming; science is not a popularity contest. It is better to look at the research itself and see what it says in the aggregate, a task undertaken by Dr. James Lawrence Powell, MIT. He reviewed scientific research in peer-reviewed journals to see what percentage supported or did not support anthropomorphic global warming. His criteria was straightforward: Did the research paper provide evidence consistent with anthropomorphic global warming or evidence contrary to or inconsistent with anthropomorphic global warming? He examined all papers for one year, from November 12, 2012 to Dec 31, 2013. His data added to 2,258 articles, published by 9,136 authors.<sup>1</sup> He found only one peer-reviewed paper that contradicted anthropomorphic global warming—a paper in the journal *Herald of the Russian Academy of Sciences*. This is a rate of agreement in the 100th percentile.

The public certainly does not know this. It is astonishing that the legitimacy of the topic has not been broadly recognized, let alone acted upon. Many of us, especially those of us who have waded through the voluminous research related to global warming, believed that the middle three years of the 21st century's teenage

decade, 2014 through 2016, would finally convince the voting public of the importance and pervasiveness of climate change as the planet raced ahead in the pace of warming. New global temperature high averages were set in 2014, then again in 2015, and then again in 2016. Moreover, the pace of warming is picking up: 2016 experienced an increase of nearly .2 centigrade over 2015, which was the previous record holder. According to the Copernicus Atmosphere Monitoring Service,<sup>1</sup>

The latest figures from C3S, part of the EU's Copernicus earth observation programme, show that 2016's global temperature exceeded 14.8°C, and was around 1.3°C higher than typical for the middle years of the 18th century. 2016 was close to 0.2°C warmer than 2015, which was previously the warmest year on record.

Indeed, the signature features of these three years is the sharp uptake of pace of global warming and attendant global changes. What we finally realized during these three years is that the changes in global warming, across all affected areas, are happening much faster than expected—faster than even some of the most radical among us had thought. During these three years, we finally began to understand the slumbering beast we had awakened. What we had thought would be century changes we now realize may be decadal. Some may be even shorter. We know this—our models consistently underestimate the pace of changes on the ground. And we are in deep trouble.

Did these dramatic global increases in temperature finally compel the US legislative and executive branches of government to develop

action plans to address global warming as we had hoped? We could not have been more wrong. The website *Breitbart News* infamously stated that “The last three years may eventually come to be seen as the final death rattle of the global warming scare.”<sup>1</sup> Astonishingly, he was referring to the same three years of record-breaking temperatures. This seemingly obscure site, unfortunately, was under the leadership of Steve Bannon, one of the members of the National Security Council, who holds the positions of counselor to the president and White House chief strategist. The sharp increase in warming processes seemed to have the opposite impact, with US political leadership spewing a constant stream of misinformation about the dangers of warming in order to justify deregulation of the oil, mining, and coal industries. We moved into a period of renewed support for oil exploration, development, and use at what might be the worst time it could happen: the moment when we teeter on the edge of catastrophe, the final moment when we might still be able to do something about it. Symbolically, 2016 was the year that the level of CO<sub>2</sub> in the air rose above 400 ppm. As the global warming crisis flows toward us, the US political leadership has set the stage for the worst thing it could do: encourage the development and deregulation of fossil fuels.

In the following sections, I am going to focus on cities as a unit of analysis and describe global warming in terms of consequent threats to which cities must adapt to survive. By looking at the various interactive global warming threats and the damaged environmental conditions where many of those threats will occur, we can gain a sense of their impact on the survivability and quality of life faced by citizens as we move forward in time.

## Global Warming and Cities in Terms of Threat and Risk

When I first looked at municipal impacts, I borrowed the Pentagon’s label for it, *threat multiplier*. Threat multiplier is defined as something that takes a negative condition and then makes that condition worse. In the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the Pentagon noted that factors of resource redistribution and scarcity and terrorism can be enhanced by global warming. The term *threat multiplier*, though, is fundamentally wrong in several limiting ways that fail to grasp its full implications. I also wanted to have a measure that would be meaningful in terms of the lives we lead, something that would tap our ability to live in the ways we have become accustomed to. Quality of life seemed to satisfy that criterion, and it will also be included in this discussion.

In overview, global warming is a ubiquitous exogenous event. It will affect all regions of the world. The fundamental aspect of that impact will be that it reduces the quality of the human/ecological fit everywhere. At the same time, it needs to be recognized that its impact will be different everywhere. Global warming will have intensely local impacts, affecting the human/environment fit differently everywhere. The following five points are presented to show why the Pentagon’s threat multiplier concept is limiting, and because of that fails to adequately capture the threat potential of global warming.

First, it is not a single threat, but always manifests as multiple threats that interact with each other. A single consequence would be a



threat; the consequences of global warming, taken together, represent a *vector of threats*. Different threats will affect cities differently, but all will be affected by some group of threats.

