



Richard Quinney

Journey of Discovery

Clemens Bartollas
Dragan Milovanovic

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Foreword

This book is part of a commendable new Palgrave Macmillan “Pioneers of Criminology” series. Who merits the designation “pioneer” of criminology? Those who have provided an influential foundation for a significant dimension of the field have been so identified in books on pioneers of criminology. Richard Quinney richly deserves to be celebrated along with others so designated. His status in this regard can be well-appreciated in relation to the influence of Edwin H. Sutherland (1883–1950), a quintessential pioneer of modern criminology. Sutherland has been commonly identified as the single most important criminologist of the twentieth century. During the course of his quarter century (1924–1950) career as a criminologist Sutherland made a foundational contribution to the establishment of a specifically sociological approach to criminology, with his 1924 textbook, *Criminology*, and the influential differential association theory introduced in a later edition of that book, as one core part of this. At least as significant, we have Sutherland’s introduction of and establishment of white-collar crime as an important (but historically neglected) focus of criminological inquiry. Sutherland made other noteworthy contributions, but these are two of his most enduring contributions to the field. Richard Quinney’s

engagement with the field of criminology first took place in the latter part of that decade which marked the end of Sutherland's career (and life), the fifties, under the mentorship of Sutherland's former graduate assistant, Marshall Clinard. Early in his academic career Quinney (with the late Melvin DeFleur) produced a reformulation of Sutherland's theory of differential association. But perhaps more importantly, a half century after the publication of Sutherland's hugely influential textbook *Criminology* (1924), Quinney produced several books—including a textbook of his own—that pioneered a neo-Marxist understanding of crime and the criminal justice system. Sutherland's analysis of crime, and especially his work on white-collar crime, can be said to have advanced an understanding of crime in a modern capitalist society, and Sutherland (who by his own account was influenced by socialism) suggested the need to understand crime and the criminal law in relation to the political economy. Some others—notably the Dutch criminologist Willem Bongers—advanced this thesis in relation to capitalism specifically. But Quinney played a foundational role in fully developing and articulating what is only suggested more indirectly in the work of Sutherland, and in this regard he provided a pioneering theoretical framework for a contemporary critical criminology.

In relation to white-collar crime, Richard Quinney produced a dissertation in 1962 that addressed a form of white-collar crime—rare for that time. Quinney's first three published articles all addressed aspects of white-collar crime. But more fundamentally, Quinney also played a pioneering role in building on Sutherland's core thesis about the role of the powerful (including powerful corporations) in determining what is to be defined as crime in the first place. Starting with *The Social Reality of Crime* and going on from there, Quinney established a core premise for contemporary critical criminology: i.e., that the criminal law and the criminal justice system is not a "neutral" arbiter of what is harmful and needs to be policed and punished for the good of society, but rather profoundly reflects the interests of the powerful.

In the 1970s, Richard Quinney was arguably the single most important—and indisputably the single most controversial—radical criminologist. While critical criminology over the past four decades or so has become a multi-faceted enterprise with many different strains, all forms

of such criminology are rooted in significant ways—even if in different degrees and forms—in the radical criminology of the 1970s. Richard Quinney is now most closely associated with one of these strains (peace-making criminology)—one that he co-founded with Hal Pepinsky—but at a minimum echoes of his work can be found in many other strains as well. And one should note also that his work (initially with Marshall Clinard) from the late 1960s into the 1970s also played a pioneering role in the establishment of a typological approach to the understanding of crime.

Both Edwin Sutherland and Richard Quinney grew up in the American Midwest, settled by pioneers of another sort. In terms of their backgrounds neither Sutherland nor Quinney were obvious prospects to become pioneers of criminology, and both came to criminology by somewhat serendipitous circumstances. Edwin Sutherland rejected the fundamentalist Baptist world of his parents, according to colleagues never spoke of his early years, and never published an account of his origins, his life and his personal philosophy. Richard Quinney chose to return to the environs of his youth, the family farm in southern Wisconsin, and has published many books and articles reflecting on his heritage, his experience of growing up on a farm, and his outlook on human life itself. Since Sutherland's time many books and articles of biographical and autobiographical reflections of prominent criminologists, along with interviews of such criminologists, have been published. But Richard Quinney is surely the criminologist who has written more fully about his own life and his experience of life than any other criminologist. The term “explorer” is one synonym for pioneer, and a “seeker” is a type of explorer. So Richard Quinney is also a pioneer in another sense, one who has been engaged in a reflexive and spiritual search for the deeper meaning of a human life. The present book fully explores as well this dimension of Richard Quinney. He offers an alternative to the conventional model for how to approach a professional career as an academic criminologist, and the core importance of having a meaningful existence transcending professional success. His justly celebrated photographs—some of which are reprinted in this book—are part of the exploration Quinney has long undertaken. All criminologists—although they may sometimes lose sight of this, when fully immersed

