



# *Criminological* Highlights

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*Criminological Highlights* is designed to provide an accessible look at some of the more interesting criminological research that is currently being published. Each issue contains “Headlines and Conclusions” for each of 8 articles, followed by one-page summaries of each article.

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This issue of *Criminological Highlights* addresses the following questions:

1. Where should treatment programs for youths be located?
2. In what kinds of cases would ordinary citizens prefer the sentence to focus on rehabilitation rather than simple punishment?
3. Do sentences of imprisonment reduce re-offending rates for either men or women?
4. Why do the police charge ordinary citizens with possession of marijuana?
5. Is satisfaction with the police determined by how effective they are in apprehending offenders?
6. Is committing a sex offence a life-defining event?
7. What does the ‘globalization of organized crime’ really look like?
8. How does race affect the likelihood that the police will search a motorist they stop for a traffic infraction?

**If courts want youths on probation to complete non-custodial treatment programs, it would be helpful to ensure that the program was administered at a location close to the youth’s home.**

Previous work has found a relationship between the density of rehabilitative services in a community and the likelihood of successful reintegration of those released from prison on parole (*Criminological Highlights* V11N6#3). It may well be that the importance of the density of services is that those parolees released into well serviced neighbourhoods don’t need to go far to receive services. In this study, simply living close to the location of the rehabilitative program meant that the youth was more likely to complete the program. These findings suggest that those responsible for rehabilitative services should consider two things. First, services should be located in close geographic proximity to the clients that the service is meant to serve. Second, judges and probation officers who require youths to attend services should take into account the distance from the youth’s home and the service. Those assigning youths to rehabilitative services should be cautious in requiring youths to attend services that are distant from their homes.

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**When asked what purposes sentences should attempt to serve, ordinary citizens’ preferences depended on the age of the offender, the offence, and the criminal record of the offender.**

The results demonstrate that ordinary citizens “take into consideration offence type, offender age and offence history when determining the most appropriate purpose of sentencing” (p. 301). It would appear, then, that the public is more nuanced in its approach to the sentencing decision than is often presumed. Findings such as those that suggest that the public views sentences as being too lenient need to be interpreted in the context of these findings that demonstrate quite clearly that, as with sentencing courts, members of the general public consider the specifics of each case as they weigh the importance of various sentencing purposes.

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**Both women and men are *more* likely to reoffend if they are sent to prison than if they are made subject to some other less intrusive sanction.**

The results suggest that prison sentences, if anything, increase offending for both women and men. The crime-increasing impact of imprisonment appeared to be greater when compared to two clearly non-custodial sentences – ordinary probation and intensive probation. For women, a prison sentence appeared to be more likely to increase property offending rather than violent or drug offending. People are sent to prison for lots of reasons. These findings suggest that for both women and men, it is not the case that they will ‘learn a lesson’ and stop offending after being sent to prison. Rather, it seems more likely that the ‘lesson learned’ from prison is to commit more crimes.

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**The arrest and prosecution of those arrested for marijuana possession does not appear to serve any useful public safety purpose.**

“If the point of making massive marijuana arrests is to cast a wide net where potential sharks might be lurking [a justification offered by a former deputy police commissioner], the police seem to be pulling in far more dolphins than sharks. Neither [these] findings nor those of other researchers indicate the arrests are an efficient or fair means for identifying future dangerous felons” (p. 27). Clearly the high rate of arrests of Blacks and Latinos “raise serious human rights concerns... even in the absence of racist intent” (p. 2). But in addition, the financial costs of processing tens of thousands of marijuana arrests each year and the possibility that “goodwill toward law enforcement may be eroded when substantial numbers of community residents are arrested or witness friends and relatives arrested for marijuana possession...” (p. 3) have to be considered. The fact that most of those arrested for private marijuana possession do not appear to be involved in anything serious thereafter raises further questions about the value of a policy that encourages these arrests.

