

October 2010
Volume 5, Issue 2

EDITORIAL

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As we get ready for our professional association's annual meeting in San Francisco this November, much has been happening within the Division of Experimental Criminology (DEC). Big among these changes is the relative rapid growth in membership that our Division has experienced in the one year since its launching. According to the most recent count, we now have more than 140 members. We hope to use the American Society of Criminology's (ASC) conference next month to get to know as many new members as possible.

One event in San Francisco which we hope will be especially helpful to new and older members alike is Tuesday's session on *Designing and Leading Randomized Field Experiments*. Dr. Lawrence Sherman will head up a panel of leading researchers who have experience developing, implementing and running experiments in the community in each of the three branches of the criminal justice system: police, courts and corrections. Together they will share their experiences – the good, the bad and the ugly – and answer all questions from those wishing to begin their own experimenting. Readers can find more specific information about this panel and their presentations on page 3.

Also noteworthy is the new Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame begun within George Mason University's Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy (see pages 5-7). The Policing Hall of Fame has been established to recognize innovative law enforcement practitioners who have understood the benefits of experimental research and have been instrumental in both conducting and using policing research. Congratulations to this year's inductees: Deputy Chief Hassan Aden, Chief of Police James Bueermann, Commissioner Edward Davis, Chief of Police Dan Flynn, Assistant Commissioner Peter Martin, Chief Executive Peter Neyroud, Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey, Retired Chief of Police Darrel Stephens, and retired Chief Hubert Williams.

Too often individuals fail to recognize the large personal risks that agency personnel take when they go against the status quo and fight within their organizations to implement experimental research. As an example, in an experiment run by one of the newsletter's co-editors (LF), the domestic violence judge allowed an experiment studying the effectiveness of a popular but never rigorously tested treatment program for men convicted of misdemeanor intimate partner violence within his court. During the years that the study ran, had one of the offenders randomly assigned into the control group (not to receive the much touted treatment program) injured or killed his partner, there is no doubt that the judge would have faced severe personal and professional consequences for allowing this experiment within his court. Of course, prior to and even after the experiment ran, when men

came through his court and then injured or even killed their partners, he did not have to worry about negative fallout as he was only following the orders of the legislature and therefore could not be held accountable for the injuries.

What George Mason University’s Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy has done is truly important for building the evidence-based movement. As experimental researchers we must realize that there is tremendous momentum for personnel to continue the status quo and not to stick their necks out to try something “different,” even where a strong argument can be made for the benefits that the community would experience for finding out what really works and with whom. We need to therefore understand the realities that agency personnel work under and reward their courage when they are willing to step off the path of doing what is safe and instead attempt to find out what is truly effective. George Mason University’s Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame should be commended for showing us all one way in which we can recognize this leadership.

And speaking of courageous personnel, this month’s newsletter contains pieces from two such individuals. Chief of Police James Bueerman writes thoughtfully about an “evidence-based” approach and its place in policing. Just as he was trained to “follow the evidence” when investigating a case as a young officer, he now exhorts law enforcement personnel to continue to follow the evidence in the form of “evidence-based policing.” In these days of budget shortfalls, he astutely notes, “Evidence based crime reduction strategies greatly leverage local resources because they are connected to the work of thousands of worldwide researchers.” To read more from this incisive practitioner/observer, please turn to page 8.

Equally encouraging are the words from Bernard Melekian, Director of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (see page 10). Director Melekian wisely points out that the fiscal crisis which most jurisdictions are currently experiencing can provide a wonderful opportunity for growing evidence-based programming. As he notes, “The lack of rigor in evaluating such programs, whether

large or small, to determine the causal factors responsible for the outcome, whether positive or negative, is a luxury no longer permitted by current conditions.”

Finally, in the 2005 issue of *Evidence and Policy*, Sir Iain Chalmers responded to a personal attack on his promotion of the use of systematic reviews of controlled trials to inform policy and practice. Sir Iain was one of the pivotal individuals in getting the Campbell Collaboration started and, with that, the Academy of Experimental Criminology. His article provides great ammunition to use when individuals criticize the experimental movement currently in full swing in the social sciences. Below are excerpts from Sir Iain’s article (see page 11). To see the entire publication, readers should go to *Evidence and Policy*, 1(2), while taking great satisfaction that we have such an articulate advocate for our mission and methods.

Though our Division is only one year old, we have scheduled many events during the five days that we meet in San Francisco. In fact, there is at least one DEC event every day of the ASC annual conference (please refer to page 4 for a full listing). Whether you are a member or not, the Division welcomes all who may be interested in learning more about the Division of Experimental Criminology and experimental research. And if you are already a member, please feel free to bring some of your colleagues to these events so they can check us out.

These are indeed exciting times. There is a great deal that is and will be happening as our field will be transformed over the next few years due to the financial constraints agencies are now operating under. The challenge for all of us is to find ways to use this crisis as an opportunity to do things smarter.

As experimentalists, we feel privileged to be part of this wonderful network of scholars. As always, we thank our colleagues for challenging and inspiring us. And we welcome all who would like to join this community and build the knowledge base with us.

