

Newsletter of the *European Society of Criminology*

CRIMINOLOGY IN EUROPE



Dario Melossi's ESC Award Acceptance Speech

Barak Ariel on Experimental Criminology

Gerben Bruinsma

FRAGMENTATION AND SCHOOLS IN EUROPEAN CRIMINOLOGY

A PLEA FOR MORE MUTUAL COMMUNICATION AND DEBATE

2014 | 3
VOL. 13

Criminology in Europe is published by the European Society of Criminology.

Web www.esnewsletter.org

Editor CSABA GYÖRY

Editorial office:

Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law
Günterstalstrasse 73
79100 Freiburg i. Br.
Phone: +49 (761) 7081-314
Fax: +49 (761) 7081-294
Email: c.gyoery@mpicc.de

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Communications should be addressed as follows

To the president:
NSCR
Postbus 71304
1008 BH Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Email: GBruinsma@nscr.nl

To the business office:
University of Lausanne
ESC-ICDP-Sorge-BCH
CH-1015 Lausanne, Switzerland
Phone: 41 21 692 4638
Fax: 41 21 692 4645
Email: secretariat@esc-eurocrim.org
ISSN 1729-8164

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The ESC is on its way to the gorgeous city of Porto. The organisers are busy outlining a scientific program and several social activities. They have a difficult task to fit all the sessions in a three-day meeting. In Prague, we had 1078 participants, 226 Panels with 799 presentations. We expect even more participants to attend the Porto meeting, more sessions and more presentations. Experienced participants of large conferences know that people select their sessions and lectures to attend by their preferred research interests and their 'own' school of thought they feel comfortable with. Their choices are understandable:

you want to meet the people who share your preferences, are experts in your field with whom you like to discuss your studies and outcomes of research or new plans you have. As a consequence of these kinds of practical and topical inspired choices, scholars seldom attend sessions on 'other' research topics, other theoretical perspectives and research questions, other schools of thought. To exaggerate: organised crime researchers in general attend sessions about organised crime, life course criminologists attend sessions about life course issues, and geography interested criminologists attend sessions dedicated to geographical topics. The existence of working groups of the ESC may strengthen this practice. As a result it seems that there is less communication and debate in our discipline across the borders of one's own perspective.

Generally, schools of thought are very important in science and they yield several crucial advantages. A school of thought consists of a group of researchers with shared interests collaborating intensively, sharing a discourse that facilitates mutual communications. One knows immediately what is meant by concept A or B or reference X or Y. For a longer period of time scholars can work within a kind of research program aimed at getting more in-depth insight in the topic. Schools stimulate cohesion in focus and (financial) resources. Young students can be initiated and trained within a school of thought for continuation or to prepare them for future leadership. Further, 'representatives' of a school do not need to question their opinions and methods every day, giving time to focus on their daily work. After some years they personally know the colleagues who are leaders in the field and consult them for advice and support. National and international networks are established and one can jointly work on books and journal articles. Conferences and specialised workshops are organised with fellow criminologists to discuss mutual

research problems, how to avoid mistakes and to advise each other in order to improve the scientific quality of all. Schools of thought also support all when representatives of other schools criticise their research or publications or find counter arguments when needed. All these practices strengthen the schools of thought to sustain for a long period of time.

Schools of thought have an essential role in the development of a discipline. In his seminal work on scientific revolutions Thomas Kuhn wrote about the emergence and development of paradigms in science and their crucial role in scientific progress. According to Kuhn, progress in science can be accomplished when it is organised around paradigms in which assumptions and the way of observation (we would say method) are part of an accepted 'body of knowledge'. Paradigms or schools of thought determine what 'normal' science is for a longer period of time.

However, contrary to what Kuhn argued, the existence of various schools and paradigms can also have disadvantages for a discipline. Competing and sometimes conflicting schools of thought can lead to a fragmentation of a discipline. I have the impression that in many disciplines including criminology, the communication between schools of thought diminishes over time and that the little mutual communication that is left becomes harder and more conflictual.

How can this happen? Members of a school organise workshops and conferences for like-minded researchers, and start their own journals in which only representatives or supporters of the schools publish their studies. Due to specialisation journals and books of other schools of thoughts are neglected. Anomalies found in research outside their own circle are ignored while verifying evidence on core views of the school of thought is getting priority. After several years, inspiring leaders may become scholars always trying to get their way. Stereotypes and prejudices about other schools begin to dominate. The little discussion that is left between schools of thought is getting a tougher tone, even causing personal animosity. After a while, representatives might become more or less 'believers' convinced that they have it right. Representatives of a school are urged to take membership in committees that distribute research funding and research proposals of other schools are by definition

negatively evaluated. To hold power may become the main goal of a school of thought.

Of course, the processes and events as described are not all true or not everything in combination is taking place in reality. But ESC members may intuitively recognise some of the concerns I have about the 'sectarian' communication because they may be potential risks for our discipline.

One of the underlying motives of the founding mothers and fathers who established the ESC years ago—which was also set as a formal goal—was to bring together European criminologists annually and to stimulate among them mutual discussions and an exchange of ideas. Although the society succeeded in bringing together European scholars more than was expected in advance, the mutual discussion between the members of the society did not completely live up to its promise. I imagine that the existence of schools of thought has much to do with that and in a way has fragmented the society. To bring more closely together the members of the ESC, I would like to call upon the Porto participants to attend at least one of the sessions on topics and issues they are not familiar with. As an optimist, I still believe that we can learn from other schools how and why they formulate research questions, how they carry out empirical and theoretical studies and how they solve practical and methodological research problems within their schools. For these reasons I intend to organise in Porto two *presidential sessions*, in which invited young talented criminologists from various European countries and of different schools of thought present their views on the future development of criminology on two issues: (1) neglected 21st century crime and criminal justice problems that should be on the criminological priority research agenda, and (2) the question whether criminology needs new theories to address 21st century crime problems (to augment or replace the existing ones having their origins in the 19th century). I hope these two sessions contribute to a more open debate in the ESC by giving the floor to young scholars who will be future leaders in our discipline.

