

## Editorial

# Overview

## Editors

**T**HIS ISSUE OF *CRIME AND SOCIAL JUSTICE* FOCUSES ON COMPARATIVE and theoretical issues in criminology. In recent years, we have seen some initial efforts to deepen our understanding of conceptions of justice and criminal justice policies in socialist and Third World countries. Through the efforts of the United Nations, the International Society of Criminology, and individual scholars, North American criminology has begun to examine non-Western, non-capitalist models of justice. Correspondingly, scholars in Third World and socialist countries are now receptive to dialogue and debate with criminologists and policymakers from the United States and other core capitalist countries. Recent international conferences in, for example, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Cuba have encouraged this kind of exchange.

In this issue, the dialogue continues with U.S. criminologists Paul Friday and Dorothy McClellan respectively commenting on the work of Hungarian criminologist József Vigh and on Soviet efforts to deal with youth crime. McClellan's article captures the early stages of *glasnost* in the USSR, which witnessed nationwide discussions of the problems of criminality among Soviet youth, and alcoholism in the general population. From the German Democratic Republic, Erich Buchholz reports on successful efforts in his country to lower the crime rate. Lance Selva and Robert Bohm undertake to analyze the significance of the emergence of "informal justice" systems in the United States from the standpoint of expanded state control as well as enhanced possibilities for popular participation, and compare this development with the existing popular judicial institutions in socialist countries. Also included in this section is Tony Platt's article, which details the continuities and changes between the Reagan and pre-Reagan eras in selected aspects of the U.S. criminal justice system in the 1980s.

This issue also contains some significant articles on theoretical issues that confront critical criminology. Pat O'Malley contributes another thoughtful, provocative piece that makes a theoretical case for locating the subject matter of critical criminology within the established analytical constructs of Marxism. Gil Gardner tests the applicability of the Rusche-Kirchheimer thesis to the New York prison system and, in doing so, enriches this classic theory with new complexi-

ties. Michael Lynch addresses the relevance of quantitative theory for Marxist criminology.

Also included are a provocative piece on pedagogy by Sullivan, Sanzen, and Callaghan, and Robert Bohm's sympathetic review of Elias' new book on victimization.