Lynette Feder & Anthony A. Braga
Co-Editors



**The Division of Experimental Criminology Announces Workshop:
*Designing and Leading Randomized Field Experiments***

At the upcoming American Society of Criminology conference in San Francisco, the Division of Experimental Criminology will be offering a workshop on “Designing and Leading Randomized Field Experiments.” The workshop will provide expert insight into designing and leading randomized trials. Presenters will discuss the problems and pitfalls they have faced in conducting randomized field experiments in criminal justice system settings. In addition, they will present specific solutions that they have applied to these problems and pitfalls and will provide more general strategies for developing solutions to barriers to the implementation of randomized experimental designs. The workshop will be conducted by leading scholars in the area of experimental research in criminal justice and will address randomized field experiments in distinct criminal justice system settings including police, courts and corrections. Each presentation will be followed by discussion.

Scheduled Time: Tuesday, November 16, 2:00 – 5:00 pm

Location: Salon 4, Lower B2 Level, San Francisco Marriott Marquis

Fee: \$25 for all attendees Enrollment Limit: 50 attendees

Lawrence Sherman will serve as the workshop moderator. Presenters and topics at the workshop will be:

Anthony Braga - “Partnering with Police”

This session will consider the problems and pitfalls in designing and implementing randomized field experiments in police organizations. Recent experiences in managing hot spots policing experiments will be used as example. Particular attention will be paid to developing strong working relationships with police practitioners so opportunities can be created to conduct more rigorous evaluations.

Lynette Feder - “Partnering with Courts When Researching Sensitive Issues”

This session will discuss a randomized controlled trial within a court setting that investigated the effectiveness of a treatment program for men convicted of misdemeanor domestic violence. During the four years that the study ran, the researcher and her staff encountered continuous hostility and harassment, high staff turnover (due to the hostility and harassment), the death of a research subject, and threats from court officials. Dr. Feder will share how experiments can be a true trial for the experimenter but still provide credible results and some unintended professional benefits.

Doris MacKenzie - “Partnering with Prisons”

This session will examine some of the trials and tribulations of designing and directing experiments in the context of corrections using the experimental study of Maryland’s adult correctional boot camp as an example. We will review the difficulties from the first request for permission to conduct the experiment to the difficulties and hurdles presented by changes in administrators, educating research assistants, obtaining recidivism data, release dates and Institutional Review Boards.

David Weisburd - “Statistical Power: How to Get It and How to Keep It”

When an experiment has low statistical power it is unlikely to observe a statistically significant finding even if the intervention is successful. In this session an introduction to the general problem of statistical power will be provided. The session will also provide guidance on how the researcher can maximize statistical power in experimental research.

Peter Greenwood - “Reaching out for Help”

This session will describe how DEC is prepared to provide mentorship to members who are attempting to sell their first RCT to the required set of stakeholders who are necessary to make the study work, and the benefits that such mentorship can provide.

ANNOUNCEMENT

AEC / DEC Events at the 2010 American Society of Criminology Conference

The Academy of Experimental Criminology and the Division of Experimental Criminology will be holding the following events at the 2010 American Society of Criminology conference. We hope to see you there.

Division of Experimental Criminology Reception

Scheduled Time: Tuesday, November 16, 5:00 – 6:00 pm

Location: Club Room, Second Floor, San Francisco Marriott Marquis

Joan McCord Lecture

Scheduled Time: Wednesday, November 17, 2:00 – 3:20 pm

Location: Salon C2, B2 Level, San Francisco Marriott Marquis

Division of Experimental Criminology Business Meeting

Scheduled Time: Wednesday, November 17, 3:30 – 4:50 pm

Location: Walnut, B2 Level, San Francisco Marriott Marquis

Journal of Experimental Criminology Board Meeting and Luncheon

Scheduled Time: Thursday, November 18, 12:30 – 1:50 pm

Location: Club Room, Second Floor, San Francisco Marriott Marquis

Division of Experimental Criminology Social and Dance (Featuring the Hot Spots Band)

Scheduled Time: Thursday, November 18, 7:00 – 11:00 pm

Location: Salon A, B2 Level, San Francisco Marriott Marquis

Division of Experimental Criminology Mentoring Breakfast

Scheduled Time: Friday, November 19, 7:30 – 9:00 am

Location: Club Room, Second Floor, San Francisco Marriott Marquis

FEATURE ARTICLES

The Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame

by *Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy, George Mason University*

A program of the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy (CEBCP) at George Mason University, the Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame recognizes innovative law enforcement practitioners who have been central to the implementation of a high quality research program in their affiliated agency, highlighting individual excellence in both using and conducting policing research. These champions of evidence-based policing help to make high-quality police scholarship possible and their efforts advance our knowledge of the field.

Membership Requirements:

1. Nominees must be or have been a **police practitioner**, either sworn or civilian; and
2. Nominees must have been **central to the implementation of a documented rigorous scientific evaluation** in their affiliated agency in which a police intervention, tactic, strategy, or deployment was tested for effectiveness; and
3. Nominees must show a **record of incorporating evidence-based practices in their agency**. The types of evidence-based practices can be, for example, those strategies that have characteristics of interventions that fall within the “realms of effectiveness” of the Evidence-Based Policing Matrix (Lum, Koper, and Telep, 2009).

To nominate an individual or individuals, please visit the Hall of Fame website and fill out the preliminary questionnaire (link below). Selection decisions will be made by the Directors and Coordinator of the Evidence-Based Policing Research Program, with guidance from CEBCP Advisory Board members when needed.

(<http://gemini.gmu.edu/cebcp/HallofFame.html>).

As of October 2010, nine police executives have been inducted to the Evidence-Based Policing Hall of Fame. Eight of these leaders and their contributions to evidence-based research and practice are briefly described below. The ninth inductee is Hubert Williams who is currently the President of The Police Foundation.

**Hassan Aden, Deputy Chief
Patrol Operations Bureau
Alexandria Police Department
Alexandria, Virginia**

Deputy Chief Aden has been instrumental in the support and implementation of a randomized controlled experiment in license plate recognition systems at hot spots conducted by George Mason University. This

experiment is a replication of the Police Executive Research Forum’s License Plate Reader Experiments with an added component of a random-sample community survey gauging community concerns with the technology. In 2006 he helped introduce and deploy a number of LPR systems in patrol, and was key in working with the George Mason University team to implement this experiment, being involved from the ground up in assuring that implementation was carried out.

Many of the patrol officers remark on Deputy Chief’s Aden’s hands-on mentorship approach, which makes him highly successful in incorporating innovative and difficult research and field experiments in daily police practices. Most notably, Deputy Chief Aden transformed his patrol sector when he was a district commander from a reactive beat patrol approach to a directed hot spots approach using the Koper Curve principal. Given that very few (if any) other agencies in the U.S. have transitioned their traditional beat patrol system to a directed hot spots approach, this change is viewed as one of the most innovative in modern policing.

**James R. Bueermann, Chief of Police
Redlands Police Department
Redlands, California**

Jim Bueermann’s advocacy for evidence-based practice and support of researcher and practitioner partnerships has produced several key studies of crime and policing in Redlands, California. He has also introduced other innovative, evidence-based approaches to his department, transitioning his entire police department from beat patrol to hot spots patrol; training officers in evidence-based approaches, using the evidence-based policing matrix as a part of department planning processes, and making knowledge of research and evidence a part of officer rewards and promotions.

**Edward F. Davis, Commissioner
Boston Police Department
Boston, Massachusetts**

Davis was instrumental in the implementation of a randomized controlled trial that evaluated the efforts of policing disorder on hot spots in Lowell. He also supported the quasi-experimental evaluation of a pulling-levers focused deterrence strategy to reduce gang violence in Lowell. When Edward Davis assumed leadership of the Boston Police Department in December 2006, he immediately implemented a hot spots policing program that assigned officers to engage in community problem solving strategies in violent crime places. He also reinvigorated the Operation Ceasefire pulling-levers strategy to address gang violence in Boston. These strategies engage a wide range of tactics and partners to focus on the small number of people and places that generate the bulk of violent crime problems in Boston. While more rigorous evaluations

are pending, Boston homicides have decreased by 33.8% (74 in 2006, 49 in 2009) and non-fatal and fatal shootings decreased by 39.8% (377 in 2006, 227 in 2009) since engaging in these evidence-based practices.

**Dan Flynn, Chief of Police
Marietta Police Department
Marietta, Georgia**

Chief Flynn has been influential in the implementation and empirical evaluation of two substantial programs. First, he partnered with criminologists to evaluate the Tactical Narcotics Team (TNT) program in Miami-Dade. Chief Flynn also developed and implemented the Savannah Impact offender reentry program in Savannah, Georgia. He played a substantial role in securing funding for a major National Institute of Justice Grant on Police Officer Decision Making and Discretion.

**Peter Martin, Assistant Commissioner
Ethical Standards Command
Queensland Police Service
Queensland, Australia**

Peter Martin's interest in evidence-based research and practice and support of researcher and practitioner partnerships has resulted in key innovations in policing in Queensland and added to criminological understanding of how police interactions with citizens affect public perceptions of officers as individuals and police service as an institution.

In particular, Peter Martin was responsible for significant operational changes in QPS after the department received a number complaints relating to the use of excessive force by police officers in dealing with alcohol affected patrons within a popular night-club precinct. He developed a set of strategies with a community safety focus that involved police partnerships with a broad range of stakeholders (including business leaders, the public, and others), statistical analysis of policing strategies used to deal with alcohol affected persons, interventions for officers over-represented in complaints data, and police use of alternative strategies in preference to arrest, such as directing drug and alcohol-affected individuals to public care facilities. He also developed a Major Event Planning Guide, an international first that incorporates best-practice principles for police planning for major events regardless of their scale and sophistication.

**Peter Neyroud, Chief Executive
National Policing Improvement Agency
London, United Kingdom**

Chief Constable Neyroud's interest in evidence-based research and practice came early in his career. In 1981, as a young Police Constable, he was responsible for evaluating the Havant Policing Scheme, an experimental neighbourhood policing scheme in Hampshire. He then designed and evaluated an early

hot spots experiment in Southampton to reduce violent crime clusters in the St. Marys area of Southampton.

In 1990, as part of his Masters degree, he evaluated a multi-agency partnership to tackle racial violence and harassment in Southampton. The evaluation was a case study, using semi-structured interviews, data and participant observation. The evaluation was published in a peer reviewed journal and this work formed the basis of the national approach to tackling racial violence adopted by the Commission for Racial Equality.

