

Editors' Introduction: Volume 9, Issue 1

For All Scholars Who Wish to Submit to the *International Journal of Rural Criminology*: Regardless of Your Fluency in English

As the co-editors of the *International Journal of Rural Criminology*, we receive significant variability in the quality of submissions. A significant share of this variability is not the rigour of the research or the strength of the conceptual model, *but the lack of clarity of the narrative itself and oftentimes the lack of necessary attention to basic formatting requirements of submissions*. For these reasons, we have created this short statement which should be read by all who wish to publish in IJRC. As well, we believe our advice holds true for submissions to most other criminology and criminal justice journals that are published in the English language, and for that matter, any other language.

General Advice

First, consider your writing a service to readers, even if you are worried about your stature in criminology and the size of your CV. You are telling readers a story about your scholarship from which they can advance their own intellectual development.

Second, if English is not your first language, write the first draft in the language you know the best. Then, find a way to have it translated. Perhaps your institution provides a translating service, or you have a good colleague living in Australia, the United Kingdom, the United States or some other place who would be willing to devote time to copyediting your manuscript, once a rough translation is made. Be careful about online translators. They are far from perfect. Please consult the IJRC policies on AI use!

Third, no matter where you are from and how much English-language fluency you have acquired, writing an acceptable, high-quality article for a peer-reviewed journal requires that you have a clear, concise *statement of objectives*, that is, informing readers what the article is supposed to be about and why it is important.

Fourth, it greatly helps if you make an outline to help break down what you want to write into smaller pieces of narrative. By breaking down your writing into smaller parts, you can write piece by piece rather than wait for days totally free from the bustle of jobs, committee meetings, teaching responsibilities, family demands, errands and other mundane tasks that fill up all our lives. However, never allow an outline to act like a legal document that constrains your creativity – your article should tell a story to readers, and the narrative you write often unfolds in ways divergent from your original outline.

Fifth, it is REQUIRED that you read the editorial guidelines for IJRC so that you can meet submission requirements. Go to the [IJRC web page](#), then go to the right column and click on “make a submission”. Then, read the “submission preparation checklist”, paying special attention to the fourth one on the list – for instance, use New Times Roman font and double-



space the document. Attention to basic formatting requirements will make the life of editors and reviewers alike much, much easier and get the accepted publication out more quickly!

Sixth, it is required that you use APA, version 7. You can refer to an easy-to-read set of guidelines at [the web page nicknamed "Purdue Owls"](#). These guidelines are ideal for getting in-text citations and referencing format correct. Too often, we receive a mishmash of referencing styles. It is best if you enter each reference without using one of a software package that is out-of-date and does not keep up guideline upgrades or ensure the program is up to the latest standards.

Seventh, do not wait until a complete draft is entirely finished before entering your references. Most of us write in spurts of several hundred words, then look for something to distract us. That distraction should be entering in correct APA7 format the references cited in the narrative just completed. Your citations and references will line up with each other and be in good order. AND, look up the doi number and include that too [by going to the Crossref page](#). Follow this format: <https://doi.org/> *the actual doi number for that specific reference*. It is not the job of the IJRC editors to complete this task – it is the responsibility of the author(s).

Here are seven more simple pieces of advice from the editors.

1. Titles can be clever and entertaining, but titles alone are nothing without a quality manuscript. A title that is very clear on the content of the paper is also helpful when others are searching for research.
2. Merely name-dropping a criminological theory or two is insufficient: explain why you are using it/applying it, or otherwise it serves only as verbiage.
3. A thorough literature review gives your manuscript an advantage, but make sure you actually describe how a reference applies to your own work. Name-dropping does not work. Reviewers and editors are likely to notice it and not react positively.
4. Editors sometimes select reviewers from your list of references. If there are any who you believe would not give your manuscript a fair review, tell the editors. Likewise, you can also mention a reviewer or two (in a note to the editors when you submit your manuscript) you think would give your manuscript an honest and rigorous review.
5. A separate title page helps keep the manuscript anonymous for review purposes. In other words, you usually download two files – a title page and the manuscript without the title page. The title page alone should include the title of the manuscript, the full name and affiliations of the author(s), their ORCID number, a short abstract of less than 200 words, and approximately five keywords. Also be sure to de-identify your manuscript document. This can be done in Word by selecting Review, then Protect Document and, finally, selecting “remove personal information from this file on save”.

