



Guest Editors Issue Introduction

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Received: 25 October 2022 / Accepted: 25 October 2022 /

Published online: 22 November 2022

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Substance abuse and drug crime are among the nation's most pressing social problems. Widespread drug control policy reform has been coupled with an unfortunate increase in substance abuse most pronounced by the opioid epidemic and an unprecedented extent of fatal overdoses mostly associated with fentanyl and its derivatives. The COVID pandemic redirected attention from substance abuse and masked the severity of addiction and drug crime somewhat but the scope of the problem is marked by ongoing overdoses, border seizures of vast amounts of fentanyl and other drugs, and a higher likelihood that justice involved people suffer from a substance abuse disorder than the general population.

In this special issue on the American Drug Crisis, we have assembled a number of original works from both established and emerging drug researchers and criminologists that examine a range of important contemporary substance abuse, drug treatment, drug control policy, and drug enforcement issues. The lead article by Worrall and colleagues explore US Postal Inspection Service drug seizures as impacted by legalization bolstered black market activity. This piece both relates a shocking degree of drug enforcement activity by the postal service and affirms that the redirection of recreational and medical marijuana drives gray and black-market distribution activity. The second article by Leban, Copes, and Velazquez critiques antidrug advertisements focused on methamphetamine abuse. Using a novel methodology, methamphetamine users were engaged in photo-elicitation interviews to understand ad message effectiveness from users' perspectives. Findings include anti-drug messaging opportunities for authenticity enhancement and connectivity. Next, Hochstetler and colleagues reaffirm the need and significance of substance abuse treatment in underserved rural areas as well as the lingering import of stigmatization as these realities vary across more resourced urban and more remote and less resourced treatment facilities. This mixed method study entailed both multivariate analysis to better understand predictors of overdose and focus groups to identify factors and dynamics associated with resilience and vulnerability to drug

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abuse as effected by social ecological factors. The following contribution by Erickson features a theoretical-methodological symmetrical approach to address methodological issues inherent to social control theory including comprehensive social bond measurement and analytic focus on specific drugs rather than a drug category.

The second half of the issue begins with Miller et. al.'s examination of marijuana enforcement trends across six states. The first topical study since the national marijuana reform movement, focus group data on officer self-reported behavior and enforcement intent was collected during DOJ sponsored studies with findings of trends of officer leniency and informal incident resolution. Factors influencing officer discretion to arrest are identified and center discussion around further drug policy reform implications. The next article by Hawdon, Paarti, and Dearden investigates how online illegal drug acquisition was impacted by COVID-19 and whether the pandemic drug use was more so a function of enhanced strain or altered market conditions. Next, Stringer explores the costs and benefits of new zero tolerance policies on impaired driving with consideration of their impact relative to system net-widening. Griffin and Spillane present a rare study of methaqualone, a sedative-hypnotic drug. The drug was placed into Schedule I of the 1984 Controlled Substances Act which provides a before and after reference for examination of legal changes and lessons learned for the regulation of similar substances such as Quaaludes and Oxycotin. The issue concludes with Wells empirical examination of cocaine sentences prior to and after the Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 with focused attention to implication regarding racial and ethnic disparity in federal cases and the related role of downward departures.

With this range of topics and currency of scholarship we trust the works herein provide something of interest and import regarding the evolving drugs-crime-criminal justice system nexus and that they will inform the drug treatment and drug crime lines of inquiry on the issues covered.

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