

The mediation of national standards of performance and evaluation by these contexts is, presumably, of interest to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Probation and we hope that this edited collection can make a modest, albeit not infallible, and certainly not final, contribution to the evolving debate over policy-oriented learning in crime control.

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INSULT TO INJURY: RETHINKING OUR RESPONSES TO INTIMATE ABUSE. By LINDA G. MILLS (Princeton, New Jersey, 2003, 178pp.)

Due, in large part, to more than three decades of practical struggles, waged by feminists and other progressive people, intent on eliminating highly injurious symptoms of societal and familial patriarchy, many North Americans now define male-to-female violence as a major social problem. Further, the number of social scientific studies on this harm has increased dramatically in recent years, and federal governments in both the United States and Canada have devoted millions of dollars to various initiatives on sexual, psychological and physical variants of woman abuse. Still, in a current political economic climate that is characterized by a rabid anti-feminist backlash, an enormous audience still exists for academics like Linda G. Mills. Although she claims to be a feminist, many of the arguments presented in her book, *Insult to Injury*, are similar to anti-feminist assertions published by prominent North American neo-conservatives in the mid-1990s.

Mills' main objective is to challenge theoretical, empirical and political work done by people she refers to as 'mainstream feminists'. According to her, this group includes those calling for mandatory arrest and prosecution policies, as well as academics and activists who contend that only women are victims of domestic violence and that male perpetrators are simply 'products of patriarchy'. Of course, *some* feminists offer single-factor explanations of woman abuse, but they are not a mainstream group. For example, an in-depth review of the extant empirical and theoretical work on various types of male-to-female victimization reveals a large feminist literature combining both macro- and micro-level factors, such as formal labour-market exclusion, broader patriarchal forces and male peer support. Mills is either unfamiliar with this literature or purposely chose to ignore it to help buttress her assertions. Regardless of what influenced her to exclude major feminist contributions to the field, her book reflects an inadequate understanding of feminist theories, research and policy proposals.

Like fathers'-rights groups and other anti-feminist organizations, in Chapter 4, Mills argues that women are as violent as men are. Yet again, studies that used crude counts of male and female behaviours are cited to support this claim. Conspicuously absent from this chapter is

a review of feminist surveys that examined the contexts, meanings and motives of women's violence. These studies, such as the Canadian national survey of woman abuse in university/college dating relationships, found that *some* women are physically abusive, but a substantial number of women reported that their violence was in self-defence or 'fighting back'. What Mills neglects to point out is that the sexual symmetry of violence thesis has only been supported using measures such as the highly controversial Conflict Tactics Scale, with no further questioning. Further, nowhere in the book does she mention that women are the primary targets of sexual assault in marriage/cohabitation, dating and during or after separation/divorce.

Drawing from psychoanalytic theory, Mills contends that 'the focus on men's physical violence that mainstream feminists advocated, for the benefit of the judiciary and society, may actually have been a form of countertransference called projection—an unconscious effort by mainstream feminists to distance themselves from the abuse they could not face in their own lives and from their own abusive tendencies' (p. 78). This 'theory' is purely speculative and lacks tangible empirical support. No matter how attractive Mills' perspective might be, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to support or refute it scientifically. How would one go about measuring peoples' unconscious efforts in a way that can be used in empirical work? It may not be impossible to accurately measure them, but it surely is extremely difficult. It may not be much easier to measure such efforts on the *conscious* level.

Another major problem with Mills' work is that she offers a simplistic description of feminist practitioners. For example, she states that:

What is common practice among mainstream feminists who work with women in abusive relationships is that they are tolerant and supportive of victims so long as they adhere to certain stereotypes—they are dependent on the professionals who are helping them, appropriately fearful of their abusive partners, and deferential to the professional's expertise. When the women demonstrate independence—the precise state they need to be in to recover from the trauma—either because they express an ambivalence toward their partners rather than outright disdain because they choose not to support arrest or prosecution, the professional reverts to viewing these women as incapable of making difficult decisions and therefore in need of protection. (p. 130)

Certainly, there are feminists who act accordingly, but Mills neglects to identify the many practitioners and services guided by an empowerment model. Consider My Sister's Place, a battered women's shelter in Athens, Ohio. Rather than patronizing their clients, pressuring them to leave their partners and motivating them to adhere to a particular ideology, the staff there attend to their safety and offer women information that can help them decide which course of action is best for them. Many other feminist services are similar and warrant recognition for their important efforts.

