

# The Stockholm Criminology Symposium 2006

**Brief accounts of some  
of the presentations**





PHOTO: ESTER SORRI

Jan Andersson

# We share the problems – and share our knowledge

**At last I had the chance** to take the rostrum and welcome everybody! After months of frantic work, in which virtually everybody working at the National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) had in some way been involved. I now had the honor of opening the Stockholm Criminology Symposium. Before me in the imposing Aula Magna at Stockholm University sat experts from more than 40 different

countries, all of whom had come to spend three days sharing their knowledge and listening and talking to colleagues from all over the world.

**One of my strongest** impressions from the Symposium was of the extent to which the fundamental crime policy issues are so similar across different countries. For a small country like Sweden it is therefore

important to take note of international research findings as to what works, what doesn't work and what appears to be promising. The Symposium, and perhaps most of all the work conducted prior to the Symposium, has meant that we at Brå have established new and closer ties to researchers and research environments in other parts of the world. This in turn means that we will become increasingly aware of new research findings from abroad, which will further improve our ability to contribute to methodological developments and to expanding the knowledge base within the criminal justice system.

**This review contains** brief accounts of a number of the presentations given at the symposium's many sessions. Space does not permit for more than a general outline of the contents – more than 250 different papers were presented. But it will be possible to read more on our website – [www.criminologyprize.com](http://www.criminologyprize.com).

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Session 1:  
Opening ceremony



KNOWLEDGE

# An international symposium – a boost to our knowledge

**“The next best thing to having knowledge is knowing where to find it.” These were the words with which Sweden’s Minister of Justice, Thomas Bodström, opened the Stockholm Criminology Symposium at the University of Stockholm.**

TEXT: SUSANNE ERIKSSON

**History was made** when the Stockholm Criminology Symposium, an international conference on criminological research was held for the first time. The event was organized by the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå), the University of Stockholm, the International Society of Criminology (ISC) and the Scandinavian Research Council for Criminology.

“The goal,” according to Jan Andersson, Director General of Brå, “is to create a forum for the exchange of knowledge between countries all over the world. This is important in order both to make use of the knowledge that is already available and to discover new angles of approach and new ideas.”

**The Symposium was held** at Stockholm University in the midst of the Football World Cup in June. It was attended by more than 500 participants from all over the world. These included Germans, Indians, Australians, Iranians, Americans, Japanese, Hungarians, Sri Lankans and Turks. The participants listened to no fewer than 275 speakers, who presented their research at over 90 seminars. The presentations covered an impressive range of subjects and dealt with everything from strategies to combat terrorism and the prevention of violence, to the question of what works in the field of correctional treatment.

“For a small country such as Sweden, with limited research resources, this is a real bonus,” says Jan Andersson.

Or, in the words of Thomas Bodström: “There are two big differences between this symposium and the World Cup. Here there are 44 countries participating, whereas the World Cup only has 32. At the World Cup there is only one winner. From the Symposium everyone leaves as a winner.”

**The Symposium will be held** every year in connection with the presentation of an international prize in criminology. This prize, the Stockholm Prize in Criminology, has been instituted with the support of the

Swedish Ministry of Justice and is financed by American, Japanese and Swedish foundations. Amongst other things, the prize is intended to advance the development of knowledge on the causes of crime and on strategies for crime prevention. The prize, in the sum of one million Swedish kronor, was awarded for the first time in connection with this year’s Symposium. It was shared by Professors John Braithwaite from Australia and Friedrich Lösel from Germany. ●

READ MORE AT [WWW.CRIMINOLOGYPRIZE.COM](http://WWW.CRIMINOLOGYPRIZE.COM)



**Session 46:**

Key issues in criminal career research:

New findings from the Cambridge study in delinquent development

**Session 68:**

Antisocial behaviours in the three first decades of life.

