

Introduction and Overview

Lessons

*John Winterdyk
and
Liqun Cao*

In this collection of “stories,” the authors share of themselves in ways we seldom learn about in textbooks.

While the particulars of the stories may fade, the passion will always remain strong.

This anthology got its roots from a modest Appendix that appeared in the first edition of Winterdyk’s *Canadian Criminology: An Introduction* in 2000. In Appendix 4, John profiled six pioneers in Canadian criminology. The objective was to provide students with a social, historical, and academic insight into some of the leading Canadian criminologists/criminal justice academics. Each profile was relatively brief in length but based on feedback from students and colleagues, a noteworthy element of the text. Subsequently, Gilbert Geis and Mary Dodge prepared a wonderful anthology entitled *Lessons of Criminology* in 2002, in which they invited thirteen eminent American criminologists and criminal justice scholars to prepare a chapter on their “life and times.”

As Geis and Dodge note, their names are well known among most academics and students are regularly

required to read various works by these scholars. To obtain insight into how they came into the discipline, how they developed their perspective, where they see comparative criminology going, and some helpful insights for those who are interested in engaging in such research. Their contributions provide both a human context to who these people are as well as offer an honest look into what it takes to become respected in one’s field of interest. Aside from hard work and a degree of academic potential, it also requires at times a degree of good fortune, inspirational mentors, and a passion for learning.

So when we met at the ASC meetings in Chicago in 2002, we discussed the opportunity of taking the theme that John had used and combined with the inspiration from the work of Geis and Dodge, and apply it to a somewhat modified approach to our joint interest in comparative/international criminology.

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Comparative criminology as an area of study has been around for some 40-odd years but it has only been in recent years that we've seen a growing interest in this approach. Although Bayley (1996) argued that comparative criminology was a misnomer and Friday (1996) proposed that the term comparative could carry a pejorative connotation and value judgment, it is difficult to discuss the study of two or more societies by completely avoiding the word. Both Bayley and Friday preferred to use the word international which implies that if one finds a difference it is a difference, not that one element is somehow either better or worse than the other. Furthermore, it is said that when the Division of International Criminology, American Society of Criminology was created in 1989, the choice of the name was more than mere semantics.

The word international reflects different values and a different orientation than is captured in the concept of comparative. Indeed, one cannot make sense of any phenomenon or event without placing it into some kind of comparative context. What distinguishes comparative criminology is not comparison as a method, but political geography—that is, whether the cases of interest to be analyzed occur within a single country or in several nations.

The use of comparative criminology to indicate international criminology, however, has a long history, beginning with Hermann Mannheim's *Comparative Criminology* (1965). In general, it refers to the systematic study of crime and its related activities in more than one society. Because of its

long history and its wide use, it has become difficult to avoid the word comparative in studies of two or more cultures/nations. As a result, in this book, we will use comparative and international interchangeably.

Criminology in a global context is not merely a cross-cultural look at rates, the description of a different system, or a test of theory in another milieu. It is a perspective that relies on both macro- and micro-analysis to place crime in a broader social context. It seeks to identify both commonalities and differences between cultural, legal, political, social, and historical contexts, subdue the variations within a larger context, and search for an extensive explanation.

With the advance of communication, transportation, and commerce, the world has been increasingly shrinking into a global village. The speed and profundity of changes in the world are echoed in the rapidly changing character of criminology's subject matter—crime is no longer contained by traditional nation-state boundaries. Since 1965, the field of comparative/international criminology has gradually become more and more burgeoning. Within the largest criminologist association in the world—American Society of Criminology, the Division had the largest number of registered members of all the Divisions in 2003.

The most recent addition to this enterprise is the *International Journal of Comparative Criminology*. Furthermore, one can find numerous books ranging from a general approach to being topic specific (see Reichel 2003—see the contribution in this text; Fairchild and Dammer 2001; Terrill 1999) to compar-

ative research on such topics as policing (see Deflem 2002; Marenin 1996), victimology (van Dijk et al. 1999—see Van Dijk's contribution in this text), corrections (see Winterdyk 2004), international law (see Smit 2002), penal populism (see Roberts et al. 2003), among others. In addition, there are a host of additional books relating to the same topic areas but which appear in the native language of the author(s) or editor(s). A wonderful resource centre for such material is the Max Plank Institute in Freiburg, Germany (see the contribution from H-J Albrecht).

