FORUM PROCEEDINGS August 2002

Reflections on the Crime Decline: Lessons for the Future?

Proceedings from the Urban Institute Crime Decline Forum

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research for safer communities

URBAN INSTITUTE
Justice Policy Center

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Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank the many individuals who made the Forum on the Crime Decline a reality and made valuable contributions to this report. The participants in the forum were particularly generous in giving their time and sharing their insights. Al Blumstein, co-editor of *The Crime Drop in America* and dean of American criminologists, was an enthusiastic partner in this effort. With his support, the forum was built upon the scholarship represented in that book. Adele Harrell, director of the Justice Policy Center, and other colleagues at the center, particularly Amy Solomon, Christy Visher, and Jeff Butts, helped conceptualize the project and shape the report. Our partners in the Urban Institute's Public Affairs Department, Susan Brown, Renu Shukla, and Karen McKenzie, provided both logistical support and intellectual feedback. Ellen Hoffman wrote an early draft of the proceedings, and Jake Rosenfeld provided research assistance. We are also indebted to the superb administrative support team of the Justice Policy Center, particularly Dionne Davis for handling the logistical arrangements for the forum and Dave Williams for turning words and numbers into an attractive publication. Finally, we gratefully acknowledge the financial support provided by The Smith Richardson Foundation, the Open Society Institute, The National Consortium on Violence Research, and the Urban Institute. Without their vote of confidence, this project could not have happened.

Foreword

Crime has been a defining characteristic of modern America. It has claimed many thousands of lives and cost billions of dollars. When crime rates began to rise in the 1960s, the "crime issue" occupied a prominent place in the U.S. national agenda, influencing electoral outcomes and spurring debates about the role of race, culture, morality, personal accountability, judicial discretion, and economic inequality. When crime rates were on the rise, discussions about crime often became ideological and polarized. Everyone agreed there was too much crime, yet there was little agreement about what should be done about it.

Despite a lack of consensus on how to address crime problems, by the end of the 20th century, crime rates had fallen to their lowest levels in a generation. Violent crime rates, which rose dramatically in the mid-1980s with the introduction of crack cocaine into U.S. inner cities, have declined every year since 1993. Property crime rates fell to half the level of a quarter century ago. Violence in families, specifically assaults between intimate partners, had been declining for several years. The steepest drop in violence occurred among young offenders.

As the 1990s drew to a close, new questions dominated the public debate on crime, questions unimaginable 10 years earlier: Why had crime rates fallen so precipitously? Why did crime rates drop more sharply in some cities than in others? Many have taken credit for this decline in crime, among them police officials, advocates of increased incarceration, prevention specialists, and community activists. Others have pointed to a relatively strong economy during the 1990s and broad demographic trends. Few of these experts agreed on next steps in the national effort to increase community safety.

More recently, these debates have intensified as new crime data show that the dramatic decline in violent crime in the nation's largest cities is leveling off, and some cities are posting new and disturbing increases in rates of violence. With the country now in a recession, law enforcement resources redeployed to reflect a national commitment to combat terrorism, and prison populations stabilizing, many of the large-scale social forces that may have contributed to the crime decline are uncertain allies as communities struggle to keep crime rates low.

It appears that the nation is at a critical juncture in its efforts to bring crime rates down. This report is intended to shed light on the next generation of crime policy discussions by exploring the lessons to be learned from the declining crime rates of our recent past. It is our belief that, even if the decline reverses, as it indeed may, the breadth and consistency of the changes during the 1990s provide an important opportunity to learn from this social phenomenon. This report presents a discussion of the long-term trends in crime rates as a reminder that there is no single narrative that describes the nation's experience with crime. The report also presents the views of prominent researchers and practitioners convened by the Urban Institute to reflect on the remarkable fact that crime rates have fallen to new lows. This report is not intended to provide definitive answers to the questions raised by the recent crime decline—that would require more research, new data, and a sustained effort to reconcile every competing claim. We have a more modest goal—to share these insights from research and practice with those who hope to create safer communities in America.

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Senior Fellow

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Introduction

This report is divided into three sections. The first presents an overview of crime rates in America over recent years, examining separately the trends in crimes of violence and property crimes and describing the different ways crime rates are measured. The trends in violence are then disaggregated to explore the distinct developments in the levels of domestic violence, violence committed by young people, and violence committed with firearms. The first section ends with a presentation of recent developments in crime rates, documenting that the steep declines witnessed in the 1990s have bottomed out at the national level and, in some jurisdictions, have risen, sometimes sharply.

The second section of this report presents the proceedings of the Crime Decline Forum, a meeting of leading researchers, law enforcement experts, prevention specialists, and community activists. This forum, convened by the Urban Institute in the fall of 2000, provided an opportunity to explore the factors affecting the declining crime rates of the 1990s and to draw lessons for future crime control policies. The forum began with a series of presentations by researchers who wrote chapters in the book *The Crime Drop in America* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), a singular effort by some of the nation's leading scholars to analyze the broad social forces and policy shifts that contributed to the decline in crime. Recognizing that even this ambitious book could not provide definitive answers to these complex questions, we invited other researchers and prominent practitioners to build upon the initial presentations, adding perspectives that were missing, critiquing the analysis, and suggesting other explanatory theories. This section reflects that rich discussion.

The third section, which focuses on future policy challenges and promising strategies, also builds upon the discussion at the forum. The participants were asked to identify the key issues that should be addressed in developing crime control policies over the coming years. Four challenges are highlighted: 1) waning of the strong economy; 2) increasing numbers of returning prisoners; 3) persisting poverty in inner-city areas; and 4) growing population of young people.

Finally, the report presents four promising crime reduction strategies, nominated at the forum for consideration in the near future: 1) engaging the community and young people in crime reduction efforts; 2) coordinating community efforts to respond to crime; 3) expanding and improving community corrections; and 4) continuing policing innovations.

The report concludes with some observations about the ongoing challenge of responding to crime in our changing world.

The Crime Drop in America, Edited by Alfred Blumstein and Joel Wallman

The Crime Drop in America, published in 2000, reflects the efforts of a number of America's most prominent criminologists to examine a host of factors thought to contribute to the crime decline that began in the early 1990s. They examine the role of guns, the growing prison population, homicide patterns, drug markets, economic opportunity, changes in policing, and demographics as possible explanations for the rise and fall of crime in the past two decades. The research for the book was sponsored by The National Consortium on Violence Research and the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation. The author of each chapter of *The Crime Drop in America* was invited to present his or her research on the crime decline to frame the forum's discussions.

Declines in Crime: Long-Term Trends

Crime is not a unitary phenomenon. To talk meaningfully about crime, one must distinguish between types of crimes, types of offenders, different contexts, and different places. Similarly, crime rates cannot be measured with a single trend line. The different kinds of crime rarely follow the same upward and downward trends over time. For example, there are significant differences between the trends in property crime and violent crime over the past quarter century. Trends in juvenile violence have followed patterns quite distinct from those in domestic violence. And even within the category of juvenile violence, there are quite different patterns depending on the weapon used to commit the violence. So, just as one cannot talk meaningfully in general terms about cancer, its causes, and its treatment, but must distinguish lung cancer from breast cancer and other cancers, so too must one begin a discussion of crime rates by distinguishing between different types of crimes. Accordingly, this report examining the decline in crime in America first presents a differentiated picture of crime trends over time.

This first section presents crime trends over the past several decades, through 2000, using the two primary sources of national crime data—the Uniform Crime Reports and National Crime Victimization Survey.[1] (See the insert below.) Although each source of data reflects a different view of crime—from the perspective of the police or the victims—several common themes emerge:

- Violent crime rates have declined every year since 1993.
- Violence in families, specifically assaults between intimate partners, have been declining for several years.
- The steepest and most dramatic increases and subsequent decreases in violence occurred among young offenders. Although young people (under age 25) led the steep decline in violent crime experienced in the early 1990s, they did not decline much further than where they were in the mid-1980s.
- The entire rise in homicides in the late 1980s and early 1990s was in the use of handguns by people under age 25.
- Property crime rates have fallen to half the level of a quarter century ago.

Crime in America: Two Sources of Data

The Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) and National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) both measure the level of violent crime nationally. However, each source uses a different methodology and provides a different story of crime in America. The UCR, compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, reflects crimes reported to police departments across the country. The NCVS, based on an annual telephone survey of people ages 12 and older, captures individual victims' experiences with crime, even if the crime was never reported to the police.

Using both the UCR and NCVS to understand crime trends provides a more complete and accurate picture than using only one or the other. For instance, the reliability of UCR data is limited by the Extent to which reported crime rates reflect local policing practices that target certain crimes or neighborhoods, variations in how police agencies count crimes, and victim reporting behaviors. The NCVS is a survey of individuals and therefore is not as vulnerable to gaps caused by victims not reporting crimes to the police and variation in police reporting practices. However, due to the limited number of respondents in any one survey, NCVS data cannot say much about local crime trends, and the number of victims reporting certain crimes, such as forcible rape, tends to be small. The NCVS does not collect information on homicide, making the UCR's Supplementary Homicide Report the primary source of criminal justice information on homicide incidents.

[1] As of the writing of this report, the Department of Justice had not released the 2001 NCVS data and the Federal Bureau of Investigation had not released the final UCR data for 2001.

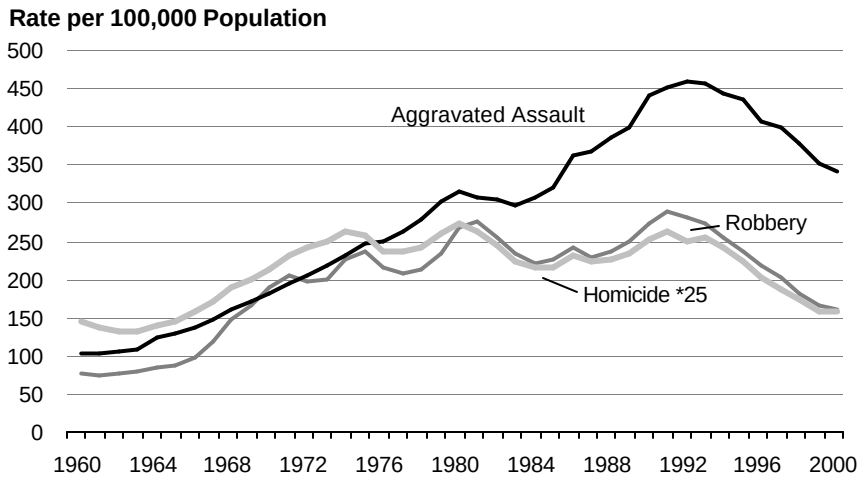
I. CRIMES OF VIOLENCE

A. Trends in Violence, According to Crime Reports to the Police

Of greatest concern to the general public are crimes involving violence, either actual violence or threatened violence. Figure 1 shows the trends in three kinds of violent crime—aggravated assault, robbery, and homicide—as reported to the police and cataloged by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR). This figure shows that, beginning in the 1960s, the rates of reported aggravated assault, robbery, and homicide increased steadily through the late 1970s. Robbery and homicide trends track one another fairly closely throughout the four-decade period from 1960 to 2000. By the end of the century, murder and robbery rates reached their lowest levels since the late 1960s.

Aggravated assaults, on the other hand, continued to rise appreciably faster through the 1980s and early 1990s. More recently, aggravated assault rates have also fallen but not as dramatically as robbery and homicide rates. Aggravated assault rates have returned to levels found in the mid-1980s.

Figure 1. Aggravated Assault, Robbery and Homicide Rates, 1960–2000



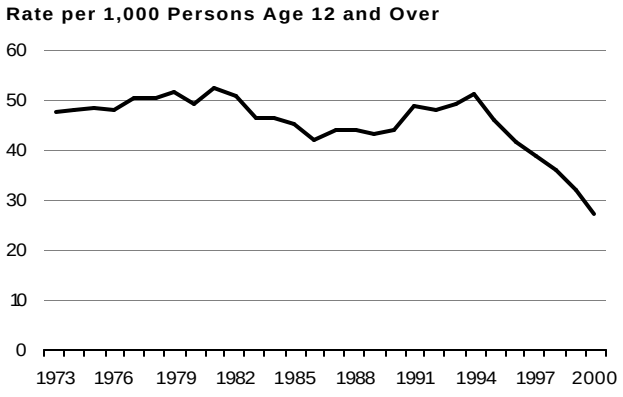
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports

B. Trends in Violence, According to Victim Surveys

A slightly different story of the national trends in violence over time emerges when one examines the findings of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS). Unlike the Uniform Crime Report data, which reflect crimes reported to the police, the NCVS violent crime estimates are based on periodic surveys of a random sample of households in the United States. (See the insert for details on the differences between the NCVS and UCR data.)

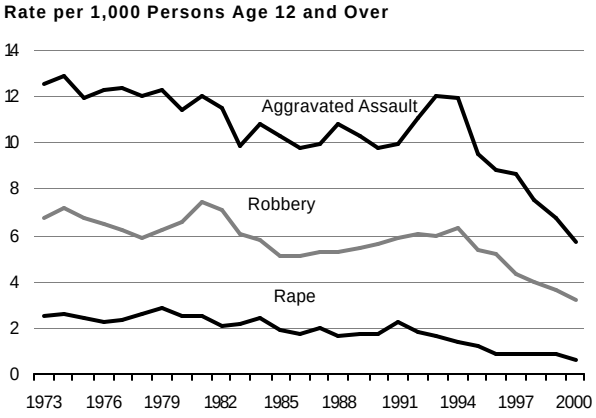
Figure 2 shows a slight rise in violent crime rates from 1973, when the first victimization survey was conducted, through the end of the decade. A decline in the early 1980s was followed by another increase, with the peak in 1994, when violent crime rates began a dramatic decline. Looking at breakdowns for aggravated assault, robbery, and rape in Figure 3, there is a similar peaking in the mid-1990s followed by a steady decline through 2000. According to the NCVS, levels of violent crime in America are now about half the levels reported in 1973. In fact, the largest one-year decrease in measured crime since the survey began occurred between 1999 and 2000 (nearly a 15 percent decline).

Figure 2. Total Violent Crime, 1973–2000



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey

Figure 3. Aggravated Assault, Robbery and Rape Rates, 1973–2000



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey

Within the broad narrative depicting the rise and fall in levels of violence in America there are three important subplots—the trends in domestic violence, violence by young people, and gun violence.

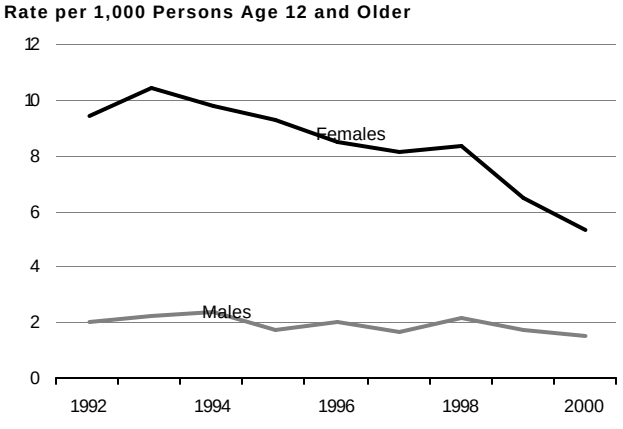
C. Trends in Domestic Violence

The patterns of domestic violence have not followed the national trends for all crimes of violence. Although domestic violence rates have generally been declining, there are notable differences by gender and race.

