



Western Association of Criminal Justice

Thursday, October 10

8:00am-12:00pm **REGISTRATION/HOSPITALITY DESK** **Silver Baron E**

8:00am **MORNING REFRESHMENTS** **Silver Baron E**

Sponsored by: Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences

8:30am - 9:30am **EVENT # 6** **Silver Baron E**

PAPER PRESENTATIONS: Current Issues in Policing II

Chair: Kenneth Christopher, National University

Race, Space, and Attitudes about Police Militarization

Adam Dunbar, University of Nevada, Reno

Brandon Kyle, University of Nevada, Reno

Extant research finds the public is mixed regarding their opinion about police militarization. This study examines how the description of a community affects support for the use of various equipment by the local police. Findings indicate variation in support across standard and military-style police equipment, with the least amount of support for equipment associated with police militarization. Although participants were randomly assigned to learn that the community was affluent, suburban, inner-city, or impoverished, support for military-style police equipment did not vary based on where the equipment was likely to be used. Findings have implications for public opinion and policy.

Autonomous Technology is Here to Stay: Managing the Capabilities (and Threats) in the Public Safety Environment

Kenneth Christopher, National University

Driverless cars. Unmanned aircraft. Robotic vessels. What are their capabilities? Who is operating them?

Do public and private sector organizations—especially those responsible for critical infrastructure security--- have the capabilities for operating autonomous technology, and assessing their threats?

Two Questions Emerge:

1. How do police and security organizations develop the capacity to deploy, operate and maintain these assets?

2. What are the threats to public safety when this technology is used for nefarious purposes?

This paper will explore both the opportunities and threats associated with autonomous technology which public law enforcement and private security organizations must consider.



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Citizens Expect "Protect and Serve" but Legal Realism Emphasizes "No Duty to Protect" in American Policing

Ron Helms, Western Washington University

Maria Del Rosario Benavides, Texas A&M International University

This paper explores the divergence between public expectations of police protection and the legal doctrine that police have no constitutional duty to protect individuals, as established in the key cases of *DeShaney v. Winnebago* (1989) and *Town of Castle Rock v. Gonzales* (2005). It examines the implications of this doctrine, including its impact on public trust, the prevailing "warrior" vs "guardian" concepts, and the consequences for vulnerable populations such as domestic violence victims, those manifesting mental illness, and those who are victims in school shootings. The paper acknowledges many reforms that have sought to better align police practices with public expectations while also enhancing police accountability. The foundational political philosophy of limited government and the rule of law under the US Constitution sets limits on the legal accountability of state officials regarding protecting citizens from private violence. Educating the public to that reality will go a great distance in bridging the gap between what citizens expect and what the law provides in American policing.

9:40am - 10:50am

EVENT # 7

Silver Baron E

ROUNDTABLE: Juvenile Life Without Parole

Moderator: Shaun Gann, Bureau of Justice Statistics

Discussant: Taryn VanderPyl, Western Oregon University

Discussant: James Binnall, California State University, Long Beach

Discussant: Dan Fetsco, University of Wyoming

The United States is the only nation that allows children to be sentenced to life without parole. Through a trilogy of cases from 2005 to 2012, the U.S. began the process of declaring juvenile life without parole sentences to be unconstitutional. This roundtable will explore charging juveniles as adults, experiences testifying in juvenile resentencing hearings, how juries react to juvenile defendants, experiences with the adult system from a child's perspective, extreme sentences, and stories of juveniles released in the wake of these cases. Session attendees are invited to participate in the discussion.

11:00am-11:15am

EVENT # 8

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ACJS President Remarks

Bitna Kim, Sam Houston State University

11:15am

EVENT # 9

Silver Baron E

BUSINESS MEETING

Future Directions by WACJ Executive Board

Financial Report by Andrew Giacomazzi, Treasurer



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*Organization Updates by Marianne Hudson, Secretary
Nominations for Second Vice President*

*****ALL INVITED---NOMINATIONS FOR SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT WILL BE
TAKEN*****



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EVENT # 10

WACJ LUNCHEON

12:00pm - 1:30pm, Silver Baron C & D

“A Plea for Help: How Applied Research Can Really Benefit Criminal Justice Agencies and the Communities They Serve”

Guest Speaker: *Cary Heck, Ph.D.*

Dr. Cary Heck currently serves as the Chief Probation Officer for Denver Adult Probation. Over the past ten years, Dr. Heck has worked to get Denver Adult Probation focused on the mission of helping clients achieve long-term, pro-social behavioral change. Additionally, he is working with the local criminal bench and other agencies to embrace and actively participate in evidence-based practices related to client outcomes and success. Dr. Heck is also currently involved in grant funded research designed to answer questions regarding the effectiveness of probation practices. Previously, he has worked as a practitioner, administrator, researcher, and tenured professor in the field of Criminal Justice. Dr. Heck has served as the Director of Research for the National Drug Court Institute and been instrumental in developing and publishing materials related to drug court evaluation and performance measures. Dr. Heck has also served as a consultant for several states and localities on substance abuse and crime issues including policy formulation, program administration, and management information systems.