Although there are today many scholars who are involved to some degree in international and comparative research, there are arguably a limited number who have become highly recognized and respected (regardless of geographical, language, or cultural barriers) for the work that they have done in their respective fields. To compile such a list is somewhat risky since it can be argued that others might be equally deserving of such recognition. It is not our intention to slight anyone. We based our selection on a review of various sources and used a variety of simple indicators (e.g., frequency of publications and perceived quality of contribution to their field within a comparative context) to help compile the list presented in this reader. And since not all international/comparative scholars publish regularly in English, it is likely that several key experts have been overlooked. For example, Denise Sabo, at the University of Montreal, not only helped to establish criminology in Canada, but he has produced some key international and comparative works—the majority of which were written in

French. Rather this anthology is simply intended to offer the reader with a diverse and yet comprehensive overview of some of the key players who have made significant contributions to the field.

We are extremely grateful to those who have contributed to this project. While it is unfortunate that some were not able to contribute for justifiable reasons and that we had to limit the number of individuals profiled, we feel that we have still been able to provide a rich cross-section of experts bridging a broad range of subject areas (from victimology to organized crime, corrections, and restorative justice) and geographical areas of America, Europe, and Asia—a reasonably global representation. Nevertheless, neither the topics nor the authors fully cover the potential range of approaches in comparative/international criminology. They, however, reflect the contingencies of putting together such an anthology.

The resulting selections serve well for our original intention. The diversified paths to criminology by authors in this collection testify the rapid spread and development of international criminology. They also demonstrate the challenges posed for criminology by the changes brought by economic, cultural, and political transformations. The insight from different societies broadens our understanding of criminology and it is just too tempting to ignore. Ever since its emergence in the industrialized, urbanized world, criminology has been, or has sought to be, a contemporary, timely, worldly subject (Cao 2004). Criminologists have always attempt to broaden their views on the nature of human behavior.

This reader anthology should not be viewed as an exercise in narcissism or egotism. Rather, it provides an enriched opportunity for some of the leading experts to share their autobiographical stories in their own preferred way that will hopefully provide existing scholars and, perhaps more importantly, aspiring scholars of comparative and/or international criminology and/or criminal justice the motivation to engage in similar work. Unfortunately, we are not all able to access the wisdom of some, let alone all, of those who have helped to move this area of research forward.

Before you move on to the diverse collection, we felt it appropriate, without detracting from the content, to present a few general observations that might prove helpful in guiding the reader through each contribution. But first, we should mention that the chapters are not organized in any systematic way. We thought alphabetically, regionally, theoretically, but in the end we agreed that the order is irrelevant. In the spirit of *Lessons*, the order of the contents is based on a random draw. Finally, we included boxes in each chapter to highlight key lessons, stories, sayings, and insights.

Overview

First, the community of international/comparative scholars is relatively small. It is interesting to note how many of those covered in this anthology have worked with one or more of the others found in these pages—regardless of country of current residence.

Second, the role of a mentor is significant for most of the contributors. Not only does this speak to the quality

of education one should endeavor to pursue but also the joy of working with individuals who while having their own schedules make the time to nurture the growth of aspiring scholars.

Third, the willingness to be mobile. Although today many of us have traveled outside our country of residence, most of those presented in this text have either taught, engaged in research, or been otherwise involved in projects outside their country. This obviously helps to promote collaboration and networking.

Fourth, it is inspiring to read that the field of criminology and criminal justice is immensely diverse and that no matter where one is in their academic career, it is never too late to embrace or expand ones' provincial interests into a broader global context.