As an Assistant Chief Constable in West Mercia Chief Constable Neyroud created a ground breaking university-police department partnership between West Mercia Constabulary and the University of Worcester. He sponsored nationally important research on areas as diverse as officers reactions to firearms incidents (leading to the development of new firearms training), police use of distance learning training, and the implementation of Beat Managers (West Mercia's rural policing approach).

In his final appointment as Chief Constable in Thames Valley, he was one of the original group of five Chiefs responsible for the National Reassurance Policing Programme, a model of neighborhood policing designed to improve resident confidence in the police and also sponsored one of the sites for Lawrence Sherman's research on restorative justice and helped to ensure that the national research programme was a randomized controlled trial.

Neyroud continues to advocate for evidence-based approaches in policing as the Chief Executive of the National Policing Improvement Agency of the U.K. and has become a champion in changing police culture and standards related to use of research in police practice. Thus far the NPIA has developed a new national Knowledge Strategy, undertaken its own randomized controlled trials (RCTs) (notably the one just finished on methods of informing the public- see link to the right), sponsored RCT's in four forces in the UK, commissioned six Campbell systematic reviews, and sponsored over 100 senior police officers to attend the Cambridge Masters programme with a strong encouragement to undertake and publish primary research.

**Charles H. Ramsey, Police Commissioner
Philadelphia Police Department
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania**

Charles Ramsey has supported and facilitated evidence-based policing and experimental evaluations in law enforcement throughout his career. Most recently, as Police Commissioner in Philadelphia, Chief Ramsey developed and implemented an aggressive reduction in violent crime through targeted policing initiatives, as well as worked to improve organizational and policy infrastructures to support such initiatives. At the end of 2008, homicides had dropped 15% in 2008, shooting victims have decreased by 10%, and the homicide

clearance rate is the highest in over a decade at 75%. The Philadelphia Police Department has already made significant strides in reducing crime and improving the quality of police services, with a renewed focus on mission-driven policing through enhanced organizational accountability, investigative and forensic technology upgrades, and criminal intelligence analysis.

He has encouraged and supported the Philadelphia Foot Patrol Experiment, and under his leadership, the Philadelphia Police Department has received funding as one of the ten pilot sites of the Smart Policing Initiative, a Bureau of Justice Assistance funded program. The Philadelphia project will compare problem-oriented policing, foot patrol, and offender targeted study areas, selected in a randomized controlled trial environment. This research will be undertaken during the summer of 2010 and is indicative of the ongoing commitment of Ramsey and the Philadelphia Police Department to documented rigorous scientific evaluation that is externally validated and published (in this case by a research team at Temple University led by Jerry Ratcliffe).

During his earlier career in Chicago, Ramsey was instrumental in designing and implementing the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy, the city's nationally acclaimed model of community policing that Wesley Skogan has written about at length. Lessons were quickly learned from feedback of community meetings and research conducted by Skogan's team, and these lessons were immediately implemented into the work of the Chicago Police Department. As co-manager of the CAPS project in Chicago, Commissioner Ramsey was one of the principal authors of the police department's strategic vision. He also designed and implemented the CAPS operational model and helped to develop new training curricula and communications efforts to support implementation. Professor Skogan says Ramsey is a "hero" and a "legend" in his advocating for change in Chicago.

**Darrel W. Stephens, Retired Chief of Police
Charlotte-Mecklenburg (NC) Police Department
Former Executive Director, Police Executive
Research Forum**

Darrel Stephens involvement in evidence-based policing began when as a police officer in the Kansas City Police Department he assisted in the development and execution of a series of Police Foundation and National Institute of Justice practical research efforts during the same time the Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment and the Kansas City Response Time Study. He spent served as the first NIJ Police Fellow (1973-74) and returned to Kansas City to manage the Operations Resource Unit which served as the lead in the development and implementation of new patrol strategies based on earlier research. Later, as the Chief of the Newport News Police Department he worked with Gary Hayes (executive director of the Police Executive Research Forum-PERF), Herman Goldstein, James "Chips" Stewart (Director of the National Institute of

Justice) and NIJ staff member Bill Saulsbury to implement problem-oriented policing (POP) force wide in Newport News.

Chief Stephens assured widespread police involvement in the application of POP. The SARA process, was a joint development of the Newport News Police under the leadership of Stephens and the staff at the Police Executive Research Forum, under the research direction of Dr. John Eck. Eck writes fondly of that experience that "Darrel was always at the table encouraging police to speak up and curbing some of our sillier ideas. The endurance of SARA is in large part due to the fact that he gave cops a strong voice in its development, making sure it was simple and practical."

When Stephens left the Newport Police Department to become the Executive Director of PERF, he continued to champion problem-oriented and evidence-based policing through grant and research development. He helped create and sustain the annual problem-oriented policing conferences (now in their 21st year). These were the first meetings for police professionals that emphasized empirical analysis in everyday police work and management. He promotes progressive policing approaches through his extensive writing about policing, and as a consultant and speaker. A hallmark of his leadership and management approach has been the effective use of technology. While at PERF, and before the Internet was generally available, he created an on-line communications system linking police executives and PERF staff. "At the time it drove me nuts," said Eck. "But it really helped the researchers stay in touch with the field and vice versa. It was only after the wide spread adoption of e-mail that I realized how far sighted Darrel was." In every organization that he has led he has introduced various forms of technology to enhance the productivity of employees. This includes automated record systems, patrol vehicle laptop computers, geographic information systems, mapping, email and telephone voice mail systems that put officers in closer touch with the community, investigative analysis systems and video technology. He has also always opened the door to researchers. In St. Petersburg he worked with Steve Mastrofski in his patrol observational research, Joel Garner on the use of force and Carl Klockars on police integrity. In Charlotte he opened the door to Herman Goldstein, Ron Clarke, Vivian Lord and many other researchers working to improve our knowledge of policing.

Most recently, Chief Stephens has served as an informal advisor to the National Police Research Platform, one of the most comprehensive long-term studies of police officers, supervisors, and police organizations. He currently teaches police managers how to be more effective leaders in the field through the Johns Hopkins Public Safety Leadership Program.

The Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy is housed in the Department of Criminology, Law and Society at George Mason University

Following the Research Evidence in Policing

by *Jim Bueermann*

As a young rookie cop 32 years ago, I was taught the importance of “following the evidence” in every investigation I conducted. As a homicide detective I learned the role my own biases and preconceptions played in how I thought who the offender might be and what his motivation was. Staying focused on the evidence was always the most effective way to clear a case. Similarly, as a police chief I have learned the importance of holding my personal perspectives in check and following the evidence relative to issues with organizational, community and political ramifications. So it seems natural to me to follow the “evidence” that criminal justice researchers uncover about what works to control crime or operate a police department more effectively.

It just seems right that “evidence-based policing” should become an integral part of our organizational philosophy for facilitating a safer community. And it seemed odd to me that we had not structured our department to facilitate its own in-house research and learning capability. So, we hired our own criminologist – as part of our executive staff – to help anchor the notion of research as evidence-informing strategy to the culture of the organization.

I wish I could say that following the evidence about what works to control crime is a fundamental underpinning of all American policing agencies. While we have made, and are continuing to make, great strides in this area, policing strategies in this country remain, in large part, a function of local political and community expectations, the perspectives and biases of police executives and organizational culture. A disconnect exists between what researchers uncover about effective crime control and the activities of most police departments. If this were not true, so many police departments would not maintain their current use of traditional “beat” systems that allocate police officers to geographic areas, or time frames, in spite of the absence of criminal activity. This behavior flies in the face of the evidence uncovered in the landmark Kansas City Preventative Patrol and Minneapolis Hot Spots studies.

There are many possible causes of this. Politics, community paradigms, organizational culture and personal biases certainly all play a part. I do not believe police chiefs look at what they believe to be good, unbiased crime research and thoughtfully reject it. They do not contemplate ways in which they can more efficiently run ineffective organizations. And they certainly do not knowingly promote an ignorance of strategies that will reduce victimization. So why aren't police chiefs as familiar with the findings of the top 10-20

crime control research efforts as they are with budgeting, personnel rules, or political evasion and survival techniques? I believe this answer is twofold: a lack of socializing policing executives in a manner that teaches them the importance of research, and, the simple fact that they aren't required – by either their political bosses or the communities they serve – to drive strategies with research. I have never met a police chief that was fired because he failed to follow the findings of current crime control research. But, I do I know many chiefs who have been shown the door for political and organizational reasons.

The global recession we all face today is an undeniable challenge. Most police executives have not experienced anything close to the fiscally constraining environment they are leading in today. In my own department, we have lost a third of all employees and 25% of the street cops. Community and political expectations have not declined along with our staffing levels. In fact, with so many people out-of-work or experiencing significant cuts to their pay and benefits, I believe community expectations about the performance of the “highly paid and benefitted public safety employees” have actually increased. Counter-intuitive as it may seem, herein lies an opportunity for linking research evidence to changes in policing performance. I think the public wants us to become smarter, increasingly efficient and much more effective about crime control. And I certainly think the public wants us to become more legitimate in the activities we pursue to control crime. Clearly, evidence based approaches can help us meet those expectations.

When private sector corporations go through their own fiscal downturns, the successful ones don't give up. They look to better ways of doing things. They innovate. They get smarter. When championship football teams are behind at halftime, they don't give up. They pursue that which made them champions in the first place. They look for ways to change up the game dramatically because they are focused on a singular, meaningful outcome – winning. And when cities appear to be losing the battle against declining revenue streams and decreasing resources, they should not give up either. What greater purpose and outcome can they seek than safe and healthy communities?

If ever there was a time for police chiefs, city managers and mayors to be embracing evidence-led strategies, it is now. Evidence based crime reduction strategies greatly leverage local resources because they are connected to the work of thousands of worldwide researchers. Like medical professionals leverage their own resources with medical research, so too should policymakers and practitioners utilize the constantly evolving knowledge base about what works to control crime. As I see it, with fewer cops on-the-job police departments can either: 1) give up, in the form of doing the “same (potentially ineffective) thing” while the world changes around them; or, 2) get smarter by using research others have funded and that is focused on the truth about what works to control crime, not meeting

political or personal expectations.

Personally, I'll pick the second option every time. And I think the overwhelming majority of police chiefs will agree. They are, in large part, highly dedicated public servants who truly want to see their communities become safer places. They simply need to understand the value of this type of "evidence" and recognize the importance of using research as the incredible leveraging tool it is. When researchers conduct meaningful research and present their findings in a non-academic, practitioner-focused manner, they give police departments and the communities they serve, a gift whose value can be measured literally in the form of lives saved. What more honorable outcome can researchers seek?

