

Making a Difference in Criminology: Past, Present and Future \*

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\* Prepared for Presentation at the 2018 Southern Criminal Justice Association Conference,  
Pensacola, FL.

## I. Introduction

Beginning in the late 1890s, Rockefeller grants totaling several million dollars transformed a small Baptist College in Chicago into one of America's foremost universities - The University of Chicago. In awarding his grants to the university, Rockefeller, along with other fellow industrialist donors, were interested in establishing an urban social work focus for the university. The collective concern among the donors was with instability among the work force believed related to the adverse living conditions of Chicago's slums. William Rainey Harper, who served as the inaugural President of the University of Chicago from 1891 to 1906, established the very first Department of Sociology in 1891. Robert Park and Ernest Burgess, early faculty members of the University of Chicago's Department of Sociology, authored the famous textbook "Introduction to the Science of Sociology" (1921) that was known as the Bible of Sociology. What followed, at what became called the "Chicago School," were a series of carefully researched and theoretically guided urban ethnographic studies aimed at improving the slums. Much of criminology's subsequent development as a scientific discipline drew heavily from the early theoretical and empirical scholarship of the Chicago School.

Very importantly, however, the subsequent development of criminology departed from the early urban and applied social work focus of the Chicago School, to an uncompromising purpose of establishing criminology as a recognized scientific discipline aimed at the determination of the social and economic causes of crime. The Chicago School's theoretical and empirical contributions related to "culture conflict" theory

provided the foundation for criminology's subsequent theoretical and empirical refinements including Sutherland's 1934 "differential association" theory and Merton's 1938 "anomie" theory. During the 1950s and 60s, criminology continued to empirically apply and refine the earlier theories on the causes of crime with Cohen's "reaction formation" (1955), Miller's "focal concerns" (1958), and Cloward and Ohlin's "differential opportunity" (1960).

Up until the 1970s, the prevalent criminological thinking was that our criminal justice system and its' policies and practices reflected "disinterested professionalism" namely that police, courts, and corrections operated according to their formally prescribed goals and practices related to maintaining order under the rule of law, due process, and treatment and rehabilitation. This thinking was challenged in the 1970s by civil protests over the Vietnam War, strained minority relations, and the well documented inability of the criminal justice system to respond effectively and legally to civil protests. Criminology's response to the turbulent 70's was to become increasingly critical of the criminal justice system with labeling and conflict theories strongly claiming that the criminal justice system had "taken on a life of its own" and in the process had displaced its formal goals and practices with essentially a "crime control" focus.

What followed were a series of criminal justice policy reforms that were officially promoted as "alternatives" to what was believed to be not only an ineffective criminal justice system but a system that actually did more harm than good. The first wave of criminal justice reforms of the 70s included police community relations, diversion, and

deinstitutionalization. However, by the 80s, another shift in thinking about the ineffectiveness of the criminal justice system and its various alternative reforms emerged which contended that “nothing works.” The “nothing works” thinking contributed to a new wave of “getting tough” on crime policies and practices that led to the erosion of parole and indeterminate sentencing, the national embrace of flat or determinate sentencing, 3-strikes, and various other zero-tolerance on crime policies. Criminology’s role in these various 70s and 80s reforms was largely critical providing such consistently reported findings as net-widening with diversion and deinstitutionalization and mass incarceration with the get-tough measures. Moreover, throughout these several decades leading up to 2000, criminology’s major focus continued to be upon the discipline’s scientific advancement through theoretical refinement and empirical validation of causal explanations of crime with a growing interest in theoretical integration (i.e., bio-social and life course theories) rather than an applied or policy and practice focus.

Beginning in 2000, and, no doubt, shaped by the undeniable acceptance of the general failure of our costly criminal justice system and the series of reforms aimed at improving the system, there emerged a growing recognition of the importance and need for evidence-based criminal justice policies that could make a positive difference in the age old pain and suffering consequences of crime. This recognition led to a series of major initiatives that has contributed to a belief among many, but certainly not all criminologists, that “the growth in applied research, scientific evidence of what works, and increased attention to evidence-based practices to be among the most positive developments in the field over the past several decades” (Baumer, 2015:8). Moreover, as

the title and focus for this year's Southern Criminal Justice Association Conference of "Making a Difference About Crime and Criminal Justice" recognizes, we are now poised to accelerate criminology forward with both scientific and applied policy purposes.

This paper traces the "making a difference" movement in criminology since 2000. It begins with an assessment of the rise of and resistance to the making a difference movement in criminology, followed by description and discussion of some of the challenges and prospects for criminologists in their efforts to make a difference. The paper concludes with identification of an emerging best-practice for making a difference in crime and criminal justice policies and practices while simultaneously advancing criminology as a scientific discipline.