in their professional work—are also human beings, are people who have lives and make choices in relation to those lives. Especially from about 1980 on Richard Quinney's work focused principally on an understanding of social existence and the pursuit of a meaningful life, what really matters. Many criminologists, including those aligned with critical criminology, were puzzled by the unorthodox choices that Quinney made at this stage of his career, and the projects he chose to pursue. But this book invites its readers to leave themselves open to engaging with these “pioneering,” existentialist dimensions of Quinney's life and work along with his specific contributions to the field of criminology.

The author of this foreword last encountered Richard Quinney in person at a conference in Las Vegas, many years ago. And he observed then that everything about Las Vegas—with its hyped up celebration of money and consumerism and exhibitionism—could hardly be more at odds with everything he (Richard) had promoted in his work, and Richard Quinney did not disagree with this observation. Today we find ourselves living in strange and challenging times, with the widespread celebration of especially grotesque, destructive and demeaning values. This book offers its readers a welcome tonic in these times, an invitation to reflect on a profoundly fulfilling way of being in the world and giving life to intellectually and spiritually enriching values. It sets forth an alternative vision of crime and justice to that which has prevailed in our world, and it offers up a model for a life well-lived in a world afflicted with much that is superficial and disappointing and painful. It will leave its readers with a hopeful vision of what is possible.

Clemens Bartollas and Dragan Milovanovic have both had hugely productive and creative careers as criminologists. They are to be richly commended for here producing—in what I take to be a “labor of love”—a masterful account explicating and interpreting the life, work and philosophy of someone fully deserving of being commemorated and celebrated. Readers of this book—and it can be heartedly recommended to as many readers as possible—are quite certain to be both intellectually and spiritually enriched by engaging with the life and career and work of this singular criminologist (and “seeker”), Richard

Quinney. And if a reading of this book inspires these readers to engage—or re-engage, as the case might be—with the work of its subject, so much the better.

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Preface

We both have a long history of knowing Richard Quinney. We have read his large body of work, often times more than once. We have visited his home on many occasions, especially after he retired and moved to Madison, Wisconsin. We have even spent time with him on the family farm. The book itself has been in process for the past ten years. Clemens Bartollas started the writing process and brought Dragan Milovanovic into the project as a coauthor. Dragan's understanding of critical criminology and commentaries on Richard's quest added a critical component in finishing the book. We both have written many books, but this one has been special.

One of the goals of this biography is to reintroduce Richard Quinney to a new generation of criminologists and sociologists. Richard has touched our lives in many ways, including our teaching. We both used a Richard Quinney's book in our first semester of college teaching. Quinney, as this biography will document, has influenced the teaching and careers of many other criminologists and sociologists.

But it is also a book for those who are contemporaries of Richard, and those who are second generation who have been inspired by his work, providing moments to rethink their own journey.

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1

Introduction

On an early summer day one finds oneself escaping the vicissitudes of city life, drawn to the country, travelling the mesmerizing winding roads which beckon us to be elsewhere. We pass farmhouses and traditional red barns in various states of disrepair while experiencing the peacefulness of a world that is otherwise. The high octave sounds of crows occasionally punctuating the trances we have entered. A rare bald eagle passing above, wings methodically flapping in the wind, white head slowly turning side to side scanning the country, oblivious to our intensive gaze. Miles and miles of corn on each side of the road, birds offering their various songs as they flutter in the cool breeze that punctuates the heated landscape, occasional horses in the paddock that stand to attention as if asking what we are doing here, an occasional clear pond or mirandering stream that has awoken from its winter slumber—all resonate with a time and space more and more distant from the everyday hectic life of the metropolitan world. Occasionally our eyes are captivated by a lone farmer working the farm, his coveralls showing ware for the long hours in the fields, his farmhouse showing its years, a tractor sitting idle by the decaying red barn already losing its characteristic color. Our eyes momentary meet and are fixated as stories

unfold. With imaginary thoughts overwhelming us, we slowly nod with a slow developing smile. We break our trance to return to the road ahead. We move on in our journey, vivid imaginations still reverberating as we mark our distinctives from the other, and what we have gained and lost in the journey that could have been.

Among the many stories unfolding is one farm boy's evening flights from his completed daily chores to a pond not too far from the farmhouse close to which the original farmhouse was built. This was the "old place", a place of wonderment, fantasy, discovery of nature, and the beginnings of fundamental questions of the meaning of it all.

Our story is about one farm boy immersed in another world whose imagination takes him elsewhere, eventually venturing out of the nirvana to another path on the road to discovery, only to find that the path eventually leads him back home, a treasure that is found in a journey less travelled, a path that is in the making, a quest that beckons even more, answers to questions that seem to be so close but so distant.

Part I includes Richard Quinney's early development both in childhood as well as in establishing the seeds for being a critical criminologist. His odyssey begins to take form, from growing up on a traditional farm in Wisconsin, to formal studies leading to the Ph.D., to entrance into Ivory Tower. Part II concerns his work in critical criminology and in auto-ethnography, visual sociology, photography, and the quantum connection. In criminology we find a number of profound shifts in his thinking, each of which had a major influence on the development of critical criminology. Later works transitioned to the connection between spirituality and crime culminating in peacemaking criminology. These in turn led to intense personal examination of the meaning of the peregrination expressed in his autographical approach, visual sociology, photography, and as of late, to possible quantum connections.

Although we have constructed the book in a chronological order more consistent with the norms of scholarly writing in criminology, we are quick to note that the surface appearance is often belied by the complex process of becoming with which Richard was engaged. His is more in the direction of Bergson's classic statement on "duration,"¹ lived experiences that resist linear time where the present is always inspired by the past and further driven by the future, and even the past

being revised in light of the present and the future yearnings. When Richard received his first copy of the groundbreaking work *The Social Reality of Crime* (1970) in presence of a colleague in his office at New York University he was quick to chuck it into the waste paperback basket declaring emphatically that he is beyond this work. Indeed, he was already at work in a profound shift to an instrumental Marxist criminology, which, with its publication was replaced with a structural Marxism in his *Class, State and Crime* (1977). Even here, he was busy at work formulating his thoughts toward including the spiritual dimension along with material critical analysis. And so we shall see that Richard's trajectory certainly draws from the past, the intense contexts with which he was engaged, but always with an eye toward the future, a perpetual becoming, ever concerned with searching for a deeper understanding of lived experiences.

In Part III we extend his work on the spiritual dimension, work which has preoccupied him to the present. This includes his reflections on nature, further reflections on spirituality, and "coming home again." This is a continuous pilgrimage and his late writings reflect his deep commitment to coming to terms with the existential beckoning that is his odyssey.²

Notes

1. Henri Bergson, *Duration and Simultaneity* (Manchester: Clinamen Press, 1999); *Matter and Memory* (New York: Zone Books, 1998).
2. John Wozniak had provided an earlier series of articles based on his interviews with Richard Quinney. Focusing more on his academic work, he depicts five overlapping periods (John Wozniak, "Richard Quinney's *The Social Reality of Crime*: A Marked Departure from and Reinterpretation of Traditional Criminology," *Social Justice* 41, no. 3: 197–216). He includes (p. 207): 1960–1965, tracing his first teaching positions, experiencing the civil rights movement, beginning to write scholarly articles, publishing his first book, *Criminal Behavior Systems*; 1965–1971, move to New York City at New York University, at the center of the diverse, activist world of Greenwich Village, witnessing

various oppositional movements including the anti-Vietnam War movement, photography, writing *The Social Reality of Crime*; 1971–1974, resigning his teaching position at NYC, moving to Chapel Hill, NC, involved in social groups, writing *Critique of Legal Order*, beginning research on *Class, State and Crime*; 1974–1983, move to Providence, RI, taking on part time positions, exploring versions of Marxisms, theology, researching Buddhism, writing *Providence*; 1983–2000, return to DeKalb, IL, engaging in ethnography, photography, writing reflective essays, developing peacemaking perspective, publishing *Criminology as Peacemaking, for the Time Being, Borderland*, and more.

Our biography on Richard goes back further in his life, carves up the time periods in a slightly different way, and adds his recent witnessing, researching, writing, and photography. Perhaps, in Wozniak's expanded scheme it could be: 2001–to present, move to auto-ethnographic writing, story telling, visual sociology, photography, personal essays, publishing periodic books with his own founded press, Borderland Books, and intense engagement with an existential search for the way home.

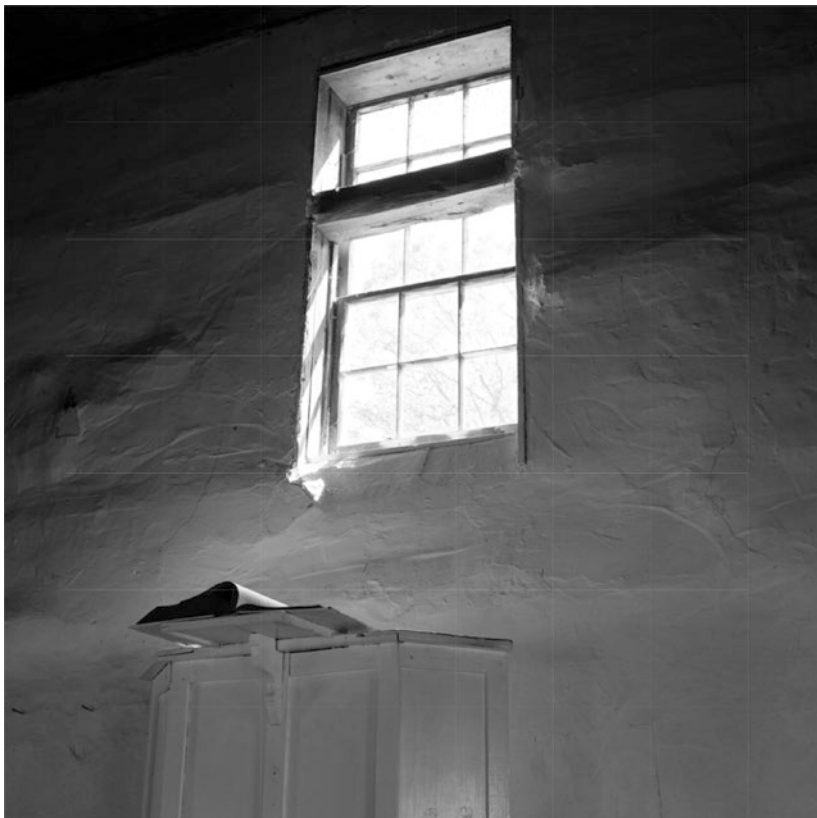


Part I

Emergence: Early Development and Writing Themes

Part I includes two chapters on Richard Quinney's early years of development and on major themes in his extensive writings. Telling stories through photography has remained throughout his journey, perhaps becoming more central in his late endeavors. Along with much of the well-recognized and paradigm shifting contributions in criminology, Richard has also wrote outside of this discipline. Chapter 2 has two goals. The first is to sketch out Richard Quinney's early years, including the major in-fluencies of his childhood, such as conscious and cross-generational imprints, the innocence of an agrarian society, and a life of wonder. The second goal is to examine the process of Richard Quinney becoming a radical. It begins with graduate school at Northwestern and then the University of Wisconsin and follows through his academic career and early retirement. As part of this process of becoming a radical, Quinney challenges the established paradigms in criminology. The chapter concludes by suggesting that Quinney was purpose driven, that he pursued the process of continued emergence, and that he took the road not traveled.

Chapter 3 provides an overview of key themes in Richard's writing. This includes reflections on a witnessing journey, a path of wonderment and discovery, disciplinary shift from formal writing in critical criminology to a turn to ethnographic writing as a way home. It includes his connections with his reader through telling a good story, photography, social commentary, and making sense of the world.





2

The Early Years and Becoming a Radical

Earl Richard Quinney grew up in southern Wisconsin in Walworth County, on a small farm five miles north of the little town of Delavan. A child of a small family (he has a younger brother), his father farmed the land and his mother was a homemaker. It was a traditionally normal childhood. Earl, as he was known then, was not thrilled about growing up on the farm, but as he looked back on it later in life, he realized that it was a happy childhood, with two loving parents. Earl's first memory was that of his father's father coming across the field to help with the morning chores. This would be the last year of John Quinney's life; he would die in 1939 at the age of seventy-nine. Earl was five years old, and he could remember his father saying, "Here comes the old man."¹

Later in life, Earl began to research his family background. He discovered that his great-grandfather, also named John Quinney, had come from Ireland during the potato famine of the 1840s. John Quinney had settled in Yonkers, New York, and married Bridget O'Keefe. They had five children. They eventually, with their children, moved to the village of Millard in Walworth County, sixty miles west of Lake Michigan. Beginning with renting a farm, they were able by 1868 to earn enough that they purchased sixty acres, a homestead that is still

called “the old place.” John Quinney’s son also named John married Hattie Reynolds, and they had two daughters, Marjorie and Nellie, and a son, Floyd. Earl’s father, Floyd, was born in 1900, farmed all his life on the old place, adding a few acres every year. As a young man, Earl heard tales from neighbors of his father’s youth. His father owned one of the first Model Ts in Sugar Creek. After the harvest in the fall of 1924, Mervin Kittleson, a good friend, and Floyd set out in the Ford for California. They worked along the way to pay their expenses. Letters from the trip later enabled Earl to see what his father had experienced. The two men were home for spring planting. After the Second World War, Earl’s father occasionally talked about selling out and opening up a hamburger place in town. His father shied from conversations, but he always instilled in Earl the importance of being friendly to other people which showed the good person you are and your care for others.

Earl’s mother, Alice Marie, also grew up on a farm near Millard. She was the only child of William Holloway and Lorena Taylor. Her early childhood was lonely, especially after her mother died of Bright’s disease when Alice Marie was thirteen years old. She and her father remained on the farm for several years before they moved to a house in Millard. She went to high school in Elkhorn and eventually attended the State Normal School in Whitewater. She then taught the eighth grade at Bay Hill School, a rural school near Williams Bay. It was there, while she was teaching, that she met Floyd Quinney at a Dance in Delavan and a year later married in 1930. Alice was 24, Floyd 30.

Earl provides many fond memories of his Mother in this book *Tales of the Middle Border*.² He often remembers her mother, Alice Marie, fixing up meals for the harvesting crew on the farm and the great appreciation of her meals. At bedtime Earl recalls that it was not the Bible that his Mother read, but with her insistence, *The Rover Boys at School*. It was a story of three brothers sent away, the oldest being Richard, and their adventures. One could see the impact with the identification with the name.

Even though his Mother was to attend church regularly, she rarely spoke about religion. Her main concern was doing the right thing to others: “be kind, be thoughtful, be helpful whenever you can,” and living the best we can.

And according to Richard, his Mom's educational training also was being felt at home. Richard's mother's reality was now built around immediate activities within a few miles of the farm. These lived daily realities were full of tragedies, hardships, and various demands of harsh life on a farm. After Richard's father passed away on a November day 1969, a short time after he and Alice had visited Richard in New York City while he was as a professor at New York University, Alice was to spend the next 30 years living alone on the family farm. Earl and his family were to visit two or three times a year but when Richard returned to the Midwest would visit every week, often attending to health needs. She became a volunteer during this time at a nursing home. Often she would cook cookies for the patients. She maintained contact with her grandchildren particularly on birthdays and special events. She passed away in 1999, approaching her 93rd birthday, a short time after Earl and his family were visiting to take her to a doctor's appointment. Apparently, Alice was holding out, not wanting to call an ambulance the day before in fear of being permanently separated from the farm. He was to miss her dearly for the rest of his journey through life.

Return to Earl's Life

Earl did have a brother two years younger, Ralph. They grew up together and went different ways as adults, Ralph a banker. They always got along and did not engage in any traditional sibling rivalry. In Earl's later years of retirement, he had more contact with his brother, as they had to make decisions in terms of the farm.³

When they attended Dunham School, District 9, Earl and his brother either walked or rode their bicycles back and forth to school, sometimes through the Wisconsin snowdrifts and in inclement weather. One of the highlights of winter, especially with heavy snows, was to ride the bobsled. If the snowplow had already cleared the road, they would glide over the packed snow with great style in the one-horse cutter, their sleigh bells ringing all the way to school.

The school experience itself found Earl in a one-room school house of red brick, where more than one class would be assembled in the