

## Editorial

# Toward a Forensic Criminology

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## EDITORIAL

Forensic science is a vibrant and broad field that includes disparate disciplines, such as genetics, pathology, chemistry, accounting, anthropology, odontology, psychiatry, and many others. Strangely, mainstream criminology has remained tangential to forensic science despite the tremendous opportunities for research collaboration between the social and natural sciences that bear on forensics. Even in television and film, forensic science knowledge is informed by the aforementioned disciplines and forensic psychology, but again, core criminological knowledge is usually not included.

In recent years, criminologists have attempted to remedy the estrangement of their field from forensic science in a variety of ways including the use of the influential criminal career paradigm to study pathological offenders who perpetrate murder, rape, and serious property crimes [1-3], bridging psychopathy with criminal offending patterns [4], linking epidemiology to clinical conduct problems [5-7], and utilizing items from extant criminal records to identify serious offenders [8]. As a result, offenders who were previously considered too extraordinary or rare to study with mainstream criminological approaches are now being examined. An advantage to this approach is the application of rigorous quantitative methods and large samples, which is an improvement on the case study approach that has limited the study of pathological offenders. In addition, readily available data on criminal histories, such as aliases, have been shown to have rich predictive value and criminological meaning that can influence criminal justice practice.

This is an exciting time for forensic science, and I am confident that the *Annals of Forensic Research and Analysis* will play an important role in advancing toward a forensic criminology.

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