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# JOURNAL

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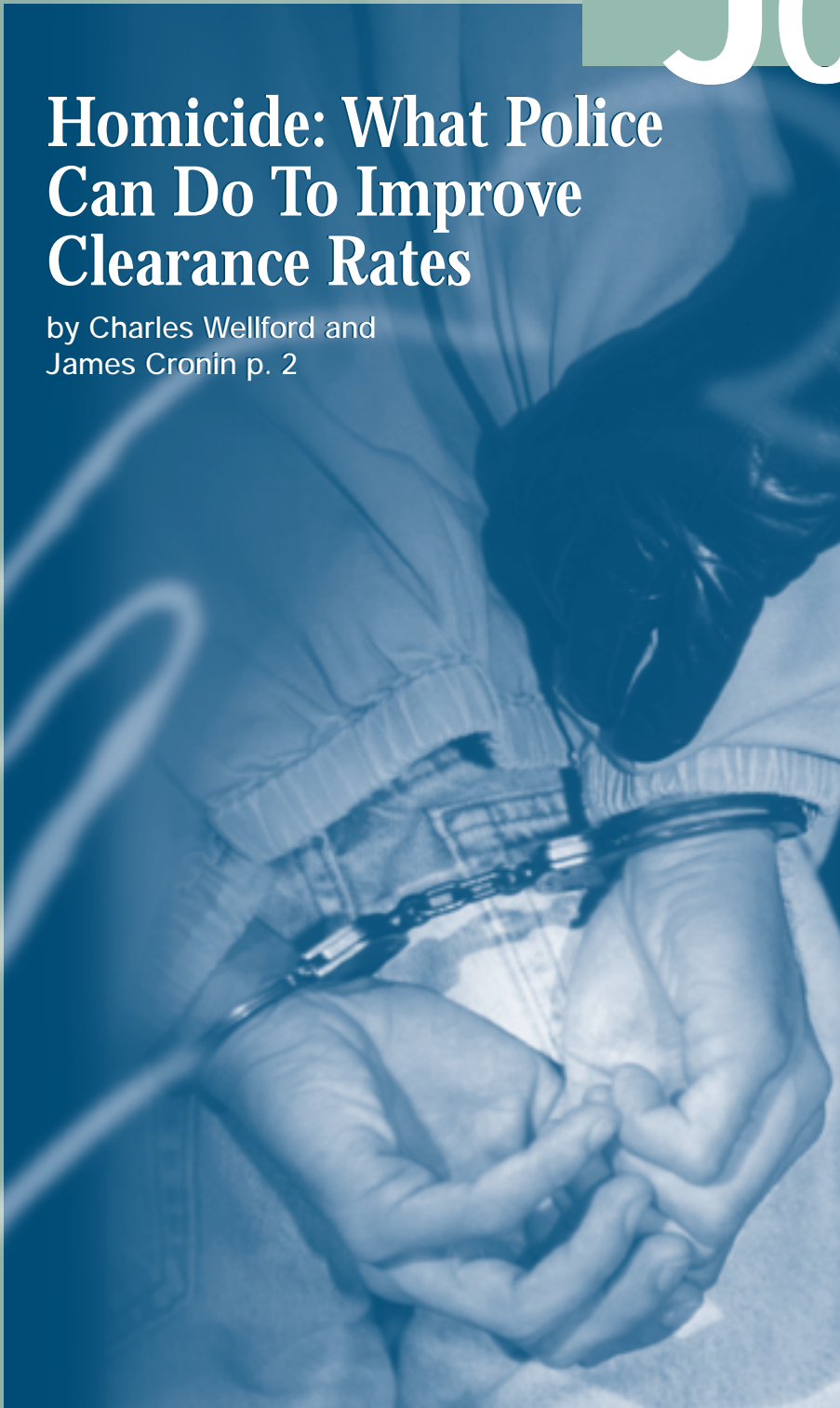
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KNOWLEDGE TO  
MEET THE CHALLENGE OF  
CRIME AND JUSTICE

## National Institute of Justice

**Jeremy Travis**  
Director

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## Director's Message

The publication of this issue of the *NIJ Journal* happens to occur in the same month I conclude my tenure as director of NIJ. It's a happy coincidence because this issue of the *NIJ Journal* truly exemplifies the many ways NIJ fulfills its mission to help policymakers and practitioners.

The stories in this issue illustrate NIJ's commitment to disseminate research-based information to the field. Charles Wellford and James Cronin, for example, present findings from their study of homicide clearance rates and offer specific steps law enforcement agencies can take to increase the number of homicide cases they close. Laurence Steinberg discusses youth violence in the context of schools, families, and parenting. He reminds us that despite recent media attention of several horrific incidents, research shows us that schools are among the safest places for children. Nora Fitzgerald and Jack Riley, on the other hand, point out what we don't know—that research-based investigation revealed very little hard evidence about the prevalence and incidence of drug-facilitated rape. But based on what we do know, Gail Abarbanel was able to provide some practical guidance and recommendations for law enforcement and victim advocates.

The findings in this issue were made possible for the most part by using Federal dollars to apply the principles of scientific inquiry to investigate issues and solve problems. To enhance this aspect of NIJ's mission, the Department of Justice recently proposed to Congress that one percent of the Office of Justice Programs budget (which in fiscal year 2000 is \$4 billion) be set aside for research and development. Such a significant commitment would boost funding for criminal justice research and development closer to the levels found in many other national-level scientific endeavors. It would increase NIJ's ability to help State and local policymakers and practitioners develop programs and policies based on research.

As I leave and watch from a distance NIJ's progress, I will see the seeds that were planted during the past 6 years begin to bear fruit—especially in the areas of violence against women, technology development in general and DNA technology in particular, and in our understanding of policing organizations. With expanded resources and growing support from the fields of research and practice, I am confident that the findings from vigorous scientific inquiry can make an even greater contribution to producing safe and just communities.

**Jeremy Travis**  
Director

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### Communicating for Public Safety:

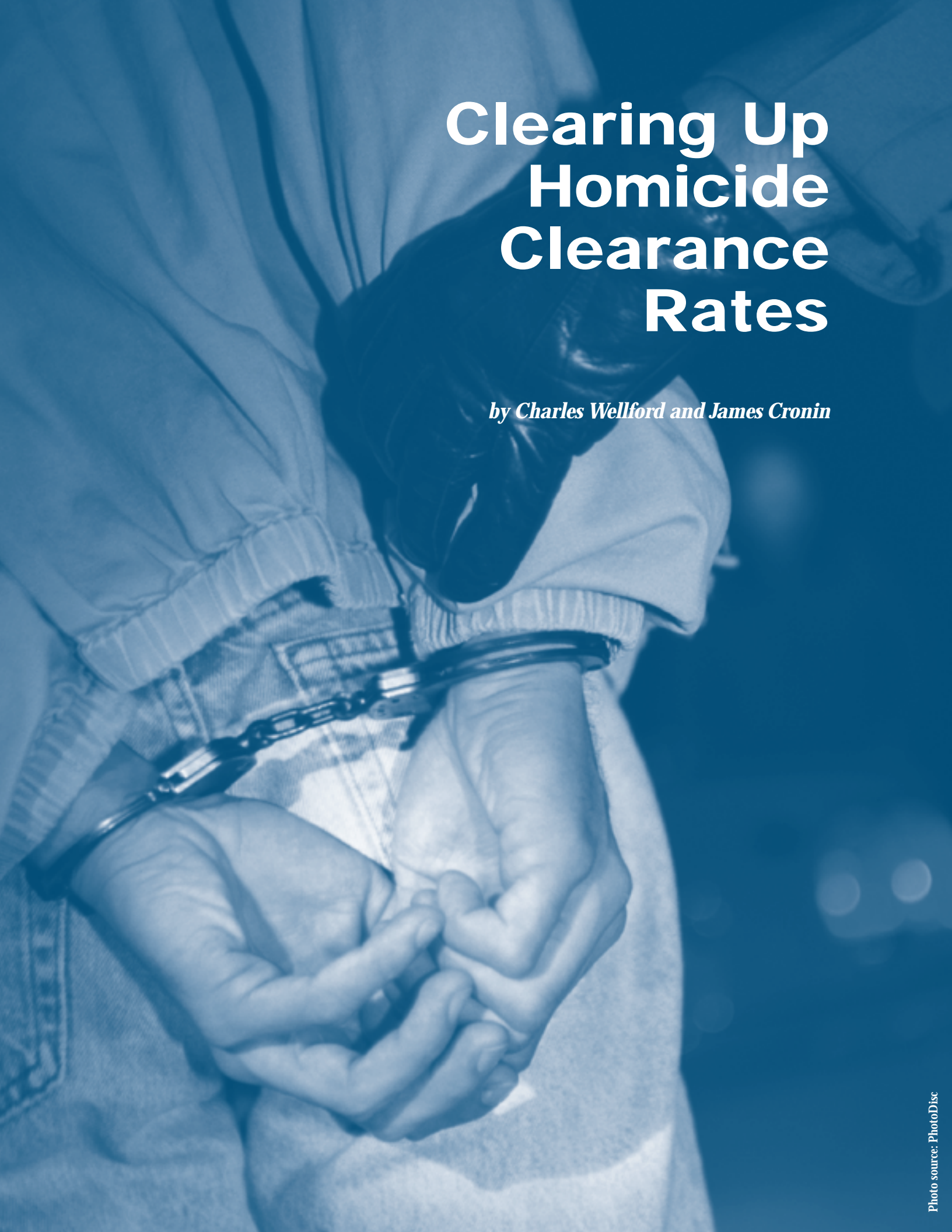
When multiple public safety agencies need to mount a coordinated response, they may not be able to talk to each other in real time via their radios because their radio equipment is incompatible. Many agencies are examining new ways to communicate with one another. See "Can We Talk? Public Safety and the Interoperability Challenge," page 16. Photo source: PhotoDisc



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### The Family and Youth Violence:

There is no single cause of youth violence, but a common factor that cuts across different cases is some type of family dysfunction. See "Youth Violence: Do Parents and Families Make a Difference?," page 30. Photo source: PhotoDisc



# Clearing Up Homicide Clearance Rates

*by Charles Wellford and James Cronin*

Law enforcement's ability to make arrests following crimes appears to have significantly diminished in recent years. This is especially true for homicide: From 1980 to 1996, the rate at which homicide cases were cleared nationally decreased more than 7 percent (see figure 1). (The clearance rate is the proportion of crimes in a jurisdiction for which the police report an arrest.)

Although the rates nationally are declining, some cities have continued to show fairly high clearance rates for homicide as well as for total crime. Others have had much lower rates than the average. What makes one department's clearance rates better than another? It turns out to be more than the way the department defines and counts its clearance rates or how many homicides occur each year.

Researchers from the University of Maryland, working with the Justice Research and Statistics Association, designed a multi-State study in four large cities to identify the factors that affected the clearance of homicides during 1994 and 1995.

They found that certain persistent factors are related to an agency's ability to clear homicide cases. These factors can be divided into two cate-

## about the authors

Charles Wellford, Ph.D., is Chair and Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Maryland, College Park, and Director of the Maryland Justice Analysis Center. James Cronin is a Research Associate with the Bureau of Governmental Research at the University of Maryland.

To obtain the full report upon which this article is based, see "For More Information" at the end of this article. The project was supported by NIJ grant number 1996-IJ-CX-0047 to the Justice Research and Statistics Association.

gories: (1) Police practices and procedures, over which the police have complete control, such as the actions of the first officer on the scene and the number of detectives assigned to the case, and (2) case characteristics, over which the police have no control, such as type of weapon used and involvement of drugs.

Key police-related characteristics include how many detectives are assigned to the case and for how long, how quickly detectives arrive at the scene, and—what appears to be very important—the activities undertaken by the first officer on the scene. (See "What Kinds of Cases Are More Likely to Be Closed?" on next page.)

The findings suggest that a law enforcement agency's policies and practices can have a substantial impact on the clearance of homicide cases and can be increased by improving certain investigation policies and procedures involving

the actions taken by the first officer to the scene, how quickly detectives arrive on the scene and the subsequent actions they take, and how many resources the agency dedicates to the investigation.

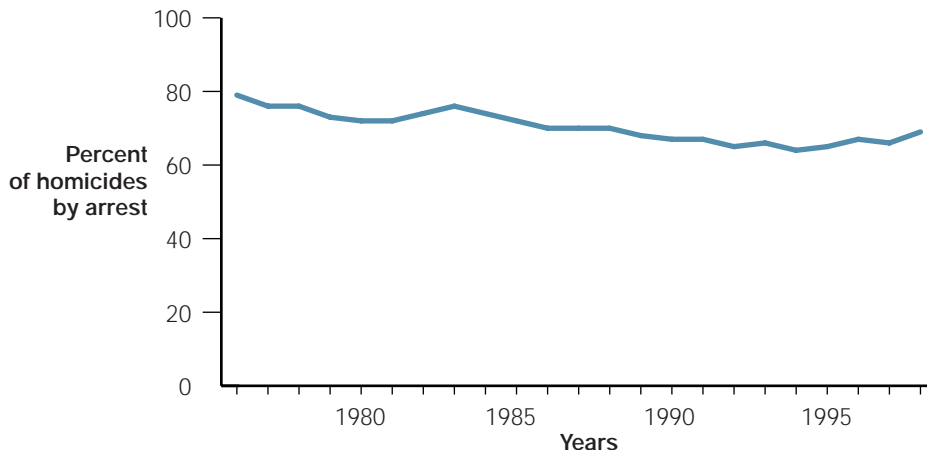
## Factors That Appear to Affect Homicide Clearance Rates

Surprisingly, very little research has been conducted on the determinants of clearance rates for any type of crime, including homicide. The homicide study's review of existing literature revealed no comparative studies or systematic attempts to understand homicide clearance. The few studies of burglary and robbery clearance that are available were used to guide the development of the homicide study.<sup>1</sup>

Some scholars have speculated about what factors affect homicide clearance rates. Riedel and Rinehart<sup>2</sup> and Cardarelli and Cavanaugh,<sup>3</sup> for example, have demonstrated the decline in clearances and have suggested several reasons:

- Changes in the nature of homicides. In the past, homicide was understood primarily to be a crime of passion involving family members or close acquaintances. These existing social relationships and the way in which the crime was carried out made identifying the alleged offender relatively easy. This, in turn, led to higher rates of clearance. In recent years, however, homicides are more often stranger-to-stranger

Figure 1: Percentage of Homicides Cleared by Arrest, 1976–1998



Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reports, *Crime in the United States, 1976–98*. See also <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/addinfo.htm>.

# What Kinds of Cases Are More Likely to Be Closed?

Researchers analyzed 215 possible predictors of clearance and found 51 factors that were statistically significant—factors that, if present, were likely to lead to the case being closed. When these significant variables were analyzed simultaneously (using multivariate analysis techniques), the following appeared to be key to closing the case:

## Factors Within Police Control That Lead to Closure

### Initial Response:

- The first officer on the scene immediately notifies the homicide unit, medical examiner's office, and crime lab.
- The first officer on the scene secures the area and attempts to locate witnesses.
- A detective arrives at the scene within 30 minutes.

### Actions of Detectives:

- Three or four detectives are assigned to the case.\*
- Detectives describe the crime scene, including measurements, in their notes.
- Detectives follow up on all witness information.
- Detectives attend the postmortem examination.

### Other Police Responses:

- A computer check, using the local Criminal Justice Information System, is conducted on the suspect, the gun, and any witnesses.\*
- A witness at the crime scene provides valuable information about the circumstances of the death, the motivation, the identification of the suspect or victim, and the whereabouts of the suspect.\*
- Witnesses, friends, acquaintances, and neighbors of the victim are interviewed.\*

\* These are among the top 15 factors that were found to be most highly correlated with clearing the case in the multivariate analysis.

- The medical examiner prepares a body chart of the victim.\*
- The attending physician and medical personnel are interviewed.
- Confidential informants are used.

## Factors Outside Police Control That are Related to Closure

- The suspect is African American or Hispanic.\*
- The homicide occurs in a private location (e.g., a home or club) rather than a public location (e.g., a city street).\*
- An eyewitness observes the homicide.\*
- A weapon is found at the crime scene.
- The homicide is not drug-related.\*
- The victim is a member of a gang or drug organization.
- The conflict is over money or property other than drugs.
- The homicide is committed in an attempt to get money to buy drugs.
- The suspect kills the victim to avoid retaliation.

## Typical Scenarios

- **Actions of the first officer on the scene.** The homicide was more likely to be cleared if the first officer on the scene notified the homicide unit, the medical examiner, or the crime lab, or if the officer attempted to locate witnesses. The case was more likely to be closed if the crime scene was measured.
- **Detectives.** A case was more likely to be solved if 3, 4, or 11 detectives were assigned to the case, compared to just 1 detective. The case was more likely to be solved if it took the detectives less than 30 minutes to arrive at the crime scene. The case was more likely to be solved if the detectives followed up on witness information and attended the postmortem examination.
- **Drugs.** The presence of drugs in a case has an effect on its closing.

Cases were less likely to be closed when drugs were a circumstance.

- **Weapons.** Cases in which the victim was killed by a rifle, knife, or personal weapon (hands or feet) were more likely to be solved than cases in which the victim was killed with a handgun. Furthermore, the case was more likely to be cleared if the police identified the weapon used to kill the victim or a weapon was found at the scene.

- **Motivation.** The case was more likely to be closed if the homicide preempted an anticipated retaliatory attack, involved a conflict over money or property other than drugs, or the suspect was defending him- or herself. The case was less likely to be closed if the homicide was punishment for informing.

- **Witnesses and sources of information.** A case was more likely to be closed when witnesses were at the crime scene and provided valuable information, including the circumstances of death, the motivation for the homicide, identification of the suspect, identification of the victim, and location of the suspect. The crime was more likely to be closed when a neighborhood survey provided valuable information, when friends and neighbors of the victim were interviewed, and when confidential informants provided valuable information or came forward on their own. When police used surveillance in a case, the case was more likely to be solved.

- **Computer checks.** When computer checks were conducted on a suspect or a gun, the case was more likely to be solved, but when computer checks were conducted on the victim or witnesses, the case was less likely to be solved.

- **Medical examiner.** Cases were more likely to be solved when the medical examiner collected specimens, recovered a projectile, or prepared a body chart.

# Cities, Number of Cases, Definitions, and Data Collection Methods

The study examined 798 homicides in four large American cities (198 to 200 cases in each city) during 1994 and 1995. The researchers chose large cities because of their substantial number of homicides in relation to the United States as a whole.

The cities were selected to maximize variation on homicide and total index crime clearance rates measured from 1980 through 1993:

- **City A:** low homicide clearance rates, low total clearance rates.
- **City B:** high homicide clearance rates, low total clearance rates.
- **City C:** low homicide clearance rates, high total clearance rates.
- **City D:** high homicide clearance rates, high total clearance rates.

To encourage participation in the study, cities were assured that their names would not be revealed.

The cases were selected so that the proportion of open and closed homicide cases in the sample matched that of the entire homicide caseload for those years for that city. This resulted in a total of 589 (74 percent) solved cases and 209 (26 percent) unsolved cases in the sample. Of the 589 closed cases, 50 percent

were solved within 1 week; 93.2 percent were solved within 1 year.

The predominate motivation, as classified by the data collectors who read the files, for committing the homicide for all cases was "other conflict" (43.0 percent). "Other conflict" involves an argument between the victim and offender that does not involve money or drugs. The second largest motivation for the homicide was "drug-related" (26.4 percent), which includes failure to pay a drug debt, robbery during a drug deal, and conflict over drug territory. The third greatest motivation for the homicide was "retaliation" (22.7 percent).

## Definition of a Closed Case

The research design considered a case closed when an arrest was made, the homicide was a murder/suicide situation, or the homicide was in self-defense. If a warrant was issued but the suspect was not taken into custody, the case was considered open.

An arrest warrant was issued and the suspect was arrested in 80 percent of the closed cases. In the remaining closed cases, the suspect was already in custody (17 percent), the homicide was a murder/suicide (2 percent), or the homicide was in self-defense (1 percent). A warrant was issued but the suspect was

not taken into custody in 8 percent of the open cases.

## Data Collection Methods

Data were collected from open and closed cases by researchers from the Statistical Analysis Centers in the States where each city was located. Two data collection instruments were employed:

- The Homicide Attribute Coding Instrument provided a detailed description of the circumstances surrounding the homicide case, along with information regarding prior criminal records of victims and suspects, the relationship between victims and suspects, drug use by suspects or victims at the time of the incident, number of eyewitnesses, and suspected motivation for the homicide.
- The Investigative Instrument provided information on the process used by homicide detectives to investigate the case, such as the status of the case, the number of detectives assigned to the case, what evidence was found at the crime scene and what types of checks and tests were performed on the evidence found, whether search warrants were issued, who was interviewed, and what information was obtained by following up on the initial stages of the investigation.

crimes and involve more activity in the illegal drug market. Identification of alleged offenders in stranger-to-stranger crimes and drug market-related homicides is much less likely.

- Changes in police resources. As police resources were stretched when crime rates were rising through the 1980's, the ability to devote substantial numbers of experienced personnel and other resources to police investigations may have diminished. This change in the way police departments responded also could have had a negative impact on rates of clearance.

- Changes in bystander behavior. One proposition is that the willingness of citizens to cooperate with police, particularly in large urban areas, has decreased and therefore the role of third parties as witnesses and sources of information has decreased. As a result, it has become more difficult for police to identify alleged offenders, especially those in stranger-to-stranger crimes.

