



Our second decade opens with overdue insights and sobering new frontiers

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This issue features nine solid contributions, and together they reflect and advance the best aims of our mission. As always, I commend them all to our regular readers and especially to those among you who may be on a new path to discovery in Community Safety and Well-Being (CSWB) literature and knowledge exchange.

Three of these papers merit some positioning to highlight new ground they might open for us all. Every so often I get the privilege to engage with authors in ways that draw me in, close enough to observe their creative processes, close enough to taste the passion in their expression of their work. Each of these papers delivered such an opportunity.

Thompson, J. shares a deeply personal journey through his sensitive experiences into suicide and its effects on survivors. In a recent exchange, this author, guest editor, and friend described to me the duality of “*awfulness and hope*” he witnessed in the process of conducting psychological autopsies. He added, “*I wanted to honor it accurately to capture what I have heard so many times. I am in such a privileged position to be able to listen and then share these messages.*” That sentence captures much of the power of narrative that Jeff goes on to examine in this commentary. Many of you may have read about the importance of the qualitative inquiry that has emerged consistently through the first decade of our journal. Jeff’s insightful paper adds to growing evidence of the vital need for such human perspectives as we all navigate and seek meaning in the broadly collaborative work of CSWB.

Corley, C. rather candidly breaks new ground while breaking through some long-standing mythologies about leadership and governance in the policing sector, a lot of which may indeed be transferable across other partner sectors where governance is often just as fluid and complex. Cal’s social innovation narrative is equal parts incisive, probative, and scholarly. His observations ultimately manifest into timely propositions that seem very hard to ignore.

Coincidentally, that last sentence provides a good segue into another commentary we are pleased to feature from Bertucci, J. and Mete, R., albeit for very different reasons.

Unlike the historical and long-intractable topic of police governance examined by Corley, I quickly learned in my conversations that these authors had so much more to say on a very nascent field. They sought to initiate a closer look at the proliferation of artificial intelligence (AI)-driven support models entering into the youth mental health space at an accelerating pace. I found their interrogation of the early promise and threat profiles are quite capable of frightening us, at the same time as they offer some very strong reasons to open a richer examination and debate. I do believe we will see more from Julia and Rosina in due course as their own research work advances. Meanwhile, kudos to them for recognizing and deftly seizing upon an opportunity to widen the discussion early, and to directly invite other voices to join that table.

I confess that I am old enough to have witnessed many other seemingly unstoppable and, at times, frighteningly irreversible trends. I am not sure any of them could match the current fervor and accompanying presumptions surrounding AI applications. On the face of it, so much more so than real proven necessity or strong social science, it is the mere presumptions of progress and economic gain that seem to be moving some such applications ahead. Too often, we are seeing these adoptions roll forward without real guardrails even having been imagined, engineered, or applied.

Yes, if pursued wisely, there may indeed be real promise and more accessible help to be gained in any new solutions. These authors are bravely asking us all to consider what is driving so many to simply accept the inevitability of AI as a suitable replacement for the kind of informed human contact that Thompson so finely details in his own work and experience, in the absence of more reliable governance models than what Corley calls out from long history.

Please take their invitation seriously. We would love to hear from you.

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