

# THE RURAL CRIMINOLOGIST

*The latest on rural criminology around the world*



## THE CONTEXT OF PLACE

The photos featured in this issue are of small towns and villages from around the world. They are the diverse contexts within which crime affects rural people, a total population that exceeds 3 billion individuals (The World Bank, 2016). Locations shown in the photos include (1) England; (2) China; (3) Ghana; (4) South Korea; and (5) Indonesia.

## THE DIVISION OF RURAL CRIMINOLOGY IS LAUNCHED

The 74th annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology was historic for the advancement of the study of rural crime, with three major events that launched the new Division of Rural Criminology. On Wednesday, November 15, the inaugural meeting of DRC was held. The Constitution for DRC was read, reviewed, revised, and approved. A copy of the constitution can be found on the Division of Rural Criminology website ([www.divisionofruralcriminology.org](http://www.divisionofruralcriminology.org)). A picture on the next page of this newsletter shows nearly all the participants at that historic, inaugural meeting.

On Thursday, November 16, we were able to pack over 28 scholars around a tiny table and share our vision of rural criminology and rural-related topics we would like to see at future conferences. A list of suggested topics can be seen on page 2. Without a doubt, this was a very productive roundtable because it appears now that at least 10 paper sessions and roundtables with a rural-dedicated focus are planned for the 75th annual meeting of ASC in San Francisco this coming November.

Capping off everything was a jointly sponsored party on Friday evening by West Virginia University and the Division of Rural Criminology. The food was great, the drinks were flowing, the room was wall-to-wall with people, and the conversations were amazing.



## EDITOR'S NOTES

Welcome to the second issue of The Rural Criminologist. This issue includes several exciting articles about past events and future possibilities for the development of rural criminology. We hope all future issues will do the same. If you want to nominate a scholar, research topic, new publication, or upcoming conference for mention in this newsletter, please feel free to contact us.

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## DRC IS LAUNCHED, CONT'D.

Sections, panels, and roundtables could be developed on the themes mentioned below from the roundtable held on Thursday, November 16 at ASC. Additionally, author meets critics sections could be formed for recently published books. Topic themes for next future meetings that emerged from the discussion included:

- \*Defining Rural
- \*Heterogeneity of Rural Places and Spaces
- \*Diversities in Ethnicities
- \*Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence
- \*Geographical differences in access to justice for women
  - \*Technology, stalking and cyber-bullying
  - \*Victimization
- \*Differences in access to services, experiences, & perspectives
- \*Documentation of Rural Criminology's history
  - \*Rural Incarceration and Re-Entry:
    - \*Access to services (e.g., mental health)
  - \*Familial perspectives and barriers to visitation
    - \*Rural Jails and Prisons
  - \*Impact of Major Industries on Rural Areas
    - \*Drug Crisis
    - \*Future Scholars
    - \*Methodologies and Advancements
    - \*Theoretical Application in Rural Areas
    - \*Law Enforcement and Decision-making
    - \*Rural Schools
- \*Dearth of Knowledge: Countries and Areas Unexplored: such as China, South Asia, Eastern and Central Europe, Central and South America

If you would like more information on what was discussed at the roundtable or scholars who expressed interested in the mentioned topics, please reach out to Danielle Stoneberg, [dms0072@mix.wvu.edu](mailto:dms0072@mix.wvu.edu)

## New Centre for Rural Criminology

Building on a storied history and its pioneering role in the development of the field of rural criminology, the University of New England will officially be opening the Centre for Rural Criminology. The Centre's primary goal is to bring together scholars, higher degree research students, practitioners, organisations, and communities to support collaborative national and international multi-disciplinary research and the publishing of scholarly work into areas of national and global significance.

Together, the Centre's researchers and partners will study the most compelling social problems which impact upon rural communities, from livestock theft and illicit drugs to environmental crimes and interpersonal violence, amongst others. To this end, the Centre aims to lead research in this burgeoning field, inform progressive policies related to rural crime, and produce valuable information that can enhance the health and well-being of rural communities.

The Centre's website and social media will be up and running imminently and the official launch is scheduled to take place in the first quarter of the new year. We sincerely hope the rural criminology community will be a part of our rapidly growing project. Please contact Kyle Mulrooney at [kmulroon@une.edu.au](mailto:kmulroon@une.edu.au) or (+61) 2 6773 1940 if you have questions.

