Editor's Introduction

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The editors' introduction (South and Brisman 2020) to the previous issue of this journal (Volume 28, Issue 3) served as a modest attempt to pay our respects to Professor Roger Matthews, who passed away on April 7, 2020. The first article in the issue was one of Roger's last pieces, "New Times, New Crimes: Notes on the Depillarization of the Criminal Justice System" (Matthews 2020), in which Roger contemplated three "new crimes"—cybercrime, environmental crime and terrorism. As a tribute to Roger, the rest of the issue included articles that centered on the second of Roger's "new crimes"—"environmental crimes."

In many respects, little has changed since the publication of Volume 28, Issue 3. The planet continues to burn. To quote the columnist, Margaret Renkl (2020), "I held my father's hand as he died, and I held my mother's hand as she died, and now it feels as though I am watching my planet die, too." And thus, it seems appropriate to begin this issue with four articles related to matters of environmental crimes and harms: "Toxic Dispossession: On the Social Impacts of the Aerial Use of Glyphosate by the Sugarcane Agroindustry in Colombia," by Diana Hurtado and Irene Vélez-Torres (2020), "Total Extraction: Exploitative Behaviors of the Carceral Apparatus Towards Carceral Officers in Central Appalachia," by Stephen T. Young and Brian Pitman (2020), "From 'Infant Hercules' to 'Ghost Town': Industrial Collapse and Social Harm in Teesside," by Luke Telford and Anthony Lloyd (2020), and "Local Media Framing of Scrap Metal Collection as Crime," by Steven Kohm and Kevin Walby (2020).

According to Renkl (2020), "[e]very single issue that matters to [her]—education, social justice, women's rights, affordable health care, criminal justice reform, gun control, immigration policy etc.—won't mean a single thing if the planet become uninhabitable." Renkl is right, of course, but these issues are not unrelated (see generally Wolf 2020). The world may be afire and inundated—parched and drowning—as well as sick. But it is suffering from more than just climate change and environmental disaster. Critical criminology, as a theoretical perspective (or "set" of theoretical orientations (see

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Brisman In Press)), explores and strives to comprehend more than just damage to the Earth: it seeks to examine and understand, analyze and critique, a wide range of phenomena and “analogous social injuries,” to employ Michalowski’s term (2010:8 (quoting Michalowski 2007))—actions (and omissions) that produce “death, injury, financial loss, fear, emotional distress or deprivation of the rights of political participation that are equivalent or greater in gravity to similar consequences resulting from actions defined as criminal by law.” This issue attempts to showcase this breadth.

The fifth article by Kevin F. Steinmetz, Alexandra Pimentel, and W. Ricard Goe (2020) engages with the issue of cybercrime (one of Roger’s “new crimes”). From here, the issue offers research and scholarship on:

- the abuse and neglect of older people in care homes (Greener 2020);
- bullying and violence in the workplace (Lloyd 2020);
- the electronic monitoring of offenders (Laurie and Maglione 2020);
- the misreading of graffiti (Bloch 2020);
- neutralizations of corporate tax avoidance (Evertsson 2020) and other corporate crime (Schoultz and Flyghed 2020);
- penal elitism (Shammas 2020); and
- the “smart city” and the governance of public space (Pali and Schuilenburg 2020).

I mentioned earlier that little has changed since the publication of Volume 28, Issue 3. But a lot has. In the US, we voted against authoritarian populism and, in an historic election, we selected the oldest presidential candidate in history and the first woman as vice-president, who will also be the first African-American and Asian-American vice-president. While it may be that neither Joe Biden nor Kamala Harris is a dream leader, together, they are a reprieve from the nightmare of the last four years. While together (or separately) they may promote or may have supported measures that do not align with some of critical criminology’s ideals, I think we can recognize that they are a marked improvement.

Critical criminology may be unified with respect to, say, its “critique of domination” (Michalowski 1996, 2010; see also Brisman 2019), but divided with respect to its preference for Marxist or postmodern theory. Let us hope that in the coming months and years, we (as critical criminologists, as professors/researchers/scholars/teachers, as people) continue to find ways to demonstrate our unity, while maintaining our commitment to difference (different concerns, interests, priorities). Hopefully, the articles in this issue offer an example for how to do so.

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