## II. Making a Difference Movement

In 2000, the American Society of Criminology (ASC) began publishing the journal *Criminology and Public Policy* (CPP) to increase the role of research in crime and criminal justice policy and practice. CPP has since become one of the most respected and prominent journals in criminology and annually devotes a special research and policy issue that is presented at a congressional luncheon before Congressional legislators, their staff, and the press. In 2009, ASC formed a consortium with the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) and the Association of Doctoral Programs in Criminology and Criminal Justice which represents nearly 4000 criminologists and 40 criminology and criminal justice doctoral programs. The purpose of the consortium was to establish a strong research role for national crime and criminal justice policy. Among the consortium's accomplishments was the successful initiative for increased independence

in the grant-making and publication processes of the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), The Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).

Nonetheless, and despite these major efforts over nearly 2 decades to promote the role of research in crime and criminal justice policy and practice, important questions remain with differing individual criminologist perspectives. For example, some criminologists contend that because criminology's research and associated knowledge base is not causally certain, criminologists should not and cannot responsibly inform crime and criminal justice policy and practice. While other criminologists believe that while criminology's quest for causality is clearly warranted and necessary for advancing criminology - the application of current and best available research knowledge to crime and criminal justice policy and practice issues is preferable to policy and practice without research evidence. An illustration of this mixed sentiment among criminologists concerning the causality and policy question occurred at the 2009 Annual Meetings of the ASC. The meeting's theme was titled "Criminology and Criminal Justice Policy," and featured a series of plenary sessions on various perspectives, challenges, and possible remedies for increasing criminology's policy role. A panel paper by Wellford (2009) was provocatively titled, "Criminologists Should Stop Whining about Their Impact on Policy and Practice." His argument was that criminological research has not been sufficiently established as a science to enable the discipline to responsibly inform policy and practice.

This general sentiment was shared by a number of other criminologists and reflects some of the reasoning developed earlier by Tittle (2004). Tittle (2004) argued that criminologists simply do not have sufficient knowledge to responsibly inform public

policy. He suggested that existing criminological knowledge is shaky at best and poses more dangers for policy formulation than beneficial prospects. To illustrate his point, Tittle (2004:1641) claimed that there is not a single criminological “issue about which even a modestly demanding critic could be convinced by the available research evidence.” Tittle (2004) cited the examples of: What causes crime? Does arresting domestic violence abusers deter future domestic violence? Does gun control prevent violence? Does the death penalty curb capital crime? Tittle (2004) concluded that criminologists are as likely to be wrong as they are to be right in the process of applying their research to policy initiatives, therefore not only doing no good but instead doing potential harm in the process because they do not possess research that provides sufficient cause-effect evidence essential for proposing responsible crime and criminal justice policy.

In a related discussion, Burawoy’s American Sociological Association’s (ASA) Presidential Address in 2004, “For Public Sociology”, generated similar debate within sociology. According to Burawoy (2005), engaging various “publics” is critical to sharing information, broadening understandings, and increasing what we know about the world. However, he also acknowledged the “primitive stage” that sociologists are in regarding how to effectively engage “publics.” Burawoy (2005) discussed three possible justifications for sociologists to engage in politics or initiate a public policy stance: professional self-defense, policy intervention, and public engagement.

Tittle (2004) argued, in direct response to Burawoy’s (2005) call for policy intervention, that Burawoy was making an incorrect assumption, namely that sociologists actually have good knowledge that can be successfully applied to public policy. Wellford

(2009) echoed Tittle's (2004) argument and further speculated that criminology may have had too much policy influence, rather than too little, given its limited stage of scientific development and lack of causal knowledge that enables more certain explanations and predictions to inform effective policy. Wellford (2009) urged criminologists to focus on criminology as a science and to refrain from any meaningful policy role until such time criminology becomes recognized as a valid scientific discipline, namely one that possesses more specific and empirically validated causal arguments. Surprisingly, no one ever asked Tittle or Wellford if not criminological researchers, then, who is to inform crime and justice policy?

The debate, then, within criminology is not over the importance of criminology's science being applied to policy development. Rather, the debate is centered upon when criminology's research will be sufficiently established as a science before it is used to inform policy. For some criminologists the fundamental standard for establishing scientific criminology and a legitimate policy role relates to the capacity to determine cause-effect relationships. For other criminologists, the necessary threshold for a crime-related policy function is not the requirement to identify cause-effect relationships. Rather, it is the application of current and best available research knowledge to policy-relevant questions as they arise.

Since its positivist beginnings, much of criminology has been preoccupied with scientifically identifying the causes of crime. Underlying this quest for causality is the assumption that the occurrence of events, like crime, is determined by a cause and effect relationship (i.e., X causes Y, and if X causes Y, how large is the effect of X on Y? And is this effect larger than other causes?). For criminology, as with other social and many



natural sciences, it has not yet been possible to isolate a single cause of crime. Instead, criminologists have found that, for example, in the case of delinquency there are many contingent factors that increase the likelihood that delinquency will occur (e.g., poverty, living in slums, negative peer group associations, dropping out of school, broken homes, etc.) rather than a single cause that results in delinquency. However, such multiple correlations do not provide a predictive function (i.e., not all youth living in slums, with negative peer associations, lacking a high school diploma, and from broken homes are delinquent and/or some delinquents are not from the slums, or school drop-outs, etc.). The presence of multiple factors does not necessarily mean that distinct causal effects cannot be identified. A common policy struggle, then, is the identification of an appropriate and alterable risk factor that a particular policy or practice should address. To further complicate this process, the numerous factors that influence an individual's decision to commit a crime do not exist in a vacuum - they co-exist and co-occur with other variables and create a research environment that is largely impossible to fully control and account for. For further discussion of the difficulties of seeking causality with contingent research findings see Blomberg, et. al. (2013).