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**Citizen satisfaction with the police is determined largely by how citizens are treated rather than by how successful the police are in locating or charging an offender.**

Obviously, victims do care about the outcome of their cases. However, “a criminal justice outcome alone... appears less likely to result in overall satisfaction than good interpersonal treatment and a tailored response” (p. 416) on the part of the police. Hence, police officers or police organizations that focus solely on “getting a result” (p. 417) run the risk of losing the support of the public they serve. A policing style oriented toward procedural justice is likely to have a positive impact on public satisfaction. “Policy makers and police managers might do well to emphasize the key role played by the public both in helping to detect crime and in cooperating with the police to build and maintain social order” (p. 419). If the police find it is important to have public trust and cooperation to help them apprehend offenders, then the evidence would suggest that it would be helpful for them to attend carefully to the nature of their interaction with victims and other citizens.

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**Sex offending typically represents a transitory phase in an offender’s life, not a life-defining event.**

The findings suggest that for these convicted sex offenders, “a sex crime might be best conceptualized as a transitory phase in the criminal career rather than evidence of a sexual criminal career in the making” (p. 553). However, there was, at the same time, “evidence suggesting the presence of a very small group of offenders following an active, high rate sexual offending pattern between age 18 and 35” (p. 554). For them, the recidivism rate was higher than the rate for those who had been low rate offenders between age 18-35. But in addition, the recidivism data suggest that by the time this high rate group might be identified, “they might no longer constitute the most dangerous group of offenders” (p. 554). The overall rates of recidivism of all identified groups in this sample suggest that even among those with the most problematic patterns of previous offending (e.g., increasingly high rate offending when 18-35) the 5-year recidivism rates, when released from penitentiary, are fairly low and the number of such offenders is very small.

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**Globalization of organized crime groups may involve more than simply opening up branch plants around the world.**

In Italy, it would seem that the actual criminal activities of the Russian mafia were very different from what they had been in Russia. The ‘core business’ of the group – the protection racket – did not move to Italy when the group expanded into that country. The notion that “criminal groups globalize because they are searching for attractive labour or raw material markets is not confirmed by this case study” (p. 248-9). The fact that mafia groups may change their activities when they expand has important implications for those trying to control them.

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**When police officers stop cars for traffic violations, the likelihood that they will also conduct a search depends not only on the race of the driver and the race of the officer, but also the racial makeup of the neighbourhood in which the stop took place.**

The results suggest that despite the increase in the number of Black officers in the U.S., Black and White citizens are treated differently when they are stopped by the police. But the data from neighbourhoods that differ in their racial composition suggest that “the racial composition of a community has a strong, [though]... not easily interpreted, influence on police search patterns” (p. 1016).

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## **If courts want youths on probation to complete non-custodial treatment programs, it would be helpful to ensure that the program was administered at a location close to the youth's home.**

Juvenile courts often spend considerable effort trying to determine which treatment programs are most appropriate for youths appearing before them. Given that treatment programs are expensive and there are often more potential clients than there are spaces in the program, it is important to use these services wisely. In the context of scarce program resources, it may be important to choose youths who are likely to attend the program as required.

This paper looks at a simple, easily-available, predictor of successful completion of a program that can be easily determined by the court (or probation service) that is ordering the program – the distance that the youth must travel to attend the program. Other possible predictors of successful completion of programs – person variables such as race, offence history, or characteristics of the neighbourhood in which the youth lives – were also examined and used as control variables to see whether 'distance to the treatment from the youth's home' was a significant predictor of successful completion of the program above and beyond other traditional predictors of program completion.

This study examined the predictors of program completion for 6208 youths in Philadelphia who had been assigned to attend one of 24 different treatment programs. Failures to complete an assigned program were divided into two types: those youths who were expelled from the program for reasons such as being arrested or violating the rules of the program, and those youths who did not complete it because they didn't attend the program as required.

