



UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM



CENTRE FOR CRIME  
JUSTICE AND POLICING

# One Year Anniversary, Centre for Crime, Justice and Policing: Some Non Random thoughts

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# Looking Back

- The University of Birmingham has a long tradition of high-quality research and engagement in crime, justice and policing
- However, till recently, it was conducted individually or in small teams
- About 3 years ago, a grant application brought many of us together
- A loose network was formed and cross disciplinary working and joint grant applications became more common

# Looking back

- Through successful collaboration across disciplines, the group became more cohesive
- Also linked in with external partners, both academic and practice oriented (e.g. Better Policing Collaborative)
- The cohesive identity was formalised as the Centre for Crime, Justice and Policing one year ago
- Today, the diversity of the research is by itself testimony to the breadth and depth of the Centre's research.

# What sets us apart?

- There are other centres of excellence in CJS
- Typically led by small cohesive groups specialising in certain areas
- Our centre is notable for the way we have transcended disciplinary boundaries
- Interdisciplinary not for its own sake but because big problems in the CJS require cross disciplinary expertise

# Why interdisciplinary research?

- Criminal justice faces ever more challenges today
- Official figures show a drop in police recorded crime in the UK but the distribution of crime shows a more complex pattern with violent crime showing a rise
- The phenomenal increase in cybercrime is challenging even the way we conceptualise and observe acquisitive and personal crime in the digital era

# Why interdisciplinary?

- Areas of emerging political instability and conflict interact with existing criminal networks to present risks not only to personal security but to basic state functions
- This presents problems that goes beyond the remit of one discipline
- Needs a new breed of research-e.g. social science insights with systems engineering
- This is what the Centre achieves-a place where scholars from economics, psychology, law, public health, social policy, computer science, geography (the list goes on) can interact and collaborate.

# Academic Policy interface

- Academics don't just interact with each other
- We work with practitioners and policy makers: police, social workers, Home Office, MoJ, Think Tanks
- Using different models, we produce research that is rigorous and relevant
- From the conceptual end (what is harm?) to policy evaluations, the Centre's research is wide ranging.

# Research in the Centre: Examples

- ‘What works’ in reducing DV?
- Suspect prioritisation
- Helping shape strategies to reduce harm for high risk missing persons (with the University of Liverpool)
- Cyber-crime: Making sense of the evidence around this growing phenomenon (with University of Derby scholars)
- Effective use of police resources-Solvability Models
- Linking adverse childhood experiences and adult life criminality

# Research in the Centre

- Analysing effectiveness of custodial alternatives
- Closer co-working of CPS lawyers and police RASSO units in case processing of sexual offences
- The Public Health Burden of Violence
- Understanding the actors that process cases:  
Prosecutors
- Designing prisons for well being
- Assessing how police handle calls (THRIVE)

# Activities and Achievements

- We have delivered on an ambitious set of work packages for the Police Knowledge Fund which has led to strengthening our practice networks and led to follow on funding
- We continue to build a strategic partnership with our nearest neighbour – West Midlands Police
- Several consultancy contracts to evaluation interventions in the area of policing and rehabilitation (incl. domestic violence and sexual offences, missing persons, support for female offenders)
- Further funding secured for the Academic Advisory Group – a police-academic group that meets to develop innovative approaches to tackling crimes such as on-line CSA.
  - Co-hosted by UoB.

# Activities and Achievements

- Centre's work and several of our collaborators featured in the POLFED and ITN production 'Above and Beyond' for the POLFED 2017 conference.
- Co-Director, Jess Woodhams, short-listed for the University's Founders Award for Policy Advancement.
- Media coverage: Expert commentary by Dr Juliane Kloess on teaching children about porn and sexting featured in article in the Independent.
- Media coverage: Feature article re. Jess Woodhams and her work with the Police in Mercedes AMG magazine.

# Activities and Achievements

- A journal article on the reasons for engaging in multiple perpetrator rape published in the prestigious journal, *Archives of Sexual Behavior*
- Two impact events delivered to UoB future research leaders as well as early career researchers about *Engagement, Influence and Impact in the area of Policing*
- First journal article from the Crime Linkage International Network published in the prestigious *Journal of Criminal Justice*.
  - C-LINK also featured in Belgium's National Security Plan 2016-2019

# Our Future Research Leaders: Examples of our PhD students' work

- Mark Irving, a doctoral researcher in the College of Arts and Law. Under the supervision of Dr. Steve Hewitt (History) and Dr. Richard Young (Law), Mark is critically examining protest policing approaches, strategies and tactics, using the 2010 G20 Summit in Toronto as a case study.
- Jessica Eaton, a doctoral researcher in the School of Psychology, has developed a new measure of the blame allocated to victims and perpetrators of sexual violence.
- Fazeelat Duran, a doctoral researcher in the School of Psychology, has completed her research on psychological contract, wellbeing, coping and stress with a large police force and a fire and rescue service.

# Our Future Research Leaders: Examples of our PhD students' work

- Aixa Garcia Ramos, in the Department of Economics is examining the impact of easier access to divorce in Mexico on IPV
- Katharine Inglis, in the Department of Economics is analysing the role of risk preferences in the 'crime gender gap'
- Ariana Matsa, in the Department of Economics is analysing the complex interaction between crime and the state of the economy
- Joht Chandan, jointly supervised by Krish Nirantharakumar (Public Health), Julie Taylor (Nursing) and Siddhartha Bandyopadhyay (Business School) is looking at the long term health outcomes of child maltreatment

# Looking ahead

- With a current group of researchers that encompass the whole spectrum of ‘blue sky’ theorists to policy evaluation experts, there is cause to be optimistic
- Especially when it is supplemented by a talented group of doctoral researchers
- We hope to continue to play a pivotal role in understanding and solving the complex problems of the CJS in the 21<sup>st</sup> century!