Gerben Bruinsma is President of the ESC, Senior Researcher of the NSCR and Professor of Environmental Criminology, VU University, both in Amsterdam

FROM THE NEXT ISSUE

> *New Series: What is European Criminology?*

Dario Melossi

FOUR MUSKETEERS,¹ ONE D'ARTAGNAN AND AN OLDER BROTHER

I am particularly thankful to all who participated in this decision—thankful and honoured! In particular I am honoured by the motivation, especially where it says that I ‘... bridged the world ...’ I do indeed like that: ‘bridging’. I do not know if that is what I did, but that is certainly what I tried to do. I also tried bridging across disciplines ... or should I perhaps say *escaping* disciplines? In my high school days, I attended the *Liceo scientifico*, specifically the *Liceo Scientifico* ‘Augusto Righi’ of Bologna. Because, however, the real *Liceo* of the Italian bourgeoisie has always been the *Liceo classico*, by the survival of some truly Fascist hierarchy, coming from the *Liceo scientifico* I was prohibited from enrolling in Philosophy at the University. So, thanks to this Fascist discrimination, I enrolled instead in Law, making my parents very happy, if for a brief moment ...

Law was not much better, though. Bologna law at the time consisted (mainly) of a string of incredibly boring academic lectures on Roman Law and the like (not that it is so much different now!) However, I was saved by 1968. We ‘occupied’ the School of Law from March to May. (May ’68 is so famous because it happened in Paris, of course, but the student movement had started in many Italian universities much earlier, and before that in Berlin. It had begun even earlier in Berkeley, in 1964, with the Free Speech Movement and Mario Savio’s famous speeches!). During our occupation, we produced some incredibly presumptuous (and ignorant) ‘documents’ and had much fun. Few professors crossed the occupation line, but one of these was Franco Bricola, my very first Musketeer. Franco was a professor of criminal law and the only one at the time who was tolerant of my sociological perversions. (We did not even have criminology among the taught disciplines in Law!) So that is how I ended up doing Criminology, and eventually being here... life is strange, isn’t it?

Those were heady days; it was the time of the National Deviancy Conference (NDC) in the UK and of the European Group (EG) for the Study of Deviance and Social Control in Europe. The very first meeting of the EG took place in Florence in 1973, when the Conference participants marched in the streets, together with tens of thousands other people, to protest against the coup in Chile which had just brought about Allende’s

death and would bring the violent death and torture of so many of his countrymen and women. A few years later, in conjunction with another EG meeting, I remember with particular affection the first *Diada* to be publically celebrated in Barcelona since Franco’s victory in the civil war. That was on September 11, 1977—exactly 37 years ago today!

Those were the times when I made so many friends, many of whom have unfortunately left us quite recently: the ‘new criminologists’ Ian Taylor, Paul Walton, and my very, very dear Jock Young; the brilliant Stanley Cohen; and Stuart Hall! During these years I also encountered my second Musketeer: Alessandro Baratta! In fact, not really knowing what to do with me, Franco Bricola thought that Alessandro could tolerate me better in the hot (cultural) climate of Saarbrücken! The newly discovered collaboration between Bricola and Baratta resulted, among other things, in the foundation of *La questione criminale*, when, in 1975, Franco and Alessandro brought together a group of young people, including Massimo Pavarini, myself, and Tamar Pitch (whom we had met in the circles of the European Group), to set up the new journal².

At that time I was working with Massimo on *The Prison and the Factory*, which was first published in 1977, and which, together with Macmillan, we are thinking of republishing in a new edition. *The Prison and the Factory* has been by far my most fortunate publication, certainly the best known. I believe that I have a secret to reveal in connection with this, especially to young scholars and researchers: Ignorance! Ignorance is bliss! Don’t study too much! Knowledge gets in the way of ideas!!! *The Prison*

1 Yes, I know, the Musketeers were actually three, according to Alexandre Dumas—a colleague told me so much just after my speech, and I was left wondering. Well, in Italy, the Musketeers are actually four! I will plead innocent. Witness Sofia Loren, who plays Antonietta in Ettore Scola’s powerful *A Special Day* (1977). When she enters Gabriele’s flat (played by Marcello Mastroianni) she sees a book and she is immediately reminded of a radio quiz show that was all the rage in 1930s Fascist Italy, which was called in fact *The Four Musketeers*! Gabriele corrects her but to no avail. Since that show, the number of Musketeers in Italy is uncertain, four being more likely than three!

2 The journal then turned into *Dei delitti e delle pene* and then, more recently, after Baratta’s passing, *Studi sulla questione criminale*. It is still being gloriously published!

and the *Factory* was based on one truly original idea, and this idea could develop and flourish because unencumbered by knowledge!!!

More or less contemporaneously, Michel Foucault was publishing his 1975 masterpiece, *Discipline and Punish*. Certainly this work was not ‘unencumbered by knowledge’—on the contrary! However, the similarities between the two works—their revolving around the concept of discipline, for instance—had to be found in their

topical relevance *vis à vis* what was going on at the time, not only within prisons and all ‘total institutions’—a point most usefully made recently by David Garland (2014)—but more generally in the ‘spirit of the time’ in society. My advice to young people, therefore, is, open yourself to the *Zeitgeist* and do not bother too much about scholastic knowledge, what Marx (1852) called ‘the tradition of all dead generations [that] weighs like a nightmare on the brains of the living’!

Miklós Lévy

DARIO MELOSSI

Dario Melossi has made a truly exceptional contribution to the development of criminology in Europe. He has bridged the worlds of European and American, ‘Latin’ and ‘Anglo-Saxon’ and ‘critical’ and ‘mainstream’ intellectual cultures in a way that few others have managed to do, or to do so well and so consistently.

He has divided his academic career mainly between two countries, Italy and the USA. He received his law degree from the University of Bologna and his PhD in Sociology from the University of California at Santa Barbara, beginning his career in the Sociology Department at the University of California, Davis, returning to Italy and joining the faculty at the University of Bologna in 1993 where he is Professor of Criminology.