According to the NCVS, the rate of violent crime victimization of women by an intimate partner has been declining since 1993. As shown in Figure 4, between 1993 and 1998 the rate of inmate partner violence against women decreased 21 percent. The rate of victimization of men by an intimate partner is comparatively much lower than the rate for women. Intimate partner victimization rates of men declined slightly between 1992 and 2000, despite some fluctuation in the intervening years.

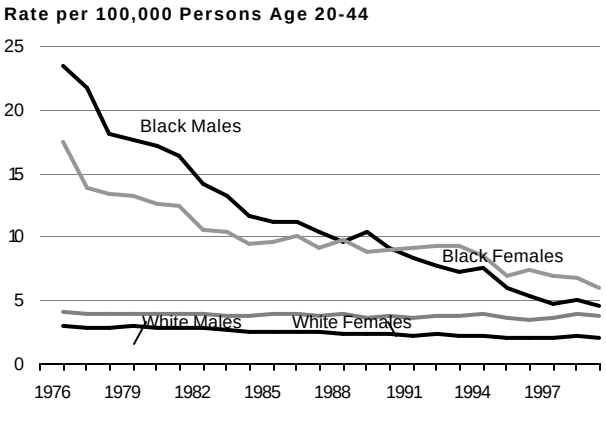
Another means of assessing trends in domestic violence is to look at intimate partner homicide data. As can be seen in Figure 5, although rates of intimate partner homicide have been falling, there are significant differences by race and gender. The rate of intimate partner homicide is appreciably higher among black men and women compared to white men and women. Since 1976, the per capita rate of homicides among intimate partners has been declining steadily, with the greatest declines occurring among black males. The per capita rate of black males killed by an intimate partner dropped 86 percent between 1976 and 1999; for black females, it dropped by 59 percent, and for white males by 71 percent. These step declines in intimate homicides among black men and women have helped close the pronounced gap between blacks and whites experienced in the mid-1970s. However, although intimate partner homicide rates are at a nearly 30-year low, they are still higher among black men and women than among white men and women. White females represent the only category of victims for whom intimate partner homicide has not decreased substantially since 1976—dropping only 11 percent.

Figure 4. Rate of Violent Victimization by Intimates by Gender, 1992–2000



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey

Figure 5. Rate of Intimate Partner Homicide by Race and Gender, 1976–1999



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplementary Homicide Reports

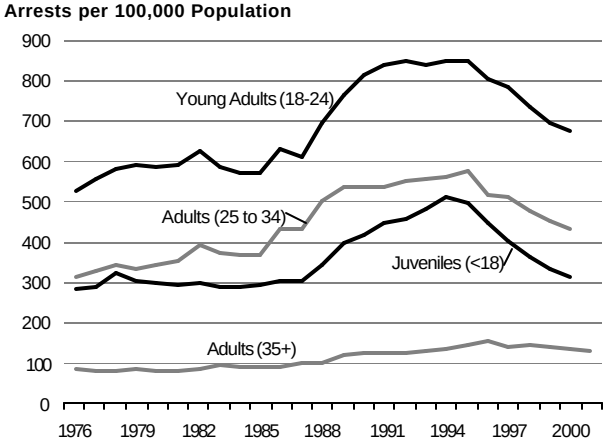
D. Trends in Violence by Young People

Examining changes in the levels of violent crime committed by juveniles (under age 18) and young adults (age 18 to 24) reveals important trends masked by the overall changes in violent crime. Because criminal behavior has always been more prevalent among young people, it is important to distinguish juvenile crime and youth crime from crime by adults. Juveniles and young adults combined made up 38 percent of the increase in violent crime arrests between 1985 and 1995, but they accounted for 51 percent of the subsequent drop in violent crime between 1995 and 1999. Despite the dramatic declines of the mid-1990s, violent crime arrests among young people did not decline much beyond where they were in the mid-1980s.

As Figure 6 shows, from 1976 until 1985, there was a fairly constant pattern in arrest rates. Young adults between the ages of 18 and 24 had the highest arrest rates, at about 580 per 100,000 population, followed by adults 25 to 34 years old (350 per 100,000) and juveniles (300 per 100,000). But, beginning in 1985, those patterns lost their hold. Violent crime arrest rates increased by 50 percent for offenders age 18 to 24—from 570 per 100,000 in 1985 to the peak of 852 per 100,000 in 1995. Arrest rates of adults age 25 to 34 also increased by half to a high of 576 per 100,000 in 1995. There was a 70 percent increase in arrests of juveniles, peaking at 512 arrests per 100,000 in 1994. Arrest rates for all three groups have dropped since 1995, with juveniles registering the steepest decline.

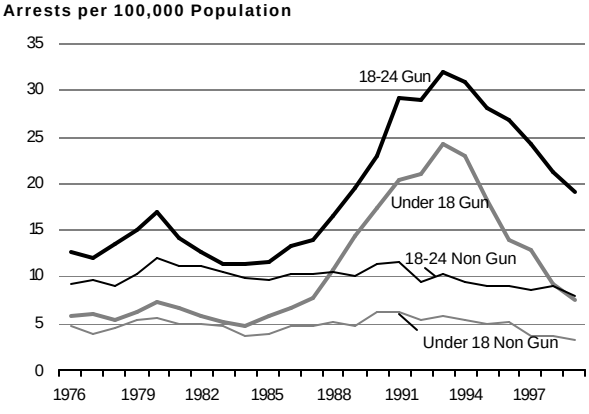
The increase in gun crimes among juveniles and young adults is the leading factor in the pronounced rise in arrests beginning in 1985. From 1976 to 1985, the arrest rates of juveniles for homicide with a gun and without a gun were nearly identical. During that 10-year period arrest rates averaged about five to six per 100,000 juveniles for homicides committed with and without a gun. The 18 to 24 age group had a slightly higher arrest rate, at an average of 13 arrests per 100,000 for homicides with a gun and 10 arrests per 100,000 for homicides without a gun. Between 1985 and 1993, the rate of arrests for homicides with a gun more than quadrupled for juveniles, to nearly 24 arrests per 100,000 population. During that same period, arrests for gun-related homicides nearly tripled among young adults age 18 to 24, to about 32 arrests per 100,000 population. Since 1993, gun-related homicide arrests have been dropping steadily, with the most dramatic declines seen among juveniles.

Figure 6. Violent Crime Index Arrest Rates by Age, 1976–2000



Source: Butts, J., and J. Travis. 2002. *The Rise and Fall of American Youth Violence: 1980 to 2000*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

Figure 7. Gun and Non Gun Homicide Arrest Rates by Age, 1976–1999



Source: Urban Institute analysis of data from Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplementary Homicide Reports

Defining Age Groups: Juveniles and Youth

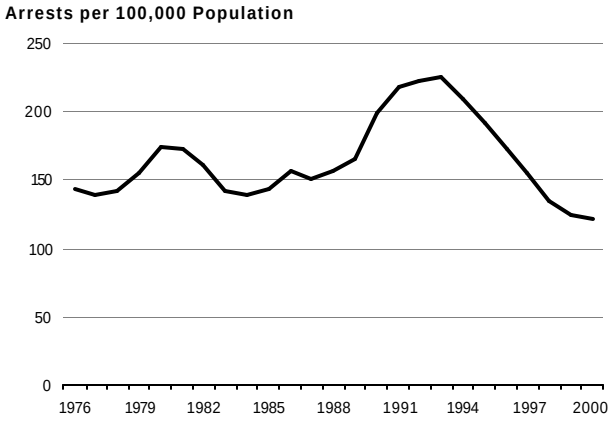
The words "youth" and "juvenile" are often used interchangeably in discussions of crime rates and crime policy. However, there is a critical difference between the two classifications. The term "juvenile" has a precise and formal meaning. Depending on state law, a juvenile is someone under the age of 15, 17, or 18. The terms "youth or young adult," on the other hand, typically include people through their mid-20s. Most juveniles who commit crimes are dealt with by the juvenile court system, while youth over the state's statutory age limit are considered adults and are subject to adjudication through the adult criminal court process. Some states also allow or require that certain offenses, even when committed by juveniles, be prosecuted in the adult system.

E. Trends in Gun Crimes

An examination of violent crime in America would not be complete without an analysis of the levels of crimes involving guns. As Figure 8 shows, the per capita rate of gun crime in America remained fairly constant from 1976 to 1989 with the exception of a three-year period in the early 1980s. The firearm crime rate, as measured by arrests per 100,000 population, then rose sharply starting in the late 1980s, peaking in 1993 at a rate of 226 gun crimes per 100,000 population, a 60 percent increase over the previous all-time low rate in 1977 (139 per 100,000). Then, just as precipitously, the rate dropped, falling to the lowest level in three decades (121 per 100,000).

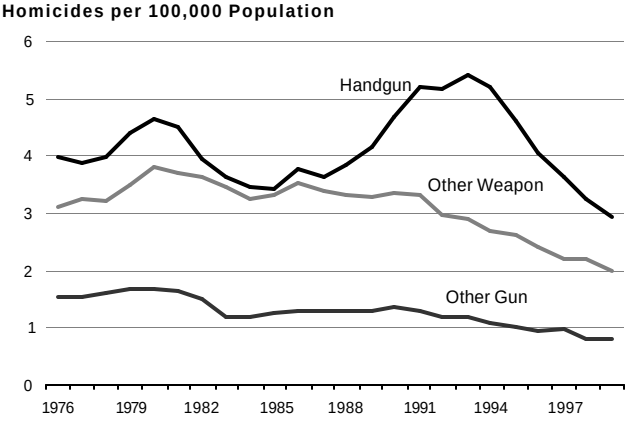
The rise in violent crimes involving guns in the late 1980s and early 1990s was primarily due to an increase in the use of handguns. As shown in Figure 9, homicides involving handguns and other weapons tracked one another fairly closely until about 1988. Beginning in the late 1980s, homicides involving handguns increased dramatically while homicides involving other guns and weapons leveled out and then declined through the 1990s. Between 1988 and the peak in 1993, there was a 40 percent increase in homicides involving handguns. Since 1994, handgun homicides have been declining and in 1999 were at the lowest level in decades (3 per 100,000).

Figure 8. Violent Crimes Committed with Guns, 1976–2000



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports

Figure 9. Homicides by Weapon Type, 1976–1999



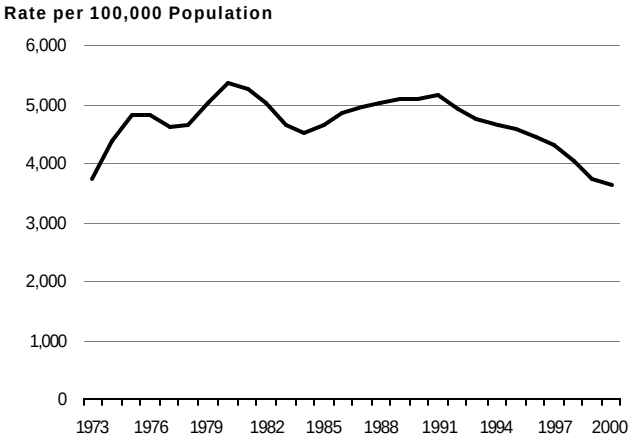
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplementary Homicide Reports

II. PROPERTY CRIMES

Although most academic and public discussion of crime rates has focused on violent crime, it is important to note the dramatic, long-term drop in the rates of property crime in the United States. Property crime makes up about three-quarters of all crime in the United States. According to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports, property crimes have been declining since 1991 and are now at their lowest level in three decades. The nation's property crime rate has declined by 30 percent since 1991, from 5,140 property crimes per 100,000 population to 3,620 in 2000 (see Figure 10.)

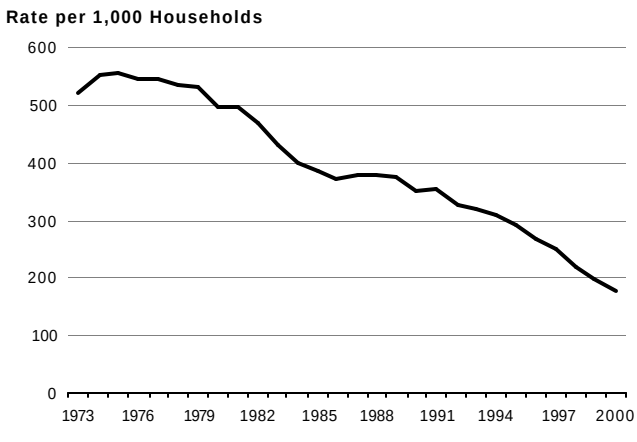
The National Crime Victimization Survey data in Figure 11 tell a similar story. Aside from a slight increase between 1973 and 1974, the overall property crime rate steadily declined through 2000. According to the NCVS data, the rate of property crime (includes burglary, household larceny, and auto theft) in the United States in 2000 was 178 per 1,000 households, or two-thirds lower than the mid-1970s peak rate of 550 property crimes per 1,000 households.

Figure 10. UCR Property Crimes Rates, 1973–2000



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports

Figure 11. NCVS Property Crime Rates, 1973–2000



Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey

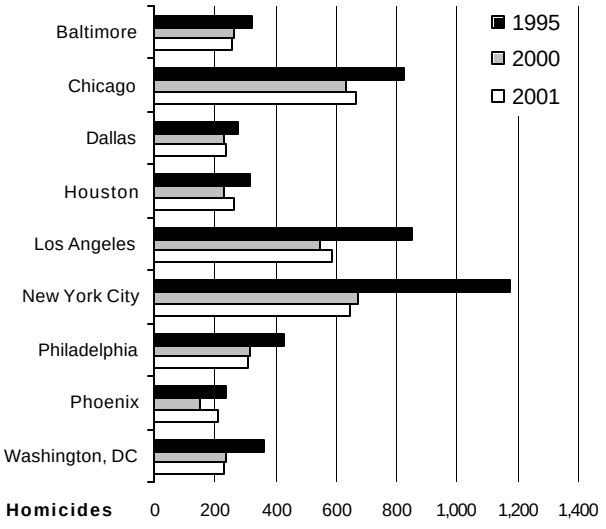
III. RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CRIME RATES

The steady declines in crime of the 1990s could not have continued indefinitely without moving to a point of zero or negative crime incidents. At the turn of the century, rates of reported crime leveled off, signaling to some analysts that the great crime drop of the 1990s was over. According to the Uniform Crime Reports, rates of reported violent crime dropped only 0.1 percent, and property crime rates dropped 0.3 percent from 1999 to 2000. Preliminary UCR data for 2001 indicate a slight increase in major crimes over 2000. Overall, there was a 2 percent increase in the nation's crime index between 2000 and 2001. Violent crimes remained relatively unchanged, with a 0.3 percent increase since 2000, while the volume of property crime offenses rose by 2.2 percent.