6. DO NOT plagiarize or improperly use AI in your submissions. All authors should read very carefully the IJRC’s [Artificial Intelligence Generated Content \(AIGC\) policies](#) on our website.
7. IJRC is moving towards greater language flexibility, such as welcoming abstracts in both English and a second language, such as French, Chinese, Polish etc. This is not a requirement, but a welcome mat to all rural scholars for those who prefer this feature, no matter where they are located. After all, we are the *International Journal of Rural Criminology*

In conclusion – as the editors of IJRC, we are trying to help you meet the standards for submission; that is, facilitate the development of a manuscript, and not simply dictate requirements in a dogmatic, inflexible way. Contact any one of us if you have questions of clarification.

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One last note. Remember that for your article to be published, editors need to contact at least two other colleagues and arrange for them to review the article. Oftentimes, we will contact many more before two agree to play the role of reviewer! So, we ask that if you submit an article that is accepted and published, that you give active consideration if asked to review for the journal at a later time – that is, “pay it forward”!

Introduction to Volume 9, Issue 1

Volume 9, Issue 1 offers five substantive articles and two contributions to the ‘Policy and Practice: Notes from the Field’ section.

The first article, from Orlando Goodall, adopts a novel approach in thinking quite differently, theoretically, about natural disaster. Using the flood disaster which happened in a small village in North Devon in the United Kingdom in 1952, Goodall unpacks the disaster and reinterprets it using ‘rural enterprise criminology’ and the ‘metabolic rift’ concept. Ultimately the article proposes a new framework in which we can consider future environmental disasters in rural spaces. The article is thought-provoking and well worth reading. It is important, too, because it will serve as a precursor for the next issue of IJRC (Vol. 9, Iss. 2) which will be dedicated entirely to rural disaster and crime.

The second and third articles both deal with aspects of inter-personal crime. Cynthia Baiqing Zhang and Mark Killian explore the relationship between violence against women, religion and health in the United States context. Utilising large longitudinal random sample datasets, they examine the causal relationship between religion and the health of. Specifically, sexual assault victims. The study of modern slavery is a growth area in rural crime scholarship, and

quite rightly too, as it has hitherto been overlooked by decision makers and scholars alike, especially as it pertains to the agri-horticultural supply chain. And, so, Giada Volpato's article is very timely. In it she focuses specifically on Mandatory Human Rights Due Diligence legislation which have been implemented in various European countries in quite recent years. She finds positive impacts are being derived from such legislative change on victims of modern slavery and human trafficking.

The fourth and fifth articles attend to two quite specific examples of agricultural theft, and such farm crime in countries which have not been the subject of much scholarly attention previously. Ai Suzuki, Mamoru Amemiya, Hideharu Kurita and Takahito Shimada offer intriguing insights into fruit theft in Japan, which has become a serious and costly issue. Drawing upon interview data gleaned from representatives of Japan's agricultural cooperatives, Suzuki et al. explore an array of issues such as the levels of cooperation with different actors to prevent fruit theft, issues around reporting to police and perceived effectiveness of crime prevention measures. The last article, from Christine Moser, Kevin Crooks and J.S. Butler, details the prevalence (high) and impacts (significant) of goat theft in Jamaica. They also canvass the importance of the goat meat market for Jamaica and the implications of goat theft for farmers and retailers. The data presented in the article comes from a survey of farmers across four parishes.

The first contribution to this issue's 'Policy and Practice: Notes from the Field' section is from Willie Clack. A webinar was held on 8 May 2024 with the overarching theme of 'Rural crime in Africa', and Clack has summarised the discussions for readers in order to provide a snapshot overview. The Webinar itself can be viewed in full on the International Society for the Study of Rural Crime's YouTube channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9rVpXyZ9EU&t=1s>

The second contribution is from Joseph F. Donnermeyer, a reflective piece on what he terms his drift into rural criminology. From a bedroom window looking out to the skyline of Cincinnati to the elder statesman he is now, 'Joe's Journey' is a riveting read. Of much use to readers will be his distilling of 16 key lessons he has learned along the way – peppered and explained throughout the contribution and then provided in a summary form as an appendix. We encourage others, too, to consider reflecting on their own entry into rural criminology, their current place in the field, or indeed a forward-thinking piece about where one might see the field in years to come.

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