

Historian Report:

Interview with former ACJS President Larry Hoover, February 24, 2019

Interviewer: Mitchel P. Roth (**MR**)

Interviewee: Larry Hoover (*LH*)

Interviewer (**MR**): Besides president, what other positions have you held in the Academy?

LH:

- **President 1982-1983;**
- Police Section, Executive Board Member (elected position), 1998-2000
- Nominations and Elections Committee, 1987-1988 and 1988-1989
- Trustee, 1977-1980
- Chairperson of Accreditation Committee, 1978-1980
 - The accreditation effort took almost five years
- Instructor in Professional Development Workshops, 1977-1978.

MR: What did you enjoy most about being president of ACJS?

LH: Learning the dynamics of an array of universities and colleges through the accreditation process, which was incredibly time consuming.

MR: What did you least like?

LH: Budget and related issues. Bookkeeping seemed to take up a significant amount of time back then. Of course, this was prior to the Internet and the WWW, which I am sure make it less of a burden today.

MR: What were some of the unexpected results of your term as president?

LH: Opportunity to launch the journal *Justice Quarterly* after withdrawal from the Journal of Criminal Justice, published by the University of Michigan Law School, was hammered out. During this period we also created the current ACJS Logo.

MR: How difficult was it teaching full time while fulfilling your duties as president?

LH: Some strain. I was able to get release time from my normal course load.

MR: Is the presidential position a job for anyone/everyone or does it take special qualities?

LH: It is not a role for everyone. To be successful one has to cultivate human relationships and concurrently attend to administrative management. The job basically requires one to assume the role of Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The President is expected to fulfill the symbolic duties of a CEO, including in particular attendance at numerous functions. At the time there were a number of social expectations. I would also add that whoever fills the position should possess plenty of energy and youthful vigor!

MR: What opportunities came your way that you would otherwise not have been privy to?

LH: None in particular.

MR: How many hours per week did you devote to the position?

LH: About a third of my time; at least 15 hours

MR: What was it like working with other ACJS members and staff?

LH: It was a pleasant experience. Fortunately there were no problems.

MR: What major changes in ACJS have you witnessed over the past 10 years or your years as president?

LH: Broadening the background of the membership. The demographics of ACJS are increasingly similar to ASC. What's more, back in the 1970s and 1980s, you belonged either to ASC or ACJS. Now it is fairly common to have dual membership.

MR: I was curious how the position of ACJS historian came about, especially since the duties of this position are still a work in progress.

LH: I recall that the Board during the time I served on it expressed concern about how easy it is to fail to document the development of programs.

MR: Your time as president has coincided with some major challenges to police power. Did having the platform as president afford you opportunities to weigh in on these issues?

LH: No

MR: What major issues in criminal justice and policing came up? As president did you feel constrained in taking policy positions?

LH: The creation of *Police Quarterly* did not "just happen." Launching the journal frequently entailed acrimonious exchange between various parties.

MR: Have you noticed any changes in ACJS during your watch in contrast to the previous administration? Anything changed?

LH: The dates of my term is 1982 – 1983. I cannot recall anything in particular.

MR: Did you ever feel your hands were tied in terms of budget?

LH: No. The President is responsible to the Executive Board, and should be. The way ACJS is/was set up was that the president operated more as a figurehead and mediator. In that era the position was not a strong one. He/she set up rules but was part of a system of checks and balances, with the Board the stronger of the two positions.

MR: How do you see ACJS being affected during the Trump years and what challenges does it pose to the current ACJS president? Would it have made your term any different if it coincided with the new administration?

LH: I have nothing but disdain for the Trump administration. That being noted, there have not been any particular actions that affect ACJS in a meaningful way.

MR: Any general observations?

LH: In the 1970s rising crime rates brought criminal justice to national attention. At the same time, federal funding from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration's Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP) made tuition reimbursement available to both in-service and pre-service students. Making tuition dollars available meant a bump in enrollments. At the time small

private liberal arts colleges were struggling to survive. The emergence of community colleges translated into enrollment drops in small, private liberal arts colleges. Most did not survive. However, a few regarded the LEEP program as a recruiting opportunity – a lifeboat. At least 1,000 stressed institutions created programs in criminal justice overnight. There was no faculty, no experience in the field, nothing. Abuse by unqualified institutions was confounded by the practice of awarding massive amounts of credit for “past experience”, including police academy training.

In response, the ACJS Board created an accreditation program. I had the privilege of chairing that committee. Fewer than twenty programs achieved accredited status. However, the standards were widely implemented. Compliance with the standards became the norm, not the exception. Among the standards were faculty requirements, institutional support, and the tough curtailment of life experience credit.

MR: Any adverse observations?

LH: My single significant negative observation is the inappropriate but constant fixation on influencing federal policy. There is not unanimity in the membership on any policy issue that might be addressed by federal action. Thus the Academy as an organization should not espouse any particular policy.