The National Crime Victimization Survey tells a slightly different, but not necessarily inconsistent, story of crime rates in recent years. Between 1999 and 2000, violent crime rates declined 15 percent while property crime rates declined 10 percent. These declines are not as steep as those experienced in the late 1990s and may be another indication of a leveling off.

Overall national crime trends tend to be driven by what happens in the big cities—places like New York, Houston, and Los Angeles were the first to experience the rise in crime in the mid 1980s and the first to experience the drop after 1993. So we often look to urban areas for a glimpse at what may happen next. As the nation's law enforcement and crime statistics agencies close the book on the year 2001, some troubling trends may be emerging in cities across the country. Looking only at homicide rates, and reporting data from only nine of the nation's largest cities, reveals that the declines of the late 1990s have slowed and, in some cases, begun to reverse (see Figure 12). Homicide rates declined dramatically in most large American cities between 1995 and 1999. However, these declines have slowed down in recent years, with most cities showing only modest decreases or increases in homicide rates between 2000 and 2001 (see Table 1). Apparently, the era of annual reductions in homicide rates in America's largest cities is over, but a new pattern has yet to emerge.

Figure 12. Homicides in Large U.S. Cities



Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports

Table 1. Percent Change in Homicides

City	1995-2000	2000-2001
Baltimore	-20%	-2%
Chicago	-23%	6%
Dallas	-16%	4%
Houston	-27%	16%
Los Angeles	-35%	7%
New York City	-43%	-4%
Philadelphia	-26%	-3%
Phoenix	-37%	38%
Washington, DC	-34%	-3%

This review of the distinct crime trends in America reveals some important patterns. In the early 1990s, violent crime, particularly juvenile violence, began a period of freefall, plummeting to levels not seen since the 1960s and then leveling off at the turn of the century with sobering indications that the era of steadily falling violent crime rates may have come to an end. Beyond this broad but brief trend, one can discern two distinct and important subplots in the story of violence in America over the past three decades. First, since 1976, there has been sustained reduction in homicide rates among intimate partners. Second, there was a sharp rise, then fall, in gun-related homicides among young people, at a time when the rates of nongun homicides among young people remained constant. And third, there has been a distinct pattern of steady decline in property crime rates since the mid-1970s, with rates falling over a quarter century to nearly half what they were when the first victimization surveys were conducted.

For a discussion of the factors that might explain these trends—and insights that might guide future policy development—we now turn to the Crime Decline Forum discussion.

The Crime Decline Forum

The Urban Institute assembled a panel of leading crime researchers and national experts to discuss the nexus between particular crime rates and specific social, demographic, economic, and political trends. As a starting point, the panelists focused on findings from the book *The Crime Drop in America,* edited by Alfred Blumstein and Joel Wallman. The authors of this groundbreaking work kicked off the forum by highlighting some of the factors that have led to declining crime rates. (An asterisk denotes the authors.) The panel then turned its attention to the future—specifically, will the crime decline continue and are there lessons for the future?

Elijah Anderson, University of Pennsylvania

Alfred Blumstein,* Carnegie Mellon University

Martha Burt, Urban Institute

Jack Calhoun, National Crime Prevention Council

Beverly Watts Davis, San Antonio Fighting Back

John Eck,* University of Cincinnati

Chief Edward Flynn, Arlington Police Department

James Alan Fox,* Northeastern University

Jeffrey Grogger,* University of California-Los Angeles

Bruce Johnson,* National Development and Research Institutes, Inc.

David Kennedy, Harvard University

Mark Kleiman, University of California-Los Angeles

Tracy Litthcut, Boston Community Centers

Demetra Nightingale, Urban Institute

Peter Reuter, University of Maryland

Rick Rosenfeld,* University of Missouri-St. Louis

Lawrence Sherman, University of Pennsylvania

Wesley Skogan, Northwestern University

William Spelman,* University of Texas-Austin

Mercer Sullivan, Rutgers University

Jeremy Travis, Urban Institute

Reginald Wilkinson, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction

Hubert Williams, Police Foundation

Garen Wintemute,* University of California-Davis

A Forum on the Crime Decline

The unprecedented drop in crime rates—particularly the steep decline in violent crime that began in 1993—has sparked a spirited debate among academics, practitioners, elected officials, and community leaders. There are a number of possible explanations for the dramatic crime declines of the 1990s, and any combination of them may have been working in a mutually supportive way.

- Did new police strategies bring crime rates down?
- Did the buildup of prisons pay dividends in crime reduction?
- Did the strong economy of the late 1990s prove the adage that more jobs mean less crime?
- Did new gun control policies and more effective enforcement of laws regulating gun ownership and distribution reduce gun violence?
- Did shifts in the demographic profile of United States—particularly the number of young people in the crime-producing years—affect fluctuations in crime?
- Did the crack markets that sprang up in the mid-1980s, and the attendant violence, stabilize?
- Did communities galvanize to fight crime more effectively?

To shed light on these questions and to draw lessons for future crime control policies, the Urban Institute convened leading researchers, law enforcement experts, prevention specialists, and community leaders for a forum on the Crime Decline. The purpose was to bring the collective wisdom of research and experience to the difficult task of building safe communities. (A transcript of the forum's discussions is available at the Urban Institute's web site, www.urban.org.)

Not surprisingly, the forum reaffirmed the complexity of the task—there is no simple or singular answer to the question, "Why have crime rates come down?" During the discussions, two broad themes emerged. On one level, the panelists pointed to the importance of a set of broad contextual factors that contributed to changes in crime rates, factors that included shifting demographics, the economic boom, the waning of the crack epidemic, and cultural changes within poor communities, particularly among young people. On another level, the panelists credited specific policies with contributing to the reductions in crime. These policies included new policing interventions, increases in imprisonment, and new gun control strategies. So the best evidence suggests that the reduction is the product of a complex interaction among a set of broad contextual factors in which specific policy changes played an integral part. The next section captures these themes that emerged from the "looking back" part of the discussion.

The final sections of the report describe the participants' thoughts on future trends and policy strategies. The forum discussion raised a number of challenges that must be acknowledged in considering the future direction of crime rates. We highlight four: the waning of the economy, the high levels of returning prisoners, the persistence of poverty in inner cities, and the growth in the population of young people. Finally, forum participants were asked to nominate promising crime reduction strategies that warrant greater attention and investment. Four strategies are highlighted in the final section of the report: engaging the community and young people in crime reduction efforts; coordinating community efforts to respond to crime; expanding and improving community corrections; and continuing policing innovations.

I. REASONS FOR THE CRIME DECLINE

A. Contextual Factors

For many analysts, both the rise and the fall of violent crime rates in the 1980s and 1990s can be attributed, at least in part, to the interaction among three broad social and economic trends:

- The shifting proportion of young people in the population
- The development and spread of the crack trade
- The changing labor market

Any single contextual explanation—demographics, drug markets, or the economy—has limited explanatory power. Taken together, however, the interplay of a shifting youth population, the emergence of the profitable and violent crack market, and the changing nature of employment opportunities for inner-city youth created a complex set of circumstances that led to the historic rise and fall of violent crime over the past 20 years.

Guns, Drugs, and Kids: A Combustible Mix

Part of the decline, therefore, has been undoing the rise. The characteristics of the rise were kids and handguns, and what we saw was the police, the ATF, and community groups working that issue. The other piece that was critical [in contributing to the decline was] the drug markets. The drug markets changed, in the sense that older users may have continued, but new users weren't using [drugs as often], so the process of sale could change from the street market, which was very vulnerable, to much more in the way of personal delivery.

Alfred Blumstein, Carnegie Mellon University

Demographic Shifts

Demographic factors are thought to be correlated with the rise and fall of violent crime over the past 20 years. The logic for this assertion is fairly straightforward. Research has shown that different age, race, and gender groups display varying degrees of vulnerability to or involvement in crime, either as victims or perpetrators. For example, males between the ages of 14 and 24 comprise fewer than 10 percent of the U.S. population yet commit nearly half of all murders and account for over one-quarter of all homicide victims. Therefore, all else held equal, violent crime rates are expected to rise as certain violence-prone demographic groups, particularly young adult males, expand as a proportion of the total population.

When crime data are viewed through this lens, there is some measure of predictability of crime rates over time. For example, James Alan Fox, a criminologist who has analyzed the U.S. homicide rate from this vantage point, was among those who correctly predicted that violent crime would peak in 1980 followed by a downturn in the early 1980s by demonstrating that the baby boom generation would "age out" of the high-crime age range.

Demographic trends appear to offer at least a partial explanation for the marked crime drop of the 1990s. In that decade, the group that was most likely to commit violent crimes—18- to 24-year-olds—were declining as a percentage of the population. At the same time, middle-age adults and seniors, who

are the least inclined to commit violent crime, were increasing as a percentage of the population. The drop in youth crime among 14- to 24-year-olds between 1995 and 1999 accounted for just over half of the decline in arrests for violent crimes. Fox suggests that changing demographics did play a role in the 1990s crime drop, albeit a modest one, accounting for an estimated 10 percent of decline in violence since the mid-1990s.

The analysis of the rise and fall of violence in America also serves as a reminder of the limits of the demographic perspective. Crime forecasting based on the assumption that criminal behavior remains stable within demographic groups over time failed to anticipate the role that crack, guns, and gangs would have on youthful offending beginning in the mid-1980s. The crime surge of the late 1980s and early 1990s occurred while the size of the most crime-prone age group (18- to 24-year-olds) was declining. Likewise, predictions of a coming storm of increasingly violent youth predators, based in large part on demographic forecasts, never came to fruition. The analysis of recent crime trends in America serves as a reminder that demographics are only part of the story.

Evolution of the Drug Culture

Understanding the changing nature of drug markets is critical to analyzing the recent rise and fall of violence in America. Bruce Johnson, a sociologist at the National Development and Research Institutes, who has studied patterns in drug use and drug markets, focused on this issue at the Crime Decline Forum. Summarizing a broad research conclusion, he documented how the rapid growth in illegal drug markets, especially crack markets in the mid- to late 1980s, played a crucial role in the increase in violent crime in urban areas, particularly among juveniles. During that time, crack cocaine emerged in New York and other major cities as a cheaper, quicker, and more intense high than other hard drugs like heroin and powder cocaine. The nature of crack cocaine use (intensive binges by users) and the amount of quick money that could be made through sales in inner-city neighborhoods created an intensely popular and competitive market that began looking to young people as recruits for selling and distribution.

New Recruits: Youth and Drugs

One of the key things fueling the link to violence and to homicide [in the 1980s and early 1990s] was the rapid growth in markets for illegal drugs…especially crack markets, [which] led to an explosive involvement of a very sizable segment of youth in the inner city.

Bruce Johnson, National Development and Research Institutes, Inc.

For many reasons, beginning in the mid-1980s, juveniles were aggressively recruited to be street sellers in this new drug market. Inner-city youth who saw few alternative opportunities for making a living were drawn to the crack industry by the promise of money and protection on the streets through access to guns. Although initially recruited to act as lookouts and low-level drug carriers, they quickly moved up the ranks and were provided access to guns. Recruiting juveniles held certain advantages to the crack distributors. They could be paid lower wages than older sellers, faced more lenient penalties in the courts, and were often more reliable workers because they typically had not formed a drug addiction. As demand for crack increased, and older sellers were being sent to prison, juveniles became more deeply involved in street-level drug markets.

The Decline of Crack Cocaine

[Over the last 10 years,] there's been very little initiation into use of hard drugs, certainly cocaine and heroin, even with methamphetamines. We don't have much idea why initiation has gone down beyond the sort of standard… one-line theory called "generational forgetting," that is, the model that bad consequences of drug use tend to reduce initiation, and when the memory of that fades, then initiation will start up again, because these are, in fact, attractive drugs.

Peter Reuter, University of Maryland

Weapons were used to "discipline" sellers who did not produce according to their bosses' expectations and to settle disputes over control of sales areas. The resulting tension, a culture of conflict, and the availability of handguns contributed significantly to the high rate of violent crimes in the 1980s—particularly among young offenders. Another contributing factor to the high level of violent gun crimes among young offenders was the increased access to guns by juveniles and young adults regardless of their involvement in the drug trade. Although young drug offenders were the first to carry and use handguns more widely, the handguns were soon passed on to their friends on the streets and in school who had nothing to do with the drug trade. These young people started carrying guns perhaps as a status symbol and as a means of protection against the violence of the drug markets. Alfred Blumstein, co-editor of *The Crime Drop in America*, points to this diffusion of guns from young drug offenders to other young people not involved in the drug trade as creating a volatile mix that resulted in escalating violent crime among juveniles and young adults through the 1980s and early 1990s.

Just as the evolution of the illegal drug markets, particularly crack cocaine markets, is linked to the rising crime rates of the late 1980s and early 1990s, evidence from researchers and practitioners suggests that changes in drug use patterns contributed to the declining crime rates. Young people came to recognize the devastating effects of crack addiction, and rates of crack use dropped. Stepped up policing efforts helped reduce drug-related crime during the late 1990s and drove many street drug markets indoors. Perhaps the best metaphor for describing the phenomenon can be taken from the public health field: America witnessed a crack epidemic that hit poor urban areas in the mid-1980s, peaked in the early 1990s, and fell as rapidly as it had hit. From a crime policy perspective, this epidemic was also marked by an unprecedented rise in violence, particularly youth violence, which also fell as the epidemic waned.

Changing Labor Market

Policymakers have long hypothesized a relationship between property-related crime and the economy—when the economy is good, the reasoning goes, crime should go down. Less intuitively obvious, however, is any relationship between violent crime and the economy; indeed, many researchers have discounted the importance of the economy in explaining violent crime. At the Crime Decline Forum, Jeffrey Grogger, an economist and professor of public policy at University of California-Los Angeles, focused on this question by asking whether some of the rise and fall of violent crime in the 1990s could be explained by changes in the economy.

Examining the influence of wage rates rather than fluctuations in unemployment rates, research by Grogger and others arrived at this broad conclusion: as wages in the low-skill market increase, young men are less likely to engage in economically motivated crimes. In this view, young men weigh the tradeoffs between wages earned in the legitimate economy and wages earned from crime and then choose the route that maximizes their situation. Grogger then attempted to quantify this relationship and found that a 10 percent increase in real wages would lead to a 10 percent decrease in economically motivated crime.

Why Wage Fluctuations Matter

As of 1993 the [economic] expansion reached into the bottom of the earnings distribution and began to raise the wages that were available to low -skilled young men. So what does this say about wages as an explanation for the decline in crime? There are two things that suggest an important role. One is the strength of the relationship between wages and economically motivated crime; the second is the timing. We see the increase of wages beginning around 1993, which is precisely when we see the decline in youth homicide. All the evidence together suggests that the expanding economy, particularly the improved wage opportunities for young men, may have played an important role in the recent decline in violence.

