

International Feminist Perspectives in Criminology. Edited by Nicole H. Rafter and Frances Heidensohn. Bristol, PA: Taylor and Francis, 1996, 186 pp., \$90.95 (cloth), \$29.25 (paper).

Compelled to Crime. By Beth E. Richie. New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1995, 244 pp., \$59.95 (cloth), \$16.95 (paper).

Rafter and Heidensohn's *International Feminist Perspectives in Criminology* and Richie's *Compelled to Crime* diversely address Chesney-Lind's feminist query: What would criminology look like with women at the center of inquiry? In *Compelled to Crime*, Richie examines the ways that gender and prior social victimization contribute to African American women's criminally offending behavior. In her analysis, Richie merges victimology with criminology in a theoretical formulation of *gender entrapment*, a term used to describe what occurs to women who are simultaneously marginalized in the public sphere because of their race/ethnicity, gender, and class and who are also battered by their male partners.

International Feminist Perspectives in Criminology draws on the work of 13 international scholars, many of them feminists, to discuss the "collision" between gender consciousness and crime and social control issues. While all the authors speak to new ways of producing and verifying knowledge and all seek to create transformations in the conditions under which women make decisions, the resulting collection is uneven in presentation and somewhat fragmented. The fragmentation is itself a consequence of the disparate development of feminist criminological theory in multiple geographical and cultural arenas. Each author addresses questions of sexism and criminality in the particular arenas of his or her own country and from a variety of theoretical perspectives. Nonetheless, as the editors acknowledge, the readings are not comprehensive. Perspectives from Asian nations, Central and Northern African countries, and Central America and the Caribbean are absent from the collection.

Rafter and Heidensohn's introductory essay on the development of feminist perspectives on crime sets the goal of the collection: "to assess the influence of feminism on the academic discipline of criminology" (p. 1). Yet, what follows in their essay is an argument that repudiates "feminism" for trivializing women's movements by "conceptually reducing them to the concerns of Westerners who identify as feminists" (p. 3) while attempting to incorporate these movements under a feminist umbrella. The individually authored articles that follow are organized by geographical region. For example, the South is covered in two selections: Christine Alder's informative discussion of marginalization in the development and context of feminist criminology in Australia and Desiree Hansson's cross-national treatment of feminism and academic criminology in South Africa.

Other essays dispute conventional views of crime victims, introduce new topics of study, and challenge social constructions of law and order. For example, in one of the theoretically

stronger articles, Pitch provides an extensive discussion of the nonexistence of feminist criminology in Italy while detailing the significant influences of feminist practice and theory on contemporary Italian social problems. Particularly interesting is her discussion of the emergence of new forms of political presence in women's voices against the Mafia, which in turn stimulate new ways to examine the intersections between the family and the Family.

While there were several provocative discussions of the current level of acceptance and development of feminist theory in criminology—Adler on Australia, Pitch on Italy, Platek on Poland and Eastern Europe—my favorite was Messerschmidt's cogent analysis of femininity as structured action in girl gang violence in the United States. He presents the "bad girl" in youth gangs as a specific version of femininity in which both gender and crime are accomplished behaviors. He develops his argument by examining how emergent structures, such as youth gangs, constrain and channel behaviors in specific ways.

International Feminist Perspectives in Criminology is an important attempt to develop affinities across geographical and cultural boundaries. However, the pieces—ranging from the insightful theoretical discussions mentioned earlier to the personal criminological biography of Platek to the racialized personas of Daly and Stephens—are dissimilar in content and substance. Although each of the individual pieces is potentially useful in particular applications (i.e., women's studies, criminology, deviance, sex and gender, etc.), the collection as a whole fails to coalesce. It is, nonetheless, a significant beginning.

By looking beyond the anecdotes of intimate violence in the narratives of criminally offending women, Richie also makes an important contribution to the literatures on women's criminality and on gender identity development. Richie theorizes gender entrapment to "describe the socially constructed process whereby African American women who are vulnerable to men's violence in their intimate relationships are penalized for behaviors they engage in even when the behaviors are logical extensions of their racialized gender identities, their culturally expected gender roles, and the violence in their intimate relationships" (p. 4). While provocative, this theory does not account for the women in the study (13 percent) who are not battered, the abused African American women who are not compelled to crime, or the white women in the study for whom this theoretical formulation does not hold. In addition, Richie argues that gender entrapment originates in privileges associated with a "distinctly female identity in African American families" (p. 15) (i.e., reports of verbal appreciation of personal qualities, high hopes for the future, and use as role models for others). These privileges, according to Richie, leave the daughters vulnerable to violence and crime. Is the conclusion then that treasuring African American daughters is something to be avoided? While Richie raises the irony of protection in its unintended consequences, she does not account for the range of variation that leaves some African American daughters criminal offenders and others survivors. Questions aside, hers is an important attempt to link gender identity development to violence against women and further to link violence against women to women's participation in criminal conduct.

LORA BEX LEMPERT
The University of Michigan—Dearborn

Gender, Ethnicity, and the State: Latina and Latino Prison Politics. By Juanita Díaz-Cotto. Albany: SUNY Press, 1996, 480 pp., \$74.50 (cloth), \$24.95 (paper).