The main independent variable was simple: how far was the youth's home from the location of the treatment facility. In addition, factors such as the youth's age, sex, race, prior offence history, and parents' criminal history were used as control factors, as were various measures of neighbourhood disadvantage.

On average, youths lived about 7 km from the treatment facility that they were expected to attend (range about 32 metres to about 33 km). 13% of the youths were expelled from the program they were enrolled in. There was no impact of the youth's distance from the treatment program on whether or not the youth was expelled from a program. However, when looking at the question of whether or not a youth dropped out, two independent program effects emerged: dropouts were more common among youths required to attend many hours per week. In addition, youths were more likely to drop out of treatment if they lived further away from the treatment facility.

*Conclusion:* Previous work has found a relationship between the density of rehabilitative services in a community and the likelihood of successful

reintegration of those released from prison on parole (*Criminological Highlights* V11N6#3). It may well be that the importance of the density of services is that those parolees released into well serviced neighbourhoods don't need to go far to receive services. In this study, simply living close to the location of the rehabilitative program meant that the youth was more likely to complete the program. These findings suggest that those responsible for rehabilitative services should consider two things. First, services should be located in close geographic proximity to the clients that the service is meant to serve. Second, judges and probation officers who require youths to attend services should take into account the distance from the youth's home and the service. Those assigning youths to rehabilitative services should be cautious in requiring youths to attend services that are distant from their homes.

*Reference:* Lockwood, Brian (2012). The Influence of Travel Distance on Treatment Noncompletion for Juvenile Offenders. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 49(4), 572-600.

## When asked what purposes sentences should attempt to serve, ordinary citizens' preferences depended on the age of the offender, the offence, and the criminal record of the offender.

In many countries, including Canada, judges are offered a “pick-and-mix approach to sentencing purposes” (p. 291) where they are required to choose one or more purposes to guide – or justify – the sentence that they hand down. The question raised by this study is whether such an approach is consistent with the public's view of what sentencing should accomplish. In particular, this study examines whether, for members of the public, the facts of the case determine which sentencing purposes they feel should be emphasized.

A representative sample of 800 adult Australian residents (100 from each Australian state and territory) were read 8 short descriptions of cases (e.g., “A young 17 year old offender who has been convicted of burglary and has no previous criminal record”). After each description, respondents were then asked “What do you think should be the most important purpose of sentencing?” Five choices were offered including “Give them the punishment they deserve” and “Rehabilitate them” (p. 295). They were asked to choose the single most important purpose of sentencing. The eight scenarios varied on 3 dimensions: offender age (a young offender vs. an adult); offence type (burglary vs. serious assault); and offence history (no previous record vs. three previous convictions).

Generally speaking, ordinary citizens were more likely to endorse rehabilitation as the primary purpose in sentencing youths than in sentencing adults. Rehabilitation was seen to be much more appropriate as the guiding purpose of sentencing for both adults and youths with no criminal records than it was for those with three previous convictions. And

rehabilitation was more likely to be seen as the appropriate purpose for burglary than for a serious assault.

Simply giving offenders the punishment they deserved, on the other hand, was more likely to be endorsed as the primary goal of sentencing when the offender – youth or adult – had a criminal record. Generally speaking ‘punishment’ was more likely to be endorsed when the offender was an adult than a youth and when the offence was a serious assault than when it was a burglary.

Incapacitation was very infrequently endorsed as the appropriate primary sentencing goal for those without a criminal record. However, when the offender had a criminal record it was seen as the appropriate goal by about one third of the respondents in the case of the serious assault and about one fifth of the respondents in the case of burglary.

*Conclusion:* The results demonstrate that ordinary citizens “take into consideration offence type, offender age and offence history when determining the most appropriate

purpose of sentencing” (p. 301). It would appear, then, that the public is more nuanced in its approach to the sentencing decision than is often presumed. Findings such as those that suggest that the public views sentences as being too lenient need to be interpreted in the context of these findings that demonstrate quite clearly that, as with sentencing courts, members of the general public consider the specifics of each case as they weigh the importance of various sentencing purposes.