Mills is right that the current system needs to be changed and her solution to intimate violence is heavily informed by principles of restorative justice. More specifically, she calls for the Intimate Abuse Circle (IAC) process, which is designed to counteract hard 'law and order' responses and includes couples' community, friends and family in a healing process. Peacemaking criminologists and abolitionists will find this approach promising because it is based on mediation, mutual aid and reconciliation. Not surprisingly, however, Mills does not address the fact that peacemaking solutions are only useful as part of a package that includes broader structural change in society, or such remedies will only reduce violence to an individual problem. Further, many feminist scholars are likely to find Mills' IAC process highly problematic because it assumes that women and men are equally violent and have equal power. Nevertheless, she reminds us that some imaginative proposals are needed to

overcome the common tendency to rely only on repressive measures to deal with crimes like intimate violence.

In sum, *Insult to Injury* is a provocative book—one that will surely receive even sharper criticism from feminists in North America and elsewhere. Unfortunately, as stated previously, Mills pays selective inattention to key feminist contributions, and her book will definitely be used and promoted by neo-conservatives, as well as members of the mainstream media. For example, a while back, she appeared on the widely viewed *Oprah Winfrey Show*, while those she defines as mainstream feminists rarely get such opportunities to disseminate their research and opinions to the general public.

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THE SURVEILLANCE WEB: THE RISE OF VISUAL SURVEILLANCE IN AN ENGLISH CITY. By MICHAEL McCahill (Cullompton: Willan, 2002, 219pp. £30.00 hb)

This book is a significant contribution to the study of the new plural forms of local security; it provides a cutting-edge analysis of the local politics of crime control. McCahill points out that the findings of the 1996 international crime victimization survey reinforce the view that the British have largely accepted the consumerist responsibility for the management of the risks of crime and that, already, by then, England and Wales topped the international league for the proportion of homes equipped with home-security devices. This could be interpreted as also supporting the thesis that the responsibility for security has become progressively devolved from the 'state', particularly, in the United Kingdom, in the form of the Home Office, police and criminal justice system, and local state apparatuses, towards 'civil society'. However, this political science binary view of the partitioning of institutions is suspect; it is premised on the assumption that a quantity of responsibilities and services were transferred from one sector to the other. On the contrary, as Adam Edwards and I have argued, the extraordinary growth since the 1970s of institutions and practices of local security has been historically coterminous, with the rise of new forms of, in Jonathan Simon's phrase, governance through crime control that have crossed and blurred the boundaries between statutory, commercial, voluntary sectors (Stenson and Edwards 2003).

Moreover, McCahill shares our view that abstract, post-modernist, neo-Marxist and governmentality theory narratives of change, created by historians of ideas, legal theorists and grand sociological theorists, disengaged from empirical research, are not enough. Theory is too important to leave to theorists alone, creating self-referential, enclosed forms of discourse that eschew the messy problems of operationalizing concepts for empirical investigation and measurement. This kind of theory tends to be disdainful of 'realist', empirically grounded analysis and provides scant challenge to the dominant, policy-oriented, evaluation and problem-solving research—particularly that which questionably describes itself as 'crime science'. Think of all those conference papers, particularly in the United States, consisting of theory-free log-linear number crunching, whose authors seem unwilling and incapable of telling truth to power.

It is heart-warming, therefore, that a young criminologist like McCahill has tried to develop a more grounded form of theory through a series of fascinating case studies of the development, operation and human impact of complex, interlinked systems of public and