James Bueermann is the Chief of the Redlands, California, Police Department and an honorary fellow of the Academy of Experimental Criminology.

Evidence-Based Research in Policing

by Bernard Melekian

The current economic climate threatens to undo the dramatic progress in reducing crime and building police legitimacy that has occurred over the past twenty-five years. The loss of personnel and resources will inevitably lead to a significant reduction in service unless new methods of delivering police services are found. The necessary experimentation must occur in an academically rigorous environment utilizing appropriate evidence-based social science research.

The law enforcement profession has undergone an incredible transformation over the past twenty-five years. Broken windows, community policing, Compstat and a myriad of other programs and strategies have impacted the policing profession and the communities they serve. Since the mid-90's crime has declined to 50-year lows. There have been several incredibly successful efforts to reduce youth violence. The Department of Justice and particularly the COPS Office has invested billions of dollars to assist local law enforcement agencies.

The question being debated by both academia and law enforcement is whether these programs and the attendant federal money are responsible for the falling crime rate? The problem with the debate is that very few of these programs have been vetted in an academically rigorous fashion. As a result, two key elements are missing from discussions about which programs make a positive difference; portability and sustainability.

The issue of evaluating portability is critical to social science research. If jurisdiction A implements a youth violence reduction program that achieves results, it is obvious other jurisdictions, facing similar challenges, will want to know if jurisdiction A's program will work in their community. Without solid data as to why the program worked, each jurisdiction will be left with simply copying the model onto their local template. They will not know which aspects of the program were unique to jurisdiction A, which aspects have limited applicability and which aspects are universally portable.

The issues of determining the components of the program that allow for sustainability are equally critical. In this example, jurisdiction A also needs to know why the program worked if they want it to be sustainable over time. All too often, successful programs do not

survive the change of the leadership team who implemented them. Often these programs come about as a result of political concerns, charismatic leadership or both. When the winds shift, so do the resources and the impetus to sustain the program. The second generation of program leadership often lacks the reliable data so critical for appropriate evolutionary planning. As a result, the program having been surrendered to inertia loses momentum as the agency and its leader move on to the next challenge.

The last three years (and longer in some states) has been devastating to local law enforcement. Departments large and small are losing significant numbers of personnel, both sworn and professional staff. Too often, the impact of the economy results in a retrenchment of programs as related to quality of life and social infrastructure. There is an understandable reluctance to undertake new programs which require investments of new resources for an uncertain outcome.

Law enforcement has three primary missions. In descending order; 1) emergency response, 2) ensuring quality of life in neighborhoods (e.g. crime control, traffic management), and 3) long-term engagement in the social infrastructure of the community (e.g. youth programs). It seems likely that the delivery of law enforcement services will be radically altered in the coming decade. While no one can yet predict what that alteration will look like, it is clear that agencies across the country are experimenting with how to deliver services in this environment. The lack of rigor in evaluating such programs, whether large or small, to determine the causal factors responsible for the outcome, whether positive or negative is a luxury no longer permitted by current conditions.

Thus programs which are undertaken should strive to do so with an evaluative component sewn into the fabric of the project. Ideally, there will be a partnership with an academic institution that can provide an independent and reliable evaluation as to the evolution of the program, its success or failure (and subsequent causes) and the components that determine both the portability and sustainability of the program.

Only the usage of evidence-based research and rigorous evaluation will offer the incentives for law enforcement leaders to undertake new programs and methods of delivering police services.

Bernard Melekian is the Director of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice. He was formerly Chief of the Pasadena, California, Police Department.

VOICES FROM THE FIELD

If Evidence-Informed Policy Works in Practice, Does it Matter if it Doesn't Work in Theory?

by *Sir Iain Chalmers*

With the best intentions....

Policy makers and practitioners inevitably intervene in other people's lives. Despite the best of intentions, their policies and practices sometimes have unintended, unwanted effects, and they occasionally do more harm than good. This reality should prompt humility, and it should be the main motivation of policy makers and practitioners for ensuring that their prescriptions and proscriptions for other people are informed by reliable research evidence.

Countless examples should leave little doubt that it is irresponsible to interfere in the lives of other people on the basis of theories unsupported by reliable empirical evidence (Sackett, 2002). Increased acceptance of this view has led to growing respect for and access to empirical research evidence among many policy makers, practitioners, service users, community representatives, social activists and researchers.

"Evidence-based" or "evidence-informed" practice?

These developments have often been referred to as "evidence-based practice" or "research-based policy making and practice." I consider these terms unsatisfactory.... Those who are unfamiliar with the application of evidence-based policy and practice misinterpret these terms as implying a direct link between research evidence and practice. Those with practical experience of applying this approach are very clear that although good research is essential for improving policy and practice, it is insufficient.

Humility is a precondition for unbiased evaluations

A lack of empirical evidence supporting opinions does not mean that all the opinions are wrong or that, for the time being, policy and practice should not be based on people's best guesses. On matters of public importance, however, it should prompt efforts to obtain relevant empirical evidence through evaluative research, to help adjudicate among conflicting opinions.

Avoiding biases in assessing the effects of policies and practices

Whatever study designs are considered most appropriate for reliable detection of the effects of

policies and practices, individual studies should not be considered in isolation, but interpreted in the context of systematic reviews, taking account of any other, similar studies. Application of this principle is no more or less than an acknowledgement that science, including social science, is a cumulative activity.