As previously stated, the discipline's lack of causal certainty in its research findings keeps a number of criminologists away from attempting to have a serious public policy role. Concerning the limits of causal analysis, Rein and Winship (2000) have concluded that social science produces weak causal theories with modest effect sizes that can explain only a small portion of the variability in the dependent variable. The authors reference Jon Elster's (1991) argument that complete explanations may never be forthcoming in the social sciences (2000: 36). Rein and Winship (2000) also highlight the

dilemma of identifying the most appropriate factor or correlate that policy should address when the causal modeling involves multiple independent variables. Moreover, policies that target correlates of crime or delinquency risk factors can be limited because some of these correlates and risk factors are not alterable (i.e., age, gender, race). Given the limitations of trying to link policies with validated causality, Rein and Winship (2000) argue for research-driven policies that target the problem with two objectives: (1) to directly intervene and (2) to more effectively ameliorate the alterable conditions of the problem in question rather than eliminating its uncertain cause(s). While challenges remain, it seems that criminology is now ready to expand its disciplinary focus of causal analysis to include linking its existing and best available research knowledge to policy aimed at ameliorating the malleable conditions of the problem rather than the single pursuit of identifying and eliminating the uncertain cause(s) of the problem. The question is how can criminologists simultaneously pursue causal and policy functions?

As mentioned previously, the theme of this year's Southern Criminal Justice Association Conference of "Making a Difference About Crime and Criminal Justice" further demonstrates that an ever-growing number of criminologists are increasingly focusing their efforts upon evidence-based crime and criminal justice policy while simultaneously pursuing their interests in causality. Regarding their policy role, criminologists are often involved in "targeting the problem" which may or may not address the problem's causes but rather the proximate and malleable manifestations of the problem in question. An example concerns the role of educational achievement for incarcerated delinquent youth upon post release recidivism. While no direct cause and effect relationships have been established in this area of research, the best available

research documents that delinquent youth who enter incarceration with numerous educational deficiencies and subsequently experience substantial educational achievement while incarcerated are more likely to return to school upon release. Further, research demonstrates that if youth remain in school following release, their likelihood of recidivism is significantly reduced. However, current national policy and practice in juvenile justice education can be characterized as grossly uneven and inferior in quality (i.e., low employment of certified teachers, lack of individualized instruction. etc.) compared to the quality of education provided in public schools. Yet, increasing educational achievement through quality and individualized instruction while delinquents are incarcerated increases their likelihood of return to school upon release thereby reducing their recidivism. Employing this best available research knowledge to current juvenile justice education policy and practice seems clearly preferable to waiting until more causal certainty is established between incarceration, educational achievement, and recidivism (Blomberg, Bales, Mann, Piquero, and Berk, 2011; Blomberg, Bales, and Piquero, 2012).

Very importantly, however, as a growing number of criminologists have worked to share their research on various crime and criminal justice policy and practice areas - they have come to realize there are significant challenges that extend beyond questions of causality.

### III. Challenges

To become effective in a proactive role that makes a policy difference with the best available research knowledge, criminologists will need to shift from their professional role and their comfortable relationships with like-thinking professional

colleagues. Researchers will need to increase their knowledge of the utility of their research. Further, they will need to be aware of the mechanisms by which policy makers and practitioners *acquire* and *interpret* research and the ways in which policy makers and practitioners *use* research evidence to facilitate their policy and practice efforts.

Policy makers and practitioners acquire research through a number of channels. To inform policy with research, it is important to be familiar with the intermediary organizations that broker and disseminate research evidence (e.g., advocates, lobbyists, nonpartisan private organizations, foundations). It is also important to anticipate the most likely political and economic context in which the process occurs. Additionally, researchers should anticipate that within the political context of policy making, a research finding will not necessarily remain static with one particular meaning or interpretation. Policy makers and practitioners are continuously interpreting new information and integrating it into their respective knowledge/ideological frameworks. Policy makers and staff routinely acquire new research articles or excerpts of findings and attempt to use that evidence to justify positions, understand problems, and inform their decisions. In some instances, research findings will be misinterpreted, partially extracted, or otherwise misused in the process. As policy formulations are influenced by research evidence and diffused across social networks, individuals who are part of the networks are interpreting (and reinterpreting) the ideas and research evidence. Similarly, as research evidence is used in organizational decision making, its meaning is being interpreted and reinterpreted in relation to local needs, contexts, and constraints. Knowing the various channels, strategies, and processes explicitly or implicitly employed by policy makers will assist researchers in framing their findings so that they can be more clearly understood and

more responsibly incorporated into policy. If research evidence informs or influences policy makers' and practitioners' interpretations and thought processes of problems, emerging challenges, or situations, it can be considered as providing *conceptual use*. When empirical evidence is directly applied to the programmatic or policy decision-making process, it can be considered as providing *instrumental use*. Clearly, both uses are important and often sequential namely from conceptual to instrumental.

