From the Editor

The six articles in this issue focus on deviance. They appear together here as a function of the fact that a great many manuscripts submitted every year to *Law & Society Review* deal with crime, policing, punishment, and related themes rather than because there was a call for papers on these topics.

Why should themes of deviance be so prevalent in law and society scholarship? First, it is worth noting that what gets submitted here is largely determined by authors who must decide which audiences they seek to address and which journals allow them to do so. The fact that many researchers studying crime, policing, punishment, and the like consider *Law & Society Review* to be their first choice as an outlet for their scholarship is a message to other scholars whose research interests are focused elsewhere. What these researchers are telling readers of the *Review* is that they consider their scholarship central to law and society concerns and that they seek to address the broad, interdisciplinary readership of the *Review*. Those who might think of such concerns as belonging to other fields (say, criminology) ought to take note.

A second reason we receive so many submissions in this area may be related to the fact that there is relatively little space in more specialized journals dealing with criminology and deviance compared to the amount of research and therefore potentially publishable manuscripts. To some degree, this appears to be the case, but it does not explain why scholars of crime and deviance think so often of *Law & Society Review* when they consider broader outlets for their research.

A third reason is the salience of deviance as a social problem. It is this fact that leads researchers in the first place to study such issues. And it is their belief that such concerns are an integral part of sociolegal scholarship that leads scholars working in this area to send many of their manuscripts here. The six articles published in this issue are those deemed most important and significant through the peer review process.

These articles have much to say about the connections of themes of crime, deviance, policing, regulation, and the like to broad sociolegal themes. Joe Hermer and Alan Hunt introduce the concept of *official graffiti*—that is, such things as regulatory street signs or warnings on prescription drugs. Like the graffiti of social protest, such messages clutter our environment. But their

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import, Hermer and Hunt argue, is the regulation, control, and management of our lives by forces remote and unseen. Indeed, these messages introduce order and regulate social interaction in generally helpful ways, but their political significance is much greater. Hermer and Hunt explore such themes in a provocative and engaging analysis that is sure to interest many of our readers.

Lucia Benaquisto and Peter Freed examine the myth of inmate lawlessness in their contribution. They present empirical findings that show most prison inmates holding views about appropriate punishment for wrongdoers that are remarkably similar to their expectations about the punishments a court would assign. However, inmates typically hold stereotypic views of other inmates' lawlessness while rejecting such notions about themselves. These findings present a strong case for further investigations of the relationship between normative beliefs and deviant behavior. Such findings will be useful in sociolegal considerations of legal consciousness within penal institutions as well as within society at large.

Two articles in this issue deal with corporate crime, although they do so in very different contexts and from different methodological vantages. In their article, Lee Hamilton and Joseph Sanders explore contrasting understandings of corporate actors and their agents in three radically different cultural contexts: the United States, Japan, and Russia. Their investigations in these divergent contexts allow Hamilton and Sanders to explore the degree to which citizen's judgments about wrongdoing in organizational settings may differ cross-nationally. In their article, Raymond Paternoster and Sally Simpson offer further specification and some testing of the rational choice model of corporate crime they proposed in 1993. Their analysis of the perceived costs and benefits of corporate crime provides a framework for considering the factors that models of corporate crime must include.

In a very different sort of article, David Bayley and Clifford Shearing examine the restructuring of policing in contemporary society. The emergence of private policing as well as changes in policing under governmental auspices are not neutral in their societal impacts. Bayley and Shearing consider the reasons for these changes and assess their effects.

In their contribution, Weiss, Berk, and Lee revisit sociolegal investigations of the death penalty (Berk, Weiss, & Boger 1997a, 1997b; Paternoster 1997). They examine capriciousness in decisions to charge homicide defendants with capital crimes. Their findings implicate some of law and society's most fundamental concerns—fairness, equity, and equality under the law.

—William M. O'Barr

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