**Session 89:**

Saving children from a life of crime



Alfred Blumstein and David Farrington

# Parents play a significant role in the development of criminality

**If you want to avoid becoming a criminal, choose the right parents.**

**Parents are one of the many risk factors influencing criminality.**

TEXT: SUSANNE ERIKSSON

**The study of criminal careers** is nothing new in the field of criminological research. The Belgian Adolphe Quetelet published a graph tracing the correlation between age and criminality as early as 1831. Professor David Farrington and Alex Piquero PhD of Cambridge University, Terrie Moffitt, professor of psychology at King's College, London, Brandon C. Welsh PhD, of the University of Massachusetts, and the legendary Professor Alfred Blumstein were among the internationally recognized experts who attended the Stockholm Symposium to present their research findings.

The Cambridge research team studied 411 boys from South London, most of whom were born in 1953. They interviewed the boys and their parents over a period of many years and supplemented these interviews with data from criminal and court records.

**By the age of 48**, seventeen of the boys from the original sample were dead. Several of these had been convicted of offences of various kinds over the course of their lives. Of the remainder, twenty-eight were classified as chronic offenders. These seven per cent accounted for more than half of the total number of offences committed by the group as a whole.

"We found that an early debut in crime predicted a large number of offences and a long criminal career," says David Farrington.

Altogether 21 per cent of the 411 boys in the study were convicted of one or more offences between the ages of 10 and 16. By the time they reached 50 years of age, 41 per cent had been convicted of an offence.

"On average, the criminal career peaked at the age of seventeen."

David Farrington has also studied how many offences the boys actually admitted at interview and compared this with the number of offences for which they had been convicted.

"The boys were only convicted for about one offence for every forty or so that they admitted. It is worth bearing these numbers in mind when talking about the dark figure and so forth."

**David Farrington highlights** a number of risk factors associated with a long criminal career, including having parents with criminal convictions, low school attendance and coming from a broken home.

"Impulsiveness, hyperactivity and a risk-taking personality at the age of around eight to ten are synonymous with a high risk for involvement in juvenile delinquency. But how parents react to their children's behavior is at least as important. The most important risk factor we have identified is the absence of good parenting"

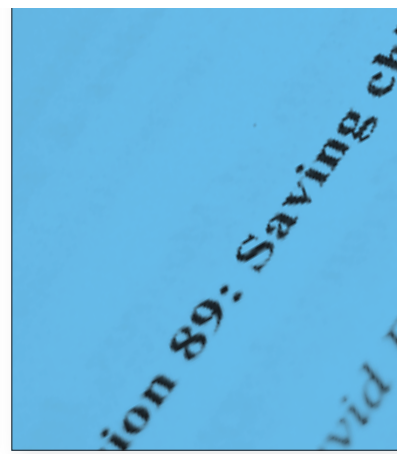
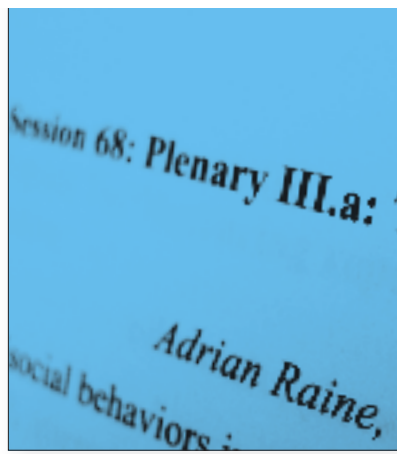
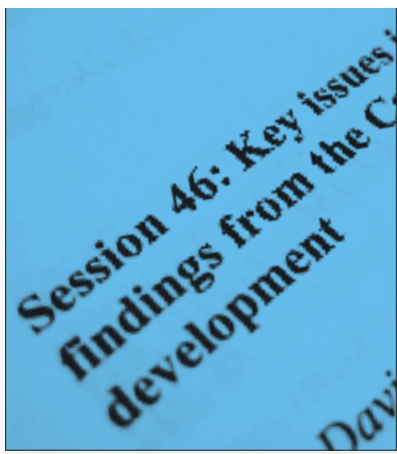
The researchers emphasize the fact that the presence of a risk factor does not make you a criminal, however. The research shows rather that the more risk factors that characterize a given child, the greater the risk that he or she will subsequently embark upon a criminal career.