These suggestions provide interesting anecdotal hypotheses that might explain the national trend in declining homicide clearance, but they have not been subjected to systemat-

ic research, and none of the explanations are easily reconciled with the stability of the clearance rates found in the four cities in the study. Analysis of clearance rates in these cities from 1980 through 1994, for example, showed that clearance rates remained virtually the same: The city with a high total clearance rate and high homicide rate remained consistently so throughout this period, as did the cities with high clearance rates/low homicide rates, low clearance rates/high homicide rates, and low clearance rates/low homicide rates. (See "Cities, Number of Cases, Definitions, and Data Collection Methods.")

As Maxwell has observed, the absence of systematic research is in part the result of limitations with the national data on homicides.<sup>4</sup> The primary sources of homicide data are the supplemental homicide reports filed with the Federal Bureau of Investigation. These reports are quite useful for basic descriptions of homicides, but they do not contain information on whether the offense was cleared and, if so, how. They also do not provide detailed information on the nature of the offense or, more important for the study of homicide clearance rates, on the nature of the investigation.

The existing research literature helps to document the decline in the rates of clearance, suggests possible explanations for the decline, and establishes that national data are not useful in advancing our understanding of clearance. But the literature does not help law enforcement agencies develop policies and procedures that might increase the rate of homicide clearance.

## Police Actions Can Lead to High Clearance Rates

The homicide clearance study examined 215 factors in homicide cases to determine the relationship of each factor to whether the case was cleared by arrest. Of the 215 factors analyzed, 51 were found to be significantly and positively associated with closing a homicide case. These factors include both police practices and case characteristics, and 37 of the 51 factors appear to be within the control of police. (See “What Kinds of Cases Are More Likely to Be Closed?” page 4) When the researchers conducted further analysis of the 51 significant variables in relationship to homicide clearance (i.e., analyzed them

The probability of clearance increases significantly when the first officer on the scene quickly notifies the homicide unit, the medical examiners, and the crime lab and attempts to locate witnesses, secure the area, and identify potential witnesses in the neighborhood.

simultaneously), they found that 15 remained significant.

The probability of clearance increases significantly when the first officer on the scene quickly notifies the homicide unit, the medical examiners, and the crime lab and attempts to locate witnesses, secure the area, and identify potential witnesses in the neighborhood.

The data indicate that the number of detectives assigned to a case is particularly important: Assigning a minimum of three detectives and perhaps four appears to increase the likelihood of clearing it. Assigning more than 4 detectives does not appear to make a difference unless an agency makes a massive investment of 11 or more detectives. Only one city, which had a high homicide clearance rate, routinely used a great number of homicide detectives on a case. That city used 11 detectives in 63 percent of the 200 cases in its sample.

The city with the consistently highest clearance rates also was the city that was much more likely to devote 11 detectives during the initial days of investigation.

The length of time it takes detectives to arrive at the scene also is key. Cases in which the detective arrived within 30 minutes were more likely to be cleared. These findings have clear implications for departments considering how many detectives to assign to homicide cases, as well as related policies about overtime and the availability of take-home cars for detectives.

The findings also suggest the growing importance of computer checks of various types, particularly checks on guns, suspects, and victims. Cases in which computer checks—using the local Criminal Justice Information System—were conducted on the victim, suspect, witnesses, and guns were more likely to be cleared.

Drug cases continue to be the most difficult for police to solve, but the results of the homicide clearance study show that even in drug cases, police response can lead to an arrest.

In addition to helping agencies determine what they can do differently to improve their homicide clearance rate, this research also may be useful in developing



measures of police performance. Homicide cases, like all other cases, begin with different levels of “solvability” and differ in regard to the probability of an arrest. But the research suggests that few homicide cases, given the right initial response, the right timing, and the right dedication of resources, cannot be cleared.

NCJ 181728

## Notes

1. See Eck, J.E., *Solving Crimes: The Investigation of Burglary and Robbery*, Washington, D.C.: Police Executive Research Forum, 1983; and Greenwood, P.W., J.M. Chaiken, and J. Petersilia, *The Criminal Investigation Process*, Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath, 1977.
2. Riedel, M., and A. Rinehart. “Clearance, Missing Data, and Murder.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, 1994.
3. Cardarelli, A.P., and D. Cavanaugh, “Uncleared Homicides in the United States: An Exploratory Study of Trends and Patterns.” Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology, 1992.
4. Maxwell, M.G., “Circumstances in Supplementary Homicide Reports,” *Criminology* 27 (1989): 671–695.

## For More Information

To download a copy of the full report, visit the Justice Research and Statistics Association Web site: <http://www.jrsa.org>. Paper copies are available from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 1–800–851–3420, P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849–6000 (NCJ 181356). Photocopying fees apply. Copies also are available for \$15 from the Justice Research and Statistics Association, 777 North Capitol Street NE., Suite 801, Washington, D.C. 20002, 202–842–9330.

## Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the Justice Research and Statistics Association; the four State Statistical Analysis Centers that collected the data for this study: California, Maryland, Michigan, and Wisconsin; and Phyllis McDonald, our grant monitor at the National Institute of Justice, for their assistance with this project. Members of the project advisory group provided valuable suggestions and ideas: Thomas Barnes, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department; John Firman, International Association of Chiefs of Police; Lawrence Sherman, University of Maryland; and Richard Williams, Madison (Wisconsin) Police Department. The following homicide detectives provided valuable experience and expertise in homicide investigations during the planning stages of this project: Bud Campbell and Larry Nodiff, Philadelphia Police Department; Errol Etting and Timothy Keel, Baltimore City Police Department; and Michael Sullivan, District of Columbia Metropolitan Police Department.



# Drug-Facilitated Rape: Looking for the Missing Pieces

*by Nora Fitzgerald and K. Jack Riley*

**M**ore than 430,000 sexual assaults occur annually in the United States, according to victimization surveys.<sup>1</sup> Many of these assaults involve alcohol and drugs,<sup>2</sup> which are often used voluntarily by both victim and offender.<sup>3,4</sup> But in the mid- and late 1990's, ethnographers and rape crisis centers began hearing reports of drugs, often referred to as "roofies" and "liquid ecstasy," being administered clandestinely to immobilize victims, impair their memory, and thus facilitate rape. Two drugs in particular were mentioned in these reports: Rohypnol (the pharmaceutical trade name for flunitrazepam) and GHB (gamma-hydroxybutyrate).

These drugs can produce loss of consciousness and the inability

to recall recent events. Victims may not be aware that they have ingested drugs or that they have been raped while under the influence of drugs.<sup>5</sup> Reports of such assaults and increases in the recreational consumption of the drugs used in these assaults have brought drug-facilitated rape into sharp focus in recent years.

This article summarizes findings about drug-facilitated rape learned by researchers at the U.S. Depart-

ment of Justice in response to a request from the Attorney General for more information about this new phenomenon. (See "How This Article Came to Be.")

## What Are Rape-Facilitating Drugs?

Sexual assault victims who believe drugs were surreptitiously given to them typically report remembering sensations of drunkenness that do not correspond with the amounts of alcohol consumed, unexplained gaps in memory, altered levels of consciousness, and unexplainable signs of physical trauma. The most commonly implicated drugs are Rohypnol and GHB.

**Rohypnol**, or flunitrazepam, belongs to a class of drugs called benzodiazepines and is approved for use in 80 countries, but not in the United States or Canada. It is available only in pill form, is tasteless, odorless, and colorless, and dissolves to some degree in liquid.

Benzodiazepines are used primarily to produce sedation, sleep, or muscle relaxation; to reduce seizures and anxiety; and to produce anterograde amnesia, a desired effect for some surgical procedures. *Anterograde amnesia* is a condition in which events that occurred during the time the drug was in effect are forgotten, in contrast to *retrograde amnesia*, in which events prior to the intervening agent are forgotten.

Rohypnol mentally and physically incapacitates an individual, particularly when used in combination

## about the authors

Nora Fitzgerald is a Social Science Analyst at the National Institute of Justice.

K. Jack Riley, Ph.D., is Director of the Criminal Justice Program at RAND. Fitzgerald and Riley (who at the time was Director of NIJ's Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring program) led the Department of Justice working group that conducted the research and wrote the report upon which this article is based.

## How This Article Came to Be

In December 1997, the U.S. Attorney General directed the Department of Justice to assess the problems posed by drugs being used to facilitate rape. A working group chaired by NIJ Director Jeremy Travis and representatives from several other Justice Department agencies began meeting regularly to structure the inquiry and review progress.

The group's overarching objective was to assess the state of knowledge about drug-facilitated rape and report back to the Attorney General within several months.

The group's first step was to determine how often drug-facilitated rape occurs. There are no national statistics for this offense (such as would be provided by the *Uniform Crime Reports*, the *National Criminal Victimization Survey*, or the National Judicial Reporting Program), so the group conducted a thorough review of other, nonnational-level research. This search revealed that no empirical data exist to answer the question.

The investigation then turned to a number of other data sources representing different perspectives: ethnographers, the print media, Internet-based data, law enforcement, victim advocates, policymakers, and the pharmaceutical industry. The search uncovered a considerable amount of conflicting information amid differing viewpoints.

The working group learned a great deal from its investigation but could draw no conclusions beyond a clear recognition that the incidence of this offense is extraordinarily difficult to measure, that existing indicators are incapable of monitoring the problem, and that the true magnitude of the problem cannot be known with certainty from the scientific methods that have been used to date.

To learn how to obtain a copy of the full report, see "For More Information" on page 15.

## Description of Data Sources

**Monitoring the Future (MTF):** This ongoing survey of 8th, 10th, and 12th graders uses a national probability sample. Sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Visit <http://www.monitoringthefuture.org>.

**Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN):** DAWN records instances of emergency room visits and deaths related to particular drugs. Sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Visit <http://www.samhsa.gov> and <http://www.health.org/pubs/dawn/index.htm>.

**Community Epidemiology Working Group (CEWG):** This ethnographic reporting system, in place in 21 metropolitan areas, supplements findings from national drug data systems. Sponsored by the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Visit <http://www.nida.nih.gov>.

**Pulse Check:** This ethnographic reporting system covers 20 metropolitan areas. Sponsored by the White House's Office of National Drug Control Policy. Visit <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov>.

with alcohol, and is capable of producing anterograde amnesia.

**GHB**, a drug first synthesized in the 1920's, occurs naturally in the human body in minute amounts. It was under development as an anesthetic agent in the late 1950's and early 1960's, but no commercial products were developed from these efforts. Until the FDA banned the drug in 1990, it was available through health food stores and marketed as both a sleep aid and as a body-building supplement. Several vendors distributed products containing GHB under trade names such as "Gamma Hydrate" and "Somatomax PM."

GHB is marketed in some European countries as an adjunct to anesthesia

and currently is being tested for treatment of narcolepsy as well as alcohol addiction and withdrawal (with mixed results) in Europe and the United States.<sup>6</sup>

### How Common Is Drug-Facilitated Rape?

No one really knows how common drug-facilitated rape is because today's research tools do not offer a means of measuring the number of incidents. However, recent findings from ethnographic research and school-based surveys can provide insight into the voluntary use of these drugs.

Flunitrazepam first appeared in early warning ethnographic systems in December 1993, when it was reported among Miami high school students.

By 1995, the Community Epidemiology Working Group (CEWG) found that use of Rohypnol was spreading in Florida and Texas. Pulse Check reported Rohypnol use was rising, particularly among youth and young adults. Ethnographers in Florida and Texas reported that local law enforcement agents were seizing more Rohypnol tablets, often still in the manufacturer's packaging.

In 1996, Monitoring the Future (MTF) began tracking Rohypnol. In 1999, MTF found that 0.5 percent of 8th graders and 1.0 percent of 10th and 12th graders had reported using Rohypnol in 1998, a level slightly below those found a year earlier.<sup>7</sup> Such rates appear low in comparison to marijuana or amphetamine use, but they are not trivial—10th and 12th graders report similar levels of heroin use.<sup>8</sup>

In 1997, Pulse Check noted that although Rohypnol continued to be available in Florida and Texas, distribution had slowed.

In 1998, Texas' statewide student survey, which uses the same methodology and many of the same items as MTF, found that 1.3 to 2.1 percent of Texas students in grades 8 to 12 reported use of Rohypnol during the school year.<sup>9</sup> Later in 1998, Pulse Check reported that Rohypnol was in use in Florida, Hawaii, Minnesota, and Texas.

Mention of widespread recreational use of GHB only recently has been reported by CEWG in December 1997. In winter 1998, Pulse Check reported use of GHB in many urban areas.

The Drug Abuse Warning Network (DAWN) also has captured information about GHB because of overdoses. The Drug Enforcement Administration has documented approximately 650 overdoses and 20 deaths related to GHB. MTF added questions about GHB to its year 2000 survey.

Available law enforcement statistics on seizures and trafficking (primarily from the Drug Enforcement Administration) tend to corroborate the ethnographic and survey data.

Ethnographic measures may not represent the true scale of the drugs' use, however, and more rigorous scientific measures have not been in place long enough to give researchers the ability to project accurate trends.

Another factor complicating science's ability to measure the incidence and prevalence of these drugs is the lack of law enforcement evidence. Investigations of suspected drug-facilitated assaults often turn out to be inconclusive because many victims do not seek assistance until hours or days later, in part because the drugs have impaired recall and in part because victims may not recognize the signs of sexual assault. By the time they do report a suspected assault, conclusive forensic evidence may have been lost. Even when

victims do suspect a drug-facilitated rape and seek help immediately, law enforcement agencies may not know how to collect evidence appropriately or how to test urine using the sensitive method required. (See further discussion of investigation

policies below and in the sidebar “Learning From Victims.”)

To add more complexity to the puzzle, school-based surveys seem to suggest that Rohypnol and GHB are consumed voluntarily, perhaps

increasingly so, because these drugs are cheap, easy to share, and easy to hide. Use appears to be concentrated among populations that also are at the highest risk of sexual assault, including middle school, high school, and college-age students.

## Learning From Victims

by Gail Abarbanel, LCSW

*Gail Abarbanel is the director of the Rape Treatment Center (RTC) at Santa Monica—UCLA Medical Center. Established in 1974, the RTC has treated more than 20,000 sexual assault victims. The RTC’s informational materials on drug-facilitated rape are distributed throughout the United States.*

In late 1995, the Rape Treatment Center at Santa Monica—UCLA Medical Center began to see a new pattern in sexual assault cases. Victims were coming in who believed they had been drugged surreptitiously to incapacitate them for the purpose of sexually assaulting them. Many of these cases followed a similar pattern. Victims were in what seemed like a comfortable social environment, such as a restaurant, party, or club. Unbeknownst to them, someone slipped a drug into their drink. As they consumed the drink, they began to feel disoriented or sick. The next thing they remembered was waking up hours later, sometimes in a different location.

When they regained consciousness, some victims were unsure if they had been sexually assaulted. Others found signs that they had been: They were undressed; they had semen stains on their bodies and/or clothing; they had vaginal or anal trauma, such as soreness and/or lacerations. All of these victims reported significant memory impairment. Most could not recall

what was done to them, who participated, or how many people were present while they were unconscious. Some could remember brief, intermittent periods of awakening, during which they were aware of their surroundings but were unable to move or speak. They felt “paralyzed.” One victim said, “I came to and saw this guy on top of me about to rape me, but I couldn’t move my arms or legs. Then I passed out again.”

It was apparent to the staff at the Rape Treatment Center that some rapists were using a powerful new weapon to overpower, disable, and control their victims.

When victims began to report these crimes to the authorities, their cases often were dismissed. One victim was told, “He has his memory, you don’t have yours. There’s no evidence. The case is closed.”

In many instances, crucial physical evidence was never gathered from victims or crime scenes. For example, even when sexual assault evidentiary examinations were conducted, urine specimens needed to detect traces of the drugs were omitted because, in most jurisdictions, urine samples were not routinely included in standardized rape kits. As a result of these deficiencies, many victims felt revictimized by the agencies that were supposed to help them.

When these cases initially appeared, there was little information in the

professional literature or in news coverage about rape drugs or drug-facilitated sexual assaults. Victims were a crucial source of information. Their reports helped define this emerging crime pattern by identifying the characteristics of these crimes that distinguished them from other sexual assaults.

In addition, the problems victims encountered suggested an urgent need for a comprehensive, broad-based community response, including new protocols for hospitals, police departments, and crime labs; updated rape evidence kits; training for police officers, prosecutors, rape crisis centers, and other victim service providers; public policy and legislative reforms; research; and public education and prevention programs.

What Victims Have Taught Us

**How Rape Drugs Facilitate Sexual Assaults.** Rape drugs make it relatively easy for rapists to gain control of their victims. Perpetrators do not have to overcome any form of resistance. They do not have to use physical force. They do not have to threaten to harm the victim to get compliance. Nor do they have to be concerned about a victim’s screams attracting attention. The drugs they administer immobilize and silence the victim.

*(continued on page 12)*

### **How Victims are Prevented From Detecting Threats to Their Safety.**

Victims of these crimes do not sense any threat to their safety when the assailant is incapacitating them. The “weapon” used to overpower and disable them is invisible. It is hidden in a drink.

### **How Victims are Inhibited From Exercising Self-Defense.**

The ability to sense danger is critical to a person’s ability to implement self-defense strategies. When faced with the threat of being raped, most people employ one or more protective measures, such as verbally negotiating with the assailant, cognitively assessing their options, screaming, stalling, attempting to escape, and/or physically resisting. If these efforts fail to prevent the rape, victims may “fight back” in other ways. They may use their sensory and cognitive abilities to memorize details about the assailant’s physical characteristics, the location of the crime, and other factors that can later be used to aid authorities in apprehending and prosecuting the offender.

The incapacitating effects of rape drugs rob victims of their ability to use these coping strategies. One victim said, “Rape is never a fair fight, but I didn’t even have a chance to defend myself.”

### **How Rapists Can Appear to Be Rescuers.**

When victims are drugged in places where other people are present, such as restaurants, clubs, bars, and parties, the rapist may appear to bystanders and witnesses to be a rescuer. The behavioral effects of rape drugs look very much like the effects of voluntary alcohol consumption. To onlookers, the victim may seem drunk. When the rapist carries or leads the victim to another location where the sexual assault will be committed, he may be viewed as “helping” or

transporting a vulnerable person to a safe place.

### **How Rape Drugs Affect Reporting Patterns.**

Victimization surveys consistently indicate very low reporting rates among rape victims. Delayed reports also are common, particularly in acquaintance rapes. The reasons are well documented in the literature. In drug-facilitated rapes, additional factors may account for low and delayed reporting, including the immediate and residual effects of the drugs (the victim may be unconscious for several hours after the assault and may have hangover effects after regaining consciousness); feelings of guilt or self-blame because of prior voluntary ingestion of alcohol and/or drugs; confusion and uncertainty about what happened; and reluctance to make an accusation without personal knowledge or memory of the assault circumstances.

### **How Victims’ Inability to Recall What Happened Affects the System’s Response.**

Many aspects of a rape investigation are facilitated by a victim’s ability to describe what happened. The victim’s narrative helps guide the medical/evidentiary examination and the police investigation. In addition, it may be an important consideration in prosecutor filing decisions and judgments about credibility. When victims of drug-facilitated rapes cannot give a complete narrative, they often encounter suspicion, disbelief, and/or frustration. Their inability to supply information that could assist the investigation and/or prosecution compounds their sense of helplessness.

### **How People Misjudge and Minimize Victims’ Trauma.**

Because most victims of drug-facilitated rapes have no memory of the sexual assault, people may mistakenly minimize the trauma

they suffered. One victim was told, “You’re lucky you can’t remember, you won’t suffer as much as other victims.” For all rape victims, the loss of control experienced during an assault is profoundly traumatic. In drug-facilitated rapes, the additional deprivation of cognition during the assault, combined with anterograde amnesia afterwards, subjects the victim to an extreme form of powerlessness.

### **How Drugging Is a Unique Form of Trauma.**

Many of the difficulties victims face in the aftermath of these assaults are due to the effects of the drugs given by offenders. The surreptitious drugging of a victim is, in and of itself, a cruel and criminal violation of the person. Some victims describe this aspect of the trauma as “mind rape.” The drugging should be recognized as a separate and distinct act of victimization in addition to any other acts of abuse and degradation to which the victim was subjected.

### **How Being Unable to Forget Compares With Being Unable to Remember.**

In the aftermath of rape, most victims suffer acute stress disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder symptoms. One of the most disturbing symptoms is their inability to *forget* what happened. The trauma is reexperienced repeatedly. Victims commonly have recurrent, intrusive recollections of the rape, including thoughts, flashbacks, and nightmares. For victims of drug-facilitated rapes, this aspect of the aftermath may be experienced differently. Because they cannot *recall* what happened during a significant time period, they have to cope with a gap in their memory. They experience the horror, powerlessness, and humiliation of not knowing what was done to them. They can only imagine what happened. One victim said, “I would rather have the nightmare.”

Drug-facilitated rape may be initiated in social settings, like parties and clubs, not traditionally considered high-risk environments. Prevention strategies must consider reaching new audiences, such as bartenders, party hosts, cab drivers, and others who might frequent places where drug-facilitated rapes are initiated or who might see the victim immediately prior to the assault.

The good news is that public awareness about the drugs and their effects appears to be increasing.

### What Is Being Done to Reduce Drug-Facilitated Rape?

Although current measuring methods do not reveal exactly how widespread drug-facilitated rape is, research does make it clear that the risk is real.

Since reports of drug-facilitated rape first started appearing, policymakers at the Federal level have moved to address the situation. One step was to improve enforcement at the U.S.-Mexican border of the ban on importation of flunitrazepam. Then in October 1996, President Clinton signed the Drug-Induced Rape Prevention and Punishment Act, which provides harsh penalties for distribution or possession of flunitrazepam. In February 2000, the

President signed similar legislation related to GHB.