*Reference:* Spiranovic, Caroline A., Lynne D. Roberts, David Indermaur, Kate Warner, Karen Gelb, and Geraldine Mackenzie (2012). Public Preferences for Sentencing Purposes: What Difference Does Offender Age, Criminal History, and Offence Type Make? *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 12 (3), 289-306.

## Both women and men are *more* likely to reoffend if they are sent to prison than if they are made subject to some other less intrusive sanction.

Previous research has shown that those given prison sentences are, if anything, more likely to reoffend than are equivalent people given non-prison sentences. The failure of prison to reduce reoffending has been demonstrated both for adults (see *Criminological Highlights* 11(1)#1, 11(1)#2, 11(4)#2, 11(6)#4, 12(5)#8) and youths (*Criminological Highlights*, 10(6)#1, 12(1)#8, 12(5)#7). This study expands our knowledge of the effect of imprisonment on reoffending by looking separately at the impact of prison sentences on the reoffending rates of women and men.

Starting with a sample of 7550 women and ten thousand men who were released from Florida prisons between 1994 and 2002, offenders were, to the extent that it was possible, matched with those who received traditional probation, intensive probation, or a jail sentence (a custodial sentence of a year or less). Matching was carried out separately for women and men. The matching was carried out by creating a score for each person on the likelihood of going to prison vs. each of the three other possible outcomes, separately (probation, intensive probation, and jail). The propensity scores were calculated from race (Black, Hispanic, White), age, type of offence, severity of offence, number and type of prior convictions, and whether they had been imprisoned before.

In effect, this means that a single match was found for the imprisoned offenders first from those who got probation, and then for each of the other outcomes. On the individual variables, the matched groups were almost identical. The fact that matching was possible for so many offenders demonstrates that “similar sentences receive dissimilar treatment” (p. 376) reasonably often.

The offenders were followed for three years following release from prison or jail, or 3 years after sentencing for those who received a non-custodial sentence.

Four separate types of recidivism were examined: reconviction for a violent, property, drug, or other type of offence. Recidivism rates were compared for imprisoned offenders against each of the three groups (separately) that received non-prison sanctions. These analyses were carried out separately for women and men. For women, each of the comparisons involved at least 3934 matched pairs of offenders. For men, all comparisons involved at least 8510 matched pairs. 22 of the 24 different comparisons (male/female by four type of recidivism by 3 different comparisons for imprisoned offenders) showed higher rates of recidivism for imprisoned inmates; 16 of them were significant. Neither of the two comparisons showing lower reconviction rates for imprisoned offenders was significant.

The size of the effects varied somewhat. But what is important is that there was no evidence – for women or men – that imprisonment led to lower reconviction rates compared to equivalent other offenders who

received, instead of imprisonment, probation, intensive probation, or a (shorter) jail sentence. Indeed, the opposite occurred: in general, those receiving prison sentences tended to be more likely to reoffend during the three years following their release.

*Conclusion:* The results suggest that prison sentences, if anything, increase offending for both women and men. The crime-increasing impact of imprisonment appeared to be greater when compared to two clearly non-custodial sentences – ordinary probation and intensive probation. For women, a prison sentence appeared to be more likely to increase property offending rather than violent or drug offending. People are sent to prison for lots of reasons. These findings suggest that for both women and men, it is not the case that they will ‘learn a lesson’ and stop offending after being sent to prison. Rather, it seems more likely that the ‘lesson learned’ from prison is to commit more crimes.

*Reference:* Mears, Daniel P., Joshua C. Cochran, and William D. Bales (2012). Gender Differences in the Effects of Prison on Recidivism. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 40, 370-378.

## The arrest and prosecution of those arrested for marijuana possession does not appear to serve any useful public safety purpose.