What kind of studies should be included in systematic reviews?

Study designs must be fit for purpose (Sackett and Wennberg, 1997; Glasziou et al, 2004). Researchers need to draw on a variety of research designs, depending on the objectives of the research. These objectives might be, for example, to develop defining criteria for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; to survey the frequency of mental illness in prison populations; to investigate the validity of methods used to assess school performance; to explore and record the subjective experiences of asylum seekers; and so on..

Estimates of intervention effects vary with study design

Reliable estimates of the effects of interventions are those in which the effects of policies or practices are unlikely to be confused with the effects of biases or chance. Rarely, estimates of the effects of interventions are so large that they are very unlikely to reflect the effects of insufficiently controlled biases or chance...

People considering which studies should be included in systematic reviews of research assessing the effects of interventions must take into account that studies with different research designs tend to yield different estimates of the effects.... There is no easy escape from the dilemma posed by these differences between the results of randomized and non-randomized intervention studies. Although non-randomized studies yield estimates of effects that are larger, on average, than those using data from randomized trials, in any particular instance it is simply not possible to predict whether different estimates will emerge using the two different approaches... ..

What can be done to reduce the effects of chance?

As with the methods to reduce biases in systematic reviews, social scientists in the US led the way in developing methods to reduce the effects of chance using quantitative synthesis of the results of separate but similar studies (Chalmers et al, 2002). Sometimes meta-analysis is impossible with the data available; and even when it is possible, it may not be appropriate. When it is both possible and judged appropriate, however, meta-analysis can reveal "reconcilable differences" among studies, and avoid

the play of chance resulting in misleading inferences about the effects of intervention. Systematic reviews using meta-analyses can help to avoid false inferences, based on studies that are too small, that interventions are useless when in truth they have beneficial effects.

Systematic reviews must be rigorous, transparent and up to date

Whatever the decisions made about which studies are eligible for inclusion in systematic reviews, and whether or not meta-analysis is used to analyze them, reviews should be published in sufficient detail to enable readers to judge their likely reliability.

The role of systematic reviews of research evidence in the development of policy and practice

Conclusions about the effects of policies and practices will always remain a matter of judgment. These judgments can affect other people’s lives, however. Within the field of healthcare, comparisons of the results of systematic reviews with the recommendations of experts writing textbooks and narrative review articles has shown that advice on some life-saving therapies has been delayed for more than a decade, while other treatments have been recommended long after controlled research has shown them to be harmful (Antman et al., 1992)None of the foregoing is meant to suggest that systematic reviews of research evidence speak for themselves.But up-to-date, reliable systematic reviews of research evidence, or a demonstration that no relevant research exists, should nevertheless be regarded as desirable and often essential for informing policy and practice. Judgments will always be needed about how to use the evidence derived from evaluative research.This brings me back to the rationale for rigorous, transparent and up-to-date evaluations of policies and practices. Policy makers and practitioners who intervene in other people’s lives should acknowledge that, although they act with the best of intentions, they may sometimes do more harm than good. That possibility should be sufficient motivation for them to ensure that their prescriptions and proscriptions are informed – albeit not dictated – by reliable research evidence.

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Sir Iain Chalmers is the Editor of the James Lind Library, Oxford, UK and a founder of the Cochrane Collaboration.

NEWS AROUND THE AEC / DEC

BRITISH SOCIETY OF EVIDENCE-BASED POLICING

July 6, 2011

Submitted by Lawrence W. Sherman

On November 1, 2010, twelve police professionals and academics met at Cambridge to found the British Society of Evidence-Based Policing. The first president of the society is Detective Chief Inspector Alex Murray of the West Midlands Police. The objectives of the society are "to promote and facilitate":

1. Increased use of the best available research evidence to solve policing problems;
2. The production of new research by police practitioners and researchers
3. Communication of research evidence to police practitioners and the public

The Society will meet at Cambridge again on 6th July, 2011, in connection with the 4th International Conference on Evidence-Based Policing. All interested police, researchers or citizens are invited to join the Society. A Home Page for the Society will soon be established at the Cambridge University Institute of Criminology website, with information about membership, journal subscriptions to the Journal of Experimental Criminology, and meetings.

ADVANCING EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE SUPPORTS AEC/DEC

Submitted by Peter Greenwood

Advancing Evidence Based Practice is a non-profit, membership organization whose mission is to promote the development, adoption, and effective implementation of evidence-based programs for at-risk youth and families. In order to facilitate the development of further knowledge on evidence-based practices, Advancing Evidence Based Practice will pay for complimentary breakfasts for twenty scholars "who have not yet conducted field experiments" at the DEC Mentoring Breakfast on Friday, November 19, 7:30 – 9:00 am. The Breakfast will be held in Club Room, Second Floor, San Francisco Marriott Marquis during the upcoming American Society of Criminology conference.

Advancing Evidence Based Practice has also established a \$1,000 prize for the best paper reporting on a randomized controlled trial or natural policy experiment which assesses the impact of any combination of evidence-based practices targeting youth and families on such outcomes as recidivism, aggregate juvenile crime, juvenile placements and young adult prison commitments. The first award will be made at the 2011 DEC Breakfast.