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) within the Department of Justice currently is providing training and technical assistance for a model program designed to promote promising practices in sexual assault medical evidentiary exams. The program, which promotes the use of specially trained sexual assault nurse examiners, has developed a guide that addresses the issues of drug-facilitated rape, with specific information and guidance regarding comprehensive drug testing and an exam protocol.

National and local victim service organizations have responded to the situation by developing campaigns to raise awareness. A Los Angeles County task force developed a rape kit and procedures designed to improve the way evidence is gathered in suspected cases of drug-facilitated rape. The task force

members included the Rape Treatment Center at Santa Monica—UCLA Medical Center, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, the Los Angeles Police Department, and the County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department crime labs.

### What Are the Implications for Decisionmakers?

Practices and strategies to reduce sexual assault may help reduce drug-facilitated sexual assault, but there are unique aspects to drug-facilitated rape that demand tailored strategies.

**Environment Within Which the Crime Occurs.** Drug-facilitated rape may be initiated in social settings, like parties and clubs, not traditionally considered high-risk environments. Prevention strategies must consider reaching new audiences, such as bartenders, party hosts, cab drivers, and others who might frequent places where drug-facilitated rapes are initiated or who might see the victim immediately prior to the assault.

**Education of Targeted Audiences.** Educational programs need to be targeted to high-risk populations—high school and college-age people and people who frequent nightclubs and resorts—rather than to more general audiences.

**Investigation Policies.** The most numerous implications relate to forensic and investigation practices.

#### ■ **Interviewing Techniques.**

Drug-facilitated rape cases require interview techniques that can help identify a sexual assault case when the victim has memory gaps around the incident or isn't aware of being raped. When an interviewer suspects the victim has ingested a

rape drug, the victim should be asked to provide both urine and blood samples using established timeframes and guidelines for collection and preservation of forensic evidence.

In addition, even though the victim's memory of the assault may be extremely limited, consent should be obtained to conduct a thorough and complete medical/evidentiary examination. Oral, anal, and vaginal samples should be taken even when there is no visible trauma.

- **Importance of a Urine Specimen.** Rape drugs are more likely to be detected in urine than in blood, and the urine specimen should be collected as soon as possible. This can be done prior to commencement of the law enforcement interview and the forensic medical examination. Appropriate measures should be implemented to ensure that other potential evidence, such as sperm or semen, is protected when urine specimens are collected.

Law enforcement personnel, who are often the "first responders," should be aware of the importance of urine specimens in these cases. Victims should be transported immediately for medical care. If the victim must urinate before arriving at a medical care facility, the urine specimen should be saved in a clean container and brought to the medical facility. The chain of custody should be documented.

- **Crime Scene Evidence.** The crime scene also should be secured and examined immediately or critical evidence may be irretrievably lost. Drug-facilitated rape cases may involve multiple crime scenes, for example, the location of the drugging, the location of the sexual assault, locations where illegal

substances were produced or stored, and any vehicle used to transport the victim.

Investigators should be trained to look for specific types of evidence that have been present in other cases. Drug-related evidence may be found in the glasses from which the victim drank, containers used to mix drinks, and trash cans where these items were discarded. In one case, traces of GHB were found in the box of salt that was used to make margaritas. GHB is often carried in small bottles, such as eye drop bottles. It is often administered in sweet drinks, such as fruit nectars and liqueurs, to mask its salty taste.

Recipes for making GHB may be found on an offender's computer. In several cases, rapists who used drugs to incapacitate their victims also photographed or videotaped them. These pictures led to the identification of additional victims of the same offenders.

- **Rape Evidence Kits.** Standardized rape kits should be updated to include instructions and containers for the collection of urine specimens as well as blood in all cases in which drug-facilitated rape is suspected. In jurisdictions that do not have a standardized rape kit, a multi-agency task force composed of police officers, prosecutors, hospital personnel, crime lab technicians, and rape crisis counselors should develop one and monitor compliance. A forensic laboratory with the capability of conducting toxicology tests should be identified because not all crime labs have the specialized equipment needed to test for rape drugs. Procedures should be implemented to preserve the chain of custody of the evidence.

## Where Do We Go From Here?

Only four substantial studies of the prevalence and incidence of drug-facilitated rape were under way in late 1999 when this article was prepared, but none will provide an accurate measure of the situation. Three do not interview victims and therefore cannot factor in recreational use of Rohypnol or GHB. The fourth, a study by the University of Cincinnati and funded by NIJ, asks victims specifically if someone has ever placed Rohypnol in a beverage but does not link the responses to sexual assault victimizations or recreational use.

To understand more about drug-facilitated rape, a research agenda should include the following:

- Expansion of existing Federal data systems to provide information on drug-facilitated rape. The *National Crime Victimization Survey* may be an appropriate means for collecting population-based information on the incidence of this offense.
- Collection of new data in the fields of pharmacology and offender profiling.
- Ethnographic studies to develop a better understanding of the nature of this offense, including the most likely victims and the risk factors for victimization.
- A major multiyear, multimethod research initiative structured as four separate studies designed to measure the incidence of drug-facilitated rape among suspected cases, within the general population, among high-risk populations, and in the context of acquaintance rape.
- Funding for development of new drug detection technologies, such as hair analysis methods.



Some of the ethnographic and newspaper reporting on Rohypnol and GHB, which the Department of Justice working group tracked, has been driven in part by sporadic signs of increased recreational use and overdoses. But the more important impetus for further study appears to be reports from people who turn to rape counseling centers and clinics with complaints and suspicions that they have been victimized.

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## Notes

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  7. Conversation with Lloyd Johnston, Principal Investigator of Monitoring the Future, University of Michigan, Institute for Social Research, January 1, 2000.
  8. Among 10th graders, 1.4 percent reported heroin use in 1998; 1.1 percent of 12th graders reported heroin use in that same year.
  9. Among Hispanic students, the rates increase from 1.9 to 3.5 percent. In one school district on the Texas-Mexico border, 14 percent of the students reported ever having used Rohypnol, and 5.3 percent reported using it in the past month. See Maxwell, J.C., and L.Y. Liu, *1998 Texas School Survey of Substance Use Among Students: Grades 7-12*, Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, 1999.



# Can We Talk?

## *Public Safety and the Interoperability Challenge*

*by Brenna Smith  
and Tom Tolman*

In their routine day-to-day operations, many public safety agencies can transmit mug shots, fingerprints, and videos of crime scenes to their communications centers. But when agencies from multiple jurisdictions need to mount a coordinated response (for example, during a high-speed pursuit across geographic boundaries), they may not be able to talk to each other via their radios in real time because their separate radio equipment is incompatible. When disaster strikes—a bombing, plane crash, or natural disaster—they even may be forced to use hand signals or runners to relay messages.

In an era when news, data, and pictures can be sent instantaneously to the farthest reaches of the earth, it is hard to believe that police officers, firefighters, and emergency medical service personnel may not be able to talk to each other by radio.

Both the fairly common incident as well as the rare headline-grabbing event (such as the Oklahoma City bombing or Columbine shootings) test the ability of public safety agencies to coordinate and respond immediately. But in many cases, precious seconds can be lost while dispatchers translate and relay emergency communications.

Interoperability is the ability of two or more organizations to communicate and share information (voice, data, images, and video) in real or near real time.

## about the authors

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The ability to share information in real time between agencies is called *interoperability*. The basic idea is this: Persons who need to exchange information should be able to do so, even when they are using different technologies from different manufacturers, without the need for custom hardware or software to integrate them all. It's a little like the incompatibilities between various computer operating systems (e.g., Windows, Macintosh, Unix)—but a lot more complicated. Broadly defined, interoperability refers to the ability to transmit all types of communications electronically, including voice, data, and images. This article focuses on one aspect: The ability of public safety agencies to talk to each other via radios.

### Why Do We Have This Problem?

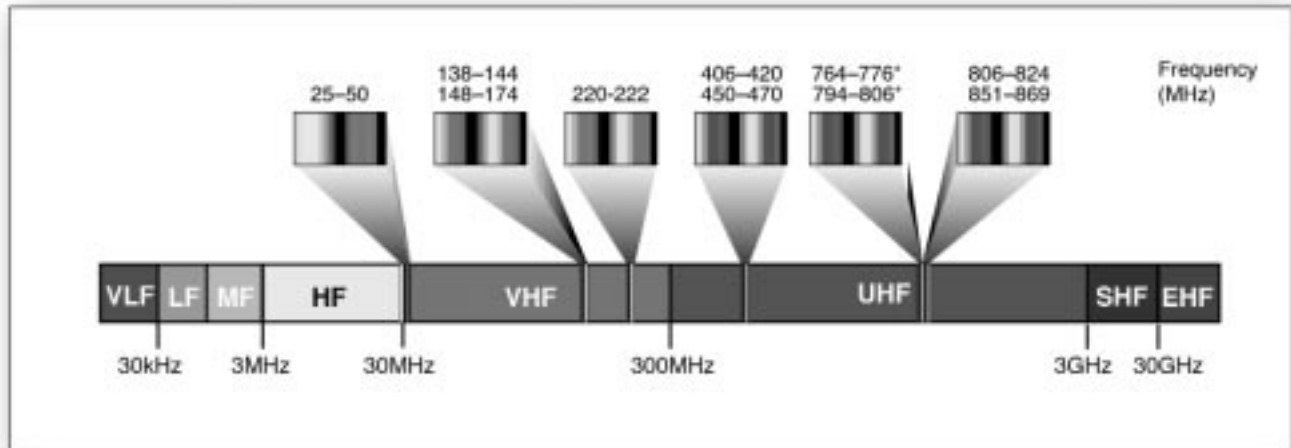
Many factors contribute to lack of interoperability. Public safety agencies report that incompatible radio frequency bands and limited

funding to update equipment are their biggest problems,<sup>1</sup> but John Clark, former Deputy Chief of Public Safety for the Federal Communications Commission, sees the issue in larger terms. Clark says, "The problem with public safety interoperability is a problem of management, leadership, institutional control, and institutional culture."

**Limited Radio "Spectrum."** In the early years of radio communication, public safety agencies used radio spectrum only for voice transmissions. Today, public safety agencies are using radio spectrum for much more than voice transmissions. Just as consumers can now use their wireless telephones to download their e-mail, so too can police officers use systems originally dedicated to voice transmissions to send crime scene data, videos, fingerprints, and mug shots. The trend toward wireless communications and the convergence of different telecommunication processes is causing more and more "traffic congestion" over the air waves.

Electronic transmissions are sent over a finite natural resource called radio spectrum. John Clark calls radio spectrum the "electromagnetic real estate in the sky." Spectrum is divided into bands, such as VHF and UHF. These in turn are divided into frequencies or megahertz (MHz). For example, 25–50 MHz resides at the lower end of the VHF band while 764–776 MHz resides at the upper end of the UHF band. (See figure 1, next page.)

Figure 1: Public Safety Spectrum Bands



This figure identifies the radio spectrum or array of channels used for communication. The bands used by public safety agency radios are spread widely across the spectrum, making interagency communication difficult. In addition, some contend that not enough spectrum has been made available to these agencies.

Illustration courtesy of the Public Safety Wireless Network (PSWN), from Public Safety and Radio Spectrum Guide. Copies of the guide are available from the PSWN by calling 800-565-PSWN or by downloading it from the Web site at <http://www.pswn.gov>.

Originally, public safety agencies were assigned the lower frequencies and bands. As the lower bands were becoming busy and congested, technology was improving to allow the use of higher bands, and the Federal Communication Commission, which assigns State and local radio spectrum, allotted more spectrum to public safety agencies.

Today, public safety agencies are assigned frequencies across 10 different bands of radio spectrum, from low to high. Unfortunately, affordable technology does not exist to allow one radio to communicate across all the frequencies. Hence, a city's police department may be assigned one frequency while the city's emergency medical services another. The result: They cannot talk to each other. In the Oklahoma City bombing, the city police operated on one frequency, the fire department on another, the county on another, and the State on still another. Mark Schwarz, an Oklahoma City Council member and former president of the National League of Cities, recounts

how at one point during the early minutes of the disaster, the fire department suspected that another bomb remained inside the building and ordered all personnel to evacuate. Only the firefighters got the message immediately. If there had been a second bomb, all the other first responders would have lost precious minutes while their dispatch centers received the fire department message and relayed it over their frequencies.

**Diversity and Age of Equipment.** More than 18,000 law enforcement agencies and 35,000 fire and emergency medical agencies operate in the United States. Of necessity, the vast majority purchase communications equipment independently of each other. Most of their components are old (20-year-old radios are not uncommon) and work well only with equipment made by the same manufacturer. But even agencies with the newest equipment find that their radios cannot work with equipment from other manufacturers.

Donald Appleby, Project Director of Pennsylvania's Statewide Radio Systems, tells of a jurisdiction that installed seven different types of radios in an ambulance so EMT personnel could communicate with other first responders, like fire and police. According to Appleby, "We had so many radios, we had to color-code the microphones to know which was which." The cost of the equipment rivaled the cost of the ambulance itself.

**Coordination and Cooperation.** Without doubt, one of the biggest challenges to solving interoperability problems is the organizational and political obstacles of making decisions that cross geographic and political boundaries. It is quite common for one jurisdiction's rules and regulations to conflict with a neighboring jurisdiction. Leaders who want to make strategic plans and cooperative purchasing decisions commonly find coordination to be extremely difficult because of political preferences, competing priorities in resources, and the complexity of varying and some-

times incompatible laws across jurisdictions.

Technical solutions can be attained, but without coordination, cooperation, and planning among agencies, the technologies cannot be implemented to their greatest potential.

## Potential Solutions

Although there is no silver bullet or single solution to achieving interoperability, several approaches can foster enhanced communication among agencies. One such approach is the use of digital radio systems. Digital systems improve interoperability indirectly because they generally operate more efficiently with radio spectrum. Digital systems also offer more options or functionality, such as the ability to use “talk groups” that relay information to multiple users at once and improved encryption capability so that information transmitted over digital systems can be made secure. In addition, signals transmitted over digital systems are clearer over longer distances. Michigan is implementing a statewide effort to streamline communication by moving all of its public safety agencies to an 800 MHz statewide digital system. But digital systems only help if they are “trunked” so that users are automatically routed to an open channel and need not wait for an open channel.

Some public safety agencies are trying another approach: Using products and services that traditionally have been sold only to consumers, such as satellite paging systems, cellular phones, and personal communication systems (PCS's) that transmit both voice and data. These alternatives are helping to alleviate existing public safety spectrum congestion and to expand the geographic boundaries of signal areas.

Sharing radio towers is another approach. The city leaders of Upper

St. Clair, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Pittsburgh, have partnered with a commercial radio enterprise to improve interoperability for their public safety services. The city has allowed a commercial enterprise to build a radio tower on a site that would not otherwise be available to them. In exchange for permission to build the tower, the commercial enterprise has agreed to let the city use the tower for police transmissions.

Although there are many issues to be ironed out regarding the use of commercially available services for public safety, some agencies are already putting the benefits into practice. The Alexandria (Virginia) Police Department, for example, is using a commercially available product (called “Cellular Digital Packet Data,” or CDPD) to wirelessly transmit information to and from laptop computers in patrol vehicles.

## NIJ's Effort to Support Solutions

The National Institute of Justice, with its history of developing standards for law enforcement products and its close working relationships with State and local public safety agencies, has taken steps to assist in solving interoperability problems.

**San Diego County Integrates 12 Agencies.** One of the earliest interoperability projects (operational since 1996) connected the dispatch centers (radio communication systems) of 12 agencies operating in San Diego County, including the Border Patrol, Immigration and Naturalization Service, California Highway Patrol, and San Diego Police Department. The Border Tactical Communication System, or BORTAC as the project is called, was undertaken jointly with the Office of National Drug Control

Policy and the U.S. Navy's Public Safety Center in San Diego.

Leaders of the participating agencies engaged in considerable early planning, significant negotiation, and substantial discussion of the tradeoffs before the project could become a reality. Territorial issues, personality differences, and legal and liability concerns all hampered the project. Eventually, off-the-shelf communications circuits and radio system software were used to link the agencies' various radio systems.

Now, with BORTAC in place, officers are able to speak directly to one another, eliminating the need for dispatchers to relay information. Officers in two or more agencies can talk together, and multiple, independent conversations can occur simultaneously. For example, the Border Patrol can talk to the San Diego Sheriff's Department about one matter while the Immigration and Naturalization Service, San Diego Fire Department, and Emergency Medical Service personnel are talking about something else.

Public safety agencies use BORTAC several times each month for an array of activities, including regional auto-theft task force operations, counterdrug sweeps, police pursuits, special cross-border events, and gang suppression. In one case, a felon who had threatened officers with a weapon tried to escape on a motorcycle. Three neighboring agencies were patched through BORTAC and apprehended the suspect without injury to the officers.

The BORTAC model is now being enhanced and replicated in Imperial County and Los Angeles County, California, and in Brownsville, Texas.

**AGILE: A Comprehensive Effort.** Created in 1998, AGILE (Advanced Generation of Interoperability for Law Enforcement) pulls together all

interoperability efforts within NIJ and serves as the point of contact for coordinating interoperability initiatives with other projects, both within the Department of Justice as well as with other Federal, State, and local agencies.<sup>2</sup>

AGILE has four main components: (1) supporting research and development; (2) testing, evaluating, and piloting technologies; (3) developing standards; and (4) educating and reaching out to end users and policymakers.

- **Supporting research and development.** AGILE is supporting or “seeding” research and development of interoperability technology in order to expand knowledge of the issues and spawn possible solutions. In 2000, the AGILE team plans to invest in the development and deployment of technologies such as high-bandwidth communications, security, software, wireless communications, and knowledge mining. NIJ anticipates release later this year of a focused interoperability solicitation to address technology research and development gaps.
- **Testing, evaluating, and piloting technologies.** Developing technologies is only the first step. (What’s needed next is to create pilot programs to make sure the technologies work as intended.) One of NIJ’s pilot sites is the Alexandria (Virginia) Police Department. Alexandria is an “operational laboratory,” which means the technologies have moved from the test lab into a real-life, day-to-day setting. The feedback and evaluation from Alexandria’s experience will contribute to a better understanding of the technologies’ impact on policies, procedures, training, organization, and operational readiness. In December 1999, NIJ deployed

a communications switch that links disparate radio systems so that over-the-air communication is now feasible among the Alexandria Police Department’s 800 MHz system, the District of Columbia’s Metropolitan Police Department’s UHF system, and the U.S. Parks Police’s VHF system.

AGILE team members are documenting Alexandria’s response to the requirements of the equipment and the ways the system accepts and manages the transmission of voice, data, and image information. NIJ anticipates that this and other pilot projects will provide information about the lessons learned—both good and bad—from the Alexandria experience.

- **Developing standards.** NIJ has a long history of involvement with the development of national standards for law enforcement.<sup>3</sup> Building on that tradition, the AGILE team is identifying existing standards related to interoperability that can be adopted or adapted by manufacturers and public safety agencies. The team is evaluating competing or multiple standards as part of the process of developing standards to fill any gaps.<sup>4</sup>
- **Reaching out through education and outreach.** AGILE’s education and outreach component will entail a public awareness campaign aimed at decisionmakers to emphasize the urgency of the problem, propose solutions, and facilitate multi-agency cooperation.

AGILE also is probing ways to address the coordination and cooperation issues related to interoperability. The team is examining how the use of emerging communications technologies affects Federal,

State, regional, and local operations; documenting how the use of these technologies affects public safety agencies’ training, security needs and policies, procurement, and equipment replacement policies; and providing information to understand the financial impact.

AGILE is a big step forward in collecting, evaluating, and disseminating information about the lessons learned about interoperable technology from a living laboratory. AGILE will inform decisionmakers about issues related to funding, development of standards, and difficulties in procuring and maintaining equipment and will encourage the investment necessary to bring the public more fully into the information age.

## The Future of Interoperability

Solving interoperability problems will require different levels of commitment from various user groups and close cooperation and open dialog between regulating officials and the manufacturing community. Solutions also must take into account the substantial embedded infrastructure currently being used by public safety agencies, their unique budgetary constraints, and the critical lack of additional funding available to most agencies.

A number of steps can be taken to enhance public safety communications. The first is a reallocation of spectrum from other uses to public safety use and a more efficient and cooperative use of present spectrum. Greater sharing of resources, such as radio towers and spectrum, both within the public safety community and with other users, will improve efficiency and enhance interoperability.

The creation of standards for communications equipment will go a long way toward fostering

interoperability. But the development of standards is a slow, time-consuming process that must be considered a long-term solution.

These critical areas will require further attention at all levels of government and by all public safety agencies and, as noted earlier by John Clark, a concerted effort to overcome institutional control and culture.

NCJ 181729

## Notes

1. Taylor, Mary J., Robert C. Epper, and Thomas K. Tolman, *Wireless Communications and Interoperability Among State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies*, Research in Brief, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, January 1998 (NCJ 168945).
2. In addition to AGILE, the other primary Department of Justice interoperability projects include the Global Criminal Justice Information Network, a technology-based approach to helping the justice community share information globally, and the Public Safety Wireless Network, a joint Justice-Treasury Department undertaking to develop a nationwide, wireless telecommunications network for use by public safety agencies at all levels of government.
3. NIJ, for example, was responsible for the development of national standards for body armor and has now issued standards for products ranging from handcuffs to police cars.
4. NIJ is working with organizations dedicated to establishing standards in these arenas, including the Telecommunications Industry Association, the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, and the Internet Engineering Task Force.