However, his academic life extends far beyond Italy and the USA. He has been invited to give guest lectures in more than twenty universities inside and outside Europe. His association in different capacities with some 15 criminological and other journals has led him into contact with a broad scientific community and he is presently editor-in-chief of *Punishment and Society*. His international contacts and importance could also be illustrated by his publications. In addition to his many monographs, anthologies, book chapters and articles written in Italian and English he has appeared in French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Greek and Japanese.

But Dario Melossi’s importance should not primarily be described quantitatively in terms of number of invitations, journal contributions or translated publications. It is the content of what he has written that is of particular importance. His publications from the very beginning with *The Prison and the Factory* together form a



most impressive intellectual achievement. His analyses are theoretical, historical, contextual and critical in the best sense. Reading him gives insights far above the ordinary.

Central to his writings is the concept of control. It is particularly well illustrated by the title of his magnum opus *Controlling Crime,*

Controlling Society from 2008. In analysing control in relation to different modes of social organisation and which groups that have been regarded as threatening in different contexts he compares the intellectual and crime policy traditions of Europe and the USA in a most stimulating way. This is also his approach to his present research interest, migration and crime. He here deals with matters of an urgent public controversy that reach far beyond criminology. His forthcoming book, *Crime and Migration*, is so eagerly to be awaited.

Dario Melossi is a key figure in the development of a properly European criminology. In recognizing the work of this outstanding scholar ESC acknowledges and celebrates the range, breadth and diversity of its constituent traditions, and the inherent trans-disciplinary fertility of the criminological enterprise. Dario Melossi’s writings elevate criminology and make us as European criminologists proud of our discipline.

Miklós Lévy is Professor of Criminology at the ELTE University Faculty of Law, Budapest, Hungary

There was no ‘doc’ in Italy at the time; therefore, when I got the chance for a fellowship to study in the US, I went to Berkeley as a ‘postdoc’ without a doc. I arrived there in that fateful year, 1977, a few years after Ronald Reagan as Governor of California had propitiated the closing down of the School of Criminology, one of the very few acts of true academic censorship in the history of American Universities.³ In Berkeley—or actually at the San Francisco airport where he was waiting for me—I met my D’Artagnan: Paul Takagi. (Paul is 91 years old now and I send him my most heartfelt greetings!) Paul disclosed to me the secrets of American life and did so from a most unusual perspective: that of the Asian-American community in the Bay Area! That was also very good for my health, because in my effort to eat with chopsticks I lost quite a bit of weight, not being able to compete with my commensals!

So, as I mentioned above, there was no ‘doc’ in Italy at the time and I desired a PhD. I ended up finding myself among the beaches and palm trees of Santa Barbara, at the University of California. There was this guy there who insisted on working with me because I had written about crime and punishment; his name was Donald Cressey. I told you that ignorance is bliss and I meant it—I had no idea who he was! At first this situation was a bit tough—Don was not man to appreciate people who did not know who he was! But with time, he turned out to be probably the most important of my four Musketeers. He retired just after I completed my PhD, and I remember how he had all the dissertations lined up in his office. He used to say that he would write a book of memoirs that would be called *From Bittner to Melossi*, because Egon Bittner had been his first PhD student and I was his last ...

At that point everybody among my graduate school colleagues was applying for jobs, so I did that too and I found myself at UC Davis. Do you know where that is? It is near Sacramento—not that that helps too much! It is not far from Berkeley, which casts a very long shadow. I found two good things at Davis: the first was that the campus was near Napa Valley and it had a great Department of Enology, interested in some of Napa’s wineries. So when we went to the reception to welcome new faculty, we had

a delicious wine! I still remember the name—Freemark Abbey, I think. Unfortunately, though, everything pretty much went downhill after that (except for a much-appreciated tenure promotion a few years later). The other good thing was that Ed Lemert was Emeritus Professor there and still very much an active member of the faculty. And so I discovered my fourth Musketeer. He acted a bit as my faculty mentor and I enjoyed our relationship very much. However much Cressey had been the working-class New Deal Democrat, Ed was the conservative liberal gentleman, with a touch of Southernness in his personal style. (He even used to wear a bolo tie!)

Speaking of Lemert, let me just close by saying something ‘serious’ about the famous ‘labelling approach’. During this time, at Davis some of the other members of the faculty—self-styled ‘quants’—used to say rather stupid things about labelling. This ‘contest’ between quantitative and qualitative is one of the stupidest conflicts of all, and unfortunately I’m afraid that it is starting to arrive to Europe. In that period in the US, whole departments of sociology were devastated by this maleficent squabble. Even in Europe (and, more precisely, Italy) lately, people who don’t like labelling denounce it as ‘constructionism’—as in the title of that nice book by philosopher of science Ian Hacking (2000) entitled *The Social Construction of What?* (with an emphasis on the last two words). Usually these people are people completely ignorant about social theory. The labelling approach is, in fact, a very serious theory of crime (and punishment), deriving from symbolic interactionism and the pragmatist tradition. It is an effort to deal with an old problem that, arriving in Santa Barbara, I immediately recognised from my Marxist days: the relationship between so-called ‘social structure’ and the sphere of ‘ideology’, or ‘culture’, on which the likes of Karl Marx, Max Weber, George Herbert Mead, C. Wright Mills had exercised themselves.⁴ I am particularly glad to see recently a neo-labelling orientation coming back with a vengeance in the excellent work of young scholars such as Victor Rios (2011) in *Punished* or Alice Goffman (2014) in *On the Run*. So, as Stuart Hall used to tell us in the early meetings of the European Group, it’s nothing else but Gramsci’s old issue of hegemony ... But I think I ‘hegemonised’ your time even too much, and excessive hegemony is not a good thing, especially here in Prague, so I’ll leave it at this. Thank you again very much!

Dario Melossi is Professor of Criminology at the University of Bologna, Italy.