Fifth, we were also struck by the frankness and conviction with which most of the contributors expressed their perspectives. Being committed and dedicated to a vision appears to be a benchmark that they all share. For example, **Van Dijk** has virtually dedicated the bulk of his work to issues related to victimology while **Waller** has worked on many high-powered levels promoting the benefit of crime prevention over more traditional means of addressing the social ills around the world. Yet, in spite of all his successes he has returned to his roots in education and is an inspiration to his students. **Joutsen** shares with us the benefits (and at times frustrations) of engaging in international research and policy making with such organizations as the UN and HEUNI, and **Heidenson's** story speaks to the importance of attending a "good" school. Yet her involvement into com-

parative work (as is the case with several others) did not begin until her career was already well established. Among her areas of interest is the study of women and crime from a feminist perspective. Her concluding comments will likely prove helpful to those aspiring to engage in comparative work. **Hou's** story serves to illustrate that a passion and commitment to a subject matter can be overcome regardless of one's roots and heritage. Coming from virtual poverty, Hou talks about the value of theory and comparative research but also the value of returning to one's roots to apply international and comparative work in one's "own backyard." **Walgrave**, like several others, came into criminology from another discipline. Yet, his passion for human good and seeking alternatives to conventional social control has prompted him to dedicate the bulk of his work since the early 1990s to restorative justice initiatives. His insights and observations are compelling and inspire us to remain open to evolving one's ideas and views. **Nelken's** account of not only engaging in comparative work but living in a "foreign" land (i.e., "being there") is both entertaining and insightful as he touches on some of the social and cultural factors that one must sometimes contend with. **Mayhew** acknowledges that sometimes "things just happen" and that by being receptive and willing to embrace new challenges (e.g., the British Crime Survey and the International Crime Victimization Survey) other opportunities are likely to unfold. Yet, she is frank in admitting that international and/or comparative research is not without its challenges. While there are a number of high pro-

file Americans' whom we could have approached to participate in this project, we choose **Reichel** because he embodies the lesson that as someone who works at a university that emphasizes teaching, he has managed to pursue a strong interest in comparative work. We also learn how one's personal life tends to play a significant role in developing an interest in comparative work. **Grabosky's** career represents a continual renewing himself and moving into new areas of research. As is epitomized by most of the contributors, a passion for what one does is instrumental to success and to "open doors" of opportunity. Yet, he is also generous to point out that a good sense of humor, or in some cases thick skin can be an asset when engaging in comparative/international work. Of all the contributions, **Albrecht's** account is reflective of someone who from his early years of schooling was destined to become involved in comparative/international work. However, given the social and educational environment in which he was largely educated in, his story speaks to the passion for learning and continually challenging and searching for solutions. **King** offers an equally fascinating account of the importance of mentors and the willingness to venture down new paths and challenge existing ideologies. His story also serves to reinforce the importance of combining theory with practice and he is unashful in acknowledging the importance of working with inspiring individuals. The account of **Shoham** is equally inspiring. He, like most of the other contributors speaks to the importance of mentorship, following one's passion, and the importance of applying

theory to practice within a national and international context. He provides an overview of the three theories he has developed/adapted in his career. His story also speaks to the importance of capitalizing on the environment in which one lives and ultimately in recognizing that criminal policy must be guided by the study of “human behavior on both the individual and groups levels.” Finally, but not least of all, **Farrington’s** contribution is a wonderful account of how important it is to feel a sense of commitment to one’s field of study and the value of having good mentors early in one’s career can serve to lay down a rewarding (if not hectic) career. Farrington reminds us of the value in collaboration and blending theory with sound research and methodology regardless of what kind of research one engages in.

Finally, this anthology is a collection of “stories” which we hope will provide some entertainment but more importantly inspiration to join (or continue working in) the community of international/comparative criminology/criminal justice. While the particulars of the stories may fade; if you have learnt something in relation to the lessons offered and feel inspired and motivated to pursue your passion in the field then the stories have served a very useful purpose in a manner which we alone could not have conveyed. As one of the contributors noted: “choose your collaborators carefully.”

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About the Editors

John Winterdyk is an Instructor of criminology/ criminal justice at Mount Royal College where he has been teaching since 1988. John teaches a wide range of courses with a special emphasis on combining interdisciplinary and comparative approaches to the study of crime and criminal justice policy. Professor Winterdyk is currently the Editor of the *International Journal of Comparative Criminology*.

Liqun Cao is a Professor of Sociology and Criminology at Eastern Michigan University. Liqun has a special interest in the areas of social control, criminological theory, community policing, and comparative criminology. He has recently published a book on the measurement of criminological theories. Professor Cao is currently a Book Review Editor for the *International Journal of Comparative Criminology*.