

## Editorial

This issue of the *New Zealand Journal of Psychology* contains two separate 'collections' of papers. The first set comprises a special feature on criminal justice psychology, compiled under the guest editorship of Devon Polaschek. In her introductory paper, Devon overviews the field of criminal justice psychology in New Zealand, and highlights the major themes covered in the remaining five articles. This is the first occasion on which the *Journal* has published a special feature on this substantive area, and I would like to congratulate and thank Devon for her very substantial efforts in developing and compiling it.

The second part of this issue is based on the NZ Psychological Society's *Hunter Award* given to Professor Tony Taylor in 2002. Tony's article summarizes his research in the area of stress and trauma in Antarctica and the South Pacific, over a period of some 30-plus years. He discusses some of the major implications of this research endeavour, which was fittingly acknowledged by the Hunter Award. Two senior researchers (Professor Ian Evans of Massey University and Associate Professor Douglas Paton of the University of Tasmania) were asked to provide a commentary on Tony's paper, and these commentaries are published immediately following Tony's paper.

From 2004, the *New Zealand Journal of Psychology* will publish three issues per volume, an increase from the two issues which have been the pattern for many years now. These issues will be published in March, July and November each year. The main purpose of this change is to encourage and enable publication of a greater number of papers salient to New Zealand research. To foster and support this development, the publication policy of the *Journal* has been modified as printed inside the front cover.

Finally, I am pleased to announce that another special feature issue is being developed, for publication in November 2004, on Maori Psychological Theory, Practice and Research. Further information about this feature appears on page 75.

**Michael O'Driscoll, PhD**  
Editor

## Criminal Justice Psychology in Aotearoa/New Zealand: Introduction to the Special Feature

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Criminal justice psychology is a thriving subspecialty within both clinical and forensic psychology in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Its history goes back more than 50 years and is inextricably linked to the development of psychology as a profession. The most stable influence on the development of both practice and research has been the former Department of Justice, which began a professional psychology service in the 1960s. Academically, criminal justice psychology had a much later formal start - in the 1980s, and today most Universities offer graduate papers in this area. Much criminal justice psychology research is disseminated only in internal reports and student theses. This Special Feature issue of the *New Zealand Journal of Psychology* demonstrates the current diversity of criminal justice psychology research.

Criminal justice psychology is a young sub-discipline within applied psychology, and not easily defined. In recent years *forensic psychology* has become the popular term for a raft of practice areas where psychology intersects with the law. Indeed *forensic* simply means "the application of scientific knowledge to legal problems" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2003); thus forensic psychology encompasses professional activities as diverse as gathering information from maltreated children, to establishing whether someone has the cognitive capacity to make a valid will, and advising juries about human memory issues. In some countries, such as the United States, the majority of forensic research and practice focuses on the legal system, and particularly, on activities linked to the operation of the civil and criminal courts. Although New Zealand's forensic psychologists work in these contexts (Taylor & Polaschek, 1996), New Zealand has a long tradition of applying psychology not only to legal issues within the criminal justice system, but also to issues relating to sentence administration. In particular, New Zealand psychologists have taken an interest in crime, offenders, and the operation of the correctional system: the government system responsible for administering criminal sentencing. The intent of this special issue is to draw attention to this work.

The history of criminal justice psychology in Aotearoa is closely linked to the Department of Corrections Psychological Service, probably New Zealand's largest employer of psychologists. The former Department of Justice has employed psychologists for more than half a century, although at first they were affiliated to individual prisons, and did not gather into a cohesive service with a strong professional identity until the late 1960s (Riley and Rush, 2000). Since that time, the Psychological Service has steadily developed both its research base and its practice expertise. In many ways, as Riley and Rush argued, the Service is a rare exemplar of the scientist-practitioner model at work inside an organisation. The achievement is all the greater because it is a large organisation, often caught up in public controversy because of the nature of its responsibilities, an organisation in which psychologists are a very small minority,

and subject to the competing agendas of other services. Much of the initial credit for the vision of this research-and-practice focus, and the programmatic research that now supports the Service belongs to Harry Love who directed the Service for more than a decade, until the mid-1990s. Since his retirement, under the management of Christina Rush and now David Riley, a substantial body of research has been built up "in-house", much of it directed at answering fundamental questions about Corrections' functions. International access to this research has improved since the mid-1990s when the Service began to publish some significant reports (e.g., Bakker, Hudson, Wales, & Riley, 1998).

Independent of employment by the Department of Corrections (or Justice), other well-known psychologists have carried out criminal justice psychological research over the years. As a student in the clinical psychology programme at Canterbury in the 1980s, I was required to study a red paperback book published in 1979, and edited by Drs Bill Black and Tony Taylor. *Deviant behaviour: New Zealand studies* contains such seminal studies as Black and Hornblow's investigation of the performance of 200 Waikeria Borstal trainees on the Raven's progressive matrices, and Tony Taylor's vivid descriptions of NZ prisoners' tattoos. This study has dated a little; although the James Bond movies continue, I doubt many young men currently in our prisons aspire to a "007" tattoo.