3 See more about this in the 40th anniversary issue of *Social Justice* (2014)

4 For more about this, read one of the last interviews with Jock Young (2014), that we have published in *Punishment and Society* thanks to Rene van Swaaningen. Jock would have been my fifth Musketeer had he not been my older brother!

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Goffman, Alice (2014) *On the Run. Fugitive Life in an American City*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hacking, Ian (2000) *The Social Construction of What?* Harvard: Harvard University Press.

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Pp. 594–617 in R. C. Tucker, (Ed.) *The Marx-Engels Reader*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1978.

Melossi, Dario and Massimo Pavarini (1977) *The Prison and the Factory*. London: Macmillan, 1981.

Rios, Victor M. (2011) *Punished: Policing the Lives of Black and Latino Boys* New York: NYU Press.

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▼ ESC YOUNG CRIMINOLOGIST AWARD

Barak Ariel

THE YOUNG EXPERIMENTAL CRIMINOLOGIST'S GUIDE TO RESEARCH

Experimental Criminology is gaining momentum as a means of analysing and understanding the causes and effects of criminal behaviour. While it is still far from being the mainstream criminological approach in Europe, it is nevertheless recognised by many as the most promising scientific application for establishing cause and effect. Even critics of experiments and randomised controlled trials admit that—at least in theory—science has yet to provide a better design for the study of causality, with other methodological alternatives asymptotically coming close, but never actually equalling the capacity of this relatively straightforward design to show that 'A has caused B'. Admittedly, applying this design is never easy; when conducting experiments many issues and challenges arise. Still, when considering causal models, randomised controlled trials are believed to be the methodology of choice for research into health (including pharmacology), agriculture, education and psychology.

What are randomised controlled trials (RCTs)? In essence, RCTs are recognised as the 'gold standard' of evaluation research¹. An RCT can explore the causal effects between independent and dependent variables, while ruling out alternative explanations to the causal links being tested². Given their strengths, these studies produce strong estimates of the treatment effect³. According to Sherman et al.⁴, RCTs provide the necessary conditions to secure high levels of internal validity through the process of random assignment. Random assignment of cases into different study conditions achieves baseline equality

between the study groups. When the groups are otherwise the same, any outcome differences observed between the groups can likely be attributed to the effects of the administered treatments, not any other feature⁵. For these reasons, RCTs are often regarded as superior to observational studies, *at least in terms of the concretisation of causality*. As Sherman once wrote⁶,

The reason that observations alone fail to eliminate competing explanations is that they require data analysts to be too smart and too lucky. Unless analysts are both smart enough to think up (or 'specify') every variable that needs to be held constant, and

- 1 William R. Shadish, Cook, T. D., & Campbell, D. T. (2002). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for generalized causal inference*. Wadsworth Cengage learning; Ariel, B., and Farrington, D. (2010) 'Randomised Block Designs.' In David Weisburd and Alex Piquero (Eds.) *Handbook of Quantitative Criminology*. New York: Springer.
- 2 Cook, T. D., Campbell, D. T., & Day, A. (1979). *Quasi-experimentation: Design & analysis issues for field settings* (pp. 19–21). Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- 3 Weisburd, D., & Hinkle, J. C. (2012). The importance of randomized experiments in evaluating crime prevention. *The Oxford handbook of crime prevention*, 446–465.
- 4 Sherman, L. W., Gottfredson, D. C., MacKenzie, D. L., Eck, J., Reuter, P., & Bushway, S. D. (1998). Preventing Crime: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising. Research in Brief. National Institute of Justice.
- 5 Campbell, D. T., Stanley, J. C., & Gage, N. L. (1963). *Experimental and quasi-experimental designs for research on teaching*. In N. L. Gage (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (pp. 171–246). Chicago, IL: Rand McNally.
- 6 Sherman, L. W. (2010). An introduction to experimental criminology. In *Handbook of Quantitative Criminology* (pp. 399–436). New York: Springer.

lucky enough to have a data set in which all possible conditions of all relevant variables have enough cases for analysis of the primary causal hypothesis, statistical controls are not enough. Causation cannot be strongly inferred without being sure that you were both smart and lucky. Sadly, there is little way to tell without stronger research designs. Not all of these designs entail randomized experiments ... but they all entail more than multiple regression.

With this in mind, in this brief essay I would like to lay out the promises of experiments, as well as the contemporary challenges of which scholars, who are keen to apply these methods, should be aware. Before that, however, I would like to offer two important caveats: first, that not every research question can, or should, be answered by an experiment and second, that the biggest lesson I have learned from the dozens of experiments I have had the privilege of participating in—particularly those that have failed (often miserably so)—is that experiments are difficult to deliver. Unlike non-experimental field studies, like observations and survey methodologies, and especially unlike lab experiments, like those conducted with students and studies in non-real-life settings, field trials require constant involvement, supervision and skills in diplomacy, which make them not only time consuming, but also nerve-racking!

Thus, not all research questions *should* be answered through experimental designs. Modern research methods have developed to such a degree of specialisation that we can ascertain quite distinctively when experimental methods are best fit and when they are not. In studies that explore attitudes, perceptions or leadership processes, for example, scholars are often less concerned about singling out one or two causal variables, but are rather more interested in enriching our body of knowledge about these deep processes from a descriptive or even exploratory angle. This of course does not mean that experiments *should not* be conducted in these areas, but rather that the questions asked about these broader dynamics do not merit randomly allocating participants into treatment and control conditions. While falsifiability is a major attribute of sound theories⁷—and robust theories require testing and retesting—developing complex models, paradigms and doctrines is often too complex for field tests. Portions of these models are testable, but the overall models are not.