Submitted by:  
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## THE FUTURE OF RURAL CRIMINOLOGY IN CHINA

The future development of a Chinese rural criminology fulfills a double purpose: the disciplinary development of Chinese criminology itself, and the emergence of a criminology focused on rural China. Chinese criminology as an independent discipline is still in its infancy, let alone rural criminology. It is largely a subdivision of law in most Chinese universities, specifically affiliated with criminal law, and under the administration of law schools. There are only a few scholars who identify exclusively as criminologists. For example, examining the websites of the most prominent schools, such as the Southwest Political and Law University, China Political and Law University, and the Law School at Peking University, none of the faculty claim to be criminologists, even though some of them have been doing criminology-related research. The Chinese Society of Criminology was established in 1992, but since its inception, it has been under the supervision of the China Supreme Procurator and the administration of the China Law Society, the official organization of the Chinese legal academic profession, which itself was established in 1982. None of the materials listed on the Chinese Society of Criminology website is related to crime in a rural context.

However, this does not mean there is a lack of rural research on crime issues in China. There are many papers written in Chinese and published in Chinese journals on crime and criminal justice issues within the diverse contexts of rural China. One can readily find Chinese literatures on topics such as juvenile delinquency, drug issues, violent crime, violence against women, human trafficking, corruption, and spatial crime analysis, to name but a few rural-focused forms of academic work. Nevertheless, what is lacking is a clear disciplinary orientation, firm theoretical frameworks, and assimilation of Chinese studies with larger criminology and criminal justice literatures, especially English-based literatures, that would greatly increase comparative and international analyses of rural crime and criminal justice.

As we know, all types of crime topics deserve attention. The point here is that a consideration of rural crime in China needs much more attention. The world's population may be a majority-urban population (The World Bank 2016), but fully 70 percent (about 993 million people) of China's 1.33 billion total population today can be considered rural (i.e., the rural and township populations together), according to the most recent census of the population in China.

## Call For Papers



Ilisimatusarfik

## University of Greenland Conference

We welcome papers from scholars, practitioners, etc. for the conference "Crime, Punishment, Social Marginalization and reintegration in Small Societies", which will take place at Ilisimatusarfik 08 - 10 October 2019.

Supported by the Scandinavian Research Council for Criminology (NSfK) a working group, consisting of Nordic scholars, has met on several occasions to describe how conflicts and crimes are handled in these four Nordic island societies. In such small societies people are probably more visible to each other, mutually dependent, and daily life subject to strong traditions. How do they handle conflicts, crime and deviance? And how do they work out their local criminal policies?

Are problems of stigma and social marginalization in small societies more visible and more quickly resolved within these places than in larger societies? Do small societies offer a better quality of reintegration than larger societies?

Or alternatively: Is an offence, and an offender, perhaps more likely to be remembered in small societies, making reintegration to society more difficult in small societies than in larger societies?

We invite all scholars and practitioners who are interested in topics related to crime, deviance, punishment and stigma, to participate in this conference.

Conference language: Scandinavian languages, Greenlandic and English.

Further information and information about accommodation and travel to Nuuk will be announced at the website: [www.uni.gl](http://www.uni.gl).

Please submit your abstract proposal before April 1, 2019 with a title, brief description (not exceeding 300 words), your professional affiliation, postal and email addresses to Annemette Nyborg Lauritsen [anla@uni.gl](mailto:anla@uni.gl).

# THE FUTURE OF RURAL CRIMINOLOGY IN CHINA, CONT'D.

In China, the urban population is about 400 million, however, with massive rural-to-urban migration, that is changing fast. Nonetheless, for many decades to come, the rural population of China will be larger than the total population of the United States.

In recent years, a few scholars now identify themselves as criminologists, with the efforts made by the Association of Chinese Criminology and Criminal Justice and the Asian Society of Criminology. Yet, the study of rural criminology in China is essential to the development of a fully-mature criminology in China, and one that engages with the criminological literatures of other countries around the world.

Now, there is another organization to help develop a rural criminology of China and of other countries around the world as well. It is the new Division of Rural Criminology (DRC). DRC can help boost the disciplinary growth of a Chinese rural criminology because it has great potential to provide a platform of mentorship for those who are interested in comparative rural scholarship on an international basis.

We need to let those who are already doing rural research in China and other Asian countries know that there is a platform for them, that is, an academic home where they can find a sense of belonging. For those who are still planning or revising their research agendas, we want to let them know that there are numerous research questions unanswered, and many, many opportunities are open for rigorous scholarship about rural crime.