## For More Information

- For information about AGILE, contact NIJ staff Brenna Smith (202-305-3305) or Tom Coty (202-524-7683).
  - For information about BORTAC, contact Bob Waldron, Director, NLECTC—Western Region at 310-336-2124.
  - Taylor, Mary J., Robert C. Epper, and Thomas K. Tolman, *Wireless Communications and Interoperability Among State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies*, Research in Brief, Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, January 1998 (NCJ 168945). This study surveyed thousands of law enforcement agencies; the data and analysis provide a valuable glimpse into the problems State and local agencies face.
  - “Why Can’t We Talk?” videotape. This 13-minute tape for high- to midlevel State and local public officials explores the issue and emphasizes the need for changing the way jurisdictions plan and coordinate the design of their communications systems. Emergency services personnel, police officials, firefighters, and public policymakers relate their experiences with interoperability problems—and their proposed solutions. Free copies are available from the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center by calling 1-800-248-2742.
  - National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center—Rocky Mountain, *Understanding Wireless Communications in Public Safety*, Guidebook to Technology, Issues, Planning and Management. Obtain a copy by visiting <http://www.nlectc.org/nlectcrm> or calling 1-800-248-2742.
  - A discussion of costs and funding issues can be found in “Report on Funding Mechanisms for Public Safety Radio Communications” (December 1997) and “Report on Funding Strategy for Public Safety Radio Communications” (October 1998). Both reports were prepared by Booz-Allen & Hamilton for the Public Safety Wireless Network and are available at the Network’s Web site, <http://www.pswn.gov>.
- The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bja>) offers several programs to assist State and local municipalities interested in interoperability:
- The Edward Byrne Memorial State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program provides funds through two types of grant programs: Discretionary and formula. Discretionary funds are awarded directly to public and private agencies and private nonprofit organizations. Formula funds, which are awarded to the States, in turn make awards to State and local units of governments.
  - The Local Law Enforcement Block Grants Program provides funds to units of local government to underwrite projects to reduce crime and improve public safety. Public safety agencies have used these funds to upgrade radio systems and improve information sharing.

### Web-Based Sources

- Visit the Justice Technology Information Network (JUSTNET) at <http://www.nlectc.org>, or call the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center at 1-800-248-2742.
- Visit the Public Safety Wireless Network (PSWN) program, a joint initiative of the Departments of Justice and Treasury at <http://www.pswn.gov>, or call PSWN at 1-800-565-PSWN.
- Visit the Federal Communications Commission’s Wireless Telecommunications Bureau at <http://www.fcc.gov/wtb/publicsafety>, or call the Bureau at 202-418-0680.

I'm proudest

of the fact

that when

people

around the

country say

that NIJ is

involved with

something,

everyone

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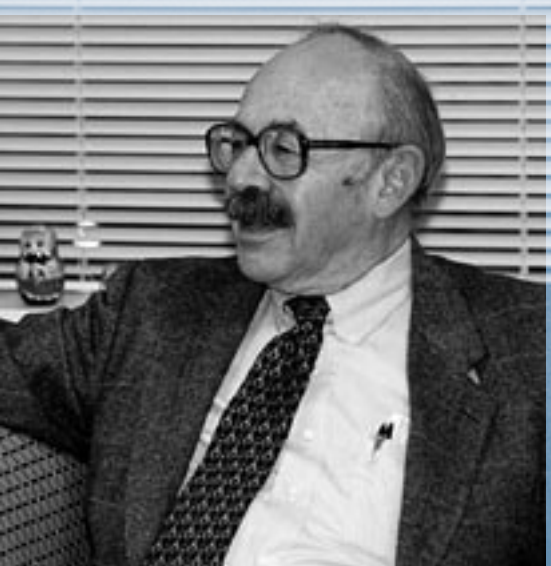
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# Departing Thoughts From an NIJ Director





Professor Alfred Blumstein interviews Jeremy Travis on the occasion of Travis' departure from NIJ. Photo: Jim Johnson Photography.

**N**IJ Director Jeremy Travis recently announced that he will be leaving the Institute after 5½ years to become a Senior Fellow at the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C. On the afternoon of February 18, Mr. Travis sat down to discuss his tenure with esteemed criminologist Alfred Blumstein, the J. Erik Jonsson University Professor of Urban Systems and Operations Research at the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management at Carnegie Mellon University. Professor Blumstein is a former dean of the Heinz School and is the Director of the National Consortium on Violence Research. What follows is an excerpt of the conversation between Mr. Travis and Professor Blumstein.

AB: Jeremy, many of us are sorry to learn that you're leaving, after one of the most impressive tenures as NIJ director. I think the world outside is really impressed with what's happened and what's been accomplished. What are you most proud of?

JT: I'm most proud of establishing NIJ's place in the world as an

organization that's committed to science, committed to independent research activities, and particularly committed to finding relationships that are productive between researchers and practitioners.

AB: I think that's widely recognized as an important accomplishment. What's your sense of how likely that transformation is to continue? What are some of the threats you see to its continuing? And how do we ensure that it will continue?

JT: Well, the good news is that at the local level we are seeing new relationships between researchers and practitioners and policymakers that can't be stopped. And those relationships are evolving and becoming a way of doing business that is seen as valuable in itself.

AB: But NIJ did some "pump priming" in this regard...

JT: I think we've played a significant role in accelerating what may have been a naturally occurring phenomenon. We made investments that brought research and police partners together. Then we replicated that in the correctional world, in the violence against women world, and in other areas as well. We've tried to foster a sense of comfort between research and practice so that each has something to teach the other. I think NIJ has played a very valuable role—valuable beyond our dollars—in encouraging different ways of thinking on both sides of the equation.

AB: Different ways of both thinking and organizing...

JT: ...and willingness to reexamine the core ways of doing business. That momentum cannot be stopped because it is of value to both parties. I also think the funding that's made this possible is very secure, in part because the political situation in this country is such that the Federal government will always now be asked to do something about crime, and

we've been successful in asserting the principle that for each Federal crime policy initiative, money should be set aside to conduct research and evaluation.

AB: Is that a principle reflected in statute that is going to continue, or is it subject to change by a change in administration?

JT: The set-aside principle is a principle that is now reflected in statute. Some modifications are now being proposed to make that clearer and establish the level of funding. But the principle is there in statute. So between a Democratic administration and a Republican Congress, this is now seen as the way that we do business. And my hope for the longer term is that we will be able not only to conduct research that is tied to Federal initiatives, but also be able to conduct long-term research projects—that take 5 to 10 years—so we can explore new areas of crime policy on behalf of the country. For example, we have very little research underway on organized crime, on economic crimes, and on emerging issues, such as cybercrime. Those require a long-term research agenda that will help define the research questions, the research methods, and the research opportunities. But we need to be ahead of that curve rather than merely conducting research that is a parallel enterprise to the Federal crime initiatives.

## Maintaining an Independent Research Program

AB: You mentioned that you're proud of establishing NIJ as an organization that's committed to independent research activities. What insulations are in place to keep the next Attorney General, the next President, and perhaps the next director of NIJ, from tearing down some of the strong protections you've built-up to maintain an independent research program?

JT: The best insulations we have and have had for many years are the two pillars of our statutory authorization, which say, first, that the decision-making authority of the National Institute of Justice is the sole authority of the director. So I have never had to consult with the higher-ups about what grant to award. I've made those decisions within this office. And that's a very important principle, it's a very important legal protection, and it's a very important statement Congress has made [to ensure] an independent research program within the Department of Justice.

A second insulation is the final decision-making authority the NIJ director has to publish. Our publications are ours alone. They receive the scientific protections of peer review and editing to make sure that they're accessible to the field, but the final decision to publish is reserved to the NIJ director.

AB: Now, to the extent that a new director is, let's say, an agent of a political Attorney General—that independence is thereby inherently undermined. What happens then?

JT: Two things. One is we have built a very strong professional staff that, to their core, believes in these values. Secondly, we've built a strong network outside of the Institute—researchers and practitioners and policymakers, and members of Congress alike—that believes in these principles.

AB: And that institutional network includes, for example, the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Law and Justice...and what others?

JT: I think all the professional associations, the universities, and the high-quality research organizations—they have an interest in the independence of the research product of their faculty and staff. We all have the same interest, which is to ensure that the research process is

respected for its independence and its integrity. And to the extent that interest is shared outside of NIJ, our internal ability to advance with independence and integrity is strengthened.

## NIJ's Contribution to Research on Violence, Policing, and Sentencing and Corrections

AB: We've been talking about some of the organizational issues that have been important, and they really *are* important. But would you comment on substantive areas that you think have been important developments?

JT: Well, I think our research on violence has been a valuable contribution to our understanding and to improving practice—and that's in the areas of family violence, homicides generally, and gun violence. In those three areas, we've made contributions that will help to focus and localize some of the practitioner and policy responses in ways that will improve practice and already have. For example, the work we did in Boston with the Boston Gun Project.<sup>1</sup> That relatively small research grant to Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government has helped us to think about juvenile violence in very innovative, very valuable ways.

Secondly, I think the research portfolio on policing will define a new era of policing. We have done research on organizational change that was never possible before because it's very expensive research. We're asking the question, 'What does it mean to change the culture of an organization toward a new way of doing business?'

AB: Would you say something about those projects?

JT: We've been able to support longitudinal studies of police

departments as the unit of analysis in six jurisdictions for, it will be ultimately 6 to 10 years. We're not just studying policing, we're studying the police, we're studying the police organization.<sup>2</sup>

And I think of particular importance has been the growth in our research and policy engagement on the issues of sentencing and corrections. When I came to NIJ in 1994, I was stunned to learn that this research organization was funding very little on what is the major policy challenge of our generation, which is sentencing and corrections.

AB: The whole incarceration issue...

JT: Right. And so we have funded a very robust research portfolio on those issues, trying to understand the impact of various sentencing options, to look at alternative sentencing policies, to look at prison management.

AB: In that realm, one of the important areas where NIJ made investments in the past was in crime-control theory, with particular emphasis on deterrence and incapacitation. One of the important contributions was, for example, the RAND inmate survey, which investigated individual offending rates or the distribution of lambda. We don't have anything more recent than a survey that was done more than 20 years ago.<sup>3</sup>

JT: I will identify this as a major regret. We wanted to be able to update the lambda estimates, in part because they provide the basis for so much policy debate and discussion and because they have been critiqued by scholars as being inadequate or limited. I think that in the next 5 years, the Institute will be able to mount a major initiative to reestimate the rates of offending.

AB: The crime-control theory program represented the development of an important knowledge base

that was a step removed from the issues of sentencing and corrections, but it provided an important input to the policy process. The lambda estimates were only a part of that. That level of fundamental research—and it's clearly applied research, but it's not directly applied to practice—should be an important component of the research agenda for NIJ.

JT: We identified this internally as an initiative we wanted to undertake, but with the budget cutback we had this past year particularly, we were not able to even get it started. With the increased funds we've asked for in the 2001 budget and with the greater discretion we've also asked for, this is high on our list.

## NIJ's Growing Budget

AB: One of the characteristics of your administration has been an impressive growth in the gross budget of NIJ. Tell me something about that growth. (See "Sources of NIJ Funds, in Millions, FY 1994–1999.")

JT: The Institute's budget has grown enormously...

AB: From what to what?

JT: ...when I arrived it was about \$24 million a year. The President's budget for 2001 requests over \$200 million. That growth has come in a number of areas and through a number of funding mechanisms. And the growth, importantly, has been for a variety of scientific efforts and, increasingly, in the physical sciences and forensic sciences. Some of our most exciting work is about the DNA issue and technology developments that are very important to the field.<sup>4</sup>

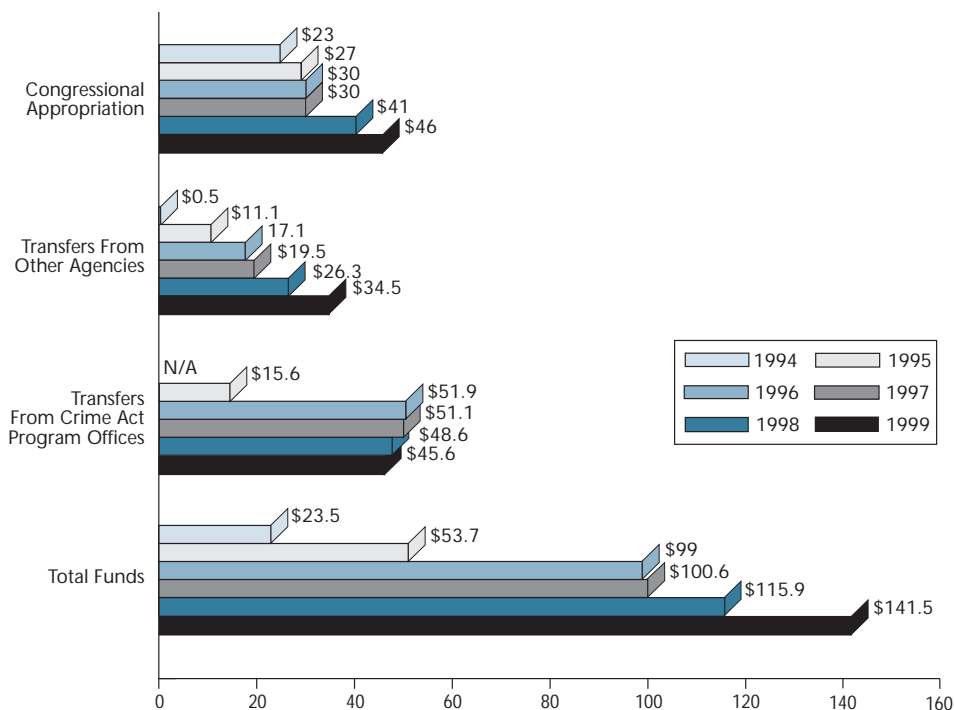
AB: What portion of the \$200 million goes into that?

JT: Next year it'll be over half.

AB: So it's over \$100 million.

JT: Right. It's \$125 million. So the growth in the Institute's budget has,

Sources of NIJ Funds, in Millions, FY 1994–1999



Source: *Building Knowledge about Crime and Justice*, The 2000 Research Prospectus of the National Institute of Justice, November 1999, NCJ 178903.

in part, tracked the needs of the field. The work that we've done in the violence against women area, for example—there's clearly a strong consensus within the country that we need to pay more attention to the phenomenon of family violence. That national interest has made one small area of our portfolio increase by about 10 times.

Some of the growth has been by virtue of our partnerships with our colleague offices within the Department of Justice. So the \$40 million we've invested in policing research has been by virtue of our partnership with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. And that has been important to help inform the changes in policing.

A lot of the growth also is in what I call research infrastructure. For example, the Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program,<sup>5</sup> which will ultimately grow to a

\$20-million-a-year program from a \$2-million-a-year program when I arrived, is an investment in research infrastructure so that we can understand the world of offending at the local level.

Similarly, the development of an international program is a type of infrastructure. It's a way of thinking about research opportunities in the global criminal justice community that we didn't think about 5 years ago.

Another example is the development of our network of technology centers,<sup>6</sup> which bring science and technology to the field to work on police and other criminal justice issues, to help people think about new technologies that address new and old problems. So infrastructure has been very important, and that's a role that NIJ uniquely can play in helping to advance practice and science.

## Funding for a Long-Term Research Agenda

AB: Even when NIJ's budget was \$25 million, a lot of that was devoted to infrastructure, like the National Criminal Justice Reference Service. What was the size of the discretionary research program then, and how has that grown or shrunk today?

JT: Our truly discretionary research program, which is that amount of money left over from our ongoing initiatives, and not including the special research programs like that on policing...

AB: ...which have their own discretionary quality because they're targeted...

JT: The *decisions* are discretionary. But our *truly* discretionary budget for substantive research is about \$3 million a year.

AB: It's *still as low* as \$3 million a year.

JT: This year, because our budget was reduced, our discretionary budget was reduced, and because we had earmarks against our discretionary budget, this year it will be even less—about \$2 million.

AB: And that's a ludicrous number in view of the \$100 to \$200 billion the Nation spends on crime and justice.

JT: Right. If you were to apply the industry formula and say that we should have a 5-percent research and development budget against that \$100 billion, we would be able to do a lot more research, and good for the country, I think. But it still has been a time of enormous growth, and other science agencies have also experienced growth. So this has been a good time for science in the Federal sphere, and we have lots of reasons to be very grateful for the support we've gotten. The

President's budget this year, the proposed budget for 2001, requests a 1-percent setaside of the *entire* OJP budget to come to NIJ for research...

AB: ...for discretionary research...

JT: Yes, 1 percent of the *entire* budget of \$4 billion...

AB: ...so that would be \$40 million...

JT: ...\$40 million...for a research budget that is cutting-edge, that is long-term, that addresses issues that are not now within the other funding streams.

AB: Is this a setaside in addition to whatever setasides come in the other streams?

JT: Yes. With a 1-percent setaside, we would be able to tackle things like organized crime, economic crime, estimates of offending, and a list of unmet research priorities. Practitioners and communities want to know about these crime phenomena, but we can't meet their research agenda. A 1-percent setaside would be more than growth. It would give us the ability to define a long-term research agenda. Take, for example, the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods.<sup>8</sup> Because of the ground-breaking work done in that study, we have opportunities to learn a lot more about what happens at the community level. We intend to do some of that kind of investigation through our COMPASS initiative<sup>9</sup> and others. But imagine a world in which we could mount a number of research sites around the country where we were simultaneously asking about informal social control and social capital. We'd be able to look at the variety of experiences that Americans have with crime.

## Connecting Research to Practice

AB: One of the issues that is always of concern is the notion that research should generate new

insights, new information, new methods that get translated into action. Would you say that NIJ's research has an effective and continuing link to practice?

JT: We have a number of stellar examples of initiatives that closely link research and practice.

AB: What are some of those?

JT: We have the Breaking the Cycle<sup>10</sup> initiative, which is testing a hypothesis regarding the impact of a systemwide use of drug treatment and other interventions to reduce drug use. In another demonstration project, we are asking what would happen if judges became involved in managing interventions and sanctions for batterers to try to reduce violence within intimate relationships.<sup>11</sup>

AB: Are these evaluations of ongoing projects?

JT: No. These projects are designed to test research-based hypotheses. That's different from evaluating something that's already underway. In these types of approaches, we explicitly set out to use our research knowledge to test a very different way of doing business. The program is designed to yield research findings.

I think the other stellar example of the relationship between research and practice is the effort to apply the lessons learned from the Boston Gun Project—to put researchers and practitioners into very different relationships in which the research partners help define the strategies for intervention in an iterative, ongoing, symbiotic way, hand-in-hand with a practitioner team that is trying different approaches. We've now done this in five other cities, and we have different research partners in all of them.<sup>12</sup>

AB: And each city is doing it differently based on its own ideas...

To place researchers in an environment . . . an environment that is in essence a natural laboratory, and give them the ability to ask questions and get feedback about behavioral changes from specific interventions, that is a relationship between research and practice that we've never seen before.

JT: ...own data, own definition of what the crime problem is, their own willingness to collaborate with each other and combine resources. But the researcher is now doing not only analytical work but also is saying, 'Well, let's think about the theoretical implications of trying strategy A versus strategy B.'

AB: And what are some of the theoretical issues that have emerged? I have a sense that there were a number of principles: One, collaboration across the agencies; two, priority setting and communication of those priorities.

JT: What we're learning from Boston and its offspring are some very important lessons on deterrence. What are the governmental—and private—actions that have impacts on the behaviors of young people, such that we have some understanding of them in deterrence theory?

AB: What makes that particularly intriguing is that almost all of deterrence research has focused on some aggregate measures of sanction policy.

JT: Exactly. And in Boston and its offspring, we are saying that to deter Johnny from engaging in criminal behavior, you have to speak to

Johnny about his behavior. You have to speak to his *peer group*. You have to speak to his *mother*.

AB: It demonstrates a necessity to communicate salient messages that are much closer to the audience whose behavior you're trying to change, as opposed to enacting new legislation, for example.

JT: The flip side of this is that we are also asking the very important question, 'What is the *least* we have to do to achieve the highest deterrent yield?' Because there's also the risk that, in terms of enforcement or controlling of behavior, we do more than is necessary to get the desired outcome.

AB: Not only the least we have to do, but what is the optimum we have to do. In many cases, if we try to do more than that, we come out being counterproductive because we're diminishing the saliency of the message.

JT: To place a researcher in an environment like that, an environment that is in essence a natural laboratory, and give the researchers the ability to ask questions and get feedback about behavioral changes from specific interventions, that is a relationship between research and practice that we've never seen before.

## The Impact of Research on Drug Policy

AB: Drug treatment is another area where research has made a major impact on policy and practice. Could you say something about that? Is it in part through drug courts?

JT: In part. But I think it's broader than that. I think NIJ also is making contributions to the national discussion about drug policy because we are able to describe drug use and drug markets and drug users in ways that we couldn't before.

AB: Predominantly through ADAM...

JT: ...predominantly through ADAM. I think that's our signature contribution. But secondly, we have been able to test drug interventions in ways that have significant implications for policy. Particularly in the area of drug courts, but also in the areas of in-prison drug treatment and postrelease drug testing and treatment. We are looking at the efficacy of a mix of sanctions—imprisonment, testing, treatment, family support—the relationship between carrots and sticks and how they can be finely calibrated to change behavior.

AB: Carrots and sticks in the sense of support and threats.

JT: Right. The behaviors we want to change are both drug-using behavior and other antisocial behaviors. Half to three-quarters of the criminal justice population has a history of drug use. Given the nexus between drug use and the criminal justice population, NIJ's contribution of a solid research base on how criminal justice involvement can be used to reduce drug use—through drug courts or some sort of judicial intervention involving drug treatment—that's a real accomplishment.

AB: You mentioned the regret about being unable to update the RAND study. Are there other things you didn't accomplish that you wish you had?

JT: When I leave a job...there's always a short list... There are so many things I hope get carried out—COMPASS, reentry courts,<sup>13</sup> the 1-percent setaside, the international program. They are not yet done, but I think they're pretty strong seedlings. I wish we had made our argument earlier about the need for a 1-percent setaside for a long-term research agenda in areas not covered by our other setasides. And I wish I could be here after OJP is reorganized<sup>14</sup> (something I hope will happen) because I think the relationship between the research function and the program development function in OJP will be even stronger.

## A Future at the Urban Institute

AB: You're now off to a program at the Urban Institute. Could you tell us something about your plans there and what issues you expect to pursue at the Urban Institute?

JT: Well, I'm very fortunate to be joining a research organization with a wonderful, rich tradition and history that is interested in asking me to help them build their research program on crime and justice issues and to increase the policy engagement on those issues. And so, in some ways, I'll be continuing to think about things that I care about passionately in a different setting.

My personal agenda is to focus thinking on the issues of crime and justice when seen in the community context. I'm really committed to looking at these as being localized issues where a number of policy-makers and community groups and agencies of the criminal justice system have roles to play in produc-

ing communities that are safer and more just. I think the Urban Institute, because of its work on those issues in urban settings, with its family focus, education focus, and welfare policy focus, is a place where I can do that.

## NIJ's New Public Image

AB: Which of your accomplishments at NIJ has given you the most personal satisfaction?

JT: I'm proudest of the fact that when people around the country say that NIJ is involved with something, everyone knows it's of high quality and has met high standards.

AB: So it's the standing in the [criminal justice] community, both the practitioner community and the research community.

JT: And the community. The public has an understanding of NIJ that it didn't have before. The mission and the value of the Institute are the strongest they've ever been. For example, on one day recently, NIJ was on the news because the Attorney General had told Congress that she was asking us to develop a broad agenda on cybercrime to help respond to this new area of crime. And on the same day, a national newspaper was reporting that we were developing a new initiative on managing the reentry of prisoners back to the community to increase the social functioning of those offenders and the overall safety of those communities. That was a great day.

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## Notes

1. The Boston Gun Project enlisted the community and implemented problem-solving policing to solve the city's juvenile homicide problem. The Project was completed in two phases—an attack

on the drug market that supplied guns to youths and an outreach program for area gangs to set standards for acceptable behavior. If these standards were violated, community police and prosecutors took every available legal action against the offender. See Kennedy, David, "Pulling Levers: Getting Deterrence Right," *NIJ Journal* (July 1998, JR 000263).

2. The studies are examining policing strategies and organizations in Chicago and Joliet/Aurora, Illinois; Dallas, Texas; Madison, Wisconsin; Tempe, Arizona; and Washington, D.C. Findings will be released in late 2000.
3. For more information, see Chaiken, Jan M., and Marcia R. Chaiken, *Varieties of Criminal Behavior*, Los Angeles: RAND Corporation, August 1982; and Blumstein, Alfred, Jacqueline Cohen, Jeffery A. Roth, and Christy A. Visher, *Criminal Careers and "Career Criminals,"* volume II, Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press, 1986.
4. The purpose of the National Commission on the Future of DNA Evidence is to provide the Attorney General with recommendations on the use of current and future DNA methods, applications and technologies in the operation of the criminal justice system, from the crime scene to the courtroom. For more information, visit the Commission's Web page at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/dna>.

For more information about NIJ's overall technology research and development activities, visit <http://www.nlectc.org>.

5. The Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (ADAM) program is an NIJ-funded project that tracks drug use trends among booked arrestees in urban areas of the United States. Currently

operating in 35 sites, ADAM is the only national drug data project using drug testing techniques on arrestees. For more information, visit the program's Web site at <http://www.adam-nij.net>.

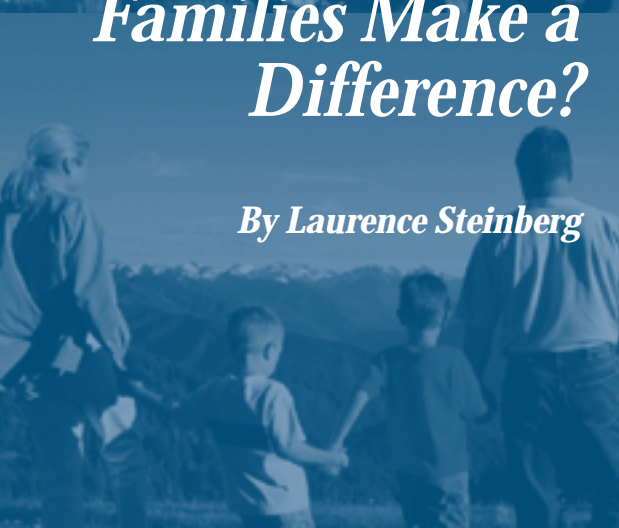
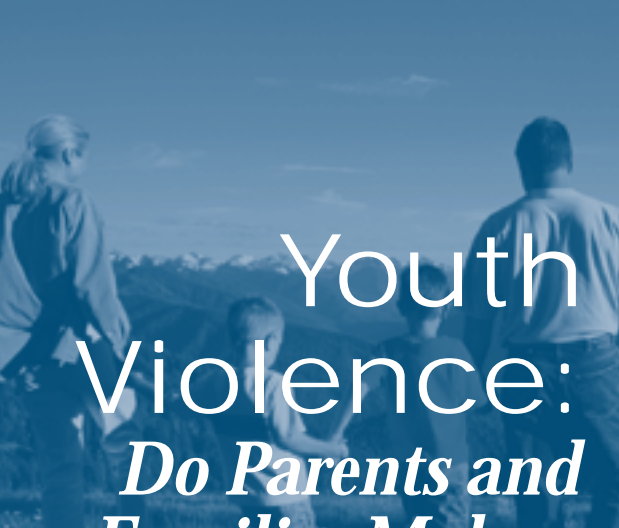
6. The National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Centers (NLECTC) are composed of a national center, four regional centers, and four special offices located throughout the country. Their mission is to be a comprehensive source of product and technology information. For more information, visit the program's Web site at <http://www.nlectc.org>.
7. The Institute's discretionary budget is the portion of the budget that is not already obligated either by Congress through earmarks or by NIJ through its ongoing initiatives.
8. The Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods began in 1988 with funding from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, NIJ, the National Institute of Mental Health, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Administration for Children, Youth and Families. It is an interdisciplinary study investigating the factors that contribute to juvenile and adult crime, drug abuse, and violence. To do this, the Project has combined two studies: A thorough examination of Chicago's neighborhoods and a longitudinal study of 6,000 area youth. The researchers are looking at the different circumstances (such as child care and exposure to violence) in each youth's (or child's) life and how these factors affect criminal outcomes. For more information, visit its Web site at <http://phdcn.harvard.edu>.
9. Community Mapping, Planning, and Analysis for Safety Strategies, or COMPASS, is an NIJ and U.S. Department of Justice initiative

to develop and implement a group of crime data systems in select U.S. jurisdictions. Each system will allow better evaluation of the crime problems facing a particular site. It is currently in its developmental stage at a pilot site in Seattle, Washington.

10. Breaking the Cycle is an NIJ-initiated program that is testing the hypothesis that arrestee drug testing and mandatory drug abuse treatment, among other interventions, for offenders with histories of drug abuse will decrease future substance abuse and criminal activity. The program currently is in place in three adult and two juvenile U.S. court systems. For more information, see "Building Knowledge About Crime and Justice," *National Institute of Justice Research Prospectus, 2000*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, November 1999 (NCJ 178903), pages 6–7, and Harrell, Adele, Foster Cook, and John Carver, "Breaking the Cycle of Drug Abuse in Birmingham," *NIJ Journal* (July 1998, JR 000236).
11. The Judicial Oversight Demonstration Program is coordinating community responses to domestic violence in three communities by holding offenders accountable through frequent judicial oversight, graduated sanctions, provision of batterer intervention programs, and intensive supervision. The demonstration is jointly funded by the Violence Against Women Office and the National Institute of Justice.
12. The Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI) is taking place in five U.S. cities—Indianapolis, Indiana; Memphis, Tennessee; New Haven, Connecticut; Portland, Oregon; and Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The

Initiative's goal is to promote collaborative efforts between researchers and local, State, and Federal crime agencies to help identify and solve community crime problems. This is to be accomplished through crime data retrieval and analysis to inform the design and implementation of strategies to combat, prevent, and reduce crime trends. For more information, see Coleman, Veronica, Walter C. Holton, Jr., Kristine Olson, Stephen C. Robinson, and Judith Stewart, "Using Knowledge and Teamwork to Reduce Crime," *NIJ Journal* (October 1999, JR 000241).

13. Reentry courts are court systems that manage, through the use of graduated sanctions and positive reinforcement, the release of prisoners into the community. These courts also use additional resources to provide a smoother reentry into society, with the goal that this will lower recidivism rates among offenders. The Office of Justice Programs is managing a demonstration initiative involving reentry in nine States: California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, New York, Ohio, and West Virginia.
14. Congress has asked OJP to reorganize in order to improve service delivery to the criminal justice field. The plan will create subject matter-based program offices, an Office of Grants Management/State Desks, and an Information Central Office to provide "one-stop shopping" for information about grants, training, and conferences. A central feature of the reorganization would create a unified research program in NIJ. More information about the restructuring proposal is available from OJP's Office of Congressional and Public Affairs at 202-307-0703.



# Youth Violence: *Do Parents and Families Make a Difference?*

*By Laurence Steinberg*



**W**hat follows is an adaptation of Dr. Steinberg's insightful and thought-provoking statement to the U.S. House of Representatives' Bipartisan Working Group on Youth Violence on September 15, 1999, described below. The Working Group asked Dr. Steinberg to address issues concerning the role of parents and families in the genesis and prevention of youth violence.

I am pleased to be able to address the Bipartisan Working Group on Youth Violence—a matter of national importance. (See “The Bipartisan Working Group on Youth Violence.”) I want to commend the committee for taking

on this task, for doing so within a climate of bipartisanship, and for selecting a range of briefing topics that reflects the complicated and multifaceted nature of the phenomenon of youth violence in America.

You have asked me to address issues concerning the role of parents and families in the genesis and prevention of youth violence. I shall do this, but before I do, I'd like to make a few introductory comments that will place my remarks in a broader context. I do this because I can think of very few topics that inspire more heated, or more misinformed, debate than that of juvenile violence, and I want to make sure that whatever this group recommends is based on solid evidence and not inflamed rhetoric.

### Youth Violence— Increasing or Decreasing?

Let me begin by correcting a commonly held misconception. In your statement about the purpose of the working group, you indicate that the group's goal is to identify causes and advance solutions to fight the rise of youth violence in our Nation today. I think it is important to point out, however, that youth violence is *not* on the rise in America today. According to reports from the U.S. Department of Justice, the juvenile homicide arrest rate has dropped steadily and dramatically since 1993. (See figure 1, next page.) This occurred, as you know, along with a steady decline in violent crime among all age groups.<sup>1</sup> But the steepest decline in violence during

## about the author

Laurence Steinberg, Ph.D., is the Distinguished Professor of Psychology at Temple University in Philadelphia. For the past 25 years, he has been conducting research on factors that influence adolescent behavior—both normal and abnormal. He is especially interested in the role of the family in adolescent development and in the ways in which parents can help foster healthy youth development. Dr. Steinberg is the Past President of the Society for Research on Adolescence, the largest organization of social scientists interested in adolescent behavior and development. He also is the director of a national initiative funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation to examine a number of issues concerning the treatment of youthful offenders within the juvenile and criminal justice systems.

## The Bipartisan Working Group on Youth Violence

The Bipartisan Working Group on Youth Violence was formed by Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Rep. J. Dennis Hastert and House Minority Leader Rep. Richard Gephardt, on June 25, 1999. The Working Group's goals were to study the issue of juvenile violence and help provide solutions. A Final Report was released in early March 2000.

### The Working Group explored six main issues:

- Parents and families.
- Law enforcement.
- School safety.
- Community programs.
- Pop culture and media.
- Health.

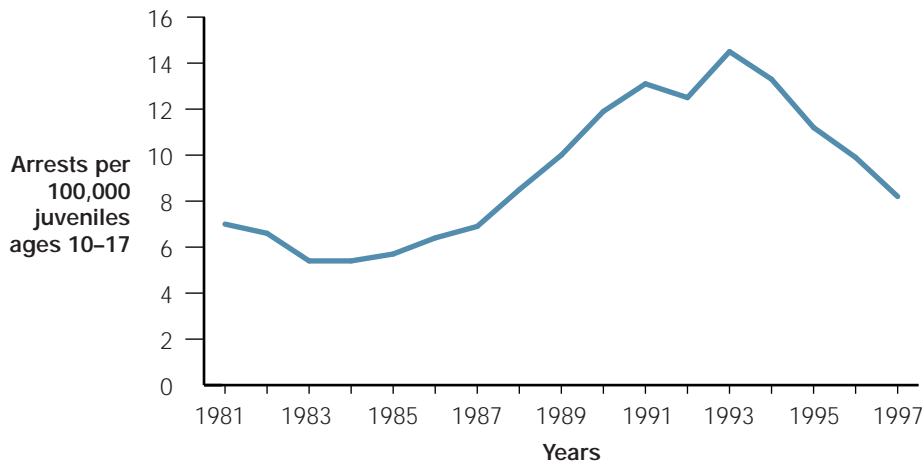
### The Working Group identified the following seven themes:

- Prevention and early intervention programs are essential.

- Parents and communities must play active and positive roles in children's lives.
- Youth health programs and mental health services must be accessible.
- The juvenile justice system should treat youth individually, with the goal of rehabilitation.
- Sharing of information among educators, law enforcement, judges, and social services is essential.
- Schools are prime locations to identify at-risk youth.
- Congress should fund only programs showing effective outcomes and demonstrating continuous benefit.

For more information about the Working Group or to request a copy of its final report, visit <http://www.house.gov/dunn/workinggroup/wkg.htm>.

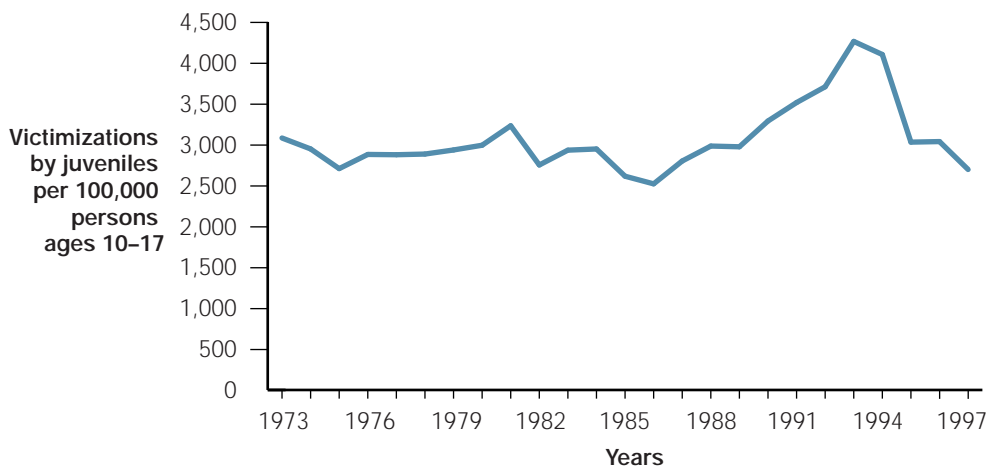
Figure 1: Juvenile Arrest Rate for Murder, 1981-1997



Source: Snyder, Howard N., *Juvenile Arrests 1997*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, December 1998 (NCJ 173938). Analysis of arrest data from unpublished Federal Bureau of Investigation reports and from *Crime in the United States* for 1995, 1996, and 1997 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1996, 1997, and 1998, respectively); and Bureau of the Census, for 1980 through 1989, *Current Population Reports*, P25-1095 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, 1993), and for 1990 through 1997 from *Population of the U.S. and States by Single Year of Age and Sex*. For data, see the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Web site at <http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/ojstabb/qa257.html>.

school-related deaths in the United States is lower today than it was in 1992.<sup>2</sup> Statistically speaking, schools are among the safest places for children to be. Yes, 12 children were killed at Columbine High School in one horrific incident. But more than 12 children die from gunfire in the United States every single day—not in school, but in their homes and neighborhoods. So if we are concerned about preventing youth violence in America, we need to focus on settings other than schools. We can put security systems inside each and every school in America, but this will barely affect the overall rate of youth violence because only a very small portion of violence committed by or against young people occurs in schools. In terms of preventing youth violence, there are better ways to spend our tax dollars than equipping schools with security systems and metal detectors.

Figure 2: Rate at Which Juveniles Committed Serious Violent Crimes, 1973-1997



Source: Snyder, Howard N., and Melissa Sickmund, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report*, Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, National Center for Juvenile Justice, September 1999 (NCJ 178257).

My intent is not to minimize the extent or seriousness of the problem of youth violence in America. No level of violence against America's children is acceptable. At the same time, however, one of the most important functions this committee can serve is to make sure that the record is set straight and that the American public is not unduly alarmed by incendiary remarks about "superpredators" and unsafe schools. Youth crime is declining. Youth violence is declining. School violence is declining. American schools, by and large, are safe places for children.

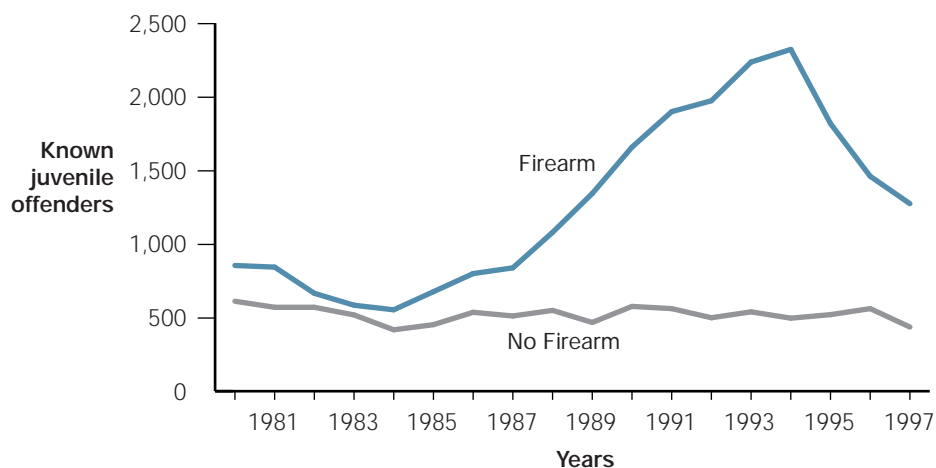
the 1990's, and especially during the last 5 years, has been among young people. The percentage of violent crimes attributed to youth is lower today than it was 25 years ago. (See figure 2.)

This welcome decline in youth violence in America also includes a decline in school-related violence. Despite the attention given to school violence by the mass media over the past year, the number of violent

### Restricting Young People's Access to Firearms

I understand that the committee has been asked specifically to look at issues beyond gun control, perhaps in an effort to stimulate, or simulate, bipartisanship. Yes, the problem of youth violence in

Figure 3: Firearm Related Homicides by Juveniles, 1981–1997



Source: Snyder, Howard N., and Melissa Sickmund, *Juvenile Offenders and Victims: 1999 National Report*, Washington, D.C.: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, National Center for Juvenile Justice, September 1999 (NCJ 178257).

America is attributable to many factors in addition to the easy access that young people have to lethal weapons. But I would be remiss as a social scientist if I did not say that there is overwhelming evidence that the availability of guns is the single most important factor that distinguishes youth violence in this country from youth violence in other parts of the world.<sup>3</sup> Our young people are no more violent than young people from other nations. What is different about youth violence in America is not that the violence our young people commit is more frequent, but that it is more lethal, and this is because of the weapons they use. Analyses of crime trends from FBI data show quite clearly that the rate of nongun-related violence among American youth has remained constant over time and that all of the increase in youthful violence during the past 25 years has been in gun-related incidents. (See figure 3.) It is the *nature* of youth violence, not its prevalence, that has changed.

This does not mean that we should ignore other factors, like those you will be discussing over the coming weeks. They are important, too.

But it does call for some truth-in-advertising in the committee's report. If we are serious about reducing youth violence in America, we need to restrict the access that young people have to guns. I know it, you know it, and the American people know it.

### The Role of the Family

I doubt that there is an influence on the development of antisocial behavior among young people that is stronger than that of the family. My goal in this presentation is to share with you what social scientists have learned about the role of the family in the genesis of youth violence and to suggest some possible ways of using parents and communities to help prevent violent incidents among our young people.

There is no single cause of youth violence, but when there is a common factor that cuts across different cases, it is usually some type of family dysfunction. Many young people who become involved in violence come from families in which there

is a long history of domestic violence. Many young people who are violent have been raised in homes that have been, if not technically abusive, hostile and conflict-ridden. Many come from families in which parents are negligent or disengaged from their child-rearing responsibilities. Exposure to violence or abuse in the home, exposure to hostile and punitive parenting, or growing up in a home environment in which parents are not sufficiently involved in their child's life are among the most important risk factors for the child's subsequent involvement in violent and other types of antisocial behavior.

**Modeling.** There are a number of psychological pathways that connect parental aggression, hostility, and disengagement to violence and other types of antisocial behavior in adolescence. One certain pathway is through modeling: When children are exposed to violence in the home, they come to see violence as relatively more acceptable, and they are more likely to resort to violence to solve problems. This is often referred to as the "cycle of violence," and there is good evidence that the acceptability of violence in interpersonal relationships is often carried from one generation to the next. Children who are themselves the victims of violence, or who witness violence against others in their home, are at risk for becoming violent themselves at some later point in time.