There are also research questions that *cannot* be answered through experimental designs. Many social dynamics or administrative responses to crime are observable phenomena that can be systematically described by researchers, but causal research by the random allocation of units is virtually impossible. For instance, extremely expensive treatments, such as bursaries for higher educa-

tion⁸ or geographic reallocation of offenders to out of state neighbourhoods⁹, despite being quite promising ways to deal with crime, will unsurprisingly not be manipulated within randomised controlled settings. Many questions in neuro-criminology are also not fit for experiments, despite these being fascinating and promising areas for contemporary research.¹⁰

Finally, there are research questions that it would be ethically unacceptable to test. For instance, when we *know* that an intervention is effective, or that a treatment will result in a backfiring adverse effect, then conducting an experiment is not ethically justifiable. ‘Scared straight’ is a prime example of an intervention that was found to cause more harm rather than deterrence from crime, and therefore subjugating juveniles to a test of this sort would almost certainly be deemed unethical.¹¹ Replicating the Zimbardo experiment in order to refute the original findings, which described the psychological effect on a group of students based on their being assigned as a ‘prison guard’ or ‘prisoner’¹², should also be rejected on ethical grounds, as it would likely cause a great degree of distress to participants.

Turning to the second caveat, I think that the challenges of implementing experiments cannot be overstated. Transforming an experimental protocol into a live experiment is never easy. Even with careful planning and meticulous attention to detail in the design of experiments, I am continually amazed by the tribulations that every researcher involved in the administration of treatments experiences. The random allocation of cases into treatment conditions is nearly always confronted by subjects dropping out or crossing over between the study groups, with difficulties in achieving equilibrium or with personnel changes within the treatment provider entity, that require explaining, yet again, the value of random allocation and the possibility of failure; many practitioners assume that before-after analyses are

7 Popper, K. (2014). *The logic of scientific discovery*. Routledge.

8 Lochner, L., & Moretti, E. (2001). *The effect of education on crime: Evidence from prison inmates, arrests, and self-reports* (No. w8605). National Bureau of Economic Research.

9 Kirk, D. S. (2009). A natural experiment on residential change and recidivism: Lessons from Hurricane Katrina. *American Sociological Review*, 74(3), 484–505.

10 Rocque, M., Raine, A., & M’Elsh, B. C. (2013). Experimental Neuro-criminology Etiology and Treatment. *Experimental Criminology: Prospects for Advancing Science and Public Policy*, 43.

11 Petrosino, A., Turpin-Petrosino, C., & Buehler, J. (2003). Scared Straight and other juvenile awareness programs for preventing juvenile delinquency: A systematic review of the randomized experimental evidence. *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 589(1), 41–62.

12 Haney, C., Banks, W. C., & Zimbardo, P. G. (1973). Study of prisoners and guards in a simulated prison. *Naval Research Reviews*, 9(1–17).



sufficient to prove causality. They are not. They cannot. Therefore, experimentalists often need to introduce the benefits of random assignments over other methodologies. Likewise, maintaining integrity in implementing experiments by ensuring identical treatment is delivered to all cases is a major challenge. Controlling the process of experiments requires constant attention and willingness to brief, de-brief and keep the level of enthusiasm high at all times. For these reasons, experiments are not for everyone.

Still, experiments are crucial. They are at the forefront of evidence-based policy, and policymakers are slowly yet surely beginning to recognise the virtue of RCTs. Foolish though it is to attempt to predict the future, I would argue that in the next 10–15 years or so, governmental projects will not be funded unless treatment providers are able to show, through unbiased research institutes, experimental evidence that supports the benefits of their services above and beyond the existing interventions. The FDA¹³ or EMA¹⁴ models used for medicine are likely to serve as the foundation for the protection and promotion of effective criminal justice outcomes, as well as the evaluation and supervision of crime and delinquency policies. These agencies demand that RCTs are conducted prior to approving new

drugs, treatments or recommending major public health policies. The same will likely be the case for crime policies. After all, why not? If one does not (and should not) object to the viability and credibility of these causal research methods, why should one expect any less for rehabilitation treatments, desistance programmes or even formal initiatives, such as police practices or in-prison interventions for offenders? Why do victims of crime deserve anything less in establishing ‘What works?’ and what does not work for their well-being and recovery? Should offenders’ welfare be measured by a different ethical rod than that employed in the healthcare system, in terms of what can potentially help them desist and consequently reintegrate back into society? Is the sphere of public health necessarily more deserving of excellence in research terms than the sphere of public safety?

Predictions aside, experimental criminology is already linked to a major transformation that the police force, as a social institution, is currently undergoing. Hotspot policing has been described as one of the most promising tactics

13 <http://www.fda.gov/>

14 <http://www.ema.europa.eu/ema/>

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Shadd Maruna – Desistance; psychosocial criminology; prisoner reintegration

Anne-Marie McAlinden – Child sexual abuse; sex offenders; restorative justice

Kieran McEvoy – Restorative justice; truth recovery; transitional justice

Marny Requa – Truth recovery; human rights; transitional justice

Phil Scraton – Deaths in controversial circumstances; criminological theory; prisons

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Yvette Russell – Feminist legal theory; gender & crime; sexuality

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for preventing crimes and disorder. We owe this strategy to Sherman and Weisburd¹⁵ and to all the subsequent RCTs¹⁶ that have shown just how effective visible policing can be and the benefits of this practice to communities around the world. Restorative Justice Conferencing is another prime example, not only for reducing recidivism and saving the state money, but also for improving the quality of life for victims.¹⁷ Even offender types that were classically considered to be very difficult to help, such as drug offenders¹⁸ or sex offenders¹⁹ have, through experimental research, benefitted from bespoke treatments.

One RCT that has attracted a great deal of attention was that conducted on the effect of the use of body worn cameras by police officers. The experiment, managed by Police Chief Tony Farrar, tested the effect of these devices on the incidence of use of force and citizens' complaints against officers.²⁰ This study found that wearing cameras reduces the number of use of force incidents by 50% compared to the control condition, and the total complaints were reduced by 90%. Crucially, this experiment gave rise to nearly 20 further tests, each with a virtually identical design, in states and countries like England and Wales, Uruguay, California, Northern Ireland, and cities like Miami, Denver, and other locations. The largest forces in England and Wales are participating in this global prospective meta-analysis with several key outcomes and outputs. Collectively, nearly 750,000 officer hours are being investigated worldwide, with an attempt to deal with use of force by the police and to improve engagement and police-public relations, more broadly. This area of experimental criminology is likely to produce the first 'evidence-based legislation' in criminal justice, with states amending the rules of engagement of police officers in communities on the basis of these research findings.²¹

The celebrated success stories of experimental criminology have taught us many lessons about some of the common challenges of experiments.²² Below, I list a few, which can best be summarised as methodological, technological, institutional and educational. Overall, these hurdles can generally be dealt with by careful planning, effective communication and diplomacy; but this is certainly not always the case.

First; expect the worst! This rather pessimistic statement can best be exemplified in terms of our inability to accurately predict the sample size that will ultimately participate in the experiment. Professor Heather Strang has famously said that '*in experiments, whatever sample size you plan on having, you should cut it in half, and then divide by three—that's the number of cases you will eventually end up with*'. This illustration is not too far from the truth. In

more than a dozen experiments with an allocation of cases through a trickle flow process, our anticipated sample size was not, even once, ultimately achieved; Participants drop out or fail to attend treatment, treatment providers 'pull the plug' prematurely or funding is declared insufficient to continue with the research project. These concerns can determinately affect the statistical power of the tests in ways that can make the experiment fail.²³

Second; communicating the merits of random assignment is one of the most difficult selling jobs you will ever have to do. Pitching to cops, probation officers and judges that random allocation is essential (in order to create equal groups), ethical (because everyone has a fair chance of being included or not included in the treatment group), and justified (as there is no way to run an unbiased experiment without it), can be described as being as hard as trying to peddle a bicycle race in humus! One way to overcome this difficulty is by talking as little as possible to treatment providers about the random assignment but focusing instead on the allocation of cases through statistical algorithms. This is not to say that random assignment should be concealed or lied about. When possible, experimentalists should take the time to carefully explain these necessary procedures to all interested parties, but often this is not

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- 15 Sherman, L. W., & Weisburd, D. (1995). General deterrent effects of police patrol in crime 'hot spots': A randomized, controlled trial. *Justice Quarterly* 12(4), 625–648.
 - 16 Braga, A. A., Papachristos, A. V., & Hureau, D. M. (2012). The effects of hot spots policing on crime: An updated systematic review and meta-analysis. *Justice Quarterly*, (forthcoming), 1–31.
 - 17 Sherman, L. W., Strang, H., Mayo-Wilson, E., Woods, D. J., & Ariel, B. (2014). Are restorative justice conferences effective in reducing repeat offending? Findings from a Campbell systematic review. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, (forthcoming), 1–24.
 - 18 Wilson, D. B., Mitchell, O., & MacKenzie, D. L. (2006). A systematic review of drug court effects on recidivism. *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, 2(4), 459–487.
 - 19 Schmucker, M., & Lösel, F. (2008). Does sexual offender treatment work? A systematic review of outcome evaluations. *Psicothema*, 20(1), 10–19.
 - 20 Ariel, B., Farrar, W. A., & Sutherland, A. (2014). The effect of police body-worn cameras on use of force and citizens' complaints against the police: A randomized controlled trial. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, (forthcoming), 1–27.
 - 21 The Atlantic (3 Dec 2014). 'Do Police Body Cameras Actually Work?' <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/12/do-police-body-cameras-work-ferguson/383323/>
 - 22 See also Sherman, L. W. (2013). The rise of evidence-based policing: Targeting, testing, and tracking. *Crime and Justice*, 42(1), 377–451; Sherman, L. W. (2009). Evidence and liberty: The promise of experimental criminology. *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 9(1), 5–28.
 - 23 Ariel, B., & Farrington, D. P. (2014). Randomized block designs. In *Encyclopedia of Criminology and Criminal Justice* (pp. 4273–4283). Springer New York.

possible for logistical reasons. In these cases, the number of decision-makers who should be exposed to the so-called lottery procedure should be kept to a minimum, as expecting these key players to explain the merits of random assignment to treatment providers can backfire if they lack the capacity to fully share the benefits of the procedure.

Third; aligning funding cycles and the lifespan of the RCT is becoming increasingly difficult, and this may call for new business models for field research. As many of you know, to secure funding from most funding agencies and research councils takes 6–12 months. This means that researchers must ‘come up’ with a research proposal with a partner agency willing to wait for an experiment, that may or may not be funded in the future. A sound RCT may last a year, with an additional two years of follow up. This is too long, in my experience, to be palatable to chief officers who hold a position for only up to three or four years. Instead, four alternative models can be considered: first, funding that comes directly from the treatment provider; often resulting in the level of funding being minimal as state agencies dealing with crime are, globally, very poor. The second model is a fast track route from grant agencies, which may be willing to allocate funds for research projects with major policy implications. Here, too, the level of funding is likely to be limited. A third model, which is becoming more common in the UK, is the model embraced by the College of Policing—namely, that the professional body informs the academic community of their most pertinent, contemporaneous questions, and researchers are invited to bid for the funds to research these questions. On the one hand, this model limits research to strictly policy-driven research questions and leaves less room for creativity and new ways of thinking about crime and disorder. On the other hand, this is a promising approach and the College should be applauded for its endeavour to bridge the divide between practitioners and researchers. Another funding model is the ‘low-cost experiments’ model or even the ‘no-cost experiments’ model, where the researcher does not secure any, or very little funding for the research project. Academic institutions are obviously against these models, but often this approach is the only viable solution.

Fourth; any field experiment requires not only an academic field manager—in my experience this is often the principal investigator (point 3 above)—but also what

Malcolm Gladwell refers to as the ‘Paul Reverses’²⁴. These are key individuals within the organisation that can mitigate internal problems, cynicism and criticism. More importantly, they can help maintain compliance with the experimental protocol and spread the enthusiasm for evidence-based practice based on experimental research. Ideally, such a person should wear both the hat of the practitioner as well as that of the academic (i.e., a ‘pracademic’)²⁵. The Police Executive Programme at Cambridge University is nothing short of a vibrant production line of pracademics, who dynamically infuse the evidence-based policy community.

A final point to consider, which is strongly linked to questions of how to strengthen the relationship between practitioners and academics, is how the experimental criminology community can grow and mature? Criminology is an applied science, and therefore the pracademic model is crucial to its future success. Yet, the specific craftsmanship category of experimental criminology requires additional mechanisms. The first and foremost of these is a ‘mentoring programme’, where senior experimentalists train junior scholars interested in these designs, on a one-to-one basis. This has been the working model for centuries in medicine, architecture and law. Similarly, it is one thing to read about the tribulations of field experiments and careful design of field trials, or about appropriate ways to statistically analyse the evidence captured in RCTS. However, the ‘real’ skills and craft of running experiments comes from on-the-job training, where experienced scholars ‘adopt’ less-experienced scholars and take them ‘by the hand’ to show them the ropes.

In the limited space I have, clearly this list is not exhaustive. The message to take from this essay is that while experiments can be tough and often challenging, they are critical for causal research and to our scientific community. Experiments were never meant to deal with all research questions, but they should certainly be considered the gold standard for some, under particular circumstances. With this in mind, I want to thank the European Society of Criminology for awarding me the 2014 ESC Young Criminologist Award in recognition of my research. I humbly accepted this prestigious award as recognition not for personal achievement, but rather as an indication of the promise of experimental criminology to our field.

Barak Ariel is Jerry Lee Fellow in Experimental Criminology and Lecturer in Experimental Criminology at the University of Cambridge as well as Assistant Professor at the Institute of Criminology, Hebrew University Jerusalem, Israel

24 Gladwell, M. (2006). *The tipping point: How little things can make a big difference*. Hachette Digital, Inc.

25 Volpe, M. R., & Chandler, D. (2001). Resolving and Managing Conflicts in Academic Communities: The Emerging Role of the ‘Pracademic’. *Negotiation Journal*, 17(3), 245–255.

Sabine Carl and Filip Vojta

EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF CRIMINOLOGY POSTGRADUATE AND EARLY STAGE RESEARCHERS WORKING GROUP (EPER)

ABOUT THE GROUP

Since the first ESC Annual Conference in 2001, there has been a growing awareness of the need for a forum at the European level for doctoral and post-doctoral researchers in criminology and criminal justice. These individuals lacked opportunities to discuss, develop and collaborate on new and innovative research with other early-stage researchers, as well as with lead and senior academics in the field. In 2001, the support for criminological research in Europe had been limited to domestic initiatives at best, which were often time-restricted and seemingly inattentive to a considerable number of early-stage researchers. This was especially the case for those who had been conducting their research relatively isolated from others, particularly in countries where criminology, albeit—still in its infancy, had been developing fast.

To address the increasing need for knowledge exchange and scientific networking—both indispensable for young researchers—the European Society of Criminology Postgraduate and Early Stage Researchers Working Group (EPER) was initially proposed in 2005 by Professors Joanna Shapland (University of Sheffield) and Jenny Johnstone (Newcastle University) as a continuing forum based around the annual ESC conferences. The Group

has been successfully operating since its first meeting at the 2006 ESC Annual Conference in Tübingen, Germany.

EPER is primarily aimed at doctoral and post-doctoral researchers in the early stages of their career (those with up to seven years of research experience). The Group affords its members the opportunity to present their research and share information on publishing work, pursuing academic/research careers, applying for research funding and working collaboratively. It is an interdisciplinary group, with members from various departments across Europe who are involved in criminological research.

The core of the Group's activities is the organisation of panel sessions at the annual ESC conferences. These sessions allow early-stage and postgraduate researchers to not only present their work and discuss the issues involved, but to benefit from the experience and advice of senior academics as well; for example, through thematic sessions on how to successfully publish, or efficiently develop research proposals. Furthermore, these sessions serve as a platform to build and strengthen communication between members. One of the Group's aims is to develop a pan-European network of young criminologists, which would enable the dissemination of information about research projects undertaken, members' publications, up-coming conferences, and training schools, as well as research, job

ESC European Criminology Award and ESC Young Criminologist Award Nominations Sought

Do you know a talented young criminologist with an excellent scholarly output who is not yet well-known in the scientific community? Do you know an outstanding scholar who contributed greatly to the development of European criminology and would deserve the ESC European Criminology Award? Sure you know! So do not forget to send your nominations with a short descriptions of the reasons why you think your candidate(s) should receive the awards to the Executive Secretary by no later than 31st January, 2015.

Henrik Tham

IN MEMORIAM HANNS VON HOFER

Hanns von Hofer was born in 1944 in Germany. His father died in the war, and Hanns grew up with a single mother and three older sisters. He studied law at universities in Berlin, Göttingen, Lausanne and Munich; a scholarship for studying criminology then took him to Sweden. He started as an assistant at the Department of Criminology at Stockholm University, and left to work at the Department of Judicial Statistics at Statistics Sweden; he then returned to Stockholm University and became professor of criminology there in 1999.

Hanns devoted his professional life to the study of criminal statistics and imprisonment. He analysed the breakthrough of imprisonment in Sweden before Foucault was translated from French. He made many creative contributions to the system of Swedish criminal statistics; he was the primary force behind the Nordic Criminal Statistics project; and he was one of the initiators of the European Sourcebook of Crime and Criminal Justice Statistics.

It could be said that Hanns restored criminal statistics to criminology after it had fallen into partial disrepute as a result of attacks from constructivists and written off as administrative statistics. By his innovative analyses of long data series and comparative statistics he was often the first to recognise problems that evaded others, be they empirical tests of criminological theories or prediction of crime trends. Together with colleagues, he developed cohort statistics as an early predictor of the levelling and decrease in crime that was long questioned in Sweden.

Central to his analyses was testing the effects of criminal sanctions in general and imprisonment in particular on detainees. In one of his last analyses, presented at Beijing Normal University, he used historical Nordic criminal statistics to disprove the deterrent



effects of the death penalty—thereby reaching the opposite conclusion of that by celebrated Chicago economists. Through the use of historical statistics, Hanns also disproved claims regarding prison's general deterrent effects. This and other analyses in his *Brott och straff i Sverige* (Crime and Punishment in Sweden), which he unfortunately did not translate into English, will remain a foundational work for future generations of Nordic criminologists.