A quick description of this vector of threats includes (1) salinization of both fossil and replenishable aquifers; (2) loss of soil moisture in agriculturally productive areas; (3) infiltration of saltwater into freshwater water tables; (4) rising seas; (5) increased inland temperatures to the point where outdoor activity is not survivable; (6) increased storms in spring and fall; (7) drought and desertification across the mid-latitudes; (8) increased storminess in poleward regions, especially above the 40th latitude; (9) shift in Hadley cells poleward, damaging currently productive crop and ranch land; (10) poleward shift in disease vectors; (11) higher rates of evaporation in all warm climates; (12) ocean acidification; (13) increased tropical storm intensity over hotter oceans; and (14) regional climate changes from the slowing and potential shut-down of the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Current.

Second, the greatest dangers posed by global warming are in areas already suffering extensive environmental misuse and/or renewable resource overuse. We can assemble a vector of existing destruction problems particularly vulnerable to global warming. It is not intended to be exhaustive but instructive.

The elements of the human/environment destruction vector are (1) overpopulation of the great mega-delta regions and in megacities, especially of the poorest; (2) loss of protective coastal plant life, especially mangroves; (3) subsidence from removal of underground water/gas/oil; (4) municipal subsidence from

weight of physical infrastructure, in combination with rising seas increasing the isostatic level of the sea; (5) subsidence from dam/levee flood protection systems; (6) increased upriver flooding from flood systems designed to channel water; (7) overuse of soil and depletion of soil fertility; (8) related to 7, misuse of farming land and water resources; (9) overuse and depletion of major aquifers globally; (10) forest mismanagement and resulting fires; (11) overbuilding in areas vulnerable to flood and fire; (12) unsustainable population growth in coastal megacities and inland cities already experiencing freshwater shortfalls; (13) overuse of ocean-based renewable resources such as fish; and (14) inequality and global slums, already deprived of resources to combat the added effects of global warming.

Third, to gauge the consequences of the relationship between threats and cities, we need to consider these factors in the context of the funding of quality of life. Cities today largely determine the quality of life that we enjoy, with state contributions to quality of life slowly receding to a “background” security function. Indeed, in spite of the many problems we have putting together a good life, without municipal services life would be much worse.

We can measure municipal quality of life as a vector of goods. A vector of municipal quality-of-life goods elements would contain (1) water quality; (2) sewer service; (3) trash services; (4) road maintenance; (5) public security and police; (6) fire services; (7) access to public health services; (8) air quality; (9) inspection and code maintenance services; (10) sidewalks and related infrastructure; (11) mosquito abatement; (12) electrical services;



(13) public parks; (14) libraries; (15) public swimming pools; (16) public transit; (17) schools; (18) social agencies; (19) emergency services (911); (20) transportation services; (21) office of budget services; (22) city prosecutor's office; and (23) jail services (with the county). Again, this is a quick list, there may be additional elements I have not identified.

Fourth, a critical shortcoming of a risk perspective is that most evaluations are calculated on the idea that the costs enable the region so affected to return to its pre-threat state. Cities are rebuilt after hurricanes, businesses are insured to reconstruct after a terrorist incident, and the like. This is not the case with global warming. There is no returning to a pre-threat state. To the contrary, each investment is a temporary solution—a Band-Aid—to an increasingly deteriorating set of conditions that will require additional investment on top of recurring and sunk costs. Thus, New York may build a billion-dollar barrier to keep rising oceans out, but at some point—and this point will be relatively early in the history of global warming—that barrier will cease to contribute and may actually backfire once seas are to the point that they are trapped inside the barrier.

Fifth is the nonresolution problem. Global warming threats cannot be resolved until fossil fuel is abandoned as a primary energy source, and instead they will only intensify over time. Without action to cease the production of fossil fuels, we will find that the fundamental feature of global warming will be to deteriorate the human/environment fit, so that quality of life and survival will require ever greater resources to adapt.

Moreover, the process of deterioration will be long term, and there will be no return to original conditions. And, instead of resolving the threat, we will have to additionally invest to adapt as threat conditions evolve and intensify.

As costly as the impact of global warming problems are to a municipal budget at one point in time, the costs will be higher for the next budgetary period. Each budgetary annum will be a toss of the financial dice, in which developing problems require further investment to maintain basic quality of life. And many of these costs will be huge. One can look at a single threat within the threat vector, the rising seas, and calculate the loss and costs of real estate as sea levels rise. These will include road systems, hospitals, hazardous waste sites, nuclear energy sites, residential housing and coastal businesses, and on and on. I would encourage readers to go to the website [rising-seas.com](http://rising-seas.com) to review the costs of each foot of ocean rise for all cities that face the US shoreline. At some point—this is the central problem—cities will financially collapse under the weight of their service load. Yet, even that moment, when a city can no longer provide services, will be only a brief historical moment in a long-term process of intensification of warming and all the problems associated with it.