**Biological Factors.** A second pathway connecting experiences in the family with subsequent violence involves the developing brain. Here we do not know as much as we would like to know, but the knowledge base is expanding rapidly, and it looks as though some children may be *biologically* more inclined toward violence by the time they reach adolescence. This does not necessarily mean that violence is genetically transmitted, however,

because, as many of you know, early experience in the family can affect brain development in profound ways. It is likely that poor prenatal care, prenatal exposure to drugs and alcohol, exposure to high levels of lead in the environment, and early abuse or neglect can alter brain development in ways that lead some children to have more difficulty controlling aggressive impulses.

**Mental Health.** A third pathway connecting family dysfunction with adolescent violence is through the development of mental health problems. I understand that this working group will devote one of its subsequent meetings to a discussion of mental health and its relation to youth violence, but it is relevant to raise this issue in the context of today's discussion. Children with serious mental health problems, including conduct disorder, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse problems, and anxiety disorders, are far more likely than other youngsters to become involved in antisocial and violent activities. Among the most powerful predictors of mental health problems among children and adolescents are poor family relationships. Children whose parents are hostile and punitive, as well as those whose parents are neglectful, are at risk for developing all sorts of mental health problems, and children with mental health problems are at risk for developing patterns of antisocial and violent behavior.

**Parenting and Personality Development.** A fourth link between negative parenting and youthful violence is through the impact that negative parenting has on youngsters' personality development. Two particular pathways stand out as very important. First, children who have been exposed to hostile parenting are more likely than others to develop problems in controlling their emotions—

psychologists call this emotion regulation—and this places these children at risk for letting aggressive impulses spiral out of control. Second, children who have themselves been victims of violence at home are likely to develop a biased way of looking at the world. They see other people's actions as intentionally hostile when their actions may actually be innocuous. They may interpret a strange look from someone else or an accidental bump while standing in a school lunch line as deliberate and malicious, and they may lash out as a result.

**Academic Performance.** A fifth pathway linking family problems with adolescent violence is through the impact of negative parenting on youngsters' academic performance. There is now some very good research indicating that involvement in aggressive and antisocial behavior during adolescence is frequently preceded by school problems of one sort or another, including academic

failure and conduct problems. Children who have problems in school often gravitate toward peer groups of other troubled children, and these peer groups frequently become involved in antisocial behavior. Engagement in school is a strong protective factor against antisocial behavior, and positive family relationships are predictive of school engagement.

**Peer Pressure.** A final pathway connecting family problems with subsequent violence concerns the role that the family plays in influencing adolescents' susceptibility to peer pressure. One of the most important differences between the criminal behavior of adolescents versus that of adults is that adolescents tend to offend in groups, along with other adolescents. This is not to say that peers are an inherently negative influence on teenagers' behavior, but it is to note that a large proportion of violent acts committed by adolescents are

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committed within the context of peer pressure. Many adolescents will do risky, dangerous, or illegal things when in the company of their peers that they would not do when on their own. Adolescents who are most able to resist peer pressure are those who have strong and positive relationships at home. In contrast, a lack of parental involvement or supervision places adolescents at risk for involvement in antisocial peer activities and increases youngsters' vulnerability to negative peer influence. Thus, even if large numbers of adolescents are unsupervised after school because their parents are working, not all unsupervised adolescents will engage in acts they know are wrong simply because their friends pressure them to do so.

## What the Research Tells Us

Research conducted by my colleagues and myself, reported in the 1996 book, *Beyond the Classroom: Why School Reform Has Failed and What Parents Need to Do*, is informative in this regard. In this study of a diverse sample of more than 20,000 American teenagers from nine different high schools, we looked at the prevalence and consequences of different types of parenting. By far, the adolescents who had the greatest number of problems—not just with antisocial behavior, but also in school, in personality development, and in general mental health—came from families in which parents were hostile, aloof, or uninvolved. These predictors of adolescent dysfunction were identical across ethnic, socioeconomic, and household groups, in that children from homes characterized by negative parenting were at risk for problems regardless of their ethnicity or income and regardless of whether their parents were married, divorced, single, or remarried. In other words, the quality of the

## MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice

The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation founded the Research Network on Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice in 1997. It combines policy analysis, research, dissemination, and technical assistance to expand knowledge about the juvenile justice system. The Network examines the assumptions upon which current practices are based, both to improve legal practices and policymaking within the system and to ensure that the most accurate adolescent development information is used. The Network has sponsored two edited volumes, both of which will be published by the University of Chicago Press in 2000: *Youth on Trial*, edited by Thomas Grisso and Robert Schwartz, and *The Changing Borders of Juvenile Justice*, edited by Jeffrey Fagan and Franklin Zimring.

In addition to Dr. Steinberg, the Network's members are Jeffrey Fagan of Columbia University; Sandra Graham of the University of California—Los Angeles; Thomas

Grisso of the University of Massachusetts Medical Center; Darnell Hawkins of the University of Illinois at Chicago; Amy Holmes Hehn of the Portland, Oregon, District Attorney's Office; Daniel Keating of the University of Toronto; Patricia Lee of the San Francisco Public Defenders Office; The Honorable Paul McGill of Concord, Massachusetts; Edward Mulvey of the University of Pittsburgh; Robert Schwartz of the Juvenile Law Center; Elizabeth Scott of the University of Virginia; and Franklin Zimring of the University of California—Berkeley.

Among the Network's many research efforts is the first-ever large-scale longitudinal study of serious and violent juvenile offenders. The study will track 1,200 adolescents in two major metropolitan areas who have been convicted of felony charges and will look at the ways in which different sorts of sanctions and treatments, as well as forces in adolescents' homes and communities, affect patterns of desistance and recidivism.

parent-child relationship matters much more than the social demographics of the household.

Perhaps the most worrisome finding in our book concerns the high level of parental disengagement we saw in our sample. About one-fourth of the students in our sample were allowed to decide what classes to take in school without discussing the decision with their parents. About 30 percent of parents did not know how their child was doing in school. One-third of parents did not know how their child spends his or her spare time. One-fourth of the

students we surveyed said their family "never" did anything together for fun, and only 30 percent said their parents spend some time talking with them each day. Our estimate of the prevalence of parental disengagement at somewhere between 25 and 30 percent is in accord with data reported in other national surveys.

In our study, the problems associated with disengaged parenting were evident across all of the outcomes we studied, including antisocial behavior. Adolescents from disengaged homes were substantially more likely

to show psychological immaturity and adjustment difficulties, as evidenced by less self-reliance, lower self-esteem, and diminished social competence. Adolescents from these sorts of homes were more likely to show psychological problems, both in terms of various types of misconduct (drug use, delinquency, etc.) and in terms of various types of distress (anxiety, depression, psychosomatic complaints). And adolescents from disengaged homes were less interested in and less successful in school.

Parental engagement in their children's lives is one of the most important—if not the single most important—contributors to children's healthy psychological development. Not only our studies, but also those of several other researchers, show quite clearly that adolescents whose parents are not sufficiently engaged in their lives are more likely to get into trouble than are other youngsters. Parental disengagement is a very good predictor of many of the problem behaviors whose levels have reached alarming proportions: Alcohol and drug abuse, delinquency and violence, suicide, and sexual precocity. The fact that nearly one in three parents is disengaged from their adolescent's life is a clear reason to worry about the future well-being of America's young people.

I want to stress here that parental aggression, hostility, and disengagement are *risk factors* for the development of youthful violence, but they are not infallible predictors. In fact, the majority of children who have aggressive, hostile, or disengaged parents are *not* violent. And this is precisely what makes the prediction of adolescent violence so difficult: When we look backward into a violent child's developmental history, we often see patterns of family dysfunction. But if we were to try to predict forward, by identifying

children from dysfunctional families and asking whether they eventually become violent, we would be extremely disappointed with our forecasting. This is why I believe that attempts to identify potentially violent young people before they have committed acts of violence will prove unsuccessful. The vast majority of children we would identify as potentially violent on the basis of background factors will never commit an act of violence, and, consequently, many youngsters would be unfairly stigmatized under any such screening system. At an aggregate level, however, at a public health level, it is safe to say that if we could reduce the prevalence of negative parenting—if we could reduce abusive, hostile, neglectful, and disengaged parenting—we would see a significant drop in youth violence and a significant improvement in adolescents' mental health, school performance, and general well-being. It therefore makes sense to ask about the antecedents, or causes, of negative parenting and whether there is anything we can do to reduce its prevalence.

## Causes of Negative Parenting

Negative parenting, like adolescent violence, has multiple causes. Yet, we can make some broad generalizations about the conditions under which parents become abusive, hostile, or neglectful. By far, the most insidious cause of negative parenting is poverty. Economic stress, whether chronic or acute, increases the risk for negative parenting, which in turn increases the risk for youthful violence. Anything we can do to help more American families out of poverty will reduce adolescent violence.

A second cause of negative parenting is parental mental health problems. Parents who themselves suffer

from a mental illness or who have a substance abuse problem are more likely to be abusive, hostile, and neglectful toward their children. Thus, if we could do a better job of identifying and treating adults with serious mental health and substance abuse problems, we would likely see a decline in antisocial and violent behavior among young people.

A third contributor to negative parenting is the lack of community support for families. I want to be clear about this: I do not believe that it takes a village to raise a child, nor do I think there is any evidence in contemporary America that children are raised by villages. I believe that it takes competent and caring parents to raise children, but that parents' ability to be effective in this role is influenced by the community in which they live. Parents under stress, because of deteriorating housing, inadequate childcare, conflicts between work schedules and family life, terrible schools, inadequate transportation, or poor health care, cannot parent as effectively as those who live under more benign conditions. I am not saying that poor day care, poor housing, or poor medical care causes youth crime. What I am saying, however, is that these and other stressors increase the likelihood that parents will be abusive, hostile, or neglectful, which in turn increase the risk of youth violence.

Finally, a significant contributor to negative parenting is the widespread dissemination of information about parenting that is often incorrect and sometimes even harmful. Many parents believe that their children do not need them any more after they have entered adolescence. Many parents believe that physical punishment is the best way to discipline children. Many parents believe that parents don't matter because children's development is determined by genetic factors or by factors out-

Parental engagement in their children's lives is one of the most important—if not the single most important—contributors to children's healthy psychological development.

side the family. All of these beliefs are wrong, and all are contradicted by scientific data. We need a public health campaign in America to make sure that all parents know how to raise psychologically healthy children and that they are willing to take responsibility for doing this.

I noted earlier that my colleagues' and my research indicates that the fundamentals of effective parenting cut across different demographic groups. How does this observation square with the widespread belief that the problem of youth violence is concentrated among a small segment of the population that is disproportionately composed of families who are poor, from ethnic minority groups, and headed by single parents? The answer is that these groups are most likely to live under the sort of stressors I described a moment ago and that it is these stressors, and not the color, marital status, and income level of a family, that most affect the child's behavior. Simply put, it is harder for a poor, single inner city parent than for an affluent, married, suburban parent to be a good parent. But when poor, single parents in the inner city raise their children in effective ways, their children are unlikely to engage in violence and other antisocial activities. By the same token, and as the Columbine tragedy indicates, coming from an affluent, suburban, two-parent household is no guarantee against violence.

### The Role of Popular Culture

Much has been said in recent discussions of American youth violence about the contribution of popular culture to the problem. I, therefore, want to say a few words about the role of the family in the development of youth violence within the context of a culture that glorifies violence and exposes young people to countless images of murder, mayhem, and mass destruction.

I fear that discussions of the role of the mass media in the genesis of youth violence have made many parents believe that they are insignificant in the face of their youngsters' exposure to the media. If anything, however, just the opposite is true: The exposure of adolescents to potentially negative influences outside the family makes the involvement of parents in their children's lives all that much more important.

Exposure to violence in the media plays a significant, but very small, role in adolescents' actual involvement in violent activity. The images young people are exposed to may provide the material for violent fantasies and may, under rare circumstances, give young people concrete ideas about *how* to act out these impulses. But the violent impulses themselves, and the motivation to follow through on them, rarely come from watching violent films

or violent television or from listening to violent music. I say this for several reasons.

First, there is good evidence that aggressive children are more inclined than other children to watch and listen to violent entertainment; for this reason, it is difficult to say whether the observed correlation between being exposed to media violence and actually engaging in violent behavior is due to the impact of media use on behavior, which is what critics of the mass media contend, or due to the fact that individuals already inclined toward violence simply have more violent tastes to begin with. Very few studies have taken this so-called "selection effect" into account, but when it is accounted for, the alleged "impact" of media violence on aggressive behavior is very small.

Second, the very same violent imagery that is purportedly behind the high level of violence among American youth appears to have no impact on young people from other countries, where violent films and music are at least as popular, if not more so, than they are in the United States. If violent behavior were so clearly associated with violent film viewing, rates of violent youth crime would be sky-high across Europe, Asia, and South America, where Hollywood exports an awful lot of its violent entertainment. Violent youth crime in these countries is far less prevalent than in the United States, however.<sup>4</sup>

Finally, studies that have documented harmful "effects" of media violence have typically looked at very minor sorts of outcomes—whether children push each other on the playground or punch inflatable dolls, for example. Beyond anecdotal evidence, I know of no research that links the sort of serious violence this working group is concerned about with exposure to violent entertainment. And given the tremendous

## For More Information

- Steinberg, Laurence, B. Bradford Brown, and Sanford M. Dornbusch, *Beyond the Classroom: Why School Reform Has Failed and What Parents Need to Do*, New York: Simon & Schuster/Touchstone Books, 1997.
- The MacArthur Foundation Research Network on Adolescent Development and Juvenile Justice, <http://www.mac-adoldev-juvjustice.org>. Marnia Davis, Network Administrator, Department of Psychology, Temple University, 215–204–0149.
- PAVNET (Partnerships Against Violence Network), <http://www.pavnet.org>, is a virtual library of information about efforts, many of them federally funded, to reach children and young people at risk for violence. Compiled with input from several Federal agencies, it is a one-stop, searchable information resource to help reduce redundancy in information management and provide easy access to information.
- *Preventing School Violence: Plenary Papers of the 1999 Conference on Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation—Enhancing Policy and Practice Through Research, Volume 2*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, April 2000 (NCJ 180972). Includes “Community and Institutional Partnerships for School Violence Prevention,” by Sheppard G. Kellam; “Research-Based Prevention of School Violence and Youth Antisocial Behavior: A Developmental and Educational Perspective,” by Ron Prinz; and “Controlling Violence: What Schools Are Doing,” by Joseph F. Sheley. Copies can be downloaded from the NIJ Web site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>. Hard copies can be obtained by calling the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 1–800–851–3420.
- Federal Government agencies are collaborating through the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Division of Adolescent and School Health. An inventory of the collaborative efforts related to school violence, categorized by type, can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphd/dash>.

and widespread exposure of American youth to media violence, this is very good news. It is likely to be the case that exposure to violent entertainment increases the likelihood of violent behavior only among teenagers already inclined to behave this way, and the weight of the evidence suggests that this inclination likely has its origins in the home. Curbing adolescents’ exposure to violent entertainment, without addressing the familial problems I noted earlier, will have little impact on youth violence in America.

### Strategies Needed to Reduce Youth Violence

Any attempt to reduce youth violence in our country must include a systematic effort to improve the

home environments of America’s children and adolescents and, in particular, to engage American parents in the business of parenting. We cannot afford to have a generation of young people come of age where one-third do not have parents who are sufficiently engaged in their lives. In addition to policies designed to limit young peoples’ access to lethal weapons, I can think of no more important strategy than one designed to reduce abusive, hostile, and negligent parenting and promote healthy parent-child relationships. We can do this by improving prenatal care, expanding parent education, and promoting family-friendly policies that reduce poverty, prevent and treat mental health and substance abuse problems, and enhance parental effectiveness.

These are goals on which we can achieve a broad and enthusiastic bipartisan consensus.

NCJ 181732

## Notes

1. *National Crime Victimization Survey 1973–1997*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1998. *Uniform Crime Reports*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1998.
2. Serious violent crime constitutes a small percentage of the total amount of school crime, and homicide is extremely rare. While the number of multiple homicide events at school has increased, there exists a less than one in a million chance of suffering a school-associated violent death. Fewer than 1 percent of the more than 7,000 children who were murdered in 1992 and 1993 combined were killed at school. In the 1992–93 and 1993–94 school years combined, 63 students ages 5 through 19 were murdered at school and 13 committed suicide at school. Nationwide, during roughly the same time frame, a total of 7,357 children aged 5 to 19 were murdered and 4,366 committed suicide, both in and out of school. Preliminary data indicate that school-associated violent deaths have decreased in the past 2 years. U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, *Annual Report on School Safety, 1998*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, October 1998 (NCJ 173934.)
3. Zimring, Franklin E., *American Youth Violence*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
4. Ibid.



# At-A-Glance: Recent Research Findings

## A New Look at Neighborhood Disorder

*Journal article, "Systematic Social Observation of Public Spaces: A New Look at Disorder in Urban Neighborhoods," American Journal of Sociology, Robert J. Sampson and Stephen W. Raudenbush (NCJ 181623). Available from NCJRS interlibrary loan.*

The "broken windows" theory that predatory crime follows on the heels of neighborhood disorder is overstated, according to researchers who videotaped the condition and street life of 250 miles of city blocks in Chicago and interviewed more than 3,500 residents of the same areas. Overall they found that the predatory crime rate—homicide, robbery, and burglary—depends more on economic-related factors and the willingness and capacity of people to work together to keep up their neighborhood.

Robert J. Sampson of the University of Chicago and Stephen W. Raudenbush of the University of Michigan used the photographing and systematic rating of 23,000 street segments in Chicago to construct scales of social and physical disorder for 196 neighborhoods, selected to maximize variation by race/ethnicity and class/socioeconomic status. Then, employing census data, police records, and an independent survey of residents, they determined the degree of residents' cohesion and shared expectations for social control of neighborhood public space.

### **Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods**

Their study was part of a much larger interdisciplinary investigation

aimed at understanding the causes and pathways of juvenile delinquency, crime, substance abuse, and violence. Called the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods, it is directed from the Harvard Medical School and funded by NIJ, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, the National Institute of Mental Health, the U.S. Department of Education, and the Administration for Children, Youth and Families.

The project, unique in size and scope, combines an intensive study of various aspects of Chicago's neighborhoods with a series of longitudinal studies of approximately 6,500 children and adolescents, looking at their personal characteristics and the changing

circumstances of their lives that may lead them toward or away from delinquent behavior. The project seeks to unravel the individual, family, and collective processes that determine what makes some communities safe and lawful and others dangerous. It also looks at the different combinations of factors that lead some individuals to criminal behavior while others maintain crime-free lives even in high-risk neighborhoods.

### **Social Disorder and Its Connections to Crime**

Social disorder refers to public behaviors usually involving strangers and considered threatening, such as verbal rowdiness among young males, harassment, intoxication, solicitation for prostitution, and

## How to Get At-A-Glance Materials

Materials are available at:

- NIJ's Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>, or
- NCJRS, [puborder@ncjrs.org](mailto:puborder@ncjrs.org), 1-800-851-3420, P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849-6000.

The summaries in this section are based on the following:

**Research in Progress Seminars.** At these seminars, scholars discuss their ongoing research and preliminary findings with an audience of researchers and criminal justice professionals. Sixty-minute VHS videotapes of the Research in Progress seminars are available from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) at 1-800-851-3420. Videotaped seminars are \$19 (\$24 in Canada and other countries).

**NIJ Final Reports.** These final submissions from NIJ grantees typically are available from NCJRS through interlibrary loan. In some cases, photocopies may be obtained for a fee. For information about these reports and possible fees, contact NCJRS.

**NIJ Publications.** Some of the information here is summarized from recent NIJ publications, which are available from the NIJ Web site or by contacting NCJRS. Refer to the documents' accession (ACN) or NCJ numbers.

drug sales. Physical disorder refers to signs of urban deterioration, such as graffiti on buildings, abandoned cars, broken windows, and syringes, needles, condoms, beer bottles, cigarettes, and garbage in the streets.

Connections between disorder and both fear of crime and crime rates have been established by prior research. Indeed, the prevailing broken windows thesis holds that minor disorder is a direct cause of serious crime. Its originators argued that public incivilities attract predatory crime because offenders assume that residents are indifferent to what goes on in their neighborhood. The broken windows thesis has led to police crackdowns on the symptoms of disorder in numerous cities, with New York City the most well-known example.

The Sampson-Raudenbush study was based on the idea that rather than disorder causing crime, many elements of disorder are part and parcel of crime itself. For example, solicitation for prostitution, loitering, drinking or using drugs in public, smashed windows, drug vials in the street, and graffiti are all evidence either of crimes or ordinance violations.

The study also sought to test the effect of a neighborhood's economic and social makeup on preventing crime. In the case of poor neighborhoods, economic deprivation limits the ability to repair buildings and clean up litter. Also, with many stores and apartments vacant, investors have little incentive to repair their properties. Residential instability can undermine social ties while high levels of home ownership and low levels of transience give neighbors a stake in neighborhood well-being and an incentive to work together to protect public order. Other possible structural handicaps to counteracting public incivilities

include a highly dense population and commercial land use.

The study also examined the informal mechanisms by which residents initiate or achieve control of public spaces. Examples of "collective efficacy" include intervention by residents to prevent vandalism, truancy, fighting, and street corner disturbances; and resident activism to protect public order in other ways (for example, by preventing the closure of a local fire station). Presumably, the shared willingness of neighborhood residents to intervene to protect their surroundings depends in part on cohesion and mutual trust.

### **Collective Efficacy and Broken Windows**

The study found that disorder and crime, rather than being cause and effect, appear to *both* be the common products of weakened social controls and neighborhood socioeconomic disadvantage, especially concentrated poverty, and in the case of disorder, the presence of mixed, residential-commercial land use. Disorder was not directly associated with predatory crime except for robbery.