Hanns' belief in criminal statistics also stemmed from what he regarded as their democratizing character. In contrast to the spectacular representations of crime in media, national criminal statistics gave each citizen the same weight, like the idea of one (wo)man one vote in general elections. Unlike many critical social scientists who regarded official statistics as an instrument for governing, Hanns stressed their function as a tool for citizens to seek/maintain democratic control. And with these official statistics, Hanns could also contribute to the improvement of democratic society by demonstrating that increasing penal repression does not bring about the positive effects its supporters advertise.

The importance of Hanns von Hofer's work will probably be increasingly recognised will in the years to come. His premature death is a loss not only to friends and colleagues but also to European criminology.

Henrik Tham is Professor Emeritus of Criminology at the University of Stockholm, Sweden

and funding opportunities. In order to maintain the network and further expand it beyond the individual annual conferences, the Group has established a website platform (<http://www.cjp.org.uk/esc/>), thus allowing members and other interested researchers to exchange information about recent developments and planned activities. EPER also collaborates with other networks and research groups in the field of criminology. The Balkan Criminology Net-

work (<http://balkan-criminology.eu/en/>) is represented in the Group by Filip Vojta, and Sabine Carl links EPER to the American Society of Criminology Student Affairs unit.

PAST AND FUTURE ACTIVITIES

For the Eurocrim 2014 held in Prague, Dr. Jaime Waters (former chair) and Dr. Sabine Carl (new chair) organised a pre-arranged panel on 'Entering the field of crimi-

nological research'. This panel took up the case raised by Professor Yvonne Jewkes (University of Leicester) about the importance of acknowledging the role of emotions in research practice—especially for ethnographers—and about how the 'messy' emotional realities of real-world qualitative research rarely make it into print. Jewkes pointed out that these aspects of the research process are largely excluded from academic discussions and argued that 'a more frank acknowledgement of the convergence of subject-object roles does not necessarily threaten the validity of social science, or at least, it is a threat with a corresponding gain' (Jewkes 2012, p. 63). Inspired by Professor Jewkes' words, the panel session focused on the auto ethnographic experiences of a group of 'early-career' criminological researchers who explored how their own engagement in research has been affected by some of the issues Jewkes raised. The presentation on 'Researching International Criminal Justice: Practical Aspects of Qualitative Approach' by Filip Vojta (Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law, MPPG for Balkan Criminology, Germany) addressed the point raised by David J. Smith on the commonality of prevalent criminological research in Europe, which is focused mostly on ordinary crime. Extraordinary crime phenomena, by contrast, such as international crimes, terrorism and transnational crimes, together with methods applied in their research, are only marginally addressed (Smith 2014, pp. 16, 20). Vojta further presented certain practical conundrums encountered in qualitative research of international criminal justice, and offered advices on how to overcome them. 'How Biography Influences Research', the presentation by Jaime Waters (Sheffield Hallam University, UK), focused on difficulties stemming from the nationality, gender and age of the researcher and touched on the influence of these factors on the data collection process. 'Emotions revisited: re-examining qualitative prison research from an auto-ethnographic perspective. A tale of politicians, professors and ombudsmen', presented by Sabine Carl (Rechtsreferendar, Germany), discussed some post-data-collection hazards for early-stage researchers with a specific focus on semi-structured interviews. Carl used the example of her path to academic self-discovery to argue the necessity of regularly setting aside time to reflect on personal academic history as it subconsciously influences research preferences and design. The presentation 'Revisiting 'Whose Side Are We On?': Values, Allegiances, and Politics in Prisons Research' by Bethany Schmidt (University of Cambridge, UK) argued in favor of 'going deep' or 'going native' and challenging subject-object

boundaries. Through such processes, the researcher can produce better-quality findings and analyses, and create a space to reflexively address emotions and biases. The presentations, although relegated to the remotest location available, were well-received by an audience of approximately 50 individuals. The number of attendees spoke to the relevance of these topics and the ongoing need to include sessions targeting early career researchers. The outstanding success of the panel led the authors to collaborate on creating a special issue on the auto ethnographic experience of 'Entering the field of criminological research'. The Group is currently in discussion with two renowned journals interested in hosting the collection, which will include seven papers total and will appear in late 2015/early 2016.

The EPER is also planning to host another panel at the Eurocrim 2015 in Porto, Portugal, called 'Publish or Perish—how to achieve the former and avoid the latter'. The Group plans to invite guest speakers from renowned journals and publishing houses to speak about their requirements for accepting early career work. The Group would like to use this opportunity to invite all interested to attend the panel. In addition to having at least one panel session, there will be opportunities for discussion and networking between attendees during the working group meeting, as well as during the informal dinner gathering, organised by the chairs.

New members are always welcome to join and should contact the Chair Sabine Carl (sabine.carl@gmail.com) or the Vice-Chair Filip Vojta (filip.vojta@gmail.com).

Sabine Carl received her doctorate degree from Freie Universität Berlin in 2013 and is a post-doc currently affiliated with the German-Southeast Asian Center of Excellence for Public Policy and Good Governance based at Thammasat University, Bangkok, Thailand.

Filip Vojta is a doctoral candidate at the Max Planck Institute for Foreign and International Criminal Law in Freiburg, Germany, and a Member of the Max Planck Partner Group for 'Balkan Criminology'.

Jewkes, Yvonne (2012). Autoethnography and Emotion as Intellectual Resources. *Doing Prison Research Differently. Qualitative Inquiry* Vol. 18(1), pp. 63–75.

Smith, David J. (2014). Wider and Deeper: The Future of Criminology in Europe. *European Journal of Criminology* Vol. 11(1), pp. 3–22.



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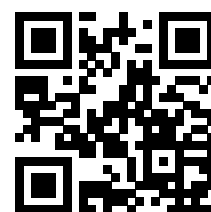
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