

Letter from the Chair of SFSU'S Criminal Justice Studies Department

Welcome to the third volume of the Annual Review of Criminal Justice Studies. ARCJS is a journal housed in the Department of Criminal Justice Studies (CJS) at San Francisco State University that is in frequent collaboration with scholars from other universities, such as the students at John Jay College of Criminal Justice published in this issue. The third volume of this journal not only demonstrates the talents and ideas of CJS students at San Francisco State University but is a practice of creating a collaborative community of scholars from a diverse set of institutions.

As an explicitly student-centered journal, ARCJS represents the culmination of years-long efforts by the Department of Criminal Justice Studies to create our program as place where critical thinking about crime, law and justice systems thrives. Through our curriculum and programming, we envision our students at the forefront of transforming systemic injustice and innovatively creating safety for their communities. ARCJS, the brainchild of Dr. Albert de la Tierra, represents a forum for showcasing this work, while also creating a high-impact pedagogical practice that increases student engagement, belonging and inclusion. Or, as the faculty advisors put it in this volume, the journal centers itself in the practice of “Critical Analysis. Collaboration. Social Justice. Strengths-Based Approach.” These four pillars reflect the intellectual and political commitments of the program and university, but importantly, are also the foundations necessary for envisioning another world, that our students will one day lead.

This journal is also housed at a public institution, which is also a “Hispanic Serving Institution”, and in a program where the student body is majority of color, who grew up in areas where state disinvestment and violence are often an integral part of the landscape. The journal thus provides an opportunity for building that elusive “social capital” that so often shapes our futures possibilities and potentials. It is, as Drs. de la Tierra and Tramontano write, an “epistemic counter attack” that seeks itself to transform the conditions of white supremacy, coloniality, heteronormativity, and capitalist accumulation that shape our students’ lives and learning experiences. This epistemic counterattack, this journal, foregrounds the expertise of lived experience, producing knowledge that emerges from community and collaboration, and does so in an explicit attempt to create transformative opportunities for students. With the foundations created

by this journal, one day our students can work to create safety and security that is not riddled with systemic inequality, colonial legacies and continuities, and so much harm and insecurity. Instead, the journal allows students to get a head-start on putting this world into practice, through their collaborative work producing and publishing in the journal.

As you move from “discussing the genocide in Gaza”, “gendered injustices and intersectional lens” and “legal and punitive institutions” to “gun violence”, “immigration” and “modern media and arts”, the talents and expertise of today’s college students is on full display. I read these articles and see the seeds of a future filled with hope and possibility. May you see the same as you read on, and find yourself, like me, hopeful about the world before us and what might become.

Happy Reading!

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