In the short run, there can now be instituted various scholarly activities related to a Chinese rural criminology at venues like the American Society of Criminology and the Asian Society of Criminology. In the long run, there will be opportunities for collaborative efforts on curriculum-building and research with numerous Chinese universities. The prospect of a Chinese rural criminology can be bright, but only if these steps are taken, either slow or fast, but at least one at a time.

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## REFERENCE

The World Bank. (2016). *Rural Population*. Available at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.RUR.TOTL>

## Call For Papers, Cont'd.



## The European Society of Criminology Conference

The 19th Annual Conference of the European Society of Criminology will be held in Ghent, Belgium from September 18-21, 2019. This year's theme is Convergent Roads, Bridges, and New Pathways in Criminology.

### SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Abstract submission period opens Feb. 1, 2019 and closes April 15, 2019.

Early bird registration deadline: June 1, 2019

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Presenting authors of accepted abstracts must pre-register and pay for the conference by the early bird deadline. Only fully registered delegates can present at the conference and will have their abstracts included in the programme.

If you would like more information on the conference, including registration and programme, please go to <https://www.eurocrim2019.com/>. For more information on the submission requirements and deadlines, please go to <https://www.eurocrim2019.com/abstract-submission>.

# ANOTHER STEP FORWARD: RURAL CRIME WORKSHOP

I recently returned from one of the most extraordinary conferences I have ever attended. Its promise to advance rural criminology and the multi-disciplinary study of rural crime in its highly varied contexts is unquestioned. I refer to the Rural Crime Workshop held at the Gippsland Campus of Federation University in Churchill, Victoria, Australia on February 7th and 8th.

Sponsored by the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, the principle objectives of the workshop were to: (1) develop a stronger understanding of conceptualizations of rural; (2) expand understandings of crime in rural, regional, and remote settings; (3) facilitate an interdisciplinary dialogue which fosters collaborative and creative understandings of rurality and rural crime; and (4) disseminate scholarly outputs that contribute to expanding awareness, knowledge, discourse, and debate regarding rural crime.

I highlight four learning moments for me from this workshop. Dr. Marg Camilleri, a Lecturer in Criminal Justice at Federation University, examined the multiple meanings of “access” to justice for rural and remote peoples, recognizing the intersection of geographic and physical barriers for people with disabilities and larger socio-cultural and economic obstacles associated with gender, social class and poverty, and Aboriginal status, among others. Her presentation was a cogent reminder that “access”, and lack thereof, can mean many things, depending on various disciplinary perspectives, but is potentially a powerful concept for understanding the multi-dimensional nature of justice issues for rural peoples around the world.

Professor Chris Cunneen of the Jumbanna Institute for Indigenous Education and Research at the University of Technology Sydney and Dr. Megan Williams, also of the University of Technology Sydney, both reminded attendees that words are tricky things. Roughly translated, Jumbanna means a “place to meet and talk”. As Professor Cunneen observed, from the perspective of people living in localities far from the shadows of skyscrapers, the word “remote” is the city itself; yet, we assume without thinking about it, that the opposite is true and that the city is the point of reference for all things criminological. In concert with Cunneen’s comments, Dr. Williams extended the theme through her discussion of the difficulties posed by barriers for the diffusion of scholarship from an Indigenous perspective and of the challenges of Indigenous scholars themselves in the academy. An Indigenous perspective on both public health and criminological issues would pull many topics “inside-out”, offering fresh views and even radical alterations of criminological theories and research methodologies.



## Call For Papers, Cont'd.



## The American Society of Criminology Conference

The 75th Annual ASC Meeting will be held in San Francisco, CA from November 13-16, 2019. This year’s theme is Criminology in the New Era: Confronting Injustice and Inequalities.

### SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Thematic panels, individual paper abstracts, and author meets critics panels due:

Friday, March 8, 2019

Posters roundtable abstracts, and lightning talk abstracts due:

Friday, May 10, 2019

For more information on the meeting, including the call for papers, hotel information, and registration, please go to <https://www.asc41.com/index.htm>

Shown in the photo on the left are many of the participants in the Rural Crime Workshop, February 7th and 8th at the Gippsland Campus of Federation University, Churchill, Victoria, Australia. Conveners include Alistair Harkness (second row, standing, fourth from left, white shirt), Naomi Smith (second row, third from left), Bec Strating (second row, two from left), and Rob White (second row, third from right).