In 1977, the New York State legislature reclassified the private possession of small amounts of marijuana as a non-criminal offence, making it punishable at most by a \$250 fine and 15 days in jail. In doing so, the legislation explicitly found that “arrests, criminal prosecutions and criminal penalties are inappropriate for people who possess small amounts of marijuana for personal use” (p. 10). Nevertheless, “between 1996 and 2011, the New York City police made 586,320 arrests for possession of marijuana in public view” (p. 11). Marijuana arrests in Canada, also, are not rare. In 2011, Canadian police recorded 61,406 criminal incidents in which possession of cannabis was the most serious crime. In 28,183 of these incidents an adult or youth was charged.

Arrests for minor crimes clearly can have long term consequences, including the acquiring of a police or criminal record. Marijuana arrests are sometimes justified in terms of crime control. However, previous research (*Criminological Highlights*, V8N5#8) has found that, when other relevant controls are included, arrests for use of marijuana in public view had no crime-reducing impact. Nevertheless, more recently, “New York City officials have suggested that marijuana possession arrests promote public safety. They have never, however, articulated the precise way that they do so” (p. 14). The police have suggested, simply, that “Taking care of little crimes, including pot possession... helped drive crime down” (p. 14). One suggestion that has been made – without evidence – is that marijuana arrests help the police identify people who would be likely to have committed other offences or might, in the future, commit offences.

This paper identified 29,147 people arrested for private possession of marijuana in 2003 and 2004 under the 1977 law. They were tracked from

2003/4 until June 2011. 49% were Black; 31% were Latino; 17% were White, and the remaining 3% were a mixture of groups. About 33% were *arrested* for a felony one or more times during this 6.5-8.5 year follow-up period. However, only 10% were *convicted* of any felony during this follow-up period and only 3.5% of the whole sample was convicted of a violent felony. An additional 10.1% of the sample were convicted of one or more of a broad category of what might be called “injurious misdemeanors” (predominantly criminal trespass, impaired driving, minor assaults). Even though the original sample was identified because of involvement in drugs, 95% of the total sample were never, during this period, convicted of a felony drug offence.

*Conclusion:* “If the point of making massive marijuana arrests is to cast a wide net where potential sharks might be lurking [a justification offered by a former deputy police commissioner], the police seem to be pulling in far more dolphins than sharks. Neither [these] findings nor those of other researchers indicate the arrests are an efficient

or fair means for identifying future dangerous felons” (p. 27). Clearly the high rate of arrests of Blacks and Latinos “raise serious human rights concerns... even in the absence of racist intent” (p. 2). But in addition, the financial costs of processing tens of thousands of marijuana arrests each year and the possibility that “goodwill toward law enforcement may be eroded when substantial numbers of community residents are arrested or witness friends and relatives arrested for marijuana possession...” (p. 3) have to be considered. The fact that most of those arrested for private marijuana possession do not appear to be involved in anything serious thereafter raises further questions about the value of a policy that encourages these arrests.

*Reference:* Human Rights Watch (November 2012). A Red Herring: Marijuana Arrestees Do Not Become Violent Felons. <http://www.hrw.org/news/2012/11/23/usnew-york-few-arrested-pot-become-violent-criminals>

## **Citizen satisfaction with the police is determined largely by how citizens are treated rather than by how successful the police are in locating or charging an offender.**

These days, the police, as with other public service agencies, are expected to do more with less. Some police managers have suggested that if fewer resources translates into a reduced ability to 'get results' (e.g., locate an offender) the public will lose confidence in the police. The findings in this paper suggest that the police are more in control of how the public views them than they might have thought.

Previous research (e.g., *Criminological Highlights* V8N2#1, V8N5#5) has suggested that the quality of the interaction between police officers and members of the public has an important effect on how the police are rated, but that this effect is asymmetric: Encounters in which citizens believe police have not shown them appropriate respect have a much larger impact than positive encounters.