An occurrence that will be inevitable in some policy settings, is when policy makers ignore empirical evidence and direct policy in the opposite direction because it is more politically viable (e.g., refusal to reverse their own position; hesitation to vote against the will of the majority or their constituents' sentiments; fear of appearing soft on crime; or because they are reacting to a highly visible media account of an isolated incident that, in their opinion, demands a certain response.) This type of resistance will occur even in the face of implementing a costlier policy - corrections and criminal justice are areas in which, sometimes, empirical evidence and costs take a back seat to the political message being sent to the public. This will, in all likelihood, frustrate and discourage researchers; however, it should not be interpreted as a sign that practitioners and policy makers are not open to evidence.

Knowing how policy makers and practitioners interpret, process, or make sense of empirical evidence is also important because it provides guidance regarding the most policy relevant way to report research findings. The risk with this task is that interpretations will vary according to individual characteristics and values, and with broader or macro-level factors such as political climate, fiscal constraints, and visibility of the issue. Anticipating the way in which these factors affect interpretations of the

relevance, validity, meaning, or implications of research evidence and how policy makers appraise the quality and nature of the evidence will also help the researcher in efforts to make a policy and practice difference.

It is important to recognize that despite a researcher's best efforts to anticipate and plan for politics and fiscal constraints, far too often these factors can derail their best efforts. For example, from 1998 to 2010, I served as Principal Investigator on a major research project namely the Juvenile Justice Educational Enhancement Program (JJEED). JJEED developed in Florida in response to the 1983 class-action lawsuit on behalf of a 14-year-old boy known as Bobby M. and three other children. Included in the federal court's resulting decision were mandates for the removal of dependent youth from the state's major juvenile training schools, the closing of the state's largest training school for girls and a reduction in the populations of the state's largest two training schools for boys. In addition, the court issued a consent decree that focused upon the educational services throughout Florida's juvenile justice system. Under the education requirements of the consent decree, Florida was required to provide special, vocational, and alternative education services that were equivalent or better in quality and quantity to those services provided in Florida's public schools.

The Bobby M. litigation evolved over a decade with the Florida legislature enacting several responsive reform acts including the creation of a new state agency to administer juvenile justice throughout the state, the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), with the mandate to establish and administer a state education quality assurance system in conjunction with the Florida Department of Education (DOE). To fulfill this education quality assurance mandate, in 1998 DJJ and DOE selected Florida

State University's (FSU) College of Criminology and Criminal Justice to develop and operate the statewide program named JJEPP.

In the effort to elevate the quality of juvenile justice educational services across the state and to ensure juvenile justice schools effectively implemented evidence-based reforms, JJEPP developed 4 interrelated functions. These included: 1. Conducting annual quality assurance (QA) reviews of each of the educational programs operating in Florida's juvenile justice facilities. 2. Providing technical assistance (TA) to improve the individual education programs. 3. Conducting research that identified and validated best practices in juvenile justice education programs and services. 4. Providing annual recommendations to DJJ, DOE and the Florida Legislature to guide state policy and practice related to juvenile justice education.

In the effort to ensure that the QA and TA services provided were effective, our research was focused upon guiding these functions. Specifically, our research agenda was designed to inform policy and practice through the use of evidence-based recommendations. The research included continuous literature reviews of empirical studies of juvenile justice education, case studies of high-and-low performing juvenile justice schools, research on school performance outcomes, and post-release longitudinal studies of students return to the community and school, and post release recidivism. JJEPP's final function of informing policy was accomplished not only through annual recommendations to Florida's DOE, DJJ, and the Legislature but included presentations to U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Congress. Further, JJEPP was recognized by the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention as an exemplary program and was funded to provide assistance to other states throughout the country in

relation to its' research based accountability of education services for incarcerated youth. The multi-year funding enabled JJEEP to work with each state's leading juvenile justice education policy makers and practitioners on the implementation of evidence-based juvenile justice education practices.

While JJEEP demonstrated a successful method for large scale system reform through evidence-based policies and practices in Florida and numerous other states, in 2010 the Florida Legislature decided to end the program. With twelve years of demonstrated effectiveness, the question is why eliminate a clearly successful program? The answer lies in political and fiscal contingencies. Following the financial crisis of 2008, Florida, like other states, was faced with numerous state budget shortfalls and pressure resulting from the high stakes testing movement on student achievement and chose to focus their efforts on mainstream youth in public schools. Driven politically by demands to show cost efficiency and student improvement in the state's 67 school districts with 3600 schools serving 2.5 million students. With these demands for cost efficiency and documented student learning gains, juvenile justice youth with little political capital or powerful advocates were left behind. The question we will now address is what are the prospects/strategies that researchers seeking to make a difference in policy and practice can implement to more effectively confront the political and fiscal challenges to the institutionalization of evidence-based policy and practice?