Although there have always been pockets of academic research on criminal psychological issues, formalised university involvement in criminal justice psychology began with an important innovation in the late 1980s. Following a recommendation to cultivate direct links between the Department of Justice and universities (Gendreau & Simpson, 1986), in 1988 Victoria and Canterbury universities obtained Justice funding to support the appointment of academic staff, the construction and delivery of specialised graduate papers and research links. In 1996, Dr Paul Gendreau presented an international review of progress in the

development of correctional psychology. He described the New Zealand scene as "vibrant", and indicated that the relationship between the Department and universities was a crucial element in this positive assessment (Gendreau, 1996, p. 156). However, growth in this relationship has been slow, and at times the loss of key individuals such as Dr Steve Hudson has noticeably set it back.

The first purpose of this Special Feature was to demonstrate the diversity of current criminal justice psychological research in New Zealand. The process of taking completed research and writing it up for publication is surprisingly hard work. The second aim, then, was to encourage researchers with little or no experience of this process to take up the challenge.

The research presented here has implications for theory, psychological practice, and the operations of the correctional system. The first paper, by Lucy King and myself, is an extension of a research programme that began in New Zealand in the early 1990s when Drs Tony Ward and Steve Hudson began to critically examine the theoretical and practical adequacy of the Relapse Prevention model (e.g., Ward, Hudson, & Marshall, 1994). For clinicians trained in the cognitive-

behavioural model, getting a clear picture of the cognitive, affective and behavioural elements of key client experiences is essential to developing a formulation. In criminal justice psychology, the process of gaining a clear description of the chain of cognitive, affective and behavioural elements in an offence has become the backbone of all offender assessment, formulation and rehabilitation planning. This description is often called an *offence chain*. For many years the Relapse Prevention model has been used as a template for the offence chain, especially with sex offenders. The paper examines how well parts of this model fit with the offending-related processes of New Zealand European men who had assaulted their partners.

The second paper by Joan Norrie and colleagues looks into the implementation of a new system of offender management in the Department of Corrections. A central part of this implementation plan was the training and supervision of Probation Officers in the use of a new assessment tool, the Criminogenic Needs Inventory (CNI). The CNI is based on cognitive-behavioural psychological research with offenders, and requires probation officers to learn how to interview offenders in order to obtain offence

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This Special Feature is dedicated to  
*Christina Rush and Steve Hudson*

- two people who made major contributions to the development of research and practice in criminal justice psychology in Aotearoa, and are greatly missed.

*Christina Rush* (1953 - 2000) was General Manager of the Department of Corrections Psychological Service until shortly before her death, and a former Chairperson of the NZ Psychologists Board. She received the NZPsS Public Interest Award in 1999 for her contribution to the profession. Her contributions to criminal justice psychology began first as a clinician and researcher. As a manager she shaped many careers, particularly through her support for the Service's development of research, professional standards and its Māori workforce.

*Steve Hudson* (1950 - 2001) was Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Canterbury and Director of Clinical Training. He was instrumental in the establishment of the Kia Mārama treatment unit for child molesters. His research into various aspects of sexual offending was widely published, and jointly with Professor Tony Ward, he was awarded the 2003 Significant Achievement Award by the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers, in recognition of his lifetime research contribution to this field.

chains and then use this information to identify intervention targets. Probation Officers were supervised by Psychological Service staff while they made this transition from traditional social work practice to an essentially psychological form of practice. Norrie, Eggleston and Ringer investigate the effectiveness of this supervision programme.

The CNI and the new system of offender management indicate that psychological research and practice are influential in the New Zealand criminal justice system at present, but this is not always the case. Brendan Anstiss reviews the dark period of the 1970s when internationally, correctional policy-makers came to view offender rehabilitation as a waste of time and resources. Eventually, meta-analyses tipped the balance, and in the quarter of a century since, psychological research has not only identified which programmes reduce reconviction rates, but has also isolated some of the essential ingredients to successful programme design and implementation. Against this historic backdrop, this article demonstrates the growing empirical evidence that New Zealand Corrections is running some of the most innovative and effective programmes in the western world.

A close-up view of one of these programmes is provided by Steve Berry's evaluation of the Montgomery House community rehabilitation programme for serious violent offenders. Montgomery House is also an important example of a programme that has taken some care to successfully combine cognitive-behavioural psychology with Māori tikanga and kawa. As Ian Evans noted in the introduction to this *Journal's* Special Issue on Clinical Psychology, in early 21<sup>st</sup> century Aotearoa/New Zealand, "we are still some distance from having a clinical psychology that is truly indigenous to Aotearoa/New Zealand" (Evans, 2002, p. 51). This observation is just as pertinent to criminal justice psychology. Much of our research stands up well against other western jurisdictions. However, with Māori still the largest group of serious offenders in the New Zealand criminal justice system, the need for indigenous approaches to both

practice and research remains urgent. Montgomery House, and more recently, Te Piriti, the Special Treatment Programme for child sex offenders in Auckland (Nathan, Wilson, & Hillman, 2003), are two rare examples of models with significant indigenous components, and the evaluation data to prove that they are effective.

The last paper concerns a matter of considerable importance to the smooth and safe operation of prisons - the offender classification system. Prisoners demonstrate the extent to which they are a risk to themselves and others through infringements of prison rules and regulations known as *misconducts*. The rates and types of infringements are one way of examining whether at the outset, prison staff have correctly estimated the degree of risk prisoners may pose, and allocated them to the most appropriate level of security. Rachael Collie and I present a preliminary examination of women prisoners' misconducts at different levels of security.

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