In one study, residents of 16 English neighbourhoods were interviewed in 2003/4 and again a year later. In citizen-initiated contacts that took place between the two interviews (in which citizens were victims of a crime or initiated contact with the police for any other reason), being satisfied with the interaction with the police had very little impact on whether citizens thought their local police were doing a good job. Being dissatisfied with the interaction with the police, however, was a strong predictor of reduced ratings of the police.

In a second study, using British Crime Survey data from 2008/9, victims whose victimizations came to the attention of the police were asked how satisfied they were with how the police handled their personal crime incident.

Respondents were asked about whether the police seemed to show interest in the victim's incident and whether the offender was identified and charged. For property crimes, victims were also asked whether the police recovered the stolen property.

"Respondents who felt that police did not show enough interest were much less likely to be satisfied... regardless of whether the offender had been identified and/or charged. Those who felt the police had shown enough interest, by contrast, were more likely to be satisfied... regardless of what had happened in relation to the offender" (p. 413). Outcomes did matter, but the positive impact of the outcome was considerably less in cases where police seemed uninterested in the case compared to cases where citizens thought police showed appropriate interest. "If officers did not show enough interest, there was no significant difference in the probabilities of satisfaction predicted for cases where the offender was identified and charged and those cases where the offender was not identified at all. However, if officers did show enough interest, knowing that a charge had been brought appeared to boost the chance of being very satisfied..." (p. 413).

*Conclusion:* Obviously, victims do care about the outcome of their cases. However, "a criminal justice outcome alone... appears less likely to result in overall satisfaction than good interpersonal treatment and a tailored response" (p. 416) on the part of the police. Hence, police officers or police organizations that focus solely on "getting a result" (p. 417) run the risk of losing the support of the public they serve. A policing style oriented toward procedural justice is likely to have a positive impact on public satisfaction. "Policy makers and police managers might do well to emphasize the key role played by the public both in helping to detect crime and in cooperating with the police to build and maintain social order" (p. 419). If the police find it is important to have public trust and cooperation to help them apprehend offenders, then the evidence would suggest that it would be helpful for them to attend carefully to the nature of their interaction with victims and other citizens.

*Reference:* Myhill, Andy and Ben Bradford (2012). Can Police Enhance Public Confidence by Improving Quality of Service? Results from Two Surveys in England and Wales. *Policing & Society*, 22 (4), 397-425.

## Sex offending typically represents a transitory phase in an offender's life, not a life-defining event.

A number of criminal justice policies have special provisions for sex offenders. These include dangerous offender provisions, restrictions on the use of certain sanctions (e.g., conditional sentences of imprisonment in Canada), registries, notification requirements, and restrictions on the availability of pardons (in Canada). These policies seem to be based in part on the notion that once a person commits a sexual offence, he is very likely to commit more. This assumption is challenged by a fair amount of research (see *Criminological Highlights* V5N1#4, V6N3#3, V6N6#8, V8N3#8, V9N2#5, V9N5#7, V11N4#7, V12N4#7).

Scales for the prediction of future offending have been shown to perform, statistically, better than chance, but have been criticized for being too inaccurate for individual decisions. Risk prediction in this field typically looks at static facts from the past (e.g., history of offending, age, type of offending). However, they typically do not take into account different *patterns* of behaviour leading up to the offence. Furthermore, they may not adequately capture one of the "most agreed upon clinical observations" (p. 536) about sex offenders: their heterogeneity.

In this study, rather than considering 'criminal history' as a static risk factor, the trajectories of offending of 237 sex offenders over age 35 at the time of their release from a Canadian penitentiary were examined. All had been sentenced to at least 2 years in prison. The number and pattern of charges for violent and sexual offences from age 18 onwards were used to group these offenders. Trajectories of offending (for the period age 18-35) were created separately for violent and sexual offences and then for the two types of offences combined. The vast majority of these offenders had committed very few offences.

The trajectory modeling showed that for sexual offending, the data were

best described by two groups: a group that showed an increasing rate of offending between age 18 to age 35 (4% of the total sample), and a group of very low rate offenders throughout this period of their lives (96% of the total sample). Sexual offence recidivism was defined as a new charge for any sexual offence within an average 5-year follow-up period after the offender was released from penitentiary. (All offenders were at least 35 years old when released.) The recidivism rate was 6.1% for the low rate sex offenders (n=229) and 38% for that very small group of offenders (n=8) with a high and increasing rate of offending when they were younger. The overall sexual offending recidivism rate for these 237 sex offenders released from a Canadian penitentiary was 7%. The results were similar when the offenders were classified according to their pattern of charges for sexual and violent offences combined. This analysis found three distinct groups: very low rate, low rate, and high rate increasers. Their overall sexual and violent recidivism rates were 8%, 24% and 38%, respectively. Overall sex or violent offending recidivism was 14%.

*Conclusion:* The findings suggest that for these convicted sex offenders, "a sex crime might be best conceptualized

as a transitory phase in the criminal career rather than evidence of a sexual criminal career in the making" (p. 553). However, there was, at the same time, "evidence suggesting the presence of a very small group of offenders following an active, high rate sexual offending pattern between age 18 and 35" (p. 554). For them, the recidivism rate was higher than the rate for those who had been low rate offenders between age 18-35. But in addition, the recidivism data suggest that by the time this high rate group might be identified, "they might no longer constitute the most dangerous group of offenders" (p. 554). The overall rates of recidivism of all identified groups in this sample suggest that even among those with the most problematic patterns of previous offending (e.g., increasingly high rate offending when 18-35) the 5-year recidivism rates, when released from penitentiary, are fairly low and the number of such offenders is very small.

*Reference:* Lussier, Patrick and Garth Davies (2011). A Person-Oriented Perspective on Sexual Offenders, Offending Trajectories, and Risk of Recidivism. *Psychology, Public Policy and Law*, 17 (4), 530-561.

## Globalization of organized crime groups may involve more than simply opening up branch plants around the world.

This paper explores, empirically, “whether organized crime groups are able to move abroad easily and reproduce their territorial control in a different country” (p. 235). One hypothesis is that organized crime groups are like ordinary companies and simply open up branch plants to take advantage of local conditions. This hypothesis assumes that organized crime groups do essentially the same things in the new location as they did in the old. The competing view is that mafias are local and stationary and that new territory presents mafia groups with difficult challenges because of the local environment. In other words, the alternative view is that mafias engage in different behaviour in the new territory to which they move.

The Solntsevskaya crime group, based in Moscow, has been described as Europe’s most powerful organized crime group in terms of wealth, influence, and financial control. As a result of struggles in Moscow related to leadership, some of the group’s leaders decided to move to Italy where they already had some contacts. Police wiretaps of conversations involving 164 individuals connected to this group during a 3 year period (1995-7) were collected and transcribed. This paper is based, in large part, on these data.

In Russia, the group was primarily involved in a protection racket. In addition, they were thought to control banks and other enterprises. In Italy, the situation was very different. The money for the Italian operation came from Russia. But the conversations captured by the wiretaps indicated that most of the activity in Italy focused on investment opportunities – largely import-export ventures involving everything from wheat and steel to Armani suits and works of art. The group in Italy also spent a

fair amount of time in such activities as opening bank accounts, getting Italian passports and drivers licenses, and acquiring citizenship. Many of the wiretapped conversations, of course, involved Italians and were conducted entirely within Italy (i.e., did not directly involve Russia). Other activities – which constituted only a small amount of their activities (about 7% of the conversations) – involved discussions about protection activities. But *none* of these conversations involved protection activities in Italy. Instead, they involved protection activities in Moscow, the ‘home base’ of the group in question.

Women, in Italy, played a more important role and were involved in discussions within the group about internal discipline. More generally, women in the Italian organization had more important roles than did women in Russia. Although women did not appear to be involved in the use of violence, they appeared to be involved in important activities including decisions about the appropriate types of punishment.

One possible explanation for the increased importance of women in the new country (Italy) was that men whom the Russian mafia members were likely to feel they could trust were probably in short supply.

*Conclusion:* In Italy, it would seem that the actual criminal activities of the Russian mafia were very different from what they had been in Russia. The ‘core business’ of the group – the protection racket – did not move to Italy when the group expanded into that country. The notion that “criminal groups globalize because they are searching for attractive labour or raw material markets is not confirmed by this case study” (p. 248-9). The fact that mafia groups may change their activities when they expand has important implications for those trying to control them.

*Reference:* Varese, Federico (2012). How Mafias Take Advantage of Globalization: The Russian Mafia in Italy. *British Journal of Criminology*, 52, 235-253.

## **When police officers stop cars for traffic violations, the likelihood that they will also conduct a search depends not only on the race of the driver and the race of the officer, but also the racial makeup of the neighbourhood in which the stop took place.**

Searches of ordinary citizens that take place when there is no evidence that a serious offence has taken place are among the most intrusive actions that police can take. This paper examines a straightforward hypothesis: that the likelihood of a search of a driver stopped for a traffic violation depends on the race of both the citizen and the police officer as well as the racial makeup of the neighbourhood in which the traffic stop takes place.

It is suggested that White officers, who may be seen in American society as higher status than Black police officers, will be more likely to search people they stop than will Black police officers. Black citizens, who may be seen as lower status than White citizens, will be more likely to be searched. The hypothesis, then, is that searches are most likely to take place when a White officer stops a Black citizen. Searches would be least likely to take place when a Black officer stops a White Citizen. When the race of the officer and citizen is the same, the likelihood of a search should be between these two extremes, with White officers somewhat more likely to search White citizens than Black officers would be to search Black citizens.

This paper examines records of ordinary traffic stops by police officers in St. Louis, Missouri. Its goal was to understand the circumstances in which police carry out searches of drivers. State law requires that, for each stop, records be kept of various aspects of the stop including the race of the driver. The study examined 69,543 stops that took place in 2007 in which searches were discretionary on the part of the police officer (i.e.,

when there were no outstanding warrants related to the driver). Searches were most likely to take place when White officers stopped Black drivers (searches took place in 8.2% of stops) and were least likely when Black officers stopped White drivers (1.5% of stops). Between these two extremes, White Officers were more likely to search White drivers (5.1% of stops) than were Black officers who stopped Black drivers (3.9% of stops).

Perhaps the most interesting findings relate to the effect of the racial composition of the community in which the traffic stop took place. St. Louis is roughly half Black and half White and is heavily segregated by race. The income of White households is roughly twice that of Black households. Nine districts in St. Louis were identified, three of which had a low representation of Black citizens (average 26%); three had medium representation of Blacks (72%) and three had very high concentrations of Black residents (96%). In the areas with a relatively low concentrations of Blacks, the results were more or less the same as for the city as a whole. For the neighbourhoods with a medium concentration of Black residents, however, those with the

highest likelihood of being searched were White drivers stopped by White police officers. In areas with very high concentrations of Black residents, White drivers stopped by White officers were, again, most likely to be searched. Situations in which both the driver and officer were Black were the least likely to result in a search. Other predictors of whether a search took place also varied across neighbourhoods suggesting, at a minimum, that police officers modify their decisions on whom to search according to the racial characteristics of the neighbourhood.

*Conclusion:* The results suggest that despite the increase in the number of Black officers in the U.S., Black and White citizens are treated differently when they are stopped by the police. But the data from neighbourhoods that differ in their racial composition suggest that “the racial composition of a community has a strong, [though]... not easily interpreted, influence on police search patterns” (p. 1016).

*Reference:* Rojek, Jeff, Richard Rosenfeld, and Scott Decker (2012). Policing Race: The Racial Stratification of Searches in Police Traffic Stops. *Criminology*, 50 (4), 993-1024.