

# PREFACE FROM THE MANAGING EDITORS

## **Convict Criminology and the Journal of Prisoners on Prisons**

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The *Journal of Prisoners on Prisons* (JPP) emerged in response to the underrepresentation of the voices of the criminalized in criminological and public discourse on punishment more broadly, and their marginalization within the International Conference on Penal Abolition specifically (Gaucher, 2002). Nearly a quarter century since the publication of the journal's first issue in 1988, it remains the case that the voices of those most affected by criminalized conflicts and harms – including those incarcerated in the community and inside prisons walls, as well as those they have harmed – are often silenced in academia, advocacy, public debate and the penal process itself. This being the case, it is vital that the work of the *JPP* and similar efforts continue to expand their reach to challenge common assumptions about, and dominant responses to, criminalized activities and statuses.

For fifteen years, Convict Criminology (CC) has shared many of the same commitments as the *JPP*, most notably privileging the voices of current and former prisoners in debates concerning penalty (Ross and Richards, 2003). Convict Criminologists have also made numerous other contributions, including mentoring countless numbers of criminalized individuals as they have made the transition from prisons to their communities, as well working towards the development of reform-oriented penal policies and practices.

Recognizing the importance of privileging the accounts of the criminalized and acknowledging the many challenges they face in attempting to disseminate their firsthand knowledge (see Piché, 2008), many from the CC Group have made sustained contributions to the *JPP* by reviewing submissions as members of the Editorial Board, and introducing inside and outside students to prison writing by using journal issues as part of their university courses. Convict Criminologists have also submitted and published articles in the *JPP*.

For us, this special double issue celebrating “The First Dime and Nickel of Convict Criminology” edited by Stephen C. Richards and Michael Lenza represents a continuation of the shared commitment by, and work of, the *JPP* and the CC Group that aims to merge the experiences of the criminalized with criminological literature to shed light on contemporary penal policies and practices. We are particularly excited about this collection as a number

of the articles introduce readers to some of the emerging voices within CC who illuminate important issues pertaining to punishment and reentry through ethnographic contributions that will challenge even the most critical of thinkers to reflect upon their pre-conceived notions concerning those who are excluded from society. Moving forward, the contributions of current and former prisoners to the discussion on punishment remain vital if we are to, in the words of *JPP* contributor Jo-Ann Mayhew, “help halt the disastrous trend toward building more fortresses of fear which will become in the 21st century this generation’s monuments to failure”.

### REFERENCES

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- Piché, J. (2008) “Barriers to Knowing Inside: Education in Prisons and Education on Prisons”, *Journal of Prisoners on Prisons*, 17(1): 4-17.
- Ross, J. I. and S. C. Richards (eds.) (2003) *Convict Criminology*, Belmont (CA): Wadsworth.