Jeffrey Grogger, University of California-Los Angeles

While this relationship may be most obvious for explaining property crime, Grogger and others have found the same connection with another category of economically motivated crime, namely participation in the crack markets of the mid-1980s and early 1990s. This period was marked by a steep decline in wages for young, low-skilled inner-city youth from about $9.00 an hour in 1979 to an all-time low of $6.74 in 1993. This fall, combined with the emergence of the fast-money crack trade, forced an economic choice. As crack markets flourished, more young people were recruited and more youth selected the drug trade over the legitimate economy.

Beginning in 1993, however, these trends began to work in the opposite direction. The economic expansion of the 1990s started to reach low-skilled workers with wage increases that continued throughout the decade. While rising wages provided a "pull" back to the legitimate labor market, Grogger argues that the increasingly violent nature of the crack trade also raised the cost for both buyers and sellers and provided a "push" away from illegal wages. While wages most likely did not play a leading role in the decline, they did play an important supporting role in that the expanding economy provided more choices, making it easier for dealers to leave drug markets and possibly dissuading young recruits from joining.

B. Policy Approaches

Several key policy initiatives can also be linked to declining violent crime rates over the past decade. Three policy clusters, in particular, were singled out during the forum discussion as playing a highly influential role in the crime drop:

- Gun control policies
- Prison and jail expansion
- Policing innovations

Gun Control Policies

Homicides in America are typically committed with a handgun. Between the late 1980s and 1990s, handguns were involved in two to three times more homicides each year than other weapons such as a long gun or a knife (Figure 9). Yet between 1985 and 1993, the critical years in the surge in violence in America, the role of handguns became further pronounced. Gun-related homicides—mostly involving handguns—accounted for the entire increase in homicides over that eight-year period. While firearm homicides increased by 53 percent between 1985 and 1993, nongun-related homicides actually declined by 5 percent.

As this trend became more evident, law enforcement officials, communities, and state and federal legislatures developed strategies they hoped would control the availability and spread of these weapons, especially to individuals involved in criminal activity. Among the most prevalent strategies: tracing guns used in crimes, tightening federal gun dealer licensing requirements, and enforcing gun-purchase waiting periods.

Garen Wintemute, director of the Violence Prevention Research Program at the University of California at Davis, is an expert on firearm violence. He and others have studied several types of national and local initiatives designed to stem the tide of violent crime through gun control measures. They found several initiatives to be effective in reducing the incidence of gun-related crimes.

First, targeted police patrols of gun-crime hot spots have been shown to help reduce gun violence. For example, an evaluation of a controlled experiment in Kansas City, in which extra police patrols focused on gun carrying, found that gun seizures rose by 65 percent and gun crime decreased by 49 percent in the targeted area while, in a comparison site following routine police practices, there was a 4 percent increase in gun-related crime. Similarly, police practices have been credited with reducing gun violence in several other cities including Indianapolis and New York.

Two initiatives focusing on gun suppliers undertaken by the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) have also been shown to have an impact on firearm violence. ATF's ability to track gun ownership has become increasingly sophisticated, although in many instances it is still restricted to traces from the manufacturer to the point of first retail purchase. ATF can now aggregate these tracing results by the first retail purchasers to develop an understanding of distribution patterns and ultimately aid enforcement efforts. Also, starting in the early 1990s, ATF began tightening federal dealer licensing requirements, thereby reducing the total number of federally licensed firearm dealers from a peak of 287,000 in 1993 to 86,180 in 1999, a 70 percent drop. A recent study by Chris Koper at the University of Pennsylvania points to the impact of these two initiatives. Koper found that of the guns traced by ATF in 1994, one-third came from retailers who were out of business by 1998.

Gun Control: Narrow Gains Against Crime

Screening buyers, [the] Brady [bill] and its state-level analogs, waiting periods, and background checks work. They reduce rates of criminal activity involving guns and violence among people who are screened out and denied purchase of a gun—about 25 to 30 percent of those screened. [However, these laws] appear not to have had a substantial, if any, effect on [overall] crime rates. The resolution of that apparent paradox is that under current criteria so few people are denied the purchase of a firearm under Brady and its state-level analogs relative to the number of people who purchase guns every year that an impact on that select group is too small at the population level to be noticed.

Garen Wintemute, University of California-Davis

Other measures such as screening buyers of handguns and requiring waiting periods prior to purchase seem to have some effect on firearm violence. Researchers have found that these policies marginally reduce rates of gun violence among the people who were refused a purchase. In the aggregate, however, the numbers of individuals affected by these policies are too small to have a significant effect on overall crime rates.

But not all gun control approaches were found to be successful. "Buy-back" programs, in which the police purchase guns from citizens who voluntarily turn them in, have been found not to reduce crime rates. Wintemute noted two reasons that buy-backs might be ineffective: 1) young people (who commit a large share of gun-related crimes) do not participate in these programs, and 2) most of the guns turned in are old revolvers, not the newer pistols used in most crimes. Similarly, legislative initiatives requiring the

issuance of permits to carry concealed handguns, called "shall issue" laws, have been found to have a minimal, if any, effect on overall crime rates. As with other initiatives, these laws reach only a small proportion of the population: only 1 to 2 percent of the population applies for these permits, while close to 7 percent of the population carries firearms on an occasional or regular basis.

Although research cannot precisely identify the contributions of various gun policy initiatives to the decline in gun violence, the dramatic shifts in the incidence of violence and gun availability are beyond question. Gun production, which had experienced a surge during the crime rise in the 1980s and early 1990s, began to fall dramatically in 1993. Over the next five years, production of semiautomatic pistols dropped 50 percent, and production of inexpensive, so-called "junk guns" fell more than 75 percent. Gun violence also peaked in 1993. After homicide rates involving handguns tripled among juveniles and nearly doubled among young adults between 1985 and 1993, the nation witnessed a 70 percent decline in handgun homicides among juveniles and a 40 percent decline among young adults over the next seven years. Rates of juvenile homicides committed by other means remained constant. As David Kennedy of Harvard University noted at the Crime Decline Forum, it was as if the nation witnessed an epidemic of juvenile handgun violence—it rose dramatically, peaked in 1993, then fell just as dramatically.

Prison and Jail Expansion

One of the most visible responses to the increase in violent crime has been the construction of more prisons and jails. During the past 20 years, the United States doubled its prison population and then doubled it again. The cost of maintaining these institutions is more than $40 billion annually. The buildup is based in part on the theory that if more criminals are incarcerated, fewer crimes will be committed outside the prison walls. The policy question is clear: has this investment resulted in less crime?

Two leading criminologists, William Spelman, from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas at Austin, and Richard Rosenfeld, from the University of Missouri-St. Louis, have found some supporting evidence for an affirmative answer to this question. Using a variety of data sources and statistical models, they independently arrive at similar estimates of the impact of prison expansion on crime rates. According to their analyses, about one-quarter of the drop in violent crime can be attributed to having more people off the streets and in prison.

The effect is also relevant to spousal homicide rates, according to Rosenfeld. He found that the rate of decline in spousal homicide was greater than the rate of decline of all homicides, a difference he attributed in part to the increased incarceration of adults with a history of violence. These individuals, he reasons, would have had greater opportunity to commit more family-related homicides if they were not in prison. The attribution is only partial, however, as lower marriage rates among young people also may have influenced the drop, by providing fewer "opportunities" for spousal homicide.

Adults and Homicide Rates

Alterations in the living arrangements of young adults, brought about by declining rates of marriage and the incarceration experiment of the last quarter of the 20th century, are, at most, contributing causes to the decline in adult homicide. Neither alone nor in combination do they fully explain the breadth, depth, and length of the decline. Nor are alternative accounts based on standard economic or criminological theories readily apparent. It has proven less difficult in retrospect to explain the abrupt and unexpected youth homicide epidemic of the late 1980s and early 1990s than the long and steady decline in adult homicide rates.

Richard Rosenfeld, University of Missouri-St. Louis

While prison buildup may have contributed to reducing violent crime, these researchers caution that the expansion of prisons has reached a point of diminishing returns. With so many violent offenders already incarcerated, they argue, the marginal value of incarcerating one more person, in terms of crime reduction, has declined significantly. According to Spelman, the "yield" in violence reduction of a prison bed added today is one-third the "yield" of a prison bed added in the early 1970s. Further, prison expansion is expensive, both socially and economically. In this view, continued investment in prison expansion would not be an effective or efficient way to reduce the rate of future violent crime.

Diminishing Returns of Prison Expansion

We've gone about as far as we can go with prison expansion. In the early 1970s, each additional [prison] bed we built reduced the number of violent crimes on the street by anywhere between 3 and 3.5. That number stayed fairly constant throughout the 1970s. Since 1980 or so it has been dropping, and especially since 1990 it has been dropping like a rock. That means that each additional prison bed is going to reduce violent crime by about 1.1—about a third as much as it did in the early 1970s. …Each prison bed is about a third as effective in reducing violent crime as it was in the early 1970s.

William Spelman, University of Texas

Policing Changes

During the past two decades, policing in America has undergone significant changes—some generic and some locally driven—that are thought to have contributed to reductions in the rate of violent crime. Three broad policy innovations are often credited with significant contributions to crime reduction: increases in the size of the police forces around the country, more aggressive police strategies, and "community policing."

According to John Eck and Edward Maguire, criminal justice professors at the University of Cincinnati and George Mason University, respectively, despite a widespread perception to the contrary, there is little evidence supporting a link between hiring more police and declining crime rates. Finding such a link, they caution, would be difficult in any event, since it would require determining whether increasing the number of police officers affects rates of violent crime or whether more crime induces greater hiring of police.

Interdependent Role of the Police in Crime Reduction

The police contribution to changing national trends is going to be very difficult to discern, partly because of lack of information, but also because [of] how the police become involved in attacking crime. They don't do this by themselves. At the same time city councils, city managers, mayors, states, the federal government [are] pushing the police to do something about a particular issue, a lot of other institutions are being pushed. They reinforce each other. So police work with a lot of groups. …The bottom line is, one can't really [give] a lot of credence to the strong statement about the police having a huge *independent* role in reducing crime, particularly homicide.

John Eck, University of Cincinnati

Some have credited more aggressive policing strategies with reductions in crime rates. This policing style—sometimes labeled "zero-tolerance policing" or "broken windows" policing—reflects the hypothesis that strict enforcement of sanctions for even petty crimes, such as graffiti, minor drug dealing, and pick-pocketing, will result in reductions in more serious crimes. Here, too, Eck and Maguire report, it

is difficult to establish such a correlation. The research confirms that crime declined both in cities that implemented this aggressive strategy and in those that did not. And, where there was evidence of a positive impact on the crime rate, it was difficult to determine whether the reduction was the result of the increased number of police officers or the newer "get tough" enforcement policies. Critics, moreover, have warned that irrespective of any correlation between aggressive policing and lower crime rates, the strategy may be generating community hostility toward the police that in the long run will undermine their crime-fighting capacity.

Targeted Police Efforts Can Be Effective

One important message of the Eck and Maguire chapter [in *The Crime Drop in America*] is that sustained, highly focused, intelligence-driven policing missions can indeed drive down many kinds of serious crime, and there is no evidence of major displacement into other neighborhoods. The real problem in American police departments is that too many of them are not capable of sustaining focused, data-driven missions for very long, or across very many parts of the city.

Wesley Skogan, Northwestern University

Community policing takes an approach quite different from that of zero-tolerance policing. According to this policing philosophy, crime reduction efforts should be based on pragmatic partnerships between the police and the community. Despite the popularity of the community policing idea across the country, Eck and Maguire found little evidence to support its effectiveness at reducing crime. This is in part because evaluations to date have focused on the process of transforming policing into a more community-oriented enterprise and not on the impact of this change on crime rates. The relatively few impact studies that have been conducted have focused on the effect of "community policing" on citizen attitudes toward the police rather than on the level of crime. Finally, where the focus of the study is on crime, either it includes all types of crime, making it hard to distinguish effects on different crime categories, or it focuses solely on nonviolent crimes, such as burglaries.

Eck and Maguire point out that the changing nature of American policing has also made it more difficult to evaluate its effectiveness. A new commitment to engage a wider variety of partners in the development of crime reduction strategies makes it harder to attribute any successes to the work of the police. This expansive view of the role of the police was captured at the forum in an observation by Edward A. Flynn, police chief of Arlington, Virginia. In his view, the past two decades have brought about fundamental changes in police attitudes and practices, most notably the development of closer ties between police and their local communities. These ties, he said, "have accelerated social processes that are strengthening neighborhoods' ability to resist crime."

In summary, in spite of significant changes in policing philosophy and practice over the last decade—or perhaps because of the rapidity of those changes—the independent impact of policing practices and policies on the recent crime drop remains uncertain. Across-the-board responses, such as mass hiring and more patrolling, have had little effect. There is increasing evidence that what really work are highly specific strategies targeted at specific problems. For instance, focusing on repeat offenders and repeat victimization and crime hotspots appears to be effective, particularly if police consult with and engage communities and the response is shaped by data describing the crime problem. Clearly, continuing research is needed on the effect of changes in policing on crime rates, but sorting out the multiple effects of differing strategies that are implemented concurrently will be difficult.

II. FUTURE CHALLENGES

Participants in the Crime Decline Forum cautioned that the recent stunning crime reductions should be placed in appropriate context, particularly as policymakers consider the implications of this research for future policy directions. Four "cautions" emerged from the discussion.

The first caution is simply to retain the perspective of history: despite the striking decline in violent crime rates over the past decade, current levels of violent crime are still quite high, comparable to the crime rates of the late 1960s and significantly higher than those of the 1950s. So a longer view reminds us that America still experiences a very high rate of violence.

The second caution is to guard against undue optimism. Crime rates cannot continue to fall indefinitely. Indeed, there is reason to believe that the dramatic declines of the late 1990s are over, and a new chapter of America's crime story is being written as crime rises in some cities, declines in others, and stabilizes in the nation as a whole.

The third caution is to consider that many of the trends that contributed to the crime reduction of the 1990s are now reversing, or have not improved, and may now contribute to crime increases in the future. Forum participants focused attention on four social trends that they considered particularly likely to contribute to a reversal of the downward crime trends. The following sections consider each of these in turn.

- Weakening of the economy
- Return of an unprecedented number of prisoners to communities
- Persistence of isolated and alienated inner-city areas
- Growth in the youth population

A. End of the Economic Boom

The high rate of economic growth that characterized the last few years of the 20th century has now given way to a period of economic decline and uncertainty. This slowdown could have serious implications for the future crime rate. An economic downturn could reduce employment opportunities and wages for unskilled youth.

Although the crack epidemic has receded, many experts warn that another, perhaps equally violent, drug market could emerge to take its place, dominating the street economy of large cities as legitimate employment dries up. And, although the number of guns in circulation has declined with new, tougher laws, it is still relatively easy for anyone who wants a gun to get one.

Low wages, the crack epidemic, easy access to weapons—all played major roles in the rising crime rates of the 1980s. In the view of some participants in the forum, a slowdown in the economy could produce yet another wave of crime in the nation's cities.

Preparing for When the Bubble Bursts

We're very fortunate that [we've just had] a period of strong economic [growth], and I think it does provide us an opportunity to think about what we might do when the bubble bursts, which it will. And what I see… is that many at the community level, at the state level and at the national level—are not thinking very deeply about preparing for an economic downturn. Nor are they thinking about reaping benefits of investments that could be targeted to the communities that are being left out of the economic boom, which [are] primarily still African-American communities and inner cities.

Demetra Nightingale, Urban Institute

B. Unprecedented Number of Returning Prisoners

One inevitable result of the dramatic increase in the prison population is the challenge presented when prisoners complete their sentences and return to the community. Over 95 percent of the nation's state prisoners will eventually be released to return to their communities. In 2001, approximately 635,000 former prisoners—about 1,700 a day—were released from state and federal correctional facilities, four times more than the number of prisoners released in 1970.

At the same time, about the same number of individuals are being sent to prison each year. This process of arrest, removal, incarceration, and reentry is highly concentrated in a small number of communities that may be ill-prepared to deal with the influx of large numbers of former prisoners who need specialized services such as job training, substance abuse treatment, housing assistance, and medical care. These neighborhoods are already experiencing significant disadvantage. They are typically poorer than neighboring areas and face various other challenges, such as loss of labor market share to suburban regions.

Hope for Returning Prisoners and Communities

I think one of the concerns that we will have to address now is the fact that we will have a large number of people who are going to be returning from prison back into communities. Communities across this country are not ready for that. There aren't programs in place, there aren't systems in place, there's not even a service delivery system in place to be able to provide the type of support services needed to really to address that population. And I say this always as just sort of a warning shot, that someone who comes back or any person who is without hope is incredibly dangerous.

Beverly Watts Davis , San Antonio Fights Back

Former prisoners are generally at high risk along several critical dimensions. Most have not completed high school. They have limited employment skills and histories of substance abuse and health problems. For those with substance abuse histories, rates of relapse are high following release from prison. Yet, in most instances, either the services nor systems they need are in place, or there is a considerable mismatch between where they live and where service providers are located. At the same time, there is evidence of cutbacks in prison-based interventions such as drug treatment, education, and vocational programs that aim to reduce recidivism and substance abuse after leaving prison.

The public safety implications of the prisoner reentry phenomenon are significant. Rates of rearrest for new crimes and revocations of parole for violations of conditions of release are high. For several participants at the forum, a comprehensive strategy to reduce crime rates in inner cities must come to grips with the issue of prisoner reentry.

C. Persistent Urban Poverty

Elijah Anderson, a leading ethnographer from the University of Pennsylvania, points out that there are a number of inner-city neighborhoods where poverty, racial tension, alienation, isolation, and crime persist despite gains in other communities. These communities, he argued, are profoundly vulnerable to future epidemics of crime.

These neighborhoods, says Anderson, are supported by three sources of income—low-income jobs, welfare payments, and the underground economy of drugs and street crime. Take either jobs or welfare away, he warns, and people will gravitate to the remaining source of income to keep the community going. This is a particularly critical concern as these communities bear the brunt of the economic downturn.

In addition to having fewer employment opportunities and a heightened sensitivity to economic cycles, these inner-city neighborhoods are also characterized by a profound sense of alienation and isolation from the social and economic mainstream. Residents in these neighborhoods often feel that the police have not protected them from drug dealing and other street crime. They often believe the laws are enforced differently for different people and therefore have very little faith and confidence in the police to be responsive to the needs of their community.

Distressed Inner-City Neighborhoods

But given the abdication of the police and the city, and the isolation in the community, the "decent people" feel they have to mimic the "street people" in order to survive. So the young people have to look that way and act that way, and act tough, and basically code switch, you know, to look "street" when it's the right time, and to look decent when it's the right time. And this is extremely important. Those conditions … are horrible, and it's a story that is off the radar screen for the politicians right now.

Elijah Anderson, University of Pennsylvania

D. Growing Youth Population

Looking ahead, demographics may continue to play a role in crime rates. Young people will represent a growing share of the total population over the next decade. This is important, considering that the rise in homicide rates in the late 1980s and early 1990s was due in large part to trends in gun use, gang involvement, drug selling, and violent crime among young people.

The 20-year decline in the size of the 18- to 24-year-old segment of the population—those most prone to criminal behavior—is now beginning to reverse, and this group will continue to grow as a share of the U.S. population through 2010. Further, the group with the highest rate of violent crime—18- to 24-year-old African-American males—is expected to expand at an even greater rate through at least 2020.

At the same time, people over age 50 are becoming the largest segment of the population as the baby boom generation ages. This population is the least likely to commit violent crimes, therefore growth in this segment of the population may statistically mask any aggregate increases in violence. However, continued awareness of trends in youth violence is important as an indicator of potential future problems, and these trends should be carefully monitored over the coming years.

The challenge, then, according to forum participants, is two-fold. Policymakers should recognize that many of the ingredients are in place for a new rise in youth crime, given the shifting demographic profile

and the faltering economy, and heed the lessons learned from the past 20 years to set in place preventive mechanisms and interventions that will divert trouble before it escalates.

Changes in the Youth Population

The youth population is now beginning to grow (particularly among minorities) as the offspring of the baby boomers approach their high-risk ages. This creates the potential for rising levels of violent crime by youth. At the same time, however, the population of elders is [also increasing]. As a consequence, the aggregate overall violent crime rate may continue its decline as the original baby boomers age further. Yet we should be watchful for renewed problems of youth violence related to the expanding population of young people and begin to prepare now through a variety of prevention strategies.

James Alan Fox, Northeastern University

III. PROMISING STRATEGIES

Recognizing that crime rates cannot continue to decline at the current rate, and that some of the social trends associated with the recent declines have turned in less favorable directions, forum participants were asked to identify new policy strategies that could hold the promise of reducing crime in the future. Four themes emerged, each of which is discussed in turn.

- Capitalizing on community strengths and engaging youth
- Coordinating community efforts to monitor crime trends
- Expanding and improving community corrections
- Promoting innovations in policing

Questions for the Future

Our policy discussions have been dominated by shorthand phrases such as law and order, three strikes, gun control, victims' rights, truth in sentencing, community policing, graduated sanctions, zero tolerance, just to name a few. And behind this ever-changing policy potpourri has been the seemingly inexorable fact that crime has been rising in America. Now, the headlines reflect a different message; crime rates are at the lowest levels in a generation. So, why has this happened? Will this good news continue? And how can we create safer communities?

Jeremy Travis, Urban Institute

A. Capitalizing on the Strengths of Youth and Communities

A number of forum participants argued that any discussion about the factors influencing crime rates in the future must explore the role of cultural change, both in communities and in the attitudes of youth. Mercer Sullivan, a professor at Rutgers University who has studied community influences on crime, sees a renewed capability of communities to withstand crime. He notes that communities credit much of this resilience to successful efforts of faith-based institutions to change the culture of young people and the communities in which they live. He sees substantial evidence of the spread of a "stop-the-violence"

attitude among young people, without a great deal of help from adults, that is transforming the outlook of this generation of youth.

Despite these encouraging signs, according to Jack Calhoun, president of the National Crime Prevention Council, most policies still seek to either control youth or fix youth. Rarely do they say to young people, "We need you. You are our future." Yet, he asserted, youth are anxious to be enlisted. Calhoun cites a Harris Poll showing that 90 percent of young people would be willing to do something about crime and violence if only they knew what to do. According to Calhoun, we should begin looking at youth as resources, not just as perpetrators or victims, and at community resilience, not just inner-city pathology and the culture of collapse.

Several panelists voiced the belief that the most effective means of thwarting the next upsurge in crime rates is to focus attention and resources on programs that have successfully invested in communities and youth, programs that seek to galvanize communities and strengthen their ability to withstand potential epidemics of crime. A number of strategies were mentioned that could strengthen a community's resilience against crime. Code enforcement, for example, might limit the number of liquor stores in a neighborhood and or prohibit their location in areas where young people gather, such as near schools. Programs that work should be supported, according to this view, but they should not be implemented in isolation. Rather, they should be connected to the entities that can help a community flourish, such as the police, schools, faith-based organizations, and various community groups.

David Kennedy, a crime researcher at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government, and Tracey Litthcut, with the Boston Community Centers, presented a different way of involving young people in crime prevention strategies. Reflecting the successful experiences of a broad-based coalition aimed at reducing youth homicide in Boston, they urged policymakers to directly engage those young people most at risk of being victims of violence or committing violence. They described the meetings that were held in Boston with young people who were involved in the cycle of violence and retaliation. At these meetings, a coalition of community and law enforcement agencies conveyed a unified message that the violence must stop and that sanctions will be enforced if it does not. In their experience, this kind of focused deterrence was effective at breaking the cycle of violence within the community.

Cultural Shift Away from Violence

I think there has been a cultural change among young people themselves. I would particularly point to the deaths of the famous rappers Tupac and Biggie and the big impact that it had on communities around this nation. I think there's been a stop-the-violence kind of attitude that has spread among young people without a whole lot of help from adults. And I think that needs more attention.

Mercer Sullivan, Rutgers University

B. Coordinated Efforts: Planning for the Unpredictability of Crime

A number of forum participants highlighted the potential power of new strategies to analyze crime problems, target crime locations, and identify troublesome crime trends. Prominent among these techniques have been crime mapping, gun tracing, hot spot analysis, the Compstat (short for computer comparison statistics) system of the New York City Police Department and sophisticated databases. These strategies, many of which involve new partnerships between police agencies, community groups, and researchers, have served to demystify crime patterns and reduce the uncertainty inherent in a macro

analysis of aggregate crime rates. These collaborations have also yielded a better understanding of crime at the community level, thereby helping communities and police departments target resources more efficiently and serving as an early warning system for problems on the horizon.

Bridging the Gap Between Research and Community Action

When I started going over this gang-mapping and gun-trafficking strategy, it taught me a lot about things. One thing that it did, it gave us a clear focus on where we should be heading, and what we should be doing. It also told us that we can't solve all the problems. We tried to solve every single problem that related to the community, and it's not going to happen that way. We had to figure out what we wanted to do and what was the biggest issue and priority in our community: That was homicides.

Tracey Litthcut, Boston Community Centers

Crime mapping has become a particularly powerful tool in crime prevention. For example, by mapping the point of gun purchase, police can pinpoint when and how guns enter a community and deploy enforcement resources accordingly. Or by mapping the locations, times, perpetrators, and victims of certain types of crime, police can target resources more effectively to prevention and enforcement at the neighborhood level.

According to David Kennedy, this new diagnostic capacity, if coupled with a commitment to early intervention, could help head off the next crime wave. In his view, the recent epidemic in youth violence was in essence an accident, a product of the crack cocaine epidemic that didn't have to happen. Nobody saw it coming. "Crime," says Kennedy, "could be much more like the weather than we've been willing to believe, and small things could start an avalanche that then can play out in very profound ways." The challenge for the criminal justice system, in Kennedy's view, is to monitor indicators of a potential problem and approach these epidemics or contingent processes in ways that stop the "avalanche" early or are strong enough to isolate its effects. Kennedy points to cities like Boston, Richmond, and New York, where neighborhoods have been brought back from rising crime rates by a variety of policies and programs that targeted a very specific aspect of the crime problem, for example, promoting street enforcement of anti-loitering statutes or reducing gun carrying.

The High Yield of Targeted Interventions

[C]rime could be a whole lot more like the weather than we've been willing to believe, and small things could start an avalanche that then could play out in very profound ways. I'm personally convinced that that's true of the youth violence epidemic, that if we hadn't had crack, then we wouldn't be here talking about either the rise or the fall, and that that's an important thing to realize. …[T]here are various kinds of strategic interventions, usually these days bundled in policing under the problem-solving rubric, but also visible in community activities and elsewhere. There might be ways to reach into these epidemics…. in ways that stop the avalanche early or are sufficiently powerful to kind of draw a wall across it. For relatively small investments you can get these big, maybe persistent, maybe not, but certainly worthwhile, gains.

David Kennedy, Harvard University

Peter Reuter, an expert on drug policy and professor in the School of Public Affairs at the University of Maryland, sounded a similar theme when he urged that attention be paid to factors that may signal the next wave of drug use. While it is true that there has been very little initiation into hard drug use over the past 10 years, Reuter observes two phenomena that could presage a change in that trend. The first is what he calls "generational forgetting." Bad consequences of drug use tend to reduce initiation, but when the

memory of that experience fades and a new generation arrives on the scene, initiation starts up again because of the perceived attractiveness of drugs.

The second phenomenon is the simple fact that drug use produces people who suffer from drug addiction, a chronic, relapsing lifetime disorder. In other words, many of the individuals who became addicted to drugs in the late 1960s and early 1970s are still addicted today. If there is another epidemic, as memory fades of the ill effects of drug use, it will be far worse than the first epidemic because it will be layered on those chronic drug addicts for whom we are not able to do much. Just as Kennedy argued for research and analysis to detect early signs of an oncoming epidemic of violence, Reuter argued for policies that reflect a longer view of the nation's experience with illicit drugs and for strategies that respond quickly to early signs of the onset of a new wave of drug use.

C. Revitalizing Community Corrections

Another community-based strategy that could play an important role in future crime rates—particularly given the unprecedented number of returning offenders—is community corrections. But, in the view of many forum participants, the role of community corrections would require systematic realignment to realize this potential. The panel highlighted a variety of fundamental changes in the mission of probation and parole agencies that could have a profound impact on the re-offending rates of individuals under their supervision.

The main theme was reversing decades of neglected community corrections as a component of a comprehensive crime control strategy. As the prison population has grown exponentially, resources for community corrections have not kept pace, meaning that probation and parole caseloads have increased, effectively resulting in nominal supervision for large numbers of offenders. Accordingly, one policy objective should be to lower parole and probation caseloads, but the panelists agreed that merely providing more resources for community corrections would be insufficient. They argued for new strategies, focusing on crime reduction objectives, such as frequent home visits for selected high-risk probationers, meetings of law enforcement agencies and community groups with gang members similar to those conducted in Boston, and focused neighborhood supervision strategies for returning prisoners designed to reduce recidivism.

Mark Kleiman, a professor at the University of California in Los Angeles and an expert on drug abuse and crime control, argued for the development of a set of principles to guide the reinvention of community corrections, such as setting only a small number of rules for probationers and parolees that are known to be linked to crime and other behaviors, and then linking these rules to feasible, enforceable, and predictable sanctions. All of these strategies, and others, could constitute important investments that could produce lower crime rates. Designing and implementing them would require a new conceptualization of community corrections as a crime reduction agency in the justice system. Moving beyond these new goals for community corrections, other panelists suggested raising expectations within the community and with individual ex-offenders about their rehabilitation goals. In this view, the objective should be not just to make returning prisoners crime- and/or drug-free, but also to help them become contributing members of the community.

Community Corrections and Crime Control

If we could have a meeting 10 years from now discussing why crime has continued to go down, we'd better have a chapter on community corrections, because if we don't learn how to punish people and control their behavior while we're not paying their room and board bill, if we don't learn to deal with the five million people who are now under nominal supervision not in prison or jail, then crime is not going to continue to go down.

Mark Kleiman, University of California-Los Angeles

D. Improving Policing

During the past two decades, American policing has introduced an enormous number of interventions involving collaborations with community organizations and other institutions of local government. As a result, the relationships between schools, faith institutions, and other community entities and the police have become closer. Previously hostile attitudes toward one another are changing in profound ways. In a 1998 study, the Police Foundation found, for instance, that 96 percent of the officers surveyed believed that a close police-community relationship is "the most effective way to deal with crime," a relatively new belief.

The Minefield of Police Accountability

There's a great failure in policing to deal with accountability. We allow the guy on the bottom, that cop out on the street, to take all the heat, and when he goes over the line, it's his problem. What about the supervision? What about the management? What about the resources? What about the department? What about the direction and control provided by the institution itself at every hierarchical rank in the chain? When are we going to apply the law in ways that it's going to affect the big guys as well as the little guys? If we do that, we deal with this issue of culture, we deal with the issue of race, we deal with the issue of being accused unjustly, and we need the chutzpah, you know, to face up to these issues as researchers and take it to the next level so that we can truly leverage the gains that had been made and improve the profession.

Hubert Williams, Police Foundation

At the same time, new issues are topping the political agenda. Among the most pressing are promoting greater accountability among police for their actions, integrating technological advances into policing, and recruiting and training the next generation of police. According to a number of forum participants, these organizational issues in American policing should be addressed at the same time police agencies are facing continuing demands to reduce crime.

Accountability

Hubert Williams, president of the Police Foundation, noted a certain irony in the widespread belief that the police, particularly police executives, can be held accountable for bringing crime rates down. In his view, this embrace of responsibility for these results stands in contrast to the other issues such as excessive use of force, or racial profiling, where top police officials often fail to take responsibility for supervising, managing, and controlling their departments. Notwithstanding the reductions in crime, the issues of excessive force and racial profiling continue to be extremely divisive between police, who feel unjustly accused, and the communities they serve, particularly minority communities.

Technology

A similar paradox is emerging in the police's increasing reliance on new technologies, according to several participants. Over the past several years, the business of policing has become increasingly technologically driven. New tools are now in the hands of most police departments, ranging from crime mapping software to new forensic techniques. However, the capacity to use them has not kept pace with their availability. In addition, there appears to be a widening gap between the growing culture of knowledge-driven policing, with the assistance of new technologies and better management and organizational skills, and the culture of "street policing" where personal relationships and creative problem solving matter more. To respond to rapidly emerging crime trends, in this view, the policing profession should find ways to bridge the gap between the two cultures, to bring technology to everyday policing and to infuse street policing with the knowledge that comes from sophisticated analysis and new business strategies.

Recruiting and Training

Finally, a number of forum participants expressed concern over the future of police professionals, particularly police managers. The accountability issue raises the question of how and whom to recruit for the next group of police leaders. Until recently, the strong national economy has meant that police departments have had difficulty recruiting new police officers. Places like New York City lowered education requirements in order to maintain the number of uniformed officers on the street. Middle managers and senior police executives have left the policing profession to seek employment opportunities in other sectors of the economy. To the extent that crime-fighting strategies of the future depend on well-educated, highly motivated, flexible policing organizations led by innovative and resourceful executives, these trends do not bode well. Accordingly, many panelists urged policymakers to focus on new strategies to recruit and train the police of the future.

Closing Thoughts

A half-day symposium on changing crime rates and future directions for crime policy cannot do justice to every possible dimension of these complex issues. The Urban Institute's forum discussion did not touch upon several other hypotheses offered to explain, even partially, the drop in crime rates, such as the contributions of faith institutions, the development of new partnerships between federal and local law enforcement, and the engagement of the public health sector in crime prevention activities. The forum also did not address one of the more controversial research findings in this area, the suggestion that increased access to legal abortion services contributed to falling crime rates. Finally, the discussion did not consider the social and fiscal costs of our current criminal justice policies, particularly the consequences of the "war on drugs" and the greatly expanded use of prisons.

Yet, in several respects, the forum provided a valuable focus to the national debate over the recent drop in crime in America. First, the forum discussion reminded us that we should not think of crime as a unitary phenomenon; to understand recent trends we must understand the distinct story of the rise and fall of youth violence. This was a pronounced national trend that saw very different patterns in violence for different ages of young people. To tell the story of youth violence—its rise and fall from the mid-1980s to the end of the 1990s—we must tell the story of the onset of crack cocaine in the nation's inner cities, the involvement of young people in those new illegal markets, and the use of guns by young people. We may never fully understand the chemistry of this combustible mix. Both the sharp rise in youth violence that started in the mid-1980s and the sharp decline that started in the early 1990s are best understood as "tipping points," moments in time when the behavior of large segments of our society experience dramatic shifts. Moments such as these are defined by a combination of dynamics. Some are internal—many young people clearly decided to alter their behavior at about the same time, toward more violence in the mid-1980s and away from violence in the early 1990s. Some are external—a combination of increased law enforcement pressure, supports from communities and service agencies. Disentangling the contributions of these complex interactions would test the most sophisticated social science inquiry.

The forum also pointed to a second trend in rates of violence in America: the steady decline in adult violence, particularly violence between intimate partners. Compared to our understanding of the rise and fall of youth violence, our understanding of these trends is much less robust. Why are men the beneficiaries of these downward trends? How do changes in marriage patterns influence changes in partner violence? Does the increased availability of shelters for battered women play an important role in explaining these developments? A sustained research agenda on adult violence might point the way toward new policy initiatives.

The forum also highlighted a third important trend, the steady decline in property crime rates. This important piece of good news has been virtually missing from the national debate on crime policy. On a per capita basis, the level of property crime is now half what it was a generation ago. America now has property crime rates lower than those found in Western Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. Yet even the research community has been drawn more to the story of violent crime rates than the story of property crime rates. There has been much less scientific inquiry on the latter topic. Another symposium, perhaps with international comparisons, could provide valuable insights into the phenomenon of declining property crime rates.

The forum offered answers—but not a single answer—to the question of why crime rates have come down. Building on the scholarship reflected in *The Crime Drop in America*, the forum identified a number of contributing factors. The strong economy made a difference. The greatly expanded use of

prisons made a difference, but at substantial costs and with diminishing returns. Gun regulations made a modest difference. The demographic story is complicated: Increases in the younger population, the age group most involved in crime, clearly added to the crime rate, but this same demographic reality was used by some commentators to predict a generation of violent youth, predictions that proved erroneous. Broad changes in policing have not been found to reduce crime, but targeted policing strategies, and collaborations with other agencies on crime reduction interventions, did reduce crime. The sea change in attitudes, behaviors, and interventions associated with the waxing and waning of the crack epidemic made a big difference.

What lessons have been learned from this extraordinary period that might provide guidance for future policy direction? Arguably, the themes that emerged from the forum's discussion—capitalizing on the strength of communities and youth; developing an analytical capacity to respond to new crime trends; revitalizing community corrections; and improving the police—constitute a new policy direction for the country. The panelists at the Crime Decline Forum were calling for a renewed investment in the two agencies that have the most direct involvement with offenders and communities—the police and community corrections. In the latter case, they urged a fundamental rethinking of the mission of probation and parole agencies, with more attention to bottom-line results, particularly in crime reduction, and more attention to offenders who pose the greatest risk to public safety. In the former case, the panelists argued for greater investment in the infrastructure (human and technological) and the managerial accountability of police agencies. Noting that much has been learned over the past two decades about the effectiveness of various crime reduction strategies, and the need for more effective partnerships with the community, the panelists sensed that the next great gains in crime reductions and public confidence could come only with that sustained investment.

At the community level, the panelists clearly saw a need to focus on the role of community involvement and young people in shaping the crime strategies of the future. If, as some argued, the analysis of the great crime drop of the 1990s overlooked the role played by resilient communities and youth who avoided violence, then crime policies of the future should explicitly build on those strengths, even engaging directly the young people involved in the violence. Related to this theme is the call for better analysis of crime trends, early identification of breaking epidemics, and swift responses to places and times where crime is on the rise. If crime control is undertaken at the neighborhood level, and with the realization that the community is an important ingredient in an effective response, then the resilience of neighborhood groups and young people can be an important asset.

Interestingly, although these themes were offered at a time when crime rates were beginning to level off and the economy was beginning to weaken, they draw upon lessons learned from an era when crime had dropped dramatically. One might argue that the wisdom gleaned from an understanding of this unusual period can shed no light on a future that will probably see crime rates level off, if not rise again. Yet perhaps these themes reflect a core lesson learned from this remarkable era, a lesson that can always be applied when developing crime control policies. That lesson can be summarized this way: although broad national crime trends may be significantly affected by changes in the economy, gun availability, the nation’s demographic profile, or our imprisonment rates, crime rates at the community level can still be affected by strategic and targeted interventions that focus on the places, people, and relationships that pose the greatest risks. To be effective, these interventions need a strong foundation of good research and data, an intelligent implementation by resourceful criminal justice agencies, and a sustained collaboration with the innate capacities of the communities most affected.

Appendix

A. Forum Participants

Elijah Anderson, University of Pennsylvania

Elijah Anderson is the Charles and William L. Day Professor of the Social Sciences at the University of Pennsylvania. An expert on the sociology of black America, he is the author of the widely regarded sociological work *A Place on the Corner: A Study of Black Street Corner Men* (1978) and numerous articles on the black experience, including "Of Old Heads and Young Boys: Notes on the Urban Black Experience" (1986), commissioned by the National Research Council's committee on the Status of Black Americans; "Sex Codes and Family Life among Inner-City Youth" (1989); and "The Code of the Street," which was the cover story in the May 1994 issue of The Atlantic Monthly. His expanded version of the Atlantic piece, *The Code of the Street: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City*, was published in 1999. He has also won the Lindback Award for Distinguished Teaching at the University of Pennsylvania and was named the Robin M. Williams, Jr., Distinguished Lecturer for 1999-2000 by the Eastern Sociological Society. Dr. Anderson is director of the Philadelphia Ethnographic Project. Other topics of his focus are the social psychology of organizations, field methods of social research, social interaction, and social organization. Dr. Anderson has a Ph.D. from Northwestern University where he was a Ford Foundation Fellow.

Alfred Blumstein, Carnegie Mellon University

Alfred Blumstein is the J. Erik Jonsson Professor of Urban Systems and Operations Research, and former dean, at the H. John Heinz III School of Public Policy and Management of Carnegie Mellon University. He is also director of the National Consortium on Violence Research. He has extensive experience in both research and policy with the criminal justice system since serving the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice in 1966-67 as director of its Task Force on Science and Technology. Dr. Blumstein was a member of the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Research on Law Enforcement and the Administration of Justice. He is a member of the Academy's Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. He is a member of the National Academy of Engineering and a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Society of Criminology. Dr. Blumstein's research has covered many aspects of criminal justice phenomena and policy, including crime measurement, criminal careers, sentencing, deterrence and incapacitation, prison populations, demographic trends, juvenile violence, and drug enforcement policy. Dr. Blumstein has a Ph.D. from Cornell University.

Martha Burt, Urban Institute

Martha Burt is principal research associate with the Labor and Social Policy Center at the Urban Institute. She is an experienced researcher in issues relating to homelessness and emergency assistance, hunger, teen pregnancy and parenting, social services policy research, and evaluation. She is currently finishing a book on the policy implications of findings from the National Survey of Homeless Assistance Providers and Clients, having directed the research and written the recent federal report based on this survey ("Homelessness: Programs and the People They Serve," 1999). She has recently directed work on the impact of federal and state policy changes on the well-being of children and youth, on hunger among the elderly, on services integration projects for at-risk youth, and on service issues related to domestic violence. Dr. Burt's research has also examined coordinated community response to domestic violence and the recognition of domestic violence as an issue for child protective services; what welfare programs are doing to recognize and accommodate domestic violence as a barrier to work; and an evaluation of the Violence Against Women Act. Dr. Burt has a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Jack Calhoun, National Crime Prevention Council

Jack Calhoun is president and CEO of the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC), a nonprofit organization that provides comprehensive assistance in community crime prevention to national, state, and local groups. NCPC's activities include public service advertising, training and technical assistance, work with the 400-member Crime Prevention Coalition of America, substance abuse prevention, municipal strategies, youth initiatives, publications, policy development, and fund-raising. Mr. Calhoun helped design Community Responses to Drug Abuse, a 10-site initiative aimed at reducing community disorganization, fear, and crime, and rebuilding civic cohesion, and T-CAP, Texas City Action Plan, an unprecedented seven-city initiative that enlisted the entire community to set concrete short- and long-term goals. Author of numerous publications, Mr. Calhoun has keynoted many national and international conferences and testified before Congress, state legislatures, and city councils. He has taught and lectured at major academic institutions and is consulted on a wide range of issues including crime prevention, community mobilization, children, youth and families, employment programs, and criminal justice issues. A graduate of Brown University, Mr. Calhoun also holds a master's degree in theology from the Episcopal Divinity School and a master's degree with honors from Harvard University (Littauer Fellow) in Public Administration.

Beverly Watts Davis, San Antonio Fighting Back

Beverly Watts Davis is vice president of the United Way of San Antonio and executive director of San Antonio Fighting Back. She also serves as the practitioner consultant for the National Center for the Advancement of Prevention, an initiative of the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. She has worked in the substance abuse prevention field for 13 years. She serves as Chair of the Multi-Cultural Affairs Committee of the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse and was the founding Chair of the National Organization of Weed and Seed Communities. She is an Advisory Board member of the National Funding Collaborative on Violence Prevention and the National Center for State Courts, and has been selected to the U.S. Department of Defense Joint Civilian Commission. She serves on the Board of Directors of Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, National Association of Drug Court Professionals, Youth Crime Watch of America, the National Crime Prevention Council, and Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation. Ms. Davis was selected by the attorney general of the United States as 1998 Volunteer of the Year and was recently inducted into the San Antonio Women's Hall of Fame.

John E. Eck, University of Cincinnati

John Eck is associate professor in the Division of Criminal Justice at the university of Cincinnati. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Maryland and his master's degree in public policy from the University of Michigan. Dr. Eck was the research director at the Police Executive Research Forum and the evaluation coordinator for the Washington/Baltimore High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area. He is the author of numerous articles, chapters, and monographs on policing, drug markets, and crime patterns. With David Weisburd, he co-edited *Crime and Place* (1995).

Edward A. Flynn, Arlington County Police

Arlington County Police Chief Edward A. Flynn entered the police profession in 1971. He ascended the ranks of the Jersey City Police Department, being promoted successively from patrol officer to sergeant, then lieutenant—where he commanded the homicide squad—to captain and to inspector. He was appointed chief of police in Braintree, Massachusetts in 1988 and was selected as a reform chief in the City of Chelsea, Massachusetts in 1993, where he helped lead the city out of state-imposed receivership. He was sworn in as Arlington's fifth police chief on November 10, 1997. Chief Flynn's professional associations include membership on the National Community Oriented Policing Resource Board, peer review consultant at the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), consultant and instructor for the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and membership in the Police Executive Research Forum. Chief Flynn is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, and was an NIJ Pickett Fellow in the John F. Kennedy School of Government's Program for Senior Government Executives. He holds a master of arts degree in criminal justice from John Jay College of Criminal Justice of New York and a bachelor of arts degree from La Salle University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

James Alan Fox, Northeastern University

James Alan Fox is the Lipman Family Professor of Criminal Justice and a former dean at Northeastern University in Boston. He is the founding editor of the *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* and has published 14 books, the most recent of which is *The Will to Kill: Making Sense of Senseless Murder* (2000). He has also published dozens of journal and magazine articles and newspaper columns, primarily in the areas of multiple murder, juvenile crime, school violence, workplace violence, and capital punishment. As an authority on homicide, Dr. Fox appears regularly on national television and radio programs and is frequently interviewed by the press. He has made over 100 keynote or campus-wide addresses around the country and 10 appearances before the United States Congress, has attended White House meetings on youth violence with the president and vice president, and has given briefings on violence trends to the attorney general and to Princess Anne of Great Britain. Dr. Fox is currently a visiting fellow with the Bureau of Justice Statistics of the U.S. Department of Justice. He has a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania.

Jeffrey Grogger, University of California-Los Angeles

Jeffrey Grogger is an economist and professor of public policy at UCLA. He is a fellow of the National Bureau of Economic Research (Cambridge, MA), the Center for Economic Policy Research (London), and the Institute for the Study of Labor (Bonn). He is the author of numerous scholarly articles on the link between crime and the labor market, including, "The Effect of Arrests on the Employment and Earnings of Young Men" (1995, *Quarterly Journal of Economics*), "Market Wages and Youth Crime" (1998, *Journal of Labor Economics*), and "The Emergence of Crack Cocaine and the Rise of Urban Crime Rates" (2000, *Review of Economics and Statistics*). He is co-editor of the *Journal of Human Resources* and sits on the editorial boards of the *Journal of Population Economics* and *Economic Inquiry*. Dr. Grogger has a Ph.D. from the University of California at San Diego.

Bruce Johnson, National Development and Research Institutes, Inc.

Bruce Johnson received his Ph.D. in sociology from Columbia University. Since 1992, he has directed the Institute for Special Populations Research at National Development and Research Institutes, Inc.. He has published over 100 articles and book chapters and has authored or co-authored five books, including *Marihuana Users and Drug Subcultures* (1973), *Taking Care of Business: The Economics of Crime by Heroin Abusers* (1985), and *Kids, Drugs and Crime* (1988). Dr. Johnson was honored in 1999 with the Senior Scholar Award by the Drinking and Drugs Division of the Society for the Study of Social Problems and was chair of that division from 1994 to 1996. He was a Woodrow Wilson Fellow at Columbia University in 1965-66. During his 33-year career in drug-abuse research, he has been principal investigator or co-investigator on 25 research projects funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, National Institute of Justice, and other agencies. His current research includes ethnographic analysis of crack distribution, analysis of drug use among arrestees, estimation of the number of hard drug users and distributors, impacts of policing on criminal behaviors, ethnography of heroin users and HIV in Brooklyn and Sydney, and analysis of new drug-detection technologies.

David Kennedy, Harvard University

David Kennedy, adjunct lecturer in public policy, is a senior researcher at the program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government. His work focuses on strategies for assisting troubled communities. He is the co-author of "Beyond 911: A New Era for Policing" and numerous articles on police management, illicit drug markets, and gun control. His research focuses on the problem of youth gun violence and strategies for preventing it; the nature of the illicit markets supplying guns to youths; and the possibilities for city-specific strategies to disrupt youth gun markets and reduce youth fear. He directed a project in Boston, funded by the National Institute of Justice, designed to give the first detailed account of the youth gun problem in any American city and implement and evaluate a citywide intervention to reduce youth violence. Its chief intervention, Operation Ceasefire, was implemented in mid-1996. Operation Ceasefire was one of the 10 programs recognized nationally by a 1997 Ford Foundation Innovations in Government Award. It also informed the 27-city Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative launched by the Clinton Administration in July 1996.

Mark Kleiman, University of California-Los Angeles

Mark Kleiman is professor of policy studies and director of the Drug Policy Analysis Program at the UCLA School of Public Policy and Social Research. He teaches methods of policy analysis, political philosophy, and drug abuse and crime control policy. He is also the Chairman of BOTEC Analysis Corporation, a Cambridge, Massachusetts, firm that conducts policy analysis and contract research on illicit drugs, crime, and health care. Mr. Kleiman's primary research interests are drug abuse and crime control, with special attention to illicit markets and the design of deterrent regimes. He is the author of *Against Excess: Drug Policy for Results* and of *Marijuana: Costs of Abuse, Costs of Control*. He is currently at work on a book on the behavioral economics of crime control. He chairs the drug policy committee of the Federation of American Scientists and edits its *Drug Policy Analysis Bulletin*. Mr. Kleiman holds a B.A. in political science, philosophy, and economics from Haverford College and a master's degree and Ph.D. in public policy from Harvard.

Tracy Litthcut, Boston Community Centers

Tracy Litthcut is manager of the Youth Services Division at Boston Community Centers (BCC), a City of Boston department. Previously, he was program manager for BCC's Streetworker Program, a nationally recognized violence prevention program. The Youth Services Division consists of the Streetworker Program, the Boston Youth Connection Program, and the Girls Centers Program. The BCC oversees 41 facilities, which offer a variety of programs for people of all ages. The Youth Services Division is responsible for outreach to high-risk youth and programs for teen development. Mr. Litthcut works closely with the Boston schools, law enforcement, and prosecution. As a member of Boston's violence reduction collaborative, Mr. Litthcut was part of the group that received an Innovations in American Government award from the Ford Foundation and Kennedy School of Government. He serves on boards at several agencies including Citizens for Juvenile Justice, the Community Crisis Response Team, and Youth Build Boston. He has a bachelor's degree in business management from Morgan State University and is currently a candidate for a master's degree in social work at Boston University.

Demetra Nightingale, Urban Institute

Demetra Nightingale is a principal research associate and director of the Welfare and Training Research Program in the Labor and Social Policy Center at the Urban Institute. For over 20 years she has conducted research at the Urban Institute on various issues related to employment, welfare, poverty, and social policy. Her research includes a number of studies on employment and training/workforce development policy, evaluations of federal and state welfare programs and welfare reform initiatives, research on the labor market and the workplace, and analysis of federal anti-poverty policies and budgets. Dr. Nightingale is the author of dozens of articles and reports on employment, workforce development, welfare, and social policy and serves on numerous advisory groups, boards, and task forces at the national, state, and local levels. She co-edited the 1996 book, *The Work Alternative: Welfare Reform and the Realities of the Job Market,* with Robert Haveman; is co-author with Eugene Steuerle, Edward Gramlich, and Hugh Heclo of the 1998 book, *The Government We Deserve: Responsive Democracy and Changing Expectations;* and co-editor with Kelleen Kaye of the 2000 book, *The Low-Wage Labor Market: Challenges and Opportunities for Economic Self-Sufficiency*. Dr. Nightingale has a Ph.D. in public policy from George Washington University.

Charles Ramsey, Metropolitan Police Department, Washington, DC

Charles Ramsey was appointed chief of the Metropolitan Police Department in 1998. A nationally recognized innovator, educator, and practitioner of community policing, Chief Ramsey has refocused the MPDC on crime fighting and crime prevention through a more accountable organizational structure, new equipment and technology, and an enhanced strategy of community policing. A native of Chicago, Chief Ramsey served in the Chicago Police Department for nearly three decades in a variety of assignments. He began his career in 1968, at the age of 18, as a Chicago Police cadet. He became a police officer in February 1971 and was promoted through the ranks, eventually serving as commander of patrol, detectives, and narcotics units. Chief Ramsey was instrumental in designing and implementing the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS), the city's nationally acclaimed model of community policing. He designed and implemented the CAPS operational model and helped to develop new training curricula and communications efforts to support implementation. Chief Ramsey holds both bachelor's and master's degrees in criminal justice from Lewis University in Romeoville, Illinois.

Peter Reuter, University of Maryland

Peter Reuter is a professor in the School of Public Affairs and in the Department of Criminology at the University of Maryland. He is currently also senior fellow at RAND and visiting scholar at the Urban Institute. In July 1999 he became editor of the *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*. From 1981 to 1993 he was a senior economist in the Washington office of the RAND Corporation. He founded and directed RAND's Drug Policy Research Center from 1989 to 1993. His early research focused on the organization of illegal markets and resulted in the publication of *Disorganized Crime: The Economics of the Visible Hand* (MIT Press, 1983), which won the Leslie Wilkins award as most outstanding book of the year in criminology and criminal justice. Since 1985 most of his research has dealt with alternative approaches to controlling drug problems, both in the United States and Western Europe. He has completed a book (with Robert MacCoun) entitled *Drug War Heresies: Learning from Other Places, Times and Vices* (Cambridge University Press). He testifies frequently before Congress and has addressed senior policy audiences in many countries, including Australia, Chile, Colombia, and Great Britain. Dr. Reuter received his Ph.D. in economics from Yale University.

Richard Rosenfeld, University of Missouri-St. Louis

Richard Rosenfeld is professor of criminology at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. Dr. Rosenfeld is a member of the steering committee of the National Consortium on Violence Research and associate editor of the journal *Criminology*. His research focuses on the social sources of criminal violence. He is co-author with Steven Messner of *Crime and the American Dream* (1997, 2nd ed.), and his research articles have appeared in *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, Social Forces, Criminology, Journal of Quantitative Criminology, Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency,* and other leading journals. He received his Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Oregon.

Lawrence W. Sherman, University of Pennsylvania

Lawrence Sherman is the director of the Fels Center of Government and Albert M. Greenfield Professor of Human Relations at the University of Pennsylvania. Since beginning his career as an Alfred P. Sloan Urban Fellow in the New York City Police Department in 1971, he has collaborated with over 30 police agencies around the world, evaluating policies designed to prevent crime, reduce domestic violence, get illegal guns off the streets, prevent police corruption, close down crack houses, and help victims of crime. The author or co-author of four books and hundreds of articles, he has received awards for distinguished scholarship from the American Society of Criminology, the American Sociological Association, and the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. His research has been cited by the U.S. Supreme Court and by the Blair Government in Great Britain as the basis for its $400 million crime prevention program. He has frequently testified before the U.S. Congress and has advised national governments in 10 other countries. A magna cum laude graduate of Denison University, Dr. Sherman holds an M.A. from the University of Chicago, the Diploma in Criminology from Cambridge University, and a Ph.D. in sociology from Yale University.

Wesley Skogan, Northwestern University

Wesley Skogan is a professor of political science and faculty fellow with the Institute for Policy Research (IPR) at Northwestern University. An expert on crime and policing, he has directed most of IPR's major crime studies over the past two decades. These include research on fear of crime, citizen participation in community crime prevention, and victim responses to crime. For the past eight years, he has directed a four-university evaluation of Chicago's experimental citywide community policing initiative. Dr. Skogan has written numerous journal articles, monographs, and chapters, as well as five books on crime-related subjects. His most recent books are *On the Beat: Police and Community Problem Solving* (Boulder, CO: Westview Publishing Co., 1999, with Susan M. Hartnett, Jill DuBois, Jennifer T. Comey, Marianne Kaiser and Justine H. Lovig, and *Community Policing, Chicago Style*, co-authored with Susan Hartnett (Oxford University Press, 1997). He is a Fellow of the American Society of Criminology. In 1998, Dr. Skogan was awarded a Senior Fellowship from the Center for Crime, Communities and Culture of the Open Societies Institute to complete *On the Beat*, which looked at the organizational transformation of the Chicago Police Department as it moved toward a community policing model. He has a Ph.D. in political science from Northwestern University.

William Spelman, University of Texas-Austin

William Spelman is associate professor at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin, where he teaches courses on applied mathematics and statistics, public management, and local government policy. He is author of *Criminal Incapacitation* (1994), *Repeat Offender Programs for Law Enforcement* (1990), and (with John E. Eck) *Problem Solving* (1987). He holds a Ph.D. in public policy from Harvard University. Between 1997 and 2000, Dr. Spelman served as a city council member in Austin, Texas.

Mercer Sullivan, Rutgers University

Mercer Sullivan is an associate professor with the School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University. His research interests include relationships between crime and employment, neighborhood and community influences on crime, child support enforcement, adolescent violence, qualitative research methods, evaluation of community-oriented interventions, and crime and the life course. Dr. Sullivan received his B.A. in English and philosophy from Yale University and his M.Phil and Ph.D. in anthropology from Columbia University.

Jeremy Travis, Urban Institute

Jeremy Travis is a senior fellow at the Urban Institute. In affiliation with the Institute's Justice Policy Center, Mr. Travis is developing research and policy agendas on crime in community context, new concepts of the agencies of justice, sentencing and prisoner reentry, and international crime. Before joining the Urban Institute, Mr. Travis was the director of the National Institute of Justice, the research arm of the United States Department of Justice. He served in this position from 1994 to 2000. Mr. Travis has taught courses on criminal justice, public policy, history, and law at Yale University, New York University Wagner Graduate School of Public Service, and New York Law School. He has written and published extensively on constitutional law, criminal law, and criminal justice policy. Mr. Travis has an M.P.A. from the New York University Wagner Graduate School of Public Service and a J.D. from the New York University School of Law.

Reginald Wilkinson, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections

Reginald Wilkinson was appointed as director of the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (DRC) in February 1991 and was recently reappointed by Governor Bob Taft in January 1999. He has been employed by the DRC since September 1973 and has served in a variety of positions including superintendent of the Corrections Training Academy, warden of the Dayton Correctional Institution, and deputy director of prisons–south region. The DRC is acknowledged internationally for its many innovative correctional programs and services in categories such as substance abuse, victim services, correctional education, security management, restorative justice, offender job readiness, and many more. DRC is recognized as being one of only two correctional agencies in the nation that is fully accredited by the American Correctional Association. Currently, Wilkinson is vice chair for North America of the International Corrections and Prisons Association and is director of the ICPA Centre for Exchanging Correctional Best Practices. Director Wilkinson is vice president of the Association of State Correctional Administrators. He has written numerous articles and book chapters on a variety of correctional topics. Director Wilkinson has a B.A. in political science and a M.A. in higher education administration, both from The Ohio State University. He was also awarded a doctor of education degree (Ed.D.) from the University of Cincinnati.

Hubert Williams, Police Foundation

Hubert Williams is the president of the Police Foundation, a private, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting innovation and improvement in policing through its research, technical assistance/technology/training, and communications programs. As its president, Dr. Williams directs all foundation operations and is a voting member of the board of directors. He has been a leading advocate for professional standards and uniform practices in policing and has presided over the design and implementation of scientific field experiments that are on the leading edge of the development of modern police policy and procedure. A 30-year veteran of policing, Williams was one of the youngest chief executive officers of a major police department in the United States. Dr. Williams sits on the advisory boards of a wide range of organizations. He earned a bachelor of science degree from John Jay College of Criminal Justice and a J.D. from Rutgers University School of Law. He was a research fellow at Harvard Law School's Center for Criminal Justice and is a graduate of the FBI National Academy.

Garen Wintemute, University of California-Davis

Garen Wintemute is director of the Violence Prevention Research Program at the University of California, Davis. He attended medical school and completed his residency at U.C. Davis, and received his MPH degree from The Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health. He practices and teaches emergency medicine at U.C. Davis Medical Center, Sacramento (a Level 1 regional trauma center), and is professor of epidemiology and preventive medicine at the U.C. Davis School of Medicine. His research focuses on the nature and prevention of violence and on the development of effective violence-prevention measures. His most recent studies, published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association,* the *New England Journal of Medicine,* and the *American Journal of Public Health*, concern the effect of completed or denied handgun purchases on the risk of subsequent violence by prospective buyers. He is the author of *Ring of Fire* (1994), a study of the handgun makers of Southern California. Dr. Wintemute has testified on numerous occasions before committees of Congress and state and local legislatures as an expert on firearm violence and its prevention. In 1997 he was named a Hero of Medicine by *Time* magazine. He has served as a consultant for the National Institute of Justice; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (as a member of the Youth Crime Gun Interdiction Initiative analysis group); World Health Organization; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; and American Red Cross.

B. Data for Figures

Figure 1. Robbery, Aggravated Assault and Homicide Rates, 1960–2000, Number and Rate per 100,000 Population (UCR)

Year	Population	Robbery		Aggravated Assault		Homicide		
		Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Rate *25
1960	179,323,175	107,840	60.1	154,320	86.1	9,110	5.1	127.0
1961	182,992,000	106,670	58.3	156,760	85.7	8,740	4.8	119.4
1962	185,771,000	110,860	59.7	164,570	88.6	8,530	4.6	114.8
1963	188,483,000	116,470	61.8	174,210	92.4	8,640	4.6	114.6
1964	191,141,000	130,390	68.2	203,050	106.2	9,360	4.9	122.4
1965	193,526,000	138,690	71.7	215,330	111.3	9,960	5.1	128.7
1966	195,576,000	157,990	80.8	235,330	120.3	11,040	5.6	141.1
1967	197,457,000	202,910	102.8	257,160	130.2	12,240	6.2	155.0
1968	199,399,000	262,840	131.8	286,700	143.8	13,800	6.9	173.0
1969	201,385,000	298,850	148.4	311,090	154.5	14,760	7.3	183.2
1970	203,235,298	349,860	172.1	334,970	164.8	16,000	7.9	196.8
1971	206,212,000	387,700	188.0	368,760	178.8	17,780	8.6	215.6
1972	208,230,000	376,290	180.7	393,090	188.8	18,670	9.0	224.2
1973	209,851,000	384,220	183.1	420,650	200.5	19,640	9.4	234.0
1974	211,392,000	442,400	209.3	456,210	215.8	20,710	9.8	244.9
1975	213,124,000	470,500	220.8	492,620	231.1	20,510	9.6	240.6
1976	214,659,000	427,810	199.3	500,530	233.2	18,780	8.7	218.7
1977	216,332,000	412,610	190.7	534,350	247.0	19,120	8.8	221.0
1978	218,059,000	426,930	195.8	571,460	262.1	19,560	9.0	224.3
1979	220,099,000	480,700	218.4	629,480	286.0	21,460	9.8	243.8
1980	225,349,264	565,840	251.1	672,650	298.5	23,040	10.2	255.6
1981	229,146,000	592,910	258.7	663,900	289.7	22,520	9.8	245.7
1982	231,534,000	553,130	238.9	669,480	289.1	21,010	9.1	226.9
1983	233,981,000	506,570	216.5	653,290	279.2	19,310	8.3	206.3
1984	236,158,000	485,010	205.4	685,350	290.2	18,690	7.9	197.9
1985	238,740,000	497,870	208.5	723,250	302.9	18,980	8.0	198.8
1986	241,077,000	542,780	225.1	834,320	346.1	20,610	8.5	213.7
1987	243,400,000	517,700	212.7	855,090	351.3	20,100	8.3	206.5
1988	245,807,000	542,970	220.9	910,090	370.2	20,680	8.4	210.3
1989	248,239,000	578,330	233.0	951,710	383.4	21,500	8.7	216.5
1990	248,709,873	639,270	257.0	1,054,860	424.1	23,440	9.4	235.6
1991	252,177,000	687,730	272.7	1,092,740	433.3	24,700	9.8	244.9
1992	255,082,000	672,480	263.6	1,126,970	441.8	23,760	9.3	232.9
1993	257,908,000	659,870	255.9	1,135,610	440.3	24,530	9.5	237.8
1994	260,341,000	618,950	237.7	1,113,180	427.6	23,330	9.0	224.0
1995	262,755,000	580,510	220.9	1,099,210	418.3	21,610	8.2	205.6
1996	265,284,000	535,590	201.9	1,037,050	390.9	19,650	7.4	185.2
1997	267,637,000	497,950	186.1	1,022,490	382.0	18,210	6.8	170.1
1998	270,296,000	446,630	165.2	974,400	360.5	16,910	6.3	156.4
1999	272,691,000	409,670	150.2	916,380	336.1	15,530	5.7	142.4
2000	276,059,000	407,842	147.7	910,744	329.9	15,517	5.6	140.5

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports

Figures 2 and 3. Total Violent Crime, Aggravated Assault, Robbery and Rape, 1973-2000, Rate per 1,000 Persons Age 12 and Over (NCVS)

Year	Violent Crime	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault
1973	47.7	2.5	6.7	12.5
1974	48.0	2.6	7.2	12.9
1975	48.4	2.4	6.8	11.9
1976	48.0	2.2	6.5	12.2
1977	50.4	2.3	6.2	12.4
1978	50.6	2.6	5.9	12.0
1979	51.7	2.8	6.3	12.3
1980	49.4	2.5	6.6	11.4
1981	52.3	2.5	7.4	12.0
1982	50.7	2.1	7.1	11.5
1983	46.5	2.1	6.0	9.9
1984	46.4	2.5	5.8	10.8
1985	45.2	1.9	5.1	10.3
1986	42.0	1.7	5.1	9.8
1987	44.0	2.0	5.3	10.0
1988	44.1	1.7	5.3	10.8
1989	43.3	1.8	5.4	10.3
1990	44.1	1.7	5.7	9.8
1991	48.8	2.2	5.9	9.9
1992	47.9	1.8	6.1	11.1
1993	49.1	1.6	6.0	12.0
1994	51.2	1.4	6.3	11.9
1995	46.1	1.2	5.4	9.5
1996	41.6	0.9	5.2	8.8
1997	38.8	0.9	4.3	8.6
1998	36.0	0.9	4.0	7.5
1999	32.1	0.9	3.6	6.7
2000	27.4	0.6	3.2	5.7

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey

Figure 4. Violence by Intimate Partners by Gender, 1992–2000, Rate per 1,000 Persons Age 12 and Older

Year	Female	Male
1992	8.8	1.4
1993	9.8	1.6
1994	9.1	1.7
1995	8.6	1.1
1996	7.8	1.4
1997	7.5	1.0
1998	7.7	1.5
1999	5.8	1.1
2000	4.7	0.9

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey

Figure 5. Intimate Partner Homicides by Race and Gender, 1976–1999, Rate per 100,000 Persons Age 20-44

	White		Black	
Year	Male	Female	Male	Female
1976	1.5	2.6	22.1	16.0
1977	1.5	2.5	20.3	12.4
1978	1.4	2.5	16.6	12.0
1979	1.5	2.5	16.2	11.8
1980	1.4	2.5	15.8	11.2
1981	1.5	2.6	14.9	10.9
1982	1.3	2.5	12.7	9.0
1983	1.3	2.3	11.8	9.0
1984	1.1	2.4	10.3	7.9
1985	1.1	2.5	9.8	8.2
1986	1.1	2.5	9.7	8.6
1987	1.0	2.4	9.0	7.7
1988	0.9	2.4	8.1	8.3
1989	0.9	2.1	8.9	7.3
1990	1.0	2.4	7.7	7.6
1991	0.8	2.2	6.9	7.8
1992	0.9	2.4	6.4	7.8
1993	0.8	2.4	5.9	7.9
1994	0.9	2.5	6.1	7.0
1995	0.6	2.1	4.5	5.6
1996	0.6	2.1	3.9	6.0
1997	0.7	2.1	3.3	5.5
1998	0.8	2.5	3.7	5.4
1999	0.6	2.3	3.1	4.6

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplementary Homicide Reports

Figure 6. Violent Crime Index Arrest Rates by Age, 1976-2000, Rate per 100,000 Population

Year	<18	18 to 24	25 to 34	35+
1976	283.3	525.9	314.6	81.3
1977	289.2	554.7	328.3	83.6
1978	321.4	583.9	341.6	87.0
1979	303.6	590.4	333.3	83.4
1980	298.4	588.5	339.0	83.0
1981	297.3	589.1	355.4	87.9
1982	301.0	629.2	390.3	94.4
1983	286.5	584.4	372.3	91.2
1984	290.3	571.3	367.9	89.9
1985	296.6	570.8	370.4	90.5
1986	305.0	630.5	430.1	102.0
1987	302.9	610.4	431.2	100.4
1988	340.5	693.5	497.8	116.3
1989	398.0	764.8	534.1	123.5
1990	419.7	815.9	536.7	121.9
1991	444.6	841.0	535.3	122.8
1992	459.0	851.6	548.2	131.5
1993	481.1	841.8	553.1	135.6
1994	512.2	848.7	561.3	143.7
1995	495.8	852.0	576.4	155.0
1996	446.8	803.3	516.5	142.6
1997	403.3	781.7	511.6	147.3
1998	363.7	736.0	479.2	140.4
1999	332.3	695.1	455.3	135.5
2000	313.1	674.8	433.4	132.4

Source: Butts, J., and J. Travis. 2002. *The Rise and Fall of American Youth Violence: 1980 to 2000*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.

Figure 7. Gun and Non Gun Homicide Arrest Rates by Age, 1976-1999, Rate per 100,000 Population

	Under 18		*18 to 24*	
Year	**Gun**	**Nongun**	**Gun**	**Nongun**
1976	5.71	4.79	12.63	9.36
1977	5.91	3.99	12.06	9.60
1978	5.31	4.56	13.39	9.19
1979	6.34	5.30	15.12	10.31
1980	7.29	5.53	16.94	12.06
1981	6.62	4.86	14.29	11.09
1982	5.73	5.00	12.66	11.14
1983	5.06	4.68	11.24	10.52
1984	4.83	3.77	11.32	9.96
1985	5.74	3.90	11.67	9.65
1986	6.77	4.81	13.29	10.21
1987	7.71	4.65	13.89	10.29
1988	10.75	5.23	16.37	10.41
1989	14.50	4.66	19.55	10.11
1990	17.45	6.13	23.03	11.21
1991	20.35	6.24	29.13	11.60
1992	20.94	5.31	28.84	9.52
1993	24.10	5.73	31.74	10.21
1994	23.03	5.37	30.81	9.46
1995	18.15	5.00	28.07	9.04
1996	14.03	5.12	26.79	9.15
1997	12.81	3.63	24.21	8.51
1998	9.25	3.67	21.09	9.07
1999	7.44	3.25	18.98	7.83

Source: Urban Institute analysis of data from Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplementary Homicide Reports

Figure 8. Arrests for Violent Crimes Committed with Guns, 1976–2000, Rate per 100,000 Population

Year	Rate
1976	143.1
1977	139.4
1978	141.1
1979	154.6
1980	174.0
1981	172.9
1982	160.9
1983	141.2
1984	139.4
1985	142.8
1986	156.0
1987	150.3
1988	157.0
1989	165.2
1990	198.1
1991	217.6
1992	221.7
1993	225.5
1994	208.4
1995	192.0
1996	172.8
1997	154.9
1998	135.0
1999	124.1
2000	121.5

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports

Figure 9. Homicides by Weapon Type, 1976–1999, Rate per 100,000 Population

Year	Handgun	Other Gun	Other Weapon
1976	4.0	1.5	3.1
1977	3.9	1.5	3.3
1978	4.0	1.6	3.2
1979	4.4	1.7	3.5
1980	4.6	1.7	3.8
1981	4.5	1.6	3.7
1982	3.9	1.5	3.6
1983	3.6	1.2	3.4
1984	3.5	1.2	3.3
1985	3.4	1.2	3.3
1986	3.8	1.3	3.5
1987	3.6	1.3	3.4
1988	3.8	1.3	3.3
1989	4.1	1.3	3.3
1990	4.7	1.4	3.4
1991	5.2	1.3	3.3
1992	5.2	1.2	3.0
1993	5.4	1.2	2.9
1994	5.2	1.1	2.7
1995	4.6	1.0	2.6
1996	4.0	1.0	2.4
1997	3.6	1.0	2.2
1998	3.3	0.8	2.2
1999	2.9	0.8	2.0

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplementary Homicide Reports

Figure 10. UCR Property Crime Rates, 1973–2000, Rate per 100,000 Population

Year	Rate
1973	3737.0
1974	4389.3
1975	4810.7
1976	4819.5
1977	4601.7
1978	4642.5
1979	5016.6
1980	5353.3
1981	5263.9
1982	5032.5
1983	4637.4
1984	4492.1
1985	4650.5
1986	4862.6
1987	4940.3
1988	5027.1
1989	5077.9
1990	5088.5
1991	5139.7
1992	4902.7
1993	4737.6
1994	4660.0
1995	4591.3
1996	4450.1
1997	4311.9
1998	4049.1
1999	3742.1
2000	3617.9

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports

Figure 11. NCVS Property Crime Rates, 1973–2000, Rate per 1,000 Households

Year	Rate
1973	519.9
1974	551.5
1975	553.6
1976	544.2
1977	544.1
1978	532.6
1979	531.8
1980	496.1
1981	497.2
1982	468.3
1983	428.4
1984	399.2
1985	385.4
1986	372.7
1987	379.6
1988	378.4
1989	373.4
1990	348.9
1991	353.7
1992	325.3
1993	318.9
1994	310.2
1995	290.5
1996	266.4
1997	248.3
1998	217.4
1999	198.0
2000	178.1

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey

Figure 12. Homicides in Large U.S. Cities

	1995	2000	2001
Washington, DC	361	239	231
Phoenix	241	152	210
Philadelphia	432	319	309
New York City	1177	673	649
Los Angeles	849	550	586
Houston	316	230	267
Dallas	276	231	240
Chicago	824	631	666
Baltimore	325	261	256

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports