

Editors' Note

**David Weisburd^{1,2} · Badi Hasisi¹ · Robert Apel³ ·
Arjan Blockland⁴ · Anthony Braga⁵ · Shawn Bushway⁶ ·
Jean McGloin⁷ · Emily Owens⁸**

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With this issue, Badi Hasisi and I are taking over editorship of the Journal of Quantitative Criminology, along with a distinguished group of Associate Editors: Robert Apel, Arjan Blockland, Anthony Braga, Shawn Bushway, Jean McGloin, and Emily Owens. Editorial responsibilities are being divided among the senior editors (Editor in Chief, Executive Editor and Associate Editors) so that we can give adequate attention to working with authors and providing careful feedback to produce the highest quality publications. In this editors' note, we want to lay out our vision for the JQC as well as note some of the editorial processes we have already put in place.

The Intellectual Focus of the JQC

In an article in the *Criminologist* Bushway and Weisburd (2006) argued that quantitative work in criminology needed to push in three directions, which they termed the three I's: importation (from other fields), introspection (about proper use of techniques), and

✉ David Weisburd
dweisbur@gmu.edu

¹ Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel

² George Mason University, Fairfax, VA, USA

³ Rutgers University, Newark, NJ, USA

⁴ Nederlands Studiecentrum Criminaliteit en Rechtshandhaving (NSCR), Amsterdam, The Netherlands

⁵ Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, USA

⁶ University at Albany, Albany, NY, USA

⁷ University of Maryland, College Park, MD, USA

⁸ University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA, USA

innovation (for unique problems in criminology). The new senior editors of the JQC have adopted this approach as a way of identifying the special mission of the JQC in criminology. We do not want the JQC to be just another of the general criminology journals. The JQC has a special mission in terms of the advancement of quantitative methods in the field.

Importation involves the adoption of statistical approaches from other fields in criminology. Meta analysis, hierarchical linear modeling, econometric regression approaches are all examples of approaches that we commonly use in criminology but which were first pioneered in other fields. We want the JQC to continue to be an outlet that encourages illustration of the opportunities presented by innovative statistical approaches from other field. But importation without introspection will not yield real advances. Identifying how criminological data or contexts influence how we can adopt new approaches should also be a key area of concern.

We also want to see JQC as the place where new techniques are applied in criminology for the first time, and where there is serious critique and reevaluation of existing quantitative methods. Perhaps most important to us is to see innovation in quantitative methods that are appropriate for criminology, and may provide guidance for other fields as well. There is clearly no other journal that can provide the kind of focus and expertise on cutting edge quantitative methods that we can.

We want to emphasize that we are also very interested in papers that make a substantive contribution to criminology while using quantitative techniques. Such contributions can include the introduction of new analytic techniques and the assessment of current methodological tools, but they most certainly should also include pieces that aim to make theoretical and policy advances. We also recognize that such contributions may come from outside our traditional discipline boundaries, so we invite economists, psychologists, public health researchers, and others to consider submitting to JQC.

We also would like to see as much international involvement as possible in the JQC. Too often our observations in criminology are based on US centered contexts and data. We recognize that there is great importance in gaining a comparative view of crime and justice problems. We encourage researchers from outside the US to submit articles to the JQC.

The Editorial Process and Editorial Policies

We are continuing the process of first reviewing articles in house. This is in part a function of the large number of articles we get per year. Our editorial process handles about 200 articles in each year. Sending out this number of articles to three reviewers will in our view make it hard for us to rely on a limited group of volunteers (reviewers) who have strong quantitative skills. But beyond this we also don't want to hold up authors when we think their article has little possibility of long term success in reaching publication. The review process even at its best can take 6–8 weeks. Some times when reviewers are not able to get us their reviews in a timely manner it can take considerably longer. Accordingly, we have a policy which involves making desk rejection decisions for manuscripts. This generally has applied to between 30 and 40 % of manuscripts received. We hope that authors will understand that a desk reject is meant to allow them to approach other journals more quickly and to reduce the burdens of the editorial process.

All eight senior editors take on primary responsibility on specific manuscripts. We think this is a tremendous advantage for the journal because it means that we have experts that

cover a wide array of topics and techniques. Single editors are naturally limited in such expertise. We have already received very good feedback regarding the quality of the reviews that are sent to authors. We are proud of the strength of our editorial team and believe that they provide significant depth in most areas that quantitative criminology covers.

Because we have some of the most talented scholars in this area working as senior editors we have decided that it would not aid the mission of the JQC to prevent the editors from having articles published in the journal. Our policy is that editors may submit articles to the journal. However, they will not participate in any way in the editorial process for a manuscript in which they are an author.

We have reconstituted the editorial board which had grown very large in recent years. At this juncture members of the editorial board will be active participants in the editorial processes of the journal. We are also expecting to add new board members to the list over time in order to continue to involve new, and especially younger quantitative scholars in the JQC. Springer has established a new editorial board rule that with a new editor in chief the editorial board will be reconstituted. We think this is a good policy and one that will allow every editorial team to identify the editorial board that is most fit to their goals.

Special Issues

We would like to encourage special issues that deal with innovative statistical questions or cover important areas of criminology with an emphasis on quantitative methods. Special issue ideas should be sent to the Managing Editor and Editor in Chief. Special issue articles will be reviewed using the same methods we use for regular issue articles.

Reference

- Bushway S, Weisburd D (2006) Acknowledging the centrality of quantitative criminology in criminology and criminal justice. *Criminologist* 31(4):1–4