## ANOTHER STEP FORWARD, CONT'D.

Both presentations reminded me of a recent case of a young scholar whose first job was at a university in the Appalachian region of a state nearby to my state of Ohio, and finding that the faculty already there dismissed rural scholarship as unimportant because they considered it not of the mainstream and not valuable for the advancement of one's criminological career. Yet, the rural population surrounding the university town was deep-set with poverty, organized drug trafficking and drug abuse, and various forms of interpersonal violence. The police departments were small, under-resourced, and over-burdened, but rather than work on research that might do something good for them, the advice of these more senior faculty was to focus on databases from big cities or that are national in scope. Fortunately, he resisted, but I can only think how much greater the barriers are and how much harder must the resistance be when that scholar is not from a privileged group (white and male) within a society. All of us who do rural crime studies remain beset by the ignorance of the mainstream, but for some of us, rural intersects with other obstacles.

Third on my list of Workshop memories was the presentation by the primary planner of the conference, Dr. Alistair Harkness, Senior Lecturer at Federation University. He organized the literature on farm crime around the crucial issue about why farmers frequently do not report crimes against their operations, such as when they experience the theft of stock or farm equipment. This in itself is a justice issue, that is, a set of barriers to accessing justice amongst farmers. He advanced our understanding of non-reporting by classifying various specific reasons into three broad, conceptual categories: (1) institutional, such as a low priority given to the seriousness of farm crime by law enforcement, either by individual officers or at the command level; (2) evidence, such as the time between when a theft likely occurred and a farmer's own awareness of it; and (3) community, such as the difficulties of accusing another community member of theft in small rural and remote locations without suffering various forms of stigma.

All of the presentations were thoughtful, but those highlighted above were the most thought-provoking for me. Additionally, the "hallway" conversations were equally valuable, which forms my fourth learning moment. When chatting over a glass of cabernet with Dr. Kyle Mulrooney, the Director of the new Centre for Rural Criminology at the University of New England (Armidale, New South Wales), we realized that the word "criminology" is restrictive because of its disciplinary reference – to the science of criminology; whereas the "study of rural crime and criminal justice" is far more interdisciplinary, embracing fields of scholarship like public health, political science, communications, and many more. We should use both, but be aware of what they mean.

The workshop concluded with a serious discussion of follow-ups and outcomes. Likely is a special issue in the International Journal of Rural Criminology and one or more edited books, with at least one in the Routledge Series on Rural Criminology.

One immediate benefit of the Workshop, however, was the expansion and strengthening of the interdisciplinary networks of scholars who focus on rural crime and criminal justice. The Workshop was invitation only, attended by 21 very dedicated rural scholars. The conveners, in addition to Dr. Alistair Harkness, were Dr. Naomi Smith, Lecturer in Sociology at Federation University, Dr. Bec Strating, Senior Lecturer in Politics at LaTrobe University, and Professor Rob White, Professor of Criminology, University of Tasmania. I am confident that all 21 of us will carry forward into our work some key memories and insights of what we learned from the others.

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# STUMBLING ONTO RURAL CRIME

The journey to publishing the first edition of "Crime and Policing in Rural and Small-Town America" is a mix of one part luck combined with one part work. Some people plan their careers out years in advance with a razor sharp focus on one issue that will come to define them. That was not the case with me. Every step in my career from finishing high school to where I am today has been one happy accident after another. I'm not dismissing the importance of hard work but without those happy accidents I would have never discovered rural crime as a research focus.

Let me start that by saying I grew up in a rural county in southern Indiana. At that time the largest community in the county had about 7,500 people. I didn't grow up on a farm, but lived about 2 miles outside of town. My grandparents on both sides were farmers and I spent time on their farms and as a child I had occasion to help with such things as butchering and bringing in hay. Like many people who grew up in rural areas, at the time I didn't fully appreciate the uniqueness of rural life.

Those happy accidents began after high school and I won't detail them here but they continued through the completion of my Ph.D. at Washington State University (itself located in a rural area). Rural and my rural roots pretty much disappeared from my consciousness through college. Skipping ahead to 1982, I began as an Assistant Professor at Illinois State University. I had a long standing interest in illicit drug policies but had no clear focus. In 1987 luck struck. It was the fall and I was watching the late evening news. The State Police had invited the media to a raid on an outdoor marijuana grow operation. The growers were a farmer and his 30-year-old son, complete with bib overalls. A television camera was put in the face of the son and asked for his comments. He said the people of Illinois should be proud of the professionalism of the Illinois State Police. His tone was sincere and ran completely counter to the reactions one expects from depictions of urban drug traffickers. I arranged to meet with the son and he claimed neither he nor his father used marijuana. He tried it once in high school but it hurt his lungs and he hadn't used it since. I asked if he had ever been in trouble with the law before and he said yes. His father had a heart condition and while they were in the barnyard his heart began acting up. He was out of the medicine he took for it and so the son scrambled for the car and headed to town. In his rush he rolled through a stop sign and was pulled over. In his hurry to get the medicine he forgot to take his driver's license with him. Well, that was it. That was his so-called prior brush with the law. Having read so much of the literature on urban drug users and urban trafficking, this was a window on a completely new world. As it happened the father and son were in deep financial trouble and were at risk of losing the farm. A childhood friend of the father, who was in the drug business, agreed to help them out by providing seeds and marketing whatever they grew.

