

the mysterious crime cycles to explain much of the crime drop, and a police-based explanation to explain the rest. Perhaps inadvertently, Zimring has demonstrated the need for a broader-based explanation of crime trends.

Reference

New York City Department of City Planning (2008) "Population—The Newest New Yorkers," Executive Summary, http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/census/nny_exec_sum.shtml (accessed 2 June 2008).

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Trial Courts as Organizations. By Brian J. Ostrom, Charles W. Ostrom Jr., Roger A. Hanson, and Matthew Kleiman. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007. Pp. 204. \$54.50 cloth.

Reviewed by Paul M. Collins Jr., University of North Texas

Sociolegal scholars employ a wide range of theoretical and methodological tools to advance our knowledge of an assortment of issues related to the legal system, ranging from attitudes toward courts to the determinants of judicial decisionmaking to the enforcement of legal rules. Often absent from sociolegal scholarship, however, is a consideration of bureaucratic subculture within legal institutions. In *Trial Courts as Organizations*, Ostrom and colleagues set out to rectify this lacuna by exploring how court culture—the norms, values, and resulting behavior of actors within a legal institution—not only varies widely throughout the United States but also has profound implications for the administration of justice. Combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies, and using a rich body of interdisciplinary scholarship as its theoretical foundation, this book makes a significant contribution to the literature. The authors do an admirable job introducing the importance of the topic, they cogently outline their research strategy, and they go to great lengths interpreting their results in an accessible manner, a particularly important point given that the book relies on methodologies that may not be familiar to many readers (including academics). Given its accessible nature, use of interdisciplinary perspectives, and the salience of the topic, *Trial Courts as Organizations* will appeal to legal practitioners, sociolegal scholars, and students of organizational behavior.

Ultimately, the authors aim to answer two very ambitious questions. First, what distinguishes one court culture from another? Second, what are the practical consequences of the

variation that exists between and within court systems? To answer these puzzles, the authors begin with a theoretical framework adopted primarily from the work of organizational behaviorist Robert E. Quinn. The authors establish four typologies of court culture: communal, networked, autonomous, and hierarchical. These four cultures are then juxtaposed against two foundational dimensions: solidarity and sociability. For example, autonomous cultures rank low on both solidarity and sociability since these cultures promote independent decisionmaking (solidarity) with little interaction between chambers (sociability). Conversely, networked cultures rank high on both solidarity and sociability as a function of valuing working together (solidarity) in a collegial environment (sociability). Appropriately, the authors note that these four cultures are neither good nor bad by definition; rather, each possesses both positive and negative elements. By simply introducing these concepts, the book makes a contribution to our understanding of court administration. However, the authors go much further by gathering both qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the utility of these concepts. To do this, the authors collected data from 12 felony criminal state trial courts: in California (three courts), Florida (two courts), and Minnesota (seven courts). The quantitative data were amassed based on a detailed survey that was sent to court administrators (including prosecutors and public defenders) and judges. The qualitative data were collected from in-depth interviews with these actors.

To oversimplify, the authors' main findings can be expressed as follows. First, there are significant differences in court cultures. These differences reflect fundamental disagreements between judges and court administrators on the appropriate role of the judiciary and offer a great deal of leverage over why courts that appear similar on paper nonetheless resolve their case loads in divergent ways. Second, the differences in court cultures have weighty implications, particularly as relating to the processing of cases. For example, the authors reveal that courts reflecting a hierarchical culture are most likely to process cases in a timely manner. However, such hierarchical court systems are viewed by attorneys as ranking low in promoting access, fairness, and managerial effectiveness. Third, when prompted to report their "ideal" court culture, judges and court administrators identified remarkably similar preferences, including the desire for a hierarchical emphasis with regard to case management and a networked emphasis in terms of judge-staff relations. The authors' theoretical framework, coupled with their findings, is particularly important for diagnosing current court culture for jurisdictions seeking future change, and the final chapter presents a cogent blueprint that maps out exactly how such change might occur.

While this book makes a major contribution to the literature on court administration, I identified two weaknesses. First, I would have liked to see the authors expand on their discussion of the relationship between court culture and the methods by which court administrators are selected (e.g., appointment versus election). Although the authors discuss the importance of selection early in the book (p. 16), this is given somewhat limited attention later (e.g., p. 121), and ultimately the reader is forced to draw his or her own conclusions about the extent to which selection mechanisms play a role in defining court culture. Second, while the authors do a nice job articulating the implications of their work for analyses of organizational behavior and the study of other institutional venues in the conclusion, I was left yearning for a discussion of the consequences of this work in other areas. For example, a wide range of disciplines have struggled with operationalizing culture. Since the authors present a coherent strategy for measuring court culture, I fear they missed an opportunity to engage a wider audience. Similarly, an incorporation of the implications of understanding court culture and how this might shape judicial decisionmaking would have also afforded an occasion to speak to a broader audience. Despite these admittedly minor deficiencies, *Trial Courts as Organizations* represents an important addition to the literature that should be taken seriously by legal practitioners, organizational behaviorists, and sociolegal scholars.

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Para uma Revolução Democrática da Justiça (Towards a Democratic Revolution of Justice). By Boaventura de Sousa Santos. São Paulo, Brazil: Cortez, 2007. Pp. 120. \$8.00 paper.

Reviewed by Fabio de Sá e Silva, Northeastern University

Since his classic studies on legal pluralism in the 1970s, Santos has infused many of his works with a strong commitment to democratic struggles in Brazil. Following in this vein is his latest book, which he is now translating for his growing English-speaking audience. Based on a speech he gave in Brasilia in June 2007 by invitation of the Minister of Justice, it analyzes the judiciary in Western societies and draws various propositions for a *Democratic Revolution of Justice*, as the title suggests.

The author starts by asking, why did the judiciary, which Alexander Hamilton called “the least dangerous branch,” become such a critical topic in contemporary democracies? His answer is