Once the nature of the global threat we face is understood as a threat-matrix serial state multiplier, in which some of the risks by themselves are civilization killers, we hope the reader begins to understand that the vaunted nostrum that *civilization might fall but humans will survive* is arrogantly presumptive. What will happen will be more like this, seen broadly: We will have to adapt to a changing ecological environment that will hurt the human race, then we will have to adapt again, and then again.

Each adaptation will be unpredictable in the timing of its onset, and the rapidity in which living conditions deteriorate is likely to increase in spite of our adaptive efforts. And each adaptation will be carried out with a weaker resource base than the previous one. For how long can the human race sustain repeated species-level body blows?

### **The Pipeline**

How long must we deal with a deteriorating human/environmental fit? The question rephrased is: How long will the warming continue? This is a complex question because some effects will wash out very quickly, but others will continue to manifest for millennia. First, we have to stop its acceleration. Then we have to stop its growth. To do both requires that we cease the production and use of fossil fuels. A quick calculation is that the pipeline—the time it takes for temperature and other effects of fossil fuel burning to fully manifest—is about 50 years ahead of their release into the atmosphere. The current global temperatures were produced by the CO<sub>2</sub> (and other gases) released in about 1970. If we can turn off the fossil fuel spigot, we will continue seeing deterioration of the human/environment fit, and all the attendant municipal cost increases to maintain semblance of quality of life, for an additional 50 years. Even that is no guarantee. We are beginning to see positive feedbacks—non-controllable factors such as large-scale arctic methane release—that can amplify global temperature on their own. But the bottom line is this: To stop global warming we must stop the burning of fossil fuels. Only then can we be in a position to plan coherently. Until production is stopped we will be second guessing the timing of catastrophe, hoping that somehow we get lucky in a world that luck has fled.

We also need to build into our risk models the threat of fat-tail “game over” buttons: ocean stratification, anoxification, and return of sulfide bacteria to the ocean surfaces creating a known extinction mechanism called a Canfield Ocean; the climatic shift of the poleward side of the Haley cells to the 50th parallel (US-Canadian border is the 49th parallel) and desertification of the current world’s cereal breadbaskets; and the uncontrolled release of subsea and polar methane hydrates, punching a sharp and rapid increase in global temperatures an additional 5 to 6 degrees Celsius on top of anthropomorphic increases. Note that I did not include the melt off of the global cryosphere, which would raise the ocean levels about 220 feet, and which might be already in the cards. Rising oceans and the melt off of the global cryosphere pale in significance against the three above, which are true existential threats.

### **The Green Movement**

Political leadership, both nationally and internationally, has been unable to act in an effective or even coherent way to address global warming. Consequent to their lack of action, the Green movement has increasingly focused on global warming. The “green advocacy” in its early years was a rejection of mass consumerism and a personalized desire to explore local gardening and self-reliance “off the grid.” In 2016, with the failure of the Paris climate talks to provide even the most minimal binding mechanisms to stop the production of greenhouse gases, the Green movement morphed into a full blown international insurgency aimed at the complete shut-down of

the fossil fuel industry. The plutocratic takeover of the US executive branch in 2017, concomitant with the already-fully-in-place corporate capture of the congressional branch of the US government, created an urgency to the movement. Following the failed Paris climate talks in 2016, a resistance infrastructure called “Break Free of Fossil Fuels” organized a series of actions in May of that year. The movement is made up of many different actors and is carried out internationally. Integral to the movement is civil disobedience. As noted by Lidy Nacpil,<sup>1</sup>

We cannot confine ourselves to what the law offers for us to demand a different world. Things remain what they are because we allow it. When we take away our consent change happens very rapidly. . . . We create change through the empowerment of people because we believe that is the only change that will last.

The goal of the resistance movement is to use whatever tools are at its disposal to slow or stop greenhouse gas production—at any and every point in the production line—until a more favorable political leadership can emerge that will actively seek to move international policy in the direction of the abandonment of fossil fuels altogether. At the center of its moral philosophy is the logic that each effort to slow down production through any means is another moment in which greenhouse gases are slowed down from entering the atmosphere. Organizations involved in the climate resistance include 360.org, the Citizens Climate Lobby, the Climate Reality Project, the National Resource Defense Council, Greenpeace, and Idle No More. The challenge

in the current era is for it to find a political voice that can successfully act against the political influence of powerful representatives of the US executive and legislative branches. In the current moment, both forces are gaining power, with the executive branch of government focused on rolling back fossil fuel regulation and facilitating production, and the contemporary Green movement increasingly shifting toward civil disobedience as a primary tool to stop fossil fuel activity. The near future will be interesting at the least as these two powerful political entities increase their hostility and move toward open conflict in an era of deepening global warming.

## Notes

1. This paper makes use of material from a book I have written but not yet published titled *Invitation to a Cataclysm: Global Warming in the Age of Plutocracy*. If you would like a copy of this book, contact me and I will e-mail you a copy without charge. I can be reached at [johnpaulcrank@gmail.com](mailto:johnpaulcrank@gmail.com).
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