That incident and the happy accidents connected to it (the police happened to have the media there, I happened to see the news story, and the young man happened to be so different from what I was expecting) led me to scour the research to see what was known about domestic marijuana cultivation. At that time very little was known, perhaps in part because so many of these larger operations were outdoors in rural areas, while most drug researchers lived and worked in cities. I began collecting every media story and every agency report I could find about marijuana cultivation. I thought it might be a fundable project, but I didn't know much about how to get funding when another happy accident happened.

That same year I volunteered to put on a spring conference in our department. The topic I chose was illegal drugs. It was a chance for me to bring in a nationally recognized expert as a keynote, along with local practitioners for additional panels. I was young and knew less than the people presenting, but was eager for the opportunity to learn more from the experts. It didn't work out that way. The keynote was to be James Inciardi. The afternoon before the conference I received a call from Inciardi's secretary informing me that his mother was dying and he was on his way to be with her in her final hours. His presentation has been printed but was locked securely in his office and she didn't have a key. I would be giving the keynote and was totally unprepared. I stayed up all night working on it and I'm sure it was dreadful, though I was too exhausted to remember much of it.

# STUMBLING ONTO RURAL CRIME, CONT'D.

Inciardi was apologetic for missing the conference, though he didn't need to be. I was working on a grant proposal that I wanted to pitch to the National Institute on Drug Abuse and as it happened our university announced there was money available to hire a successful grant writer to review proposals. Inciardi was a very busy man who didn't know me and I'm quite certain he would have turned me down had he not felt guilty about missing the conference. He made some great suggestions that substantially improved the proposal. He also steered me to the National Institute of Justice that funded the project to study domestic marijuana growers. During the twoyear duration of the study of marijuana growers I was repeatedly confronted with the reality of the rural context in which the growing took place. I began accumulating everything I could find about rural life and rural crime, not yet knowing what I would do with everything I found.

In the early 1990s another lucky happenstance occurred. Some Midwestern members of congress felt their rural constituents weren't being properly heard in Washington. The National Institute of Justice responded to their concerns by releasing a request for proposals to study rural policing. It was a large 2-year grant and I knew that while I had accumulated much of what would be needed for a proposal, the project was too big for me to handle alone. I had two colleagues who just happened to have the skills needed to make the project a success. Dr. L. Edward Wells loved working with large data sets and conducting advanced statistical analyses, skills I sorely lacked. He had the ability to find and analyze data sets from a variety of sources that would paint a good statistical picture of rural policing and rural crime. There was also Dr. David N. Falcone, who had been a police officer in a previous life and could help with the nuances of police culture, and would play an important role in shaping interviews and focus groups. Drs. Wells and Falcone also had the benefit of having experienced living in rural areas. Dr. Wells grew up in a small town in Oregon, and as an adult Dr. Falcone had lived in a section of rural Missouri. As for me, I had some experience with creating mail and telephone surveys and I was the one who most enjoyed the process of writing. In the end we three created a product better than what could have been created by any one of us alone.

The review committee (about 15 members, if I recall correctly), was made up largely of rural and small town sheriffs and chiefs. They not only recommended funding our proposal but informed us that our proposal was the kind of document they thought they would see in a final project report. From their point of view we had, in effect, already completed the project. They gave us the money anyway. Of course we didn't take the money and sit on our hands, but used it to flesh out areas in the proposal, to do more analyses, and talk to more people in rural areas. This led to the final project report. While we were pleased with the final report we continued to make improvements and additions until we were ready to find a publisher for a book length manuscript. I had previously published edited books with Waveland Press and approached them about the possibility of publishing the book. They said yes and we were thrilled. It was a success and Waveland went on to publish two more editions. Looking back at all those fortunate happenstances, I am so delighted the book has influenced events that in turn has helped contribute to the development of a Division of Rural Criminology some two decades later.

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