Sponsored by: The University of Nevada, Reno



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1:30pm-5:00pm **REGISTRATION/HOSPITALITY DESK** **Silver Baron E**

1:40pm-2:50pm **EVENT # 11** **Silver Baron E**

FEATURED PRESENTATION: Nevada Gaming Control Board: History and Current Trends in Gaming Crime

Jake Castro, Nevada Gaming Control Board

This featured presentation will provide a brief history and information to familiarize the audience with the Nevada Gaming Control Board and gaming law in Nevada, along with recent gaming trends.

3:00pm – 4:00pm **EVENT # 12** **Silver Baron E**

PAPER PRESENTATIONS: Special Issues Surrounding Juveniles: School-to-Prison Pipeline, Youth Participatory Action Research, and Recidivism

Chair: Kevin Wolff, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY

Examining the Relationship Between School Quality and Incarceration: The School-to-Prison Pipeline in Northern Nevada

Faven Stoner, University of Nevada, Reno

Brangelitee Orozco Ayala, University of Nevada, Reno

Matt Leone, University of Nevada, Reno

Disparities in school quality and educational opportunities drive school failure, potentially making crime more likely and even necessary for survival (Pesta, 2018). These disparities, however, are not applied evenly across school districts. Urban schools with greater Black, Hispanic, and poor student populations are more likely to be disadvantaged relative to their suburban counterparts, which has been shown to be related to punitive responses (rather than restorative responses) to student misbehavior (Ann Payne & Welch, 2010). While studies have shown that adult incarceration may result from structural racism in schools, (recognized as the school-to-prison pipeline), the relationship between school suspension in adolescence and later interactions with the criminal justice system remains poorly resolved (Novak, 2019). Further, the relationship between real and perceived disadvantage and dropping out has not been fully explored. A better understanding of this pipeline could result in policy changes and fewer incarcerations. This study will examine the perceptions and experiences of high school aged residents in the Reno/Sparks area and compare them with the perceptions and experiences of inmates in the Washoe County Regional Detention Facility (WCRDF). The proposed study will employ two different data collection strategies. For the high school aged youth, data will be collected via snowball sampling wherein respondents will provide the QR code which leads to the Qualtrics survey to their friends. The inmates from the WCRDF will be interviewed via video at the jail and their responses will be recorded on paper and entered into the Qualtrics database at a later date. The data will be used to test the interconnections between school discipline and



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incarceration, and to identify the impact of real and perceived disadvantage to school failure and ultimately the school-to-prison pipeline.

Youth Participatory Action Research: A Youth-Centered Look at Parental Incarceration

Britni Adams, University of Nevada, Reno

Michelle Abraczinskas, University of Florida

Erin Vines, University of Florida

The growing population of parents experiencing incarceration continues to stimulate research and programming to address the collateral consequences that create and exacerbate inequalities for families. Much of this research and programming are designed by adults for youth, without youth input. This project centers youth perspectives using a youth participatory action research (YPAR) approach to understand youth needs around parental incarceration. Promoting a strengths approach, the youth research team is investigating experiences and needs of youth with incarcerated parents. Data collection highlights how designing projects with youth is an invaluable opportunity to generate new and youth-relevant ideas for programming and research.

ACEs, Risk and Recidivism. The Exploration of Gender Differences

Kevin Wolff, John Jay College of Criminal Justice, CUNY

Jessica M. Craig, University of North Texas

Nina Papalia, Swinburne University of Technology

This study examines the interplay between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and criminogenic risk factors in predicting juvenile recidivism, with a focus on sex differences. Utilizing data from the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, we explore how ACEs and criminogenic risk factors jointly influence the likelihood of reoffending among youth involved in the juvenile justice system. Findings highlight differential impacts of these factors on male and female youth, underscoring the necessity for gender-specific approaches in addressing the unique pathways through which ACEs and criminogenic risks contribute to recidivism.

4:15pm

EVENT # 13

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WACJ QUIZ BOWL

Moderator: Andrew Giacomazzi, Boise State University

Do you have what it takes to be crowned the 2024 champs? Form a team of 2-4 members, then get ready for a face-paced game where your speed in answering questions could be the difference between winning and losing. Lots of CJ/Criminology/WACJ/Reno specific questions. See you at WACJ QUIZ BOWL!