Although the findings contradict the original broken windows thesis, they do not imply the irrelevance of disorder. Physical and social disorder comprise highly visible cues about the neighborhood to insiders and outsiders alike—prospective homebuyers, real estate agents, insurance agents, and investors. Disorder may be important to understanding metropolitan migration patterns, business investment, and overall neighborhood viability. If disorder operates in a cascading fashion, for example, by discouraging collective efficacy and encouraging people to move away, thus increasing residential instability, it would indirectly affect crime.

The findings suggest that the fashionable notion of cleaning up disorder through law enforcement measures is simplistic and may be misplaced as a means for directly fighting crime. Attacking disorder may be an analytically weak strategy to reduce crime. Based on their study, the authors suggest an approach that examines how residents' collective action to stem disorder may increase collective efficacy, in the long run lowering crime.

### **For More Information**

- Visit the Web site of the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods, <http://phdcn.harvard.edu>. See also *Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods 1999 Annual Report*, available from PHDCN, Harvard University, College House, 4th Floor, 1430 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138, 617-495-5381.
- Robert Sampson, Ph.D., Department of Sociology, The University of Chicago, 1126 East 59th Street, Chicago, IL 60637, 773-256-6357, and Senior Research Fellow, American Bar Association, 750 N. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, IL 60611, 312-988-6508, [rjsam@src.uchicago.edu](mailto:rjsam@src.uchicago.edu).
- Stephen Raudenbush, Ed.D., School of Education, University of Michigan, 610 East University, Ann Arbor, MI 48109, 734-764-8241, and Senior Research Scientist at the Survey Research Center, Institute for Social Research, 426 Thompson Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48106, 734-936-0462, [rauden@umich.edu](mailto:rauden@umich.edu).

## Effectiveness of Residential Drug Treatment for Florida Probationers

*NIJ Research in Progress Seminar, "Effectiveness of Residential Drug Treatment for Florida Probationers," Pamela Lattimore and Richard Linster, available on videotape from NCJRS (NCJ 179013).*

Assigning probationers to drug treatment programs appears to reduce both overall probation failure rates and new offending rates, according to recently released findings from an evaluation of Florida Residential Treatment Programs for Probationers. Results indicated that being assigned to substance abuse treatment prevented approximately 3,600 probation failures in the 2 years after assignment.

The project—sponsored by NIJ and the Florida Department of Corrections (DOC)—sought to determine the impact of assignment to various substance abuse treatment options by identifying drug-involved DOC admissions, examining changes in sentencing outcomes (i.e., prison versus probation), and evaluating the impact of treatment. Conducted by Pamela Lattimore of Research Triangle Institute and former NIJ Visiting Fellow Richard Linster, the evaluation was based on extensive analyses of DOC administrative data.

### Sentences for Drug-Involved Offenders

In the first phase of the study, researchers found that 48 percent of DOC admissions between July 1991 and June 1997 were drug involved (i.e., the inmates had been sentenced to probation or prison and had at least one drug offense conviction or at least one court referral for treatment). The examination of sentencing decisions during this period found a dramatic

decrease in prison admissions among the drug involved.

In addition, on average, both those sentenced to prison and those sentenced to probation had more prior prison admissions (i.e., both groups had become "more serious"). This is consistent with the objectives of the prison diversion policy Florida legislators established in 1991, which sought to divert drug-involved offenders from prison to probation.

### Impact of Treatment Programs

For the program evaluation, drug-involved probationers were classified based on their assignment to one of four treatment options: Secure (long-term) residential, nonsecure (short-term) residential, nonresidential, or no treatment. For research purposes, offenders assigned to a nonresidential program and those not assigned to treatment were separated into two study populations each by the date of program assignment.

Approximately 180,000 drug-involved offenders were assigned to probation from July 1991 through June 1995. Of these, approximately 40,000 offenders were excluded from the study for research-related reasons, such as missing variables.

The study examined the success and failure rates of probationers within 2 years of program assignment. Success was defined as no new sentence or revocation. Probation success was highest among offenders assigned to nonresidential treatment, with rates of 57 percent and 51 percent for the two groups. The groups of probationers not assigned to treatment had success rates of 47 percent and 41 percent. Those assigned to secure residential programs—offenders at high risk of failure—had success rates of 39 percent. Those assigned to nonsecure residential programs had success rates of 42 percent.

In another measure of the impact of program assignment, researchers devised models to control for the effect of treatment. Observed success rates for each treatment option were compared with the success rates that would have been expected without treatment. Findings revealed that for all treatment options, the success rates for offenders assigned to treatment were higher than the rates that would have been expected without treatment.

### Why Offenders Failed Probation

Another area of study concerned the reasons why offenders failed probation. As expected, the majority of failures could be traced to technical offenses or other violations, not new offenses. However, residential treatment was estimated to have reduced new offending by approximately 45 percent.

## Juveniles in Adult Prisons

*Final Report submitted to NIJ, New "Boys" on the Block: Under-18-Year-Olds in Adult Prisons, Robert B. Levinson and John J. Greene, American Correctional Association, June 1998 (NCJ 181624), available from NCJRS.*

The number of young people in adult prisons nearly tripled after 1982, exceeding 7,000 by 1997. Between 1995 and 1997, this population grew at the rate of 18 percent a year, and further expansion is expected in the next 5 years.

The number of such inmates in 1997 varied tremendously by State. Three States had none (New Hampshire, West Virginia, and Wyoming), while Connecticut had 959. Montana had the largest proportion of these youths relative to the State's entire prisoner population—almost 8 percent.

A team from the American Correctional Association conducted a telephone survey and onsite interviews to ascertain the number of minors in the Nation's prisons and to examine how State departments of corrections are managing them. The survey required sorting departments of corrections into one of four management types, corresponding to the method each jurisdiction followed to house its under 18-year-old youths (separated vs. integrated) and the size of that group (large vs. small). The team conducted interviews to obtain an indepth view of how inmates under 18 are handled in four different adult prisons.

### **The Growth in the Number of Juvenile Inmates**

From 1965 through 1992 the arrest rate for violent crime committed by those 18 or under rose 360 percent. Juveniles accounted for 13 percent of all violent crimes—murder, forcible rape, aggravated assault, and robbery—cleared by arrest in 1996. Such statistics have led citizens and politicians to favor heavier penalties for serious juvenile offenders. Since 1978, 44 States and the District of Columbia have passed laws to enlarge the number and types of crimes for which juveniles may be sent to an adult criminal court and to streamline the process.

The growing population of juveniles brings new responsibilities for staff in adult prisons. Serious juvenile offenders need to be understood in terms of their backgrounds and psychological makeup. For prisons, special attention needs to be given to staff selection policies, training, and programs for young offenders.

### **How States House Juveniles**

The research team found four methods for housing juvenile inmates in adult prisons:

- Place them in administrative segregation (akin to protective custody) until they reach 18.
- Keep them in a separate institution that houses only inmates under 18.
- House them together in one or more units within a facility that also holds adults.
- Integrate them into an institution's general population.

In short, there were three ways to separate youthful from adult inmates and one way to integrate them.

The survey found that the majority of States housed youthful offenders with adult inmates, rather than separating them. Mixing adults and minors was especially likely for those systems that had higher proportions of under-18-year-olds in their inmate populations.

### **Other Survey Findings**

Project staff also examined indepth four prisons housing a fairly large number of minors in the Northeast, South, Midwest, and Northwest. They represented four combinations of system size (small vs. large) and management approach (separated vs. integrated). From onsite visits with personnel at these four institutions, the authors observed:

- Security for inmates younger than 18 was a special concern only in those facilities that separated this population from adult inmates.
- Youthful offenders tended to be involved in more disciplinary incidents than their adult counterparts and, reportedly, had a higher rate of segregation commitments.
- Inmates younger than 18 received fewer visits than adult prisoners.

- Not much attention was paid to programs for young offenders, although special education arrangements were made for inmates previously identified in the community as needing such services.
- Special training for staff in how to deal with young inmates was rarely mentioned, and then only where under-18-year-olds were separated from adults.
- For the most part, the influx of young people into adult prisons has resulted in few changes in policy or procedures, other than those mandated by law.
- There is a high degree of congruence between the staff's attitudes as to how minors should be dealt with and that jurisdiction's management philosophy.

### **Implications for Program Development**

The authors regard offenders under 18 who are waived to adult court as juveniles, regardless of how they are treated by State law. They recommend that adult institutions that hold youthful inmates take the following into consideration:

*Staff training.* All institution staff who come in direct contact with youthful inmates should receive additional training on how to work with them.

*Housing.* Placement at a separate facility within the adult corrections system is preferable; if there are too few prisoners younger than 18 to make this economically feasible, then (at a minimum) one or more separate units in an adult institution should be established for them.

*Education.* Youthful inmates should be encouraged to earn a GED, and special provisions should be made for those younger than the State's age limit for mandatory education.

The facility should provide an education program, and inmates should be required to participate until they gain a GED or turn 18. Inmates requiring special accommodations to complete their GED should receive them. Physical education should be part of the regular regimen.

*Counseling.* Social skills training—for example, anger management, drug and alcohol guidance, AIDS instruction, and parenting skills—should be mandatory for youthful inmates until they turn 18, and then voluntary thereafter.

*Life management.* Career awareness, skill development, and work assignments should be integrated in the program plan for every inmate under 18.

*Program schedule.* Every inmate should follow an individualized schedule containing the above elements, as appropriate, from wakeup to lights out.

## Alcohol, Drugs, and Battered Women's Calls to the Police

*Final Report and Executive Summary submitted to NIJ, The Influence of Alcohol and Drugs on Women's Utilization of the Police for Domestic Violence, Ira W. Hutchison, June 1999 (NCJ 179277), available from NCJRS.*

Battered women are abused far more often than they report domestic violence to the police, according to a study in Charlotte, North Carolina, sponsored by the National Institute of Justice. The researcher also found that women were more likely to call the police if the batterer was drunk or using drugs and that women's own drinking was not related to their summoning the police. Most women who call the police want the batterer arrested or otherwise removed.

Charlotte was one of five locales where the NIJ-funded Spouse Assault Replication Project collected and archived arrest and outcome data. Professor Ira W. Hutchison of the University of North Carolina—Charlotte was one of the researchers who conducted the original Charlotte study for the project. For that study, interviews were conducted with 419 women involved in a misdemeanor-level incident of domestic violence who had either called the police themselves or had a call made on their behalf. The women were largely poor or working class. Hutchison's research goal was to analyze the data from the previous study to determine whether calling the police to report domestic abuse was influenced by substance abuse on the part of either abusers or victims.

The rate of alcohol consumption was unusually high among both batterers and victims. Nearly five times as many men and women in this sample as in a national sample were "high" drinkers (23.9 vs. 4.9 percent) and nearly three times as many were binge drinkers (12.6 vs. 4.6 percent). Men in the Charlotte sample were particularly heavy drinkers; more than one-half (52.8 percent) were high or binge drinkers compared to 18.4 percent of the women. The men also drank in large quantities. Among the "high" drinkers, 78.4 percent consumed 6 or more drinks a day and 37.0 percent 10 or more drinks daily.

### Reports to Police

Most of the domestic violence was never reported to the police. Women reported being threatened, on average, 4.4 times in the 6 months preceding the abusive incident and a total of 22.5 times over the course of the relationship. They reported being hit by the offender an average of 3.5 times in the previous 6 months and 10.4 times over the

entire relationship. However, these women had called the police, on average, only 1.8 times in the previous 6 months and 3.3 times since the relationship had begun.

The researchers found that the frequency with which women called the police, over both the 6-month period and the lifetime of the relationship, was tied to the frequency with which the abuser was drunk or used marijuana and the frequency with which he hit the victim.

In nearly two-thirds of the cases, women called the police themselves. When the victim did not place the call, she asked someone (a neighbor, friend, or child) to do so in nearly half the cases. Someone else was more likely to call when the victim had been injured than when she had not been. Most women who called the police did so for a combination of two reasons: Punitive—because of what her partner had already done—and preventive—fear of what he might do.

Close to one-third (29.7 percent) of the women wanted the police to arrest the offender when they made the call. Even more (41.0 percent) wanted the police to remove the offender from the scene. In short, more than two-thirds of the women (70.7 percent) wanted the police to take the offender away.

Typically, the abuse in the incidents in question took the form of striking the victim (86.8 percent) or threatening the victim (63.2 percent). Aggression against other family members and property also was common. Minor children often witnessed the abusive incidents.

### Alcohol and Drug Use

Drinking was the single most common factor associated with the abusive incident, according to both victims and police reports. Three-fifths (60.4 percent) of the offenders were drinking at the time. They had

consumed, on average, 6.7 drinks. Among those drinking, more than half were drunk (57.9 percent). Almost half the men (43.4 percent) were drinking more than usual. In addition, about one-fifth (21.8 percent) of the men were using drugs before or at the time of the abuse.

Women whose partners drank were much more likely to be afraid of them than women whose partners seldom drank. They had reason to be. Women who reported they were very often fearful when their partners were drinking were threatened and hit two to three times as often as women who said they were never afraid when their partners were drinking.

### Policy Implications

These findings suggest that law enforcement policies about responding to abusive incidents should be reviewed, formal cooperative efforts with community service agencies that deal with substance abuse should be strengthened, and involvement with the judicial system in handling substance-abusing batterers should be routine.

## The Declining Rate of Intimate Partner Homicide

*NIJ Research in Progress Seminar, "The Declining Rate of Intimate Partner Homicide," Laura Dugan, Daniel Nagin, and Richard Rosenfeld, available on videotape from NCJRS (NCJ 180212).*

Rates of homicide among intimate partners have been decreasing steadily since 1976. However, the decline cannot be explained by a concomitant trend in the overall homicide rate, which, due to the changing pattern in youth homicide, began to rise in 1986, peaked in 1992, and thereafter has declined steadily (see figure 1).

Recent research findings indicate that declines in intimate partner homicide may be due to factors that reduce an intimate partner's exposure to risk of homicide: Police and prosecution practices, women's increased participation in the labor force, services for domestic violence victims, Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) benefits, and legal advocacy. (Legal advocacy services

are intended to help women better negotiate the legal system by providing support and information relevant to the legal process. Legal advocates may help a woman apply for a protection order or prepare to testify against her abuser, among other things.)

The findings are mixed, however, and vary for different groups. Some factors are more likely to reduce the risk of homicide for married partners, but may actually exacerbate the risk for unmarried partners. For example, police policies allowing an arrest without a warrant were associated with fewer homicides for all white females and black unmarried males, but may have increased homicides of white married males.

For an NIJ-funded study, Laura Dugan, Georgia State University; Daniel Nagin, Carnegie Mellon University; and Richard Rosenfeld, University of Missouri–St. Louis, collaborated with staff at the Women's Center and Shelter of Greater Pittsburgh and other specialists. The study gathered data for 48 cities from 1976 to 1996.

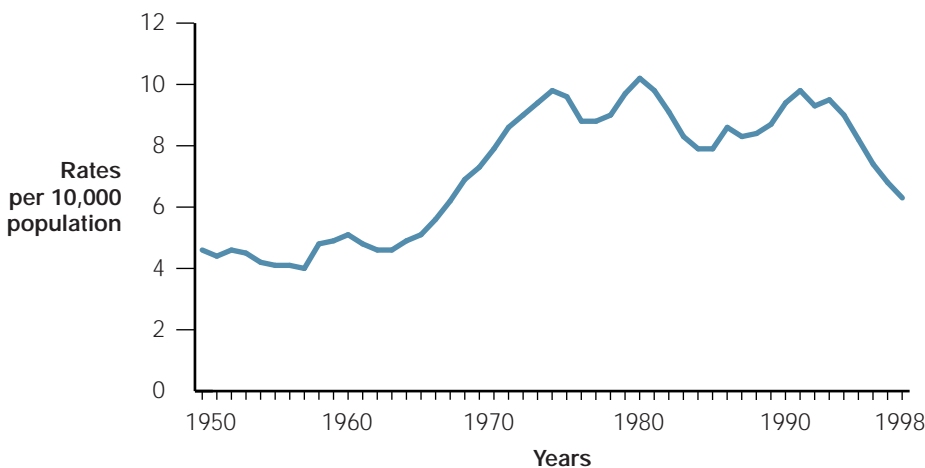
During the time period, the decreases in intimate partner homicide were greater for male victims than for female victims, for blacks than for whites, and for married victims than for unmarried victims.

### Differences Between Races

Overall, levels of intimate partner homicide have been much higher for blacks than for whites. In recent years, the rates have started to converge because the decline for blacks has been so sharp—80 percent for males and 60 percent for females—although the greatest decline for black females occurred during the early part of the period (see figure 2).

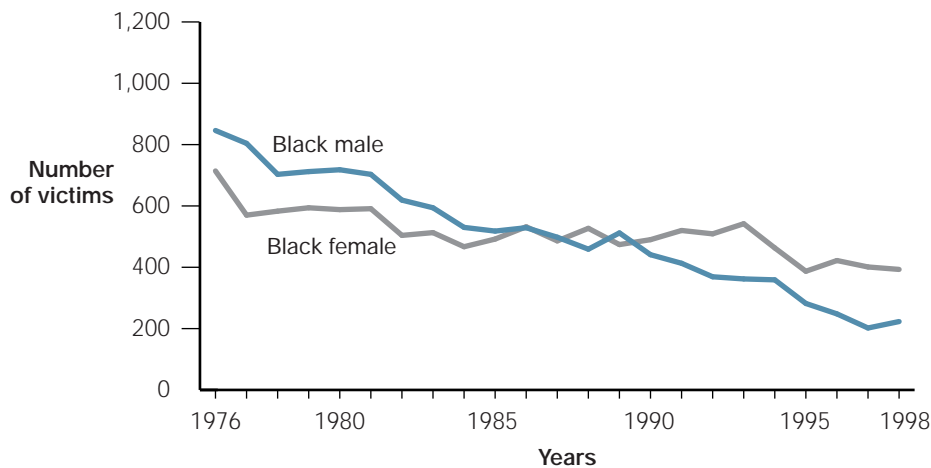
White male deaths from intimate partners dropped continuously by a

Figure 1: Homicide Victimization: National Trends, 1950–1998



Source: U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Uniform Crime Reports, 1950–1998*.

Figure 2: Intimate Partner Homicide Rates by Sex of Victim, 1976–1998: Blacks



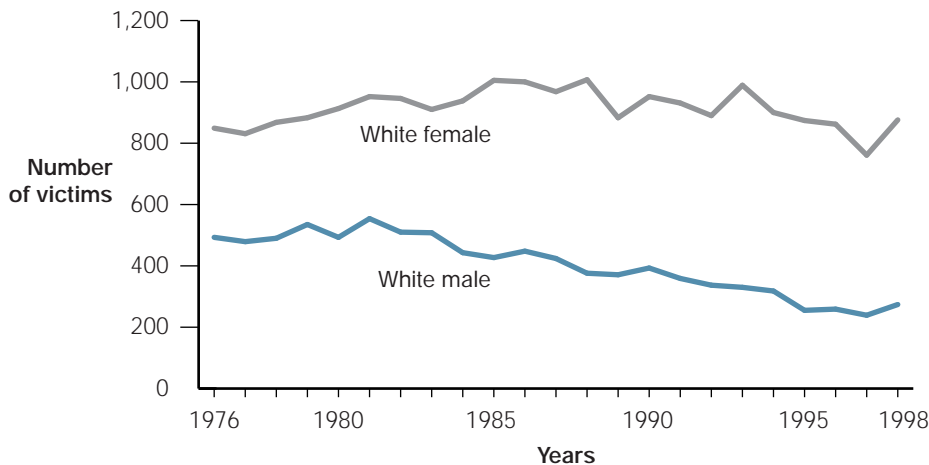
Source: Fox, James Alan, and Marianne W. Zawitz, *Homicide Trends in the United States*, Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, January 1999 (NCJ 173956). See also <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/intimates.htm>.

Correction: Bethlehem Police Family Group Conferencing Project

A summary of the NIJ-sponsored evaluation of the Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, Family Group Conferencing Project was published in the October 1999 issue of the *NIJ Journal*. The researchers noted errors in the summary. Corrections are as follows:

- The title of the report is “Restorative Policing Experiment: The Bethlehem Pennsylvania Police Family Group Conferencing Project,” by Paul McCold and Benjamin Wachtel, May 1998 (NCJ 177564). Copies are available from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service.
- Only the attitudes of police officers toward policing, not the attitudes of citizens in general, were measured.

Figure 3: Intimate Partner Homicide Rates by Sex of Victim, 1976–1998: Whites



Source: Fox, James Alan, and Marianne W. Zawitz, *Homicide Trends in the United States*, Washington, D.C., U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, January 1999 (NCJ 173956). See also <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/intimates.htm>.

total of 60 percent. The 20-percent decrease in rates for white females did not begin until the 1980’s (see

figure 3). Rates of intimate partner homicide for black married women were unaffected by the strength of

legal advocacy, while rates for white married women decreased as legal advocacy became stronger.

As the relative education of their partners increased, black unmarried males and females and black married males were more likely to be killed.

In addition, in areas with higher AFDC benefits, fewer black unmarried males, white unmarried males, and black unmarried females were killed.

**For More Information**

This study has yet to be published. For additional information about the study, contact Laura Dugan, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department of Criminal Justice, College of Health and Human Sciences, Georgia State University, P.O. Box 4018, Atlanta, GA 30302–4018.

## New & Noteworthy

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### **Detailing the State of Knowledge on Crime and Justice**

This summer NIJ will release four volumes detailing the current state of knowledge concerning crime, social control, and the means society uses to suppress prohibited behavior. The volumes, which were commissioned by NIJ, will be released at the Annual Conference on Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation, July 16–19, 2000, in Washington, D.C.

Below is a list of each volume's essays, including the volume title and essays' authors.