Journal of Experimental Criminology

The **Journal of Experimental Criminology** is published four times a year in cooperation with the Academy of Experimental Criminology and Division of Experimental Criminology. A subscription to the Journal is included in the Division's membership dues. The *Journal of Experimental Criminology* focuses on high quality experimental and quasi-experimental research in the development of evidence based crime and justice policy. The journal is also committed to the advancement of the science of systematic reviews and experimental methods in criminology and criminal justice. The journal seeks empirical papers on experimental and quasi-experimental studies, systematic reviews on substantive criminal justice problems, and methodological papers on experimentation and systematic review. The journal encourages submissions from scholars in the broad array of scientific disciplines that are concerned with crime and justice problems.

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DEC MENTORING PROJECT

The membership of DEC includes a number of experienced evaluators who have conducted randomized controlled trials (RCTs) and overcome problems in a variety of settings resulting in rigorous testing of promising programs or policies that have advanced the field. The collective wisdom of these individuals is an invaluable asset to researchers interested in launching their own rigorous evaluations.

In order to take advantage of the resources available within DEC, Peter Greenwood, Denise Gottfredson, Dennis Rosenbaum, Eileen Ahlin, and colleagues are working with DEC to establish a Mentoring Program to serve the needs of less experienced evaluators and help them achieve the degree of rigor in their research designs we all desire. The Mentoring Program will serve both as a means of recruiting young scholars to our Division within ASC (non-member, no mentor) and increasing the quality of evaluations.

The Mentoring Program will include:

- A roster of individual members along with their particular skills and experience in particular settings who are willing to serve as mentors.
- A standardized protocol for DEC members to request mentoring, which would include all of the factors required to match them with appropriate mentors.
- A process for reviewing requests, recruiting appropriate mentors, and tracking the outcome of the effort.
- A way of announcing or advertising the availability of this service.
- A way of recognizing and rewarding mentors.

Some of the specific issues that mentors might help evaluators deal with include:

- Feasibility assessments;
- Justifying an RCT;
- Design and treatment decisions;
- Implementation integrity;
- Implementation and process measurement;
- Impact measurement;
- Statistical techniques most appropriate to test hypotheses regarding program effects;
- Conclusions, interpretations, limitations; and
- General education.

Stay tuned for more information about how to become a mentor or mentee, and how to take advantage of additional resources (e.g., literature) available through the Mentoring Program!

UPCOMING CONFERENCES.

◆ The 11th Annual Jerry Lee Crime Prevention

Symposium

Maryland, USA, May 2-3, 2011
George Mason University,
University of Maryland &
University of Pennsylvania

The symposium will feature the work of the Campbell Collaboration Crime and Justice Group. Presentations will focus on methodological issues of random assignment and meta-analysis. Research results on two key topics – problem oriented policing strategies for reducing crime and the effects of outpatient treatment for drug involved offenders – will be presented and followed by reactions from panels of leading practitioners and policymakers.

Website:

<http://gunston.gmu.edu/cebcp/JerryLee.html>

◆ Stockholm Criminology Symposium

Stockholm, Sweden, June 13-15, 2011
Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention &
Stockholm University

The purpose of the symposium is for international criminologists and practitioners to learn about the latest research findings of importance for crime policy and discuss strategies, methods, and measures to reduce crime and improve levels of safety in society.

Website:

http://www.criminologyprize.com/extra/pod/?module_ins_tance=2

◆ US National Institute of Justice Annual Conference

Arlington, VA, USA, June 20-21, 2011
US National Institute of Justice (NIJ)

The conference showcases developments in technology that increases public safety will be featured. The conference puts a heavy emphasis on the benefits to researchers and practitioners who work together to make effective evidence-based policies and practice what works, what doesn't work, and what the research shows as promising.

Website:

http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/events/nij_conference/welcome.htm

◆ 20th Annual ANZSOC Conference

Alice Springs, Australia, September 27-30, 2010
Australian & New Zealand Society of Criminology
Dates for 2011 conference will appear in next issue of the newsletter

The ANZSOC conference is the premier crime and criminal justice research forum in Australia. Themes include: evidence-based policy making, persistence and desistance, peace-building and security, regulation in theory and practice, interdisciplinarity and theory.

Website:

<http://www.anzsoc.org>

◆ 11th Annual Conference of the European Society of Criminology

Villinius, Lithuania, September 21-24, 2011
European Society of Criminology (ESC)

The annual conferences of the Society provide an opportunity for the members to present papers on the results of their own research projects as well as learn about the research being done elsewhere in Europe. The conferences are also an occasion where the members can meet each other and discuss on mutual research interests; the meetings have already proved to be an important platform for new pan-European research initiatives.

Website:

<http://www.esc-eurocrim.org/conferences.shtml>

◆ 62nd Annual Meeting of the American Society of Criminology – Crime and Social Institutions

San Francisco, CA, USA, November 17-20, 2010
American Society of Criminology (ASC)

The American Society of Criminology is an international organization concerned with criminology, embracing scholarly, scientific, and professional knowledge concerning the etiology, prevention, control, and treatment of crime and delinquency. The themes discussed in the meeting are varied and include the measurement and detection of crime, legislation, the practice of criminal law, as well as a review of the law enforcement, judicial, and correctional systems

Website:

<http://www.asc41.com/annualmeeting.htm>