#### IV. Prospects

What has emerged as a recognized "best practice" in efforts by research criminologists to make a policy and practice difference are researcher and policy maker/practitioner partnerships. From 2009 to 2015, the National Institute of Justice



(NIJ) supported a series of researcher and policymaker/practitioner partnerships. As summarized by Spivak (2018), NIJ's Principal Deputy Director, researcher and policymaker/practitioner partnerships are the best way to implement rigorous research and evaluations that shape and inform policies and practices, and have on-the-ground impact. NIJ, in its efforts to promote these partnerships published two Partnership Guidebooks (2005), one for law enforcement leaders and one for researchers. Both guides provide the rationale for partnerships and describe the sequential process for initiating, organizing, implementing, and assessing the effectiveness of partnerships. Additionally, NIJ funded the "Building Bridges" study (2013) to identify and assess the prevalence of research and policymaker/practitioner partnerships in U.S. law enforcement. The study found that 80% of the law enforcement agencies surveyed to "sometimes" or very often use research to inform their policies and practices. However, it was found that the agencies rely primarily on Police Chief magazine, the FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, or various International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) publications rather than academic research journals. Importantly, less than a third of the agencies reported participating in a research partnership in the past five year. However, the larger law enforcement agencies with 100 sworn officers or more did report participating in a research partnership while the smaller departments, that constitute the majority of U.S. law enforcement, reported not having participated in a research partnership.

While NIJ has been prominent in promoting research and policymaker/practitioner partnerships across the criminal and juvenile justice system since 2009 by funding numerous projects, the specific solicitation program for these partnerships was discontinued in 2015. See Appendix I for a listing of the 29 funded

partnership projects. It remains unclear how the discontinuation of NIJ's partnership solicitation will impact researcher and policymaker/practitioner partnerships. However, it is clear that these partnerships provide an excellent strategy for those researchers intent on making a policy and practice difference.

### Partnership Examples

I will now turn to description of several partnerships between FSU's College of Criminology and Criminal Justice (FSU) and local and state criminal justice agencies to illustrate their usefulness in making a policy/practice difference while simultaneously advancing criminology as a scientific discipline.

#### Palm Beach County.

In the early 1990s, Palm Beach County's Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) received federal funding for the implementation of "Weed and Seed" initiatives in several high crime areas of the County. The CJC reached out to FSU to provide the evaluation of their Weed and Seed programs. Given the more than 400-mile distance between FSU's location in Tallahassee and Palm Beach County, FSU was concerned about logistics for effectively carrying out the evaluations. However, after a series of discussions with the CJC, it became clear that the Weed and Seed evaluation would serve as a beginning for what we both hoped would be a long-term researcher and policymaker/practitioner partnership to build infrastructure for data-driven criminal justice policy and practice in the County. Now after twenty-five years, FSU and Palm Beach have a continuing partnership having completed more than twenty criminal justice research and policy/practice studies with 3 major studies currently underway involving 7 FSU faculty

members, numerous PhD students, and numerous personnel from Palm Beach County's criminal justice system.

Over the years, we have collaborated on grant proposal writing and project designs, project implementation and evaluation, final reports, co-authored peer-reviewed articles, and research and policy presentations to national audiences and county government officials. However, it should be acknowledged that for almost three years, the partnership was suspended as a result of a change in leadership following the retirement of the long serving Executive Director of the CJC. The new Executive Director sought more direct control over how FSU conducted its research for the County. We objected to this new mandate and withdrew from the partnership until a new Executive Director, with a strong collaborative orientation, was hired. As a result, it is crucial to recognize that while these partnerships can be effective in making a difference, they are subject to change and problems as noted in the Building Bridges (2013) study that included the following:

- (1) Structural Barriers such as poor funding, geographic proximity of partners, high turnover of key partnership participants, and respective institution demands on partners.
- (2) Value differences between the researchers and policymakers/practitioners.
- (3) Interpersonal Relationships on ongoing communications, joint decision-making and trust.

The policy and practice outcomes of the FSU and Palm Beach County research partnership are summarized below by the current CJC Executive Director Ms. Kristina Henson (2018) as follows:

“Palm Beach County’s CJC has a 25-year history working with FSU on numerous projects including our Federal Weed and Seed sites, jail population projections, and medical services, Youth Violence Prevention Project, and most recently our MacArthur Foundation Safety and Justice Challenge. This long-standing partnership formed the basis for the data-driven policy analysis and decision making model that the CJC utilizes to perform its work. For instance, our various committees working on improving the courts, law enforcement, and corrections, all turn to data whenever questions are asked about operations or issues. In order to meet this need, CJC now has direct access to jail and court data in order to deliver the data and analysis so that the policy-makers can make informed decisions. FSU’s partnership with the CJC has raised our ability to build alliances that improve justice outcomes” (Henson, 2018).

Florida Department of Corrections (DOC).

In this 2012 Partnership project funded by NIJ, FSU and DOC developed a cohort of more than 250,000 inmates who were released from a Florida prison between 2004 and 2011. The cohort provided a major recidivism dataset containing 1000 variables. Employing the recidivism dataset, FSU and DOC completed 3 individual studies. The first involved an assessment of the effectiveness of prison-based substance abuse treatment upon post-release employment and recidivism. The second project was an assessment of the effectiveness prison-based work release programs upon employment and recidivism. The third project was an evaluation of the effect of post-prison supervision on employment and recidivism.

The specific policy/practice outcomes resulting from these 3 individual studies are as follows:

The recommendations in the study and final report, “An Assessment of Substance Abuse Treatment Programs in Florida’s Prisons Using a Random Assignment Experimental Design”, conducted through the Researcher and Policymaker/Practitioner Partnership project has resulted in the following changes by the DOC. The study found that the shorter the time between completion of a substance abuse program to when the inmate is released, the lower the likelihood of recidivism. Furthermore, inmates who participated in an aftercare substance abuse program had lower recidivism rates. As a result, the DOC now ensures that inmates participating in substance abuse programs complete treatment as close to release as possible. Further, the DOC now provides opportunities for released offenders to participate in aftercare programs as funding allows by negotiating aftercare services into state contracts.

The Researcher Policymaker/Practitioner Partnership project on the effectiveness of prison-based work release programs upon post-prison employment and recidivism found that participation in work release significantly reduces the likelihood of post-prison recidivism and increases the employment opportunities for released inmates. As a result of these findings, the DOC is expanding opportunities for inmates to participate in these proven effective prison-based work release programs.

Additionally, the DOC developed the Corrections Integrated Needs Assessment System (CINAS) study to determine what, if any, programming services inmates will benefit from the most to improve their post-prison reentry outcomes of staying crime free and not returning to prison. DOC asked FSU to conduct a validation of CINAS to

quantify the relative predictive accuracy of the CINIS instrument in terms of whether inmates returned to prison. Throughout the project, FSU worked extensively with the DOC's Division of Development, Bureau of Research and Data Analysis, and Bureau of Classification Management to ensure we had a clear and accurate understanding of the data we were analyzing and to assist in the interpretation of the empirical findings. The research findings demonstrated the predictive accuracy of the CINAS risk assessment tool. Additionally, FSU's recommendations for changing the data collection for CINAS from classification officers interviewing inmates to a self-administered process using Tablets to save officer time and encourage forthright responses by inmates are now being implemented by the DOC. Additionally, the validation of CINAS by FSU has been invaluable in the transitioning to a revised risk assessment tool for the DOC. (Bales and Lockwood, 2018.)

The FSU-DOC partnerships as summarized by the Florida Department of Corrections is as follows (2018):

“The Florida Department of Corrections has had a long-standing partnership with Florida State University, College of Criminology and Criminal Justice. Not only has the agency engaged in establishing and strengthening its researcher-practitioner partnership, many of its graduates are employed by the agency in leadership roles. The agency recognizes that to advance and inform correctional practices it must rely on the expertise of researchers. This is clearly visible through the agencies partnership with the College of Criminology and Criminal Justice. In all of our work with the College of Criminology and Criminal Justice the agency has been able to implement rigorous research and evaluations that have informed policies and practices and have on-the-ground impact.

The partnership provides the agency the opportunity to leverage limited resources to answer the most pressing needs and questions for Florida. These projects inform policy and practices centered on what works and what matters in the corrections field.”

With regard to the question of how do these researcher and policymaker/practitioner partnerships advance criminology as a scientific discipline, it can be pointed out that the recidivism dataset has contributed to a continuing series of professional meeting presentations and peer reviewed publications involving FSU faculty, graduate students, and DOC personnel as well as providing data for a number of PhD dissertations and master’s theses (see Appendix II).

Florida Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ).

This 2013 NIJ funded researcher and policymaker/practitioner partnership between FSU and DJJ involved 3 research and policy studies. The first study was an assessment of the use of “Civil Citation” as an alternative to arrest for juveniles. The second study was an assessment of the role of “Family Visitation” upon recidivism for incarcerated juveniles. The third study was a determination of individual youth characteristics and school level factors contributing to school referral of youth to DJJ for official processing.

The civil citation study resulted in providing DJJ with recommendations for implementing and sustaining the program statewide. Upon completion of the study, FSU reviewed with DJJ the significant program variations in implementation and use throughout the state. FSU recommended the concept of “booster shots” through periodic training and/or information dissemination to local law enforcement agencies throughout

the state to help sustain implementation and use of civil citation throughout the state. Today, the Florida Legislature has expanded the use of civil citation by allowing local law enforcement to issue multiple citations per juvenile for qualifying misdemeanors.

The family visitation study highlighted the importance of family visitation for reentry and identified barriers to visitation. Prior to the study, DJJ had not collected any systematic data on visitation. After surveying over 1,300 committed youth, FSU provided the department with their first look at who visits youth, how often they are visited, and the youths' perceptions on how visitation might help them with their community reentry. As a result, DJJ has continued to survey youth in residential programs about visitation even after the project partnership ended in order to better inform DJJ's visitation policies and practices.

The school-based delinquency study led to a better understanding of problems associated with school-based arrests. This resulted in DJJ awarding FSU a new funded study using a Randomized Controlled Trial for a school-based delinquency intervention program that places Juvenile Probation Officers in four high schools with higher concentrations of at-risk and delinquent youth.

In addition, the NIJ partnership between FSU and DJJ has led to new projects that continue to influence DJJ policies and practices including;

- Implementing and evaluating a school-based delinquency intervention in a large urban school district using a randomized controlled trial.
- Validating an Evidence-Based Sourcebook of treatment and intervention programs for juvenile justice providers. Providers throughout the state



now use this Sourcebook to choose from a list of Evidence-Based treatment and intervention programs.

- Assessing the state’s juvenile justice disproportionate minority contact.
- Rescoring the state’s juvenile justice risk and needs assessment to create more accuracy. DJJ’s risk assessment is now more accurate in predicting risk to reoffend and this information is used to place youth in a level of service that is most appropriate for them.
- Assessing the recidivism-prevention effectiveness of all of the state’s juvenile residential facilities. This information is used to rank programs based-upon their effectiveness.

The FSU-DJJ partnerships as summarized by Mark Greenwald, Director of Researcher and Data Integrity for the Florida Department of Juvenile Justice, is as follows:

“Florida has, to the best of my knowledge, the largest and most comprehensive juvenile justice data system in the country, if not the world. This data offers the opportunity to contribute to the knowledge base on delinquency and intervention approaches in ways that can benefit youth and stakeholders far beyond Florida’s borders. While the Department has a team of talented analysts, much of their time is devoted to producing reports required by the legislature and other stakeholders. The partnership with FSU allows the Department to leverage the skills and time of a team of top tier researchers and statisticians to accomplish research goals it couldn’t otherwise achieve on its own.” (Greenwald, 2018)

As with Palm Beach, DOC, and DJJ, these partnership studies have provided direct policy and practice findings related to public policy and practice at the local and state levels with likely implications for national applications from associated peer reviewed publications. See Appendix II for a listing of the peer reviewed articles published that have employed data from FSU's partnerships with Palm Beach County, DOC, and DJJ.

## V. Conclusion

Over the past century, criminology has evolved as both an applied and recognized scientific discipline. While the discipline has experienced shifts in its' science versus applied focus, it appears that criminology is now poised to effectively combine both purposes thereby simultaneously advancing criminology as a science and applied discipline. One of the most promising "best practices" in this simultaneous pursuit is researcher and policymaker/practitioner partnerships.

A clear example of the urgent need for these partnerships is the far too frequent occurrence of tragic school shootings. If we are to seriously and effectively confront this recurring public policy dilemma - it will take a well-planned and implemented partnership involving researchers and policymaker/practitioners. What we as criminologists know is that school shootings involve three interrelated components that include motivated offenders, vulnerable targets, and an absence of guardians. Any effective policy/practice response must take into account each of these interrelated components not only one of these components as is the case in current policy responses which are focused upon guns. Clearly, the list of other significant crime, criminal justice, and victimization problems is long and growing and in need of research and policy

collaborations. But this is certainly a time of great promise given the unprecedented availability of data, sophisticated methods of data analyses, and importantly, the growing recognition among researchers and policymakers/practitioners that we must work together if we are to effectively confront crime. It is interesting to note that in a publication by Morris, Wooding, and Grant (2011), the authors concluded that the time lag in health research translation into policy was 17 years. While we do not have research on the time lag in the policy translation of criminological research, it could easily be as long or longer. However, given the more immediate policy translation of research resulting from the researcher and policy maker/practitioner partnerships – it is evident the time lag can be significantly improved.

In conclusion, this is a special time in the history of criminology. While the challenges of politics and fiscal constraints will remain, as this conference's title recognizes "Making a Difference About Crime and Criminal Justice" is a welcomed discipline mandate for the future.

**APPENDIX I.**

From 2009 to 2015 NIJ funded 29 Researcher-Practitioner Partnerships covering a range of criminal justice topics and involving parole and probation departments, corrections, juvenile justice, victim advocacy agencies, police departments, specialized courts, and other practitioners. Total funding under this NIJ solicitation was \$10,850,550.

Today this line of funding no longer exists, however, NIJ continues to encourage researcher-practitioner partnerships throughout their many solicitation areas.

**2009**

<b>Award Title</b>	<b>Awardee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>State</b>
Sex Offenders: Recidivism and Collateral Consequences	University of Louisville Research Fdn., Inc.	\$76,502	KY
Santa Cruz Research Partnership	County of Santa Cruz	\$314,768	CA
Increasing Student and Community Safety	West Virginia University Research Corporation	\$157,388	WV
Building Bridges between Police Researchers and Practitioners: Agents of Change in a Complex World	University of South Carolina Research Foundation	\$247,665	SC
Achieving Successful Researcher-Practitioner Partnerships that Strengthen Practice and Policy: Lessons Learned From the Field	Yale University	\$343,565	CT

**2010**

<b>Award Title</b>	<b>Awardee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>State</b>
Junior Faculty Grant Program: Comparative Evaluation of Court-Based Responses to Offenders with Mental Illness	The University of Chicago	\$440,437	IL
Criminal Justice Researcher-Practitioner Fellowship Placement Program - Enhancing Judiciary's Role in Child Welfare: Promoting Interagency Collaboration and Best Practices	University of Maryland	\$275,991	MD

**2011**

<b>Award Title</b>	<b>Awardee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>State</b>
Area 1: Evaluating Reentry in Iowa: Context, Treatment Provision, Individual Propensity and Recidivism	Iowa State University of Science and Technology	\$225,428	IA
Criminal Justice Researcher-Practitioner Fellowship Placement Program: Determining the Timing of	University of Maryland	\$209,323	MD

<b>Award Title</b>	<b>Awardee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>State</b>
Parole Discharge Based on the Concept of "Redemption"			
Assessing the Effects of Hot Spots Policing Strategies on Police Legitimacy, Fear of Crime, and Willingness to Participate in Building Collective Efficacy	Board of Trustees, Southern Illinois University	\$395,481	IL
Florida Department of Corrections and Florida State University Research Project	Florida Department of Corrections	\$598,982	FL
Prosecution and Racial Justice in New York County	Vera Institute of Justice	\$385,715	NY

## 2012

<b>Award Title</b>	<b>Awardee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>State</b>
Assessing the Effectiveness of Four Juvenile Justice Interventions on Adult Criminal Justice and Child Welfare Outcomes	Policy Research Associates Inc	\$342,737	NY
Criminal Protection Orders As A Critical Strategy To Reduce Domestic Violence: The Impact Of Orders On Victims' Well-Being, Offenders' Behavior, And Children's Contact With Offending Fathers	Yale University	\$753,081	CT
Evaluating a Researcher-Practitioner Partnership and Field Experiment	Curators of the University of Missouri on Behalf of UMSL	\$123,928	MO
Therapeutic Change, Length of Stay and Recidivism for Incarcerated Juvenile Offenders	UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON	\$220,054	WA

## 2013

<b>Award Title</b>	<b>Awardee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>State</b>
Florida State University and Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Researcher-Practitioner Partnership Proposal to enhance evidence-based juvenile justice research and policy.	Florida State University	\$495,329	FL
Enhancing the Research Partnership between the Albany Police Department and the John Finn Institute for Public Safety	The John Finn Institute for Public Safety Inc	\$449,133	NY
Evaluating the Effects of Realignment Practices on Recidivism Outcomes	Public Policy Institute of California	\$495,951	CA
Measuring Success in Focused Deterrence	Temple University - Of The Commonwealth System of	\$298,264	PA

**2014**

<b>Award Title</b>	<b>Awardee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>State</b>
A Process and Impact Evaluation of The Veterans Moving Forward Program: Best Practices, Outcomes, and Cost-Effectiveness	San Diego Association of Governments	\$334,360	CA
Cognitive Behavioral Interventions for Medium- and High-Risk Juvenile Offenders: A Statewide Randomized Controlled Trial in Virginia	Urban Institute	\$569,702	DC
Area 2: Reducing Crime for Girl in the Juvenile Justice System through Researcher-Practitioner Partnerships	New York University	\$645,456	NY
The prosecution of child sexual abuse: A partnership to improve outcomes	University of Massachusetts Lowell	\$498,333	MA
Evaluating Medicaid Access for Halfway House Residents: A Research Partnership with the Connecticut Department of Corrections	Urban Institute	\$499,989	DC
Integrating Emergency Department Data with Law Enforcement, Emergency Medical Service and Community Data to Reduce Violence	The Medical College of Wisconsin, Inc.	\$194,175	WI

**2015**

<b>Award Title</b>	<b>Awardee</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>State</b>
Reading Intervention, Academic and Behavioral Outcomes for Adolescents: A Community Agency and University Partnership Project	Ball State University	\$388,478	IN
Investigating the Impacts of Institutional and Contextual Factors on Protection Order Decision-Making	AZ Board of Regents on behalf of Arizona State University	\$369,928	AZ
Young Adults in Jails	Vera Institute of Justice	\$500,407	NY

Source: NIJ (2018).

## APPENDIX II.

### Peer Reviewed Publications from FSU, DOC and DJJ Researcher and Policymaker/Practitioner

#### Partnerships by Journal:

<u>Journal</u>	<u>Number of Presentations</u>
<i>Crime and Delinquency</i>	6
<i>Journal of Criminal Justice</i>	6
<i>Journal of Experimental Criminology</i>	2
<i>Journal of Offender Rehabilitation</i>	1
<i>International Journal of Criminology and Sociology</i>	3
<i>Justice Quarterly</i>	6
<i>Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency</i>	5
<i>Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology</i>	1
<i>Justice Research and Policy</i>	2
<i>Criminal Justice and Behavior</i>	1
<i>Journal of Quantitative Criminology</i>	2
<i>Criminal Justice Studies</i>	1
<i>Punishment and Society</i>	1
<i>Criminology &amp; Public Policy</i>	2
<i>Criminology</i>	5
<i>Journal of Offender Monitoring</i>	1
<i>American Journal of Criminal Justice</i>	1
<i>Journal on Poverty Law &amp; Policy</i>	1
<i>Crime, Law and Social Change</i>	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>48</b>

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