#### **Volume 1: *The Nature of Crime: Continuity and Change***

Describes how changes and continuities in the social, cultural, economic, and physical fabric of society are linked to crime and crime policy.

- "The Changing Nature of Crime in America," by Gary LaFree, University of Maryland, College Park; Robert J. Bursik, Sr., University of Missouri, St. Louis; James Short, Washington State University; and Ralph B. Taylor, Temple University.
- "Theoretical Developments in Criminology," by Charles R. Tittle, Washington State University.
- "The Politics of Crime and Punishment," by William Lyons, University of Akron, and Stuart Weingold, University of Washington.
- "Changes in the Gender Gap in Crime and Women's Economic Marginalization," by Karen Heimer, University of Iowa.

- "Change and Continuity of Crime in Rural America," by Ralph A. Weisheit, Illinois State University, and Joseph F. Donnermeyer, Ohio State University.
- "Dynamics of the Drug-Crime Relationship," by Helene Raskin White, Rutgers State University, and D.M. Gorman, Texas A&M University.
- "Criminal Justice Discovers Information Technology," by Maureen Brown, University of North Carolina-Charlotte.
- "Explaining Regional and Urban Variation in Crime: A Review of Research," by Graham C. Ousey, University of Kentucky.
- "On Immigration and Crime," by Ramiro Martinez, Jr., Florida International University, and Matthew T. Lee, University of Akron.
- "A Century of Juvenile Justice," by Phillip W. Harris, Wayne N. Welsh, and Frank Butler, Temple University.

#### **Volume 2: *Boundary Changes in Criminal Justice Organizations***

Describes the fundamental changes in criminal justice agencies, their policies, and their interrelationships.

- "A Century of Changing Boundaries," by Charles M. Friel, Sam Houston State University.
- "Community Justice: A Conceptual Framework," by David R. Karp, Skidmore College, and Todd R. Clear, John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

- "The Internationalization of Criminal Justice," by Richard H. Ward, Sam Houston State University.
- "Brick by Brick: Dismantling the Border Between Juvenile and Adult Justice," by Jeffrey A. Butts and Ojmarrh Mitchell, The Urban Institute.
- "The Governance of Corrections: Implications of the Changing Interface of Courts and Corrections," by Christopher E. Smith, Michigan State University.
- "The Privatization and Civilianization of Policing," by Brian Forst, American University.
- "The Changing Boundaries of the Criminal Justice System: Redefining the Problem and the Response in Domestic Violence," by Alissa Pollitz Worden, University at Albany.
- "The Changing Boundaries Between Federal and Local Law Enforcement," by Daniel C. Richman, Fordham University, School of Law.

#### **Volume 3: *Policies, Processes, and Decisions of the Criminal Justice System***

Describes the changes in discretion and decisionmaking resulting from changes occurring within and among criminal justice agencies.

- "Policies, Processes, and Decisions of the Criminal Justice System," by Julie Horney, University of Nebraska.
- "Prison Use and Social Control," by James P. Lynch, American



University, and William J. Sabol, The Urban Institute.

- “Community Justice and a Vision of Collective Efficacy: The Case of Restorative Conferencing,” by Gordon Bazemore, Florida Atlantic University.
- “Changing the Contours of the Criminal Justice System to Meet the Needs of Persons with Serious Mental Illness,” by Arthur I. Lurigio, Loyola University, and James A. Swartz, Illinois Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities.
- “Assessing Correctional Rehabilitation: Policy, Practice, and Prospects,” by Francis T. Cullen, University of Cincinnati, and Paul Gendreau, University of New Brunswick at Saint John.
- “The Evolution of Decision Making Among Prison Executives 1975–2000,” by Kevin N. Wright, Binghamton University.
- “Community Policing in America: Changing the Nature, Structure, and Function of the Police,” by Jack R. Greene, Northeastern University.
- “Criminal Justice and the IT Revolution,” by Terence Dunworth, Abt Associates Inc.
- “Thirty Years of Sentencing Reform: The Quest for a Racially Neutral Sentencing Process,” by Cassia C. Spohn, University of Nebraska at Omaha.
- “The Convergence of Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Class on Court Decisionmaking: Looking Toward the 21st Century,” by Marjorie S. Zatz, Arizona State University.

## New Book Highlights Crime Mapping Technologies and Analysis

Law enforcement agencies are increasingly realizing the benefits of using geographic information systems (GIS) to analyze local crime trends. With GIS, they can identify locations of crime concentrations and see how they relate to other characteristics of the physical and social environment. The development of more effective crime control and prevention strategies are thereby supported.

Using the New York Police Department’s (NYPD’s) crime data as a test bed, *Analyzing Crime Patterns: Frontiers of Practice* draws on the experiences of 12 experts to outline the techniques involved in spatial analysis; examine how the use of mapping can help to define, understand, and predict crime “hot spots”; and explain the applications of available GIS software packages. The book provides a basic overview of crime mapping analytic techniques, both for law enforcement agencies new to such methods as well as for those agencies interested in exploring more advanced applications.

Specific topics in *Analyzing Crime Patterns* include:

- An assessment of various analytic methods and software tools employed in crime mapping.
- The ways in which mapping supports the COMPSTAT process.
- The use of repeat address mapping to identify hot spots.
- Data analysis using SpaceStat, a spatial statistics software program.
- Kernel smoothing estimation as a method for identifying hot spots.
- The spatial relationship among schools, rapid transit stations, and public housing and crime.

The genesis for this book stems from an NIJ-funded Locally Initiated Research Partnership grant, which partnered the Center for Urban Research, the City University of New York’s Center for Applied Studies of the Environment, and the NYPD to examine the different mapping techniques and software available to support the NYPD’s COMPSTAT program. This partnership formed the basis for *Analyzing Crime Patterns*.

Goldsmith, Victor, Philip G. McGuire, John H. Mollenkopf, and Timothy A. Ross, eds., *Analyzing Crime Patterns: Frontiers of Practice*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc., 2000: 187 pages. Available from the publisher’s Web site, <http://www.sagepub.com>, or by calling Sage Publications, Inc., at 1–800–499–0721.



#### **Volume 4: Measurement and Analysis of Crime and Justice**

Describes current knowledge, trends, and future directions in the measurement and analysis of crime and the criminal justice system.

- "Measurement and Analysis of Crime and Justice: An Introductory Essay," by David Duffee and David McDowall, University at Albany; Lorraine Green Mazzerolle, University of Cincinnati; and Stephen D. Mastrofski, George Mason University.
- "Self-Report Surveys as Measures of Crime and Criminal Victimization," by David Cantor, Westat, Inc., and James P. Lynch, American University.
- "Measuring the Sexual Victimization of Women: Evolution, Current Controversies, and Future Research," by Bonnie S. Fisher and Francis T. Cullen, University of Cincinnati.
- "Measurement and Analysis of Drug Problems and Drug Control Efforts," by Jonathan P. Caulkins, Carnegie Mellon University.
- "Measurement and Explanation in the Comparative Study of American Police Organizations," by Edward R. Maguire, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and Craig D. Uchida, 21st Century Solutions.
- "Measuring the Costs and Benefits of Crime and Justice," by Mark A. Cohen, Vanderbilt University.
- "Standards and Measures of Court Performance," by Ingo Keilitz, Sherwood Consulting.
- "The Self-Report Method for Measuring Delinquency and Crime," by Terence P. Thornberry and Marvin D. Krohn, University at Albany.
- "Fear of Crime in the United States: Avenues for Research and Policy," by Mark Warr, University of Texas at Austin.

- "Spatial Analyses of Crime," by Luc Anselin, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; Jacqueline Cohen, Carnegie Mellon University; David Cook, Greensboro Police Department; George Tita, The Rand Corporation; and Wilpen Gorr, Carnegie Mellon University.
- "Theory, Method, and Data in Comparative Criminology," by Gregory J. Howard, Western Michigan University; Graeme Newman, University at Albany; and William Alex Pridemore, University of Oklahoma.

Copies of each volume will be available at the Annual Conference on Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation. Information about ordering copies is forthcoming. To register for the conference, visit NIJ's Professional Conference Series Web site at <http://www.nijpcs.org/upcoming.htm>, or contact the Institute for Law and Justice at 703-684-5300 or [nijpcs@ilj.org](mailto:nijpcs@ilj.org).

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- Jan Chaiken on crime and incarceration at the end of the millennium
- Jan van Dijk and Kristiina Kangaspunta on comparing crime across countries

...and other articles about police officer stress, a new way to detect interpersonal violence, how insects are being used as investigative tools, and using telemedicine in prisons.

Like all NIJ publications, the *NIJ Journal* is available online. Visit us at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/journals>.



## Thinking About the Economy, Mexican Immigrants, and Crime and Justice

Every year, December through May, NIJ brings prominent thinkers to Capitol Hill for the Perspectives on Crime and Justice Lecture Series. The lectures, which are free, always provoke considerable thought and discussion. In February and March, policymakers and practitioners learned about the impact of the economy on crime and about the criminal behavior of Mexican immigrants.

**Does the booming economy help explain the fall in crime?** In the 1990's, unemployment in the United States fell by approximately 3 percent and real wages rose modestly, while income inequality roughly stabilized. Were these changes enough to have affected crime in a substantial way? The short answer, according to Harvard economist Richard Freeman, is: "Yes, but the evidence is not unequivocal."

At the February NIJ Perspectives lecture, Freeman discussed the relationship between falling crime rates and rising wages and full employment. He presented data showing trends in crime, victimization, employment, and wages and explained how potentially confounding factors—such as cultural mores, policing practices, and changes in the drug trade—appear also to play important roles in the explanation of falling crime rates.

He discussed the theoretical and empirical issues that introduce uncertainty about his conclusion, but noted that the preponderance of studies support the claim that the booming economy has indeed helped reduce crime.

**Criminal behavior of Mexican immigrants.** Despite media depictions of Mexican immigrants and crime, research shows that Mexican-born immigrants have lower offending rates, use or abuse drugs less frequently, and are less likely to carry a weapon than U.S.-born Mexican-Americans.

At the March Perspectives lecture on Capitol Hill, these findings and their policy implications were discussed by William A. Vega, Ph.D., Professor of Psychiatry at the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School—University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. Vega's findings are based on an epidemiological survey of 4,000 Mexican immigrants and Mexican-Americans living in urban and rural sections of Central California. The study was supported by the National Institute of Mental Health and National Institute on Drug Abuse.

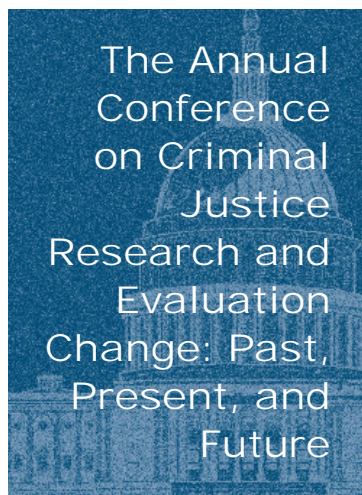
The next Perspectives lecture, on May 5, will feature Heather Weiss, director of the Harvard Family Research Project. Her topic is "Reinventing Evaluation to Build High-Performance Child and Family Interventions."

Papers by Richard Freeman and William Vega will be included in the next edition of the Perspectives lecture collected papers. Previous volumes feature lectures by Randall Kennedy, Joan Petersilia, Cathy Spatz Widom, James Q. Wilson, and others.

The three volumes are available instantly at the NIJ Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij> or via mail from the National Criminal Justice Reference Service at 1-800-851-3420.

- *Perspectives on Crime and Justice: 1996–1997 Lecture Series, vol. I* (NCJ 166609).
- *Perspectives on Crime and Justice: 1997–1998 Lecture Series, vol. II* (NCJ 178851).
- *Perspectives on Crime and Justice: 1998–1999 Lecture Series, vol. III* (NCJ 178244).

For more information about the Perspectives lectures, visit NIJ's Professional Conference Series at <http://www.nijpcs.org> and click on "Past Conference Materials" or contact the Institute for Law and Justice (ILJ) at 703-684-5300, e-mail: [nijpcs@ilj.org](mailto:nijpcs@ilj.org).



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## Nine States to Initiate Reentry Court Program

Attorney General Janet Reno in February announced a new initiative to establish reentry courts.

The reentry courts program will assist nine States in the development and implementation of special courts that employ judicial authority to more closely track recently released offenders and offer vital assistance for offenders' smooth reintegration into society.

The program will be implemented by the States with technical assistance from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs (OJP). Although each jurisdiction will modify the program to fit State and local needs, the following six key elements will be incorporated into all nine programs:

- Offender assessment and planning, which will bring together all involved judicial parties (such as the judge and parole or probation officer) to discuss the program with the offender and determine his or her specific needs after release.
- Active oversight of offenders, which requires regular judicial review.
- Community accountability, which entails the establishment of local initiatives to hold released offenders responsible to both victims and the community.
- Predetermined sanctions, which can be employed quickly and universally, for release restriction violations.
- Access to support programs for issues such as drug abuse, job training, employment, housing, and community service.
- Positive reinforcement from the judicial system for following the release restrictions.

The nine State jurisdictions competed to participate in the new reentry court initiative, though there is no government funding for the program. OJP will assist the States in using existing Federal, State, and local resources to help fund the initiative. In addition, President Clinton has requested an additional \$60 million for OJP's fiscal year 2001 budget to expand reentry initiatives, including \$10 million for reentry courts. The \$60 million OJP request will be combined with the President's request for \$75 million for the Department of Labor to help with the necessary job-related programs and \$10 million for the Department of Health and Human Services to expand drug abuse and mental health programs for offenders participating in the reentry program.

The nine participating jurisdictions are Broward County, Florida Drug Court; State of Delaware, Superior Court; El Paso County, Colorado, Pikes Peak Mental Health Association; State of Iowa, Department of Corrections; State of Kentucky, Administrative Office of the Courts; State of New York, Division of Parole; Richland County, Ohio, Adult Probation Department; San Francisco County, California, Sheriff's Office; and State of West Virginia, Department of Military Affairs and Public Safety.

For more information on the initiative, contact Liz Pearson in OJP's Office of Congressional and Public Affairs, 202-616-7510, [pearsonl@ojp.usdoj.gov](mailto:pearsonl@ojp.usdoj.gov). Information also is forthcoming on the OJP Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov>.

## Developing More Effective Strategies to Stop Drug Markets

Despite consistent increases in law enforcement expenditures, domestic drug distribution continues to

plague America's cities, suburbs, and rural areas.

In February 2000, NIJ brought together a group of highly recognized scholars and practitioners for a day and a half to discuss domestic drug markets and reexamine law enforcement strategies to intervene in those markets. Those discussions will help to shape a research agenda that better supports local, State, and Federal drug-related law enforcement efforts.

Participants explored the following topics:

- Identification and measurement of drug markets.
- Dynamics of drug markets at the community level.
- NIJ research on drug markets: ADAM and other data.
- Consequences of controlling drug markets.
- Effectiveness of current drug enforcement strategies.
- Reevaluation of law enforcement goals and strategies.
- Current Federal and local partnerships.
- The next generation of research and demonstration.

The moderator was Michael E. Smith, professor, University of Wisconsin Law School; the keynote speaker was Thomas Carr, director of the Washington/Baltimore High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area.

The papers and discussions will guide NIJ's agenda and serve as a focal point for researchers and law enforcement professionals as they work together to design more effective drug market intervention strategies for the next 5 to 10 years.

For more information, contact Brett Chapman, 202-514-2187, [chapmanb@ojp.usdoj.gov](mailto:chapmanb@ojp.usdoj.gov).

# Solicitations & Awards

## Forecast for 2000–2001

NIJ funding opportunities are announced regularly on NIJ's Web site at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij> and throughout the year in the *Federal Register* and *Commerce Business Daily*. Information about solicitations also is available from the Department of Justice Response Center at 800–421–6770, or 202–307–1480 from the Washington, D.C., area. Interested applicants may find it helpful to consult *Building Knowledge About Crime and Justice: the 2000 Research Prospectus of the National Institute of Justice*, which is available on NIJ's Web site.

Below is a listing of a few of the upcoming solicitations for fiscal year 2000 and 2001. **This list is not complete. Visit NIJ's Web page for updates (<http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij>).**

- **Evaluation of Comprehensive Indian Resources for Community and Law Enforcement (CIRCLE) Project**  
The CIRCLE Project is a 3-year Federal initiative designed to empower American Indian communities to more effectively fight crime, violence, and substance abuse. In collaboration with the Office of Community Policing Services and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, NIJ is supporting the national evaluation of the CIRCLE project. The project is planned to fund one award for a 4-year effort to examine the development, implementation, and outcomes of the CIRCLE Project. The first phase will be funded for 18 months.  
**Award Amount:** \$300,000  
**Applications Due:** Anticipated June 2000
- **School Safety Research and Evaluation**  
In cooperation with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, NIJ is supporting this solicitation to request research and evaluation projects on aspects of school safety and school violence, especially the role of law enforcement and security in school settings.  
**Award Amount:** \$1,000,000  
**Applications Due:** Anticipated June 2000
- **Training Simulation Technologies for Law Enforcement and School Safety Officers**  
This solicitation will support the development and demonstration of training and simulation technologies that can be used by law enforcement and school safety officers to help keep schools safe.  
**Award Amount:** \$500,000  
**Applications Due:** Anticipated late summer 2000
- **Forensic DNA Research & Development**  
Forensic DNA is heralded as the most powerful and discriminating method of identifying the source of biological evidence available to the criminal justice system. Forensic DNA testing has evolved both in the technologies it uses and in its protocols to promote reliability and courtroom admissibility. This solicitation strives to continue this evolution by supporting all areas of research and development that enhance or increase the capacity, capability, applicability, and/or reliability of DNA for forensic uses.  
**Award Amount:** Approximately \$2 million
- **Evaluation of the Domestic Violence Victims' Civil Legal Assistance Program**  
NIJ, in collaboration with the Office of Justice Programs' Violence Against Women Grants Office (VAWGO), is soliciting proposals for a national evaluation of the Civil Legal Assistance Program.  
**Award Amount:** Grants and cooperative agreements are usually limited to a maximum period of 12 to 36 months. NIJ anticipates supporting one grant under this solicitation of up to \$800,000.  
**Applications Due:** Anticipated summer 2000
- **National Evaluation of Grants to Combat Violent Crimes Against Women on Campuses**  
The first national evaluation of the Grants to Combat Violent Crimes Against Women on Campuses is planned to fund one award to examine the impact of Federal funding on encouraging institutions of higher education to adopt comprehensive, coordinated responses to violence against women, including sexual assault, stalking, and domestic violence. In addition to assessing the impact of this program, the evaluation should provide an overview of the types of policies, protocols, and coordinated responses campuses have developed to address violence against women, victim services, victim safety, and offender accountability.  
**Award Amount:** \$800,000.  
**Applications Due:** Anticipated summer 2000

**Applications Due:** Anticipated end of June

**Applications Due:** Anticipated end of June

**Applications Due:** Anticipated summer 2000

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■ **Graduate Research Fellowships**

NIJ's Graduate Research Fellowship Program provides dissertation research support to outstanding doctoral students undertaking independent research on issues in crime and justice. Students from any academic discipline are encouraged to apply. NIJ encourages diversity in approaches and perspectives in its research programs. It awards these fellowships to expand the pool of research talent by attracting doctoral students who can contribute critical and innovative thinking to pressing justice problems.

**Award Amount:** A \$15,000 stipend will be awarded to successful applicants for costs associated with the doctoral dissertation. It is anticipated that up to 15 awards will be made annually.

**Applications Due:** September 15, 2000; January 2001

■ **Data Resources Program: Analysis of Existing Data**

NIJ is seeking applicants to conduct original research using data from the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data, especially data from previously funded NIJ projects.

**Award Amount:** Awards of up to \$35,000 will be made to support research to be conducted within a 9-month period. Indirect charges for these awards will be limited to 20 percent of direct costs.

**Applications Due:** September 2000; January and May 2001

■ **2001 Solicitation for Investigator-Initiated Research**

Under NIJ's investigator-initiated program, applicants may submit proposals to explore a wide range of research and evaluation topics relevant to criminal justice policy or practice, supporting NIJ's broad portfolio of both basic and applied studies.

**Award Amount:** Awards are usually 1- to 2-year grants ranging between \$25,000 and \$300,000. Proposals seeking funding of less than \$50,000 are considered "small grants," which are available for the same research areas appropriate for larger grants.

**Applications Due:** Anticipated winter 2001

■ **Crime Mapping Research Center Fellowship Program**

The Crime Mapping Research Center's Visiting Fellowship Program offers research opportunities to geographers, geographic information system specialists, criminologists, and others who are interested in the criminal justice applications of mapping. Visiting Fellows study mapping topics while in residence at NIJ for 6 to 18 months. The Crime Mapping Research Center seeks candidates with extensive experience in criminal justice, geography, and GIS technology.

**Award Amounts:** Funding allocations for this program are based on the quality of the proposals received and the extent to which they are related to ongoing research, evaluation,

or science and technology priorities.

**Applications Due:** No deadline; open for 2000

■ **Visiting Research Fellowships**

The NIJ Visiting Fellowship Program supports research and development on high-priority topics that enhance the capabilities of criminal justice systems to combat crime, violence, and substance abuse. The Visiting Fellowship Program offers criminal justice professionals and researchers an opportunity to undertake independent research on criminal justice issues relevant to NIJ and public policy. Through the program, Fellows may investigate new approaches for resolving operational problems and become involved in NIJ's criminal justice research national program.

**Award Amounts:** Funding allocations for this program are based on the quality of the proposals received and the extent to which they are related to ongoing research, evaluation, or science and technology priorities.

**Applications Due:** No deadline; open for 2000. (The start date for new Fellows is no earlier than January 2001)

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The National Institute of Justice is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime.