

Letters from the Editors-in-Chiefs

Dear Reader,

I would first like to congratulate all the authors for their hard work and for being part of Volume 4 of the Annual Review of Criminal Justice Studies (ARCJS). The insight that you brought from your lived and academic experience is something to be proud of. Secondly, I would like to thank Dr. Albert de la Tierra, Dr. Marisa Tramontano, and the editors at John Jay College of Criminal Justice for their hard work and collaboration on this journal. Lastly, I would like to thank the peer reviewers Michael DaSilva, Tim Ward, Desirre Prado, Donovan Castellero, Daniella Krynsky, and Jasmine Kimbrough, who dedicated their time to reviewing the papers and provided exceptional feedback.

Academic settings historically were not often welcoming to those of us who dare use our authentic voices. Many times, people who don't speak and write in a manner that fits a colonizing lens do not participate in—much less produce—research; which is especially concerning when most of the research is about them and their interaction with the criminal justice system. This leaves individuals who are not always impacted by this system with the loudest voice.

Accounts of police brutality and over-policing were often left out of major newspapers and even academic journals simply because the accounts of events were not told in a “scholarly” way, or did not fit the narrative of Eurocentric research models. This has created a divide in how the criminal justice system is researched. That is, reformist and conservative ideologies that view the criminal justice system as a mechanism of public safety dominate the discourse while radical ideologies that recognize the criminal justice system to be state violence are marginalized.

Today, uncritical acceptance of the legitimacy of police and prisons enables federal brutality and human rights violations of vulnerable populations. Under the current administration, ICE agents have been deployed to cities and have arrested anyone who “looks” undocumented, without probable cause. In California, propositions like 36 were passed, while Proposition 6 was opposed. The idea that more incarceration is the answer to public safety (Prop 36) was upheld and that removing slavery from California's constitution (Prop 6) was rejected by California's voters shows that we need more impacted voices in these spaces. Under my leadership, ARCJS welcomes authors from historically excluded populations and encourages analyses that aim to comprehend the root causes of criminalized social problems.

The ARCJS is a critical criminology journal that encourages students to use their own voice to articulate the issues and impacts that they see within this system. They analyze topics from juvenile justice, policing, and mental health in the criminal justice system and question if this system is truly about public safety within their communities or a continuation of systemic white supremacy in our society. I hope you enjoy reading these articles as much as I did.

Sincerely,

Gabriel Singer

Editor in Chief ARCJS, San Francisco State University

It is a great honor to bring to you this year's volume of *The Annual Review of Criminal Justice Studies*. Students from both John Jay and San Francisco State poured their hearts and souls to give pieces that spoke to the issues they saw in the world. Many of these pieces are particularly special as they are personal accounts and experiences of the very systems that other students are critiquing. It has been a great honor to see how everyone has grown since the beginning of this project. I want to give a special thanks to Gabe, Editor in Chief on the San Francisco side, for his amazing communication and his artistic contributions to this project. There was never a moment where I couldn't just reach out to him to discuss anything that was bothering me. To Gabe, I thank you for all your hard work and effort in the making of this journal. To Dr. Albert de la Tierra, Dr. Marisa Tramontano, thank you for seeing greatness in me and giving me the space to be great. This has been a wonderful experience.

Before we begin, I'd like to give reverence to all the ancestors that paved the way for me to be here. To my grandparents who came to this country and planted seeds of hope. I was that seed and I am now a mighty sunflower, I am the incarnate of joy. Ancestral veneration is at the core of my beliefs. I believe that one day I too will be an ancestor and bear witness to the accomplishments of those who are here and to those who have yet to come. This is not exclusive to my blood, it is extended to those who have held me during this time. To be a part of this project has been both a blessing and a great test of strength. From management, to cover making, to working on the layout, I have learned a great deal about myself. Even more so, I've strengthened my relationship with spirit and have learned much from the elders who also held me during this process.

To be love is my philosophy on life. Love is not simply expressed via words or actions, it is an experience. All I am is love and as such I am an experience. This journal was birthed of love and it too has been an experience. This experience could not have been made possible without the keen eye of my wonderful assistant Aleeyah Hassan. From late night text, to me overthinking, to me bothering her about things I forgot along the way, Aleeyah has truly been my rock in this process. There is no one more qualified, dedicated, and determined like Aleeyah and for that I am so grateful for her presence in this project. To my amazing team, Rheanna Doogar, Florian Griese, Danielle Key, Hansly Garden Mauricio, Haya Shahzad, Izzy Taveras, Josie-Grace Valerius, I am incredibly grateful for all of them and amazed by how far many of them have come. The team this year was mainly composed of authors and editors from last edition and to watch them grow has made this project even more enjoyable. A special thanks to Haya, Hansly, and Izzy for always keeping the project lively and for all the

hard work you've put into the journal. Haya, thank you for placing your legacy in my hands, I pray that I have lived up to your expectations of me. This project also bore new fruit for me. To Shania, thank you for all the little convos and the energy you always brought to space. Thank you for this new found friendship, your future is beyond bright and I'm excited to see all that you accomplish. Finally I was not able to do so without the next generation of ancestors. To my friend group, to the ones who have never left my side, I am eternally grateful for your blessings upon me. To my dear friends and future ancestors, Izzy, Fiona, Rajaa, Tristan, Savanna, thank you for always reminding me exactly who I am and what I am capable of. To my Mom, thank you for always lending me an ear and watching as my ideas unfold into reality.

Thus, after a long year, It is our pleasure to introduce to you the work of our amazing authors. From deconstructing violence against women, to discussions around the prison system, to powerful manifestos, our authors have worked tirelessly to produce for you all these amazing works. We aim to challenge the general idea of "Criminal Justice". We ask you, "Criminal to whom?" and "To what standard"? "What is justice?", "Justice for whom?", and "Where can we find justice?" In a world full of uncertainty, these authors have made one thing certain, we will not be quiet. We will continue to fight for another tomorrow. A tomorrow where we don't have to dream of another "first" minority in a position of power. A tomorrow where freedom is not something to be questioned, it is granted for us all. A tomorrow where a culture of hate and violence is changed with one of love and compassion. Until tomorrow comes, we fight for now. My vision for this journal was a field of sunflowers. They represent joy. For what greater act of resistance is to be joyful in these uncertain times. I bring you ARCJS Volume 4, a bundle of sunflowers.

Sincerely,
Jayden Richiez
Editor in Chief ARCJS, John Jay College of Criminal Justice