One controversial subject is that of the ways in which divorce affects young children. Research shows that divorce does constitute a risk factor, but that it may to some extent be compensated for by the behavior of the remaining parent.

"In those cases where the father does not participate in the child's life, it has been shown that the significance of the father's absence decreases in relation to the strength of the emotional ties between mother and child. Put in simple terms, a good mother may compensate for an absent father," says David Farrington.

**Terrie Moffitt's research** has identified risk factors similar to those noted by the Cambridge team. She has studied a sample of almost 500 New Zealanders born in 1972. She has divided them into two groups, which she refers to as life-course persistent and adolescent limited offenders respectively. Terrie Moffitt's life-course persistent offenders, who may be compared with the chronic offenders identified in the Cambridge study, also comprised seven per cent of the sample and accounted for approximately half of the total number of offences committed. By the age of 26, in addition to their involvements in crime, this group was also characterized by extensive social problems. In her presentation Terrie Moffitt described how it was possible to see

*"It's not just the child that needs help, but the whole family."*



that this group would develop problems at a very early stage.

“It is like a snowball. Once it is in motion it just goes on gaining momentum,” says Terrie Moffitt.

“It begins with these children being viewed as difficult as babies. As they get a little older they become hyperactive and aggressive, and other children don’t like them. They often have problems in their motor development, have difficulty learning to read and a low IQ. Their parents often have a criminal background. The mothers are young and not infrequently have mental health problems. Parenting is harsh and inconsistent. The family is often abandoned by the father. Older siblings remain – they too are often involved in crime.

“For this group, early intervention is imperative. It’s not just the child that needs help, but the whole family. And they will need lifelong assistance from the social services and other agencies,” says Terrie Moffitt.

The second most criminal group in Terrie Moffitt’s survey, the adolescent limited offenders, accounted for the majority of the remaining 50 per cent of the offences registered within the sample. Their background did not differ so very much from that of a normal family, but a somewhat larger proportion of these parents had criminal convictions.

For Moffitt, “These are better candidates for bringing about a significant change.”

**Terrie Moffitt reports** that one of the more interesting findings from their study was that seven per cent of the boys were aggressive as children but that not all of these became life-course persistent offenders. She therefore considered it particularly important to study what it was that had led them to refrain from a criminal career.

“We were disappointed however. It turned out that this group of children was so different from their peers that the most reasonable explanation was that they had been excluded during their teens, when the

majority of delinquent children commit offences in groups.”

Together with David Farrington, Brandon C. Welsh has compiled a list of factors that may militate against the development of a criminal career. He argues that systematic studies have shown that certain programs and methods not only prevent offences but also represent a long-term gain to the taxpayer. At the individual level, different child skills and social skills training programs (as implemented in the USA for example) have been found to be effective.

“These efforts are also important in equipping the subjects to succeed in other areas of life, for example relationships and work,” says Brandon Welsh.

At the family level, programs such as parental training have shown themselves to be valuable, as has pre-school education.

“These prevent risk factors in the parents, such as an overly harsh discipline or parenting that is inconsistent or poor in other respects.”

Within the school environment the research teams have found several different types of school program that may prevent delinquency. These involve reorganizing classes or entire school year-groups in order to break negative patterns, increasing the children’s self-control using various cognitive techniques and running programs focusing on leadership in the school and the classroom. ●

## Further reading:

- The Institute of Criminology, Cambridge University [www.crim.cam.ac.uk/](http://www.crim.cam.ac.uk/)
- Terrie Moffitt’s study: [www.iop.kcl.ac.uk/iopweb/departments/home/?locator=351](http://www.iop.kcl.ac.uk/iopweb/departments/home/?locator=351)
- The Department of Criminal Justice at the University of Massachusetts [www.uml.edu/College/arts\\_sciences/criminal/default.html](http://www.uml.edu/College/arts_sciences/criminal/default.html)

## Risk factors identified by Farrington, Moffitt and others:

### Parents/family

- Convicted/criminal parents
- Poor parental control/how parents react to their children’s behavior
- Inadequate involvement/neglect
- Inconsistent parenting
- Overly harsh discipline
- Broken homes
- Family disputes
- Mothers with mental health problems
- Large families
- Changes of legal guardian
- Single parents
- Young mothers
- Criminal peers/siblings

### Problem behavior

- Viewed as difficult as a baby
- Impulsive
- Hyperactive
- Fights with/disliked by other children
- Poor school attendance
- Reading problems
- Problems with motor skills
- Low IQ

### Personality

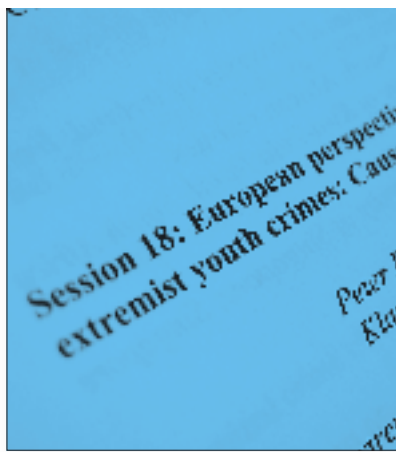
- Neurotic
- Hostile
- Risk-taking
- Alienated from others/society
- Tense
- Poor self-control
- Emotionally cold
- Not conscientious

Please note that these risk factors are not presented in order of importance and that they have been taken from several different studies.



PHOTO: THOMAS WÄGSTRÖM

Peter Rieker

**Session 18:**

European perspectives on right-wing extremist youth crimes: Causes and prevention

# Racists become violent early

**German experts state that racists have often grown up in inattentive family cultures and that many were violent long before they came into contact with foreigners.**

TEXT: HELENE LUMHOLDT

**It was the day** of an open-air meeting of neo-Nazis in Sollentuna, just outside Stockholm, and the press were expressing alarm about hooliganism and neo-Nazi elements at the Football World Cup in Germany. In one of the university's large lecture halls, the German professor Klaus Wahl was speaking, together with Peter Rieker of the German Youth Institute in Halle and Thomas Gabriel of the University of Zürich, on the theme of "European Perspectives on Extreme Right-Wing Juvenile Delinquency, Causes and Prevention".

"It is possible that an extreme right-wing ideology provides violent people with a reason to be aggressive and thus lends legitimacy to their actions," said Klaus Wahl.

**Many of those** who commit acts of racist violence have a prior history of violence. Many of them have been suspended from school, some of them even from nursery school, as a result of their aggressive behavior.

"There are also those who have suffered profound grief, but who have not received any response to this grief and who have turned to aggression as a cry for help," explained Klaus Wahl, who stated that these youngsters often have an oversensitive radar. They interpret signals poorly and often perceive that others have initiated the provocation.

"They see hostility almost everywhere."

In a research project in Germany, in which German youths and foreigners have been filmed using hidden cameras, it was found that German youth who reacted aggressively to foreigners also reacted in a similar fashion to German strangers.

"In other words their feelings are not based on hostility to foreigners but on fear and suspicion of strangers in general," said Klaus Wahl and pointed out the difference between xenophobia – fear of strangers, and xenoktonia – hostility towards strangers.

**Thomas Gabriel**, who has concentrated on parental influence and its effects on the youth generation, argued that the focus is today often directed at the attitudes and actions of youth, whereas he has himself found that racist attitudes are often also present among adults.

"To put it simply, it may be said that whereas older people are more negative, younger individuals are more criminal."

Peter Reiker argued that, "What is common to racist youth seems to be that they have grown up in inattentive family cultures," and he went on to discuss the possibilities for preventing the occurrence of racist attitudes and violence.

In Germany there used to be a variety of programs directed at young people with a potential for violence and with a racist and extreme right-wing orientation. Attempts have been made with everything from

cognitive behavioral therapy to educational programs focused on the Holocaust, but there is no consensus as to what has worked. Recently the Germans have instead increasingly shifted their focus to an emphasis on preventive action, but here too there is no definitive knowledge as to what works.

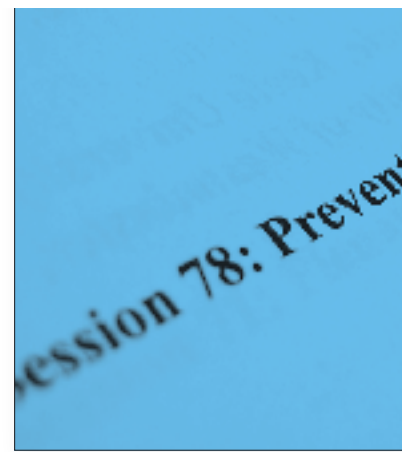
"There has been no synthesis of findings, partly because of the difficulties associated with measuring the effects of different educational processes," stated Peter Rieker, who agreed with his colleagues on the importance of creating more points of contact where majority and minority populations can meet. He also emphasized the importance of early intervention.

"And by early we don't mean at the age of sixteen but at pre-school," added Klaus Wahl, who also felt that preventive programs must be geared to the individual problems and needs of each child. ●

HELENE LUMHOLDT IS A FREE-LANCE JOURNALIST.

## Further reading:

- German Youth Institute website: [www.dji.de/cgi-bin/projekte/output.php?projekt=479](http://www.dji.de/cgi-bin/projekte/output.php?projekt=479)
- Thomas Gabriel's research program: [www.nfp40plus.ch/topic4353/story9092.html](http://www.nfp40plus.ch/topic4353/story9092.html)



# Holland prevents violence in schools

**Dutch experts claim that the PeaceBuilders program, which is used in a number of Dutch schools, is successful in preventing violence. The method is intended to improve the atmosphere and reward positive behavior.**

TEXT: ANNA TORNBERG

**“We have always had violence** and we have always wanted to control it. The means of dealing with violence have changed over time, however,” stated Dr Leontien van der Knaap from the Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek- en Documentatiecentrum (WODC) in the Netherlands.

Since we are very determined, as we have always been, to find ways of dealing with violent crime, a large number of different programs and anti-violence campaigns are being implemented in different parts of the world. Leontien van der Knaap argues however that what is lacking is a systematic evaluation of which methods have been found to produce effects. Van der Knaap has therefore joined Laura Nijssen in conducting an ambitious study intended to identify factors conducive to success in combating violent crime.

The two researchers have examined two types of program: programs designed to influence behavior and programs intended to alter the physical environment. In the first category they found two methods that they regarded as successful. The first is called “Responding in Peaceful and Positive Ways” (RIPP) and the second “PeaceBuilders”. Both are intended for use in the school environment. RIPP works to spread knowledge and PeaceBuilders is intended to improve the atmosphere and reward positive behavior at school.

**One conclusion** that van der Knaap and Nijssen have drawn is that major strides can be made towards preventing violence by working actively with children and their parents. In the opinion of the research team, this has its greatest effect on children with behavioral

problems, but it is also valuable for children in problem districts. They therefore recommend that politicians invest in action at schools and in selected residential areas.

As regards changing the physical environment in order to reduce violent crime, the researchers have identified three effective methods: problem-oriented policing with an emphasis on “hot spots” (places where a large number of offences are committed), the use of surveillance in selected locations and improved street lighting. Their study showed that improved street lighting leads to an increase both in pride in one’s own area and in informal control, which in turn reduces the risk of crime. Surveillance and problem-oriented police work focused on hot spots appear to produce a preventive effect by systematically reducing the opportunities for committing crime.

**Another conclusion**, and a piece of advice that Leontien van der Knaap and Laura Nijssen would like to pass on to decision-makers, relates to the importance of ensuring that projects are properly evaluated. They have seen major failings in this area. They believe that a better system of evaluation would result in the feedback of more useful knowledge so that subsequent projects would not have to start from square one. This is not to say that it is simply a question of transferring a method that has been successful in the USA to an area with similar problems in Europe. They consider it very important to begin by analyzing how a method that has proved successful in one location can be adapted to the needs of another. ●

[READ MORE ON WWW.WODC.NL/ENG/](http://WWW.WODC.NL/ENG/)

## CCV in the Netherlands

Ida Haisma’s main task involves the collection and transfer of knowledge. She is the head of the Netherlands Centre for Crime Prevention and Safety (CCV), an organization that represents both private and government interests.

“The CCV is intended to be a place where all parties concerned with crime-prevention work can meet to mull over problems. We hope that by functioning as a meeting point, the CCV can make a positive contribution to the work of these different actors.”

One of the CCV’s aims is to reduce the number of violent crimes. They have therefore focused on areas such as neighborhood watch schemes, schools, recreational areas, shopping centers, the transport system and industrial areas. Their short-term aim is to transfer knowledge to these target groups, thereby influencing behavior. In the longer term they work to ensure that successful crime-prevention strategies can be implemented and also to review and collate international research and to examine ways of adapting findings to the Dutch context.

The CCV also acts as a bridge between the research community and practitioners. For this reason the CCV gives high priority to what it calls toolkits, providing specialized guidance for dealing with specific problems. ●

ANNA TORNBERG IS A WRITER/RESEARCHER AT BRÅ

[READ MORE ABOUT THE CCV ON:  
WWW.HETCCV.NL](http://WWW.HETCCV.NL)

**Session 70:**  
Stockholm Prize in Criminology  
addresses winner

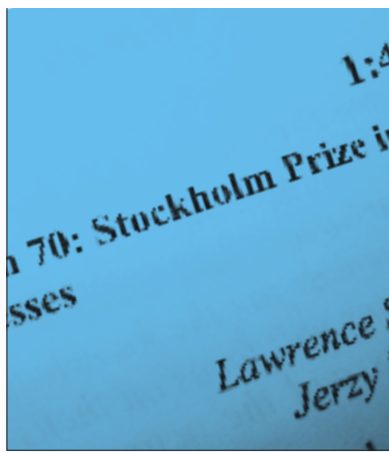


PHOTO: THOMAS WÄGSTRÖM

John Braithwaite

# Shame – the key to reducing violence

**Rape has become an increasingly common feature of warfare. But by utilizing the perpetrators' shame and remorse it is possible to reduce the risk of continued violence. Prizewinner John Braithwaite used rape as an illustrative example of how restorative justice works.**

TEXT: ÅSA BOLMSTEDT

**According to** Professor John Braithwaite of the Australian National University, winner of the Stockholm Prize in Criminology, rape is not only a part of war, but remains as a form of criminality that characterizes post-war societies.

“Violence often increases after the cease-fire,” he says.

Restorative justice can often reduce the risk for continued violence. If the perpetrator feels shame, is confronted with the injury he or she has caused and has an opportunity to show remorse, this reduces the risk of future crime.

**John Braithwaite** describes the Bougainville islands in the Pacific, where there was a struggle for freedom from Australian rule in the late 1980s and 1990s. John Braithwaite first visited at the end of the 1960s as a social anthropology student and has since been back to the islands several times.

“I would have been surprised if women in Bougainville had reason to be afraid of being raped by an unknown assailant in 1969. There was a respect for women in this matrilineal society, even though rape presumably occurred within marriage and in the form of incest.”

John Braithwaite explains that war leads to a change in the view of shame and narcissistic pride. Rape is often used to terrorize

people and drive them from their homes, especially in the context of ethnic conflicts. The warlords look the other way when rapes are committed. In addition there is often talk of rapes in the plural, which makes them anonymous – neither victim nor perpetrator is identified as an individual.

Once peace had been restored to Bougainville, efforts were made to get over these attacks by means of restorative justice.

**The aim was to** restore respect for women and men. This was done by means of an atonement process that began with a series of meetings between different villages, men and women, victims and perpetrators. By identifying the perpetrators, the process utilized their shame and remorse. During the concluding reconciliation ceremony, the participants made several speeches, sang and gave gifts to the women, including the bones of victims who had died.

“This is a far from conventional punishment. But you have to get to the roots of the violence, not simply punish the culprits. In Melanesia we have seen that if the perpetrator is not reintegrated into society, there is a risk of a continuing high level of violence.”

ÅSA BOLMSTEDT IS A FREE-LANCE JOURNALIST

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## Forgiveness reduces stress after crime

“We can today state with confidence that those victims of crime who have the ability to forgive the perpetrator experience a reduction in stress,” argues Caroline M. Angel, who works at the University of Pennsylvania, USA.

Restorative justice is based on the idea that all the parties affected by a crime can work together to understand and repair its harmful consequences. In Sweden victim-offender mediation is based on these theories.

As regards different methods of restorative justice and their effects on the victims of crime, a number of evaluations have been carried out. These have consistently found that restorative justice is good for the victims. Caroline M. Angel presented a study of the relationship between forgiveness and post-traumatic stress symptoms in the victims of robberies and break-ins. The results show that those who had participated in mediation were more likely to forgive the perpetrators and that they also experienced fewer post-traumatic stress symptoms than those victims who had not done so.

Another important question is that of the effect that different methods have on reoffending. Heather Strang presented results from 26 different studies. The results from some studies showed a reduction in levels of reoffending, whereas others found no difference at all and in some reoffending had actually increased.

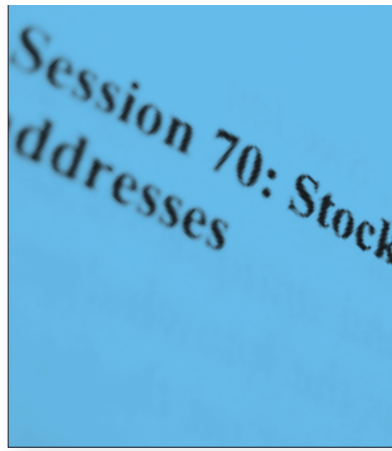
The disparity of these results indicates that there is still much that we do not know about what influences the risk for reoffending. Is it the individual characteristics of the perpetrator, for example, the type of crime, the social distance between victim and perpetrator, the social context, or some form of interaction between these variables? ●

LOTTIE WAHLIN IS A RESEARCHER AT BRÅ



PHOTO: THOMAS WÄCSTRÖM

Friedrich Lösel



**Session 70:**  
Stockholm Prize in Criminology  
addresses winner

PRIZE  
WINNERS

# Broad programs may prevent juvenile crime

**The prizewinner Friedrich Lösel has studied many subjects, but is most satisfied with research into what restrains young people from engaging in crime. He devoted his presentation to describing what the research actually says about crime-prevention programs for anti-social youth.**

TEXT: ÅSA BOLMSTEDT

**Friedrich Lösel**, Director of the Institute of Criminology at Cambridge University and winner of the Stockholm Prize in Criminology, compared two treatment programs for young offenders. One showed that youth criminality and drug problems declined, but in the other those who received treatment fared worse than those for whom nothing was done at all.

“So treatment programs may harm young people, despite being implemented with the best of intentions,” says Friedrich Lösel.

Friedrich Lösel has conducted meta-studies comparing the results of a number of preventive programs and treatment programs for young people who have committed criminal offences or displayed anti-social behavior.

He states that faith in crime-prevention programs has varied over time. A period of optimism in the 1960s and 1970s was followed in the 1980s by pessimism regarding the value of treatment. Research only took off again in the 1990s.

“Now we have learned that the results vary. Today we are no longer wondering whether anything works, but rather what it is that does work.”

There are no programs that function perfectly, and their results vary a great deal. Lösel is optimistic nonetheless. In general both preventive and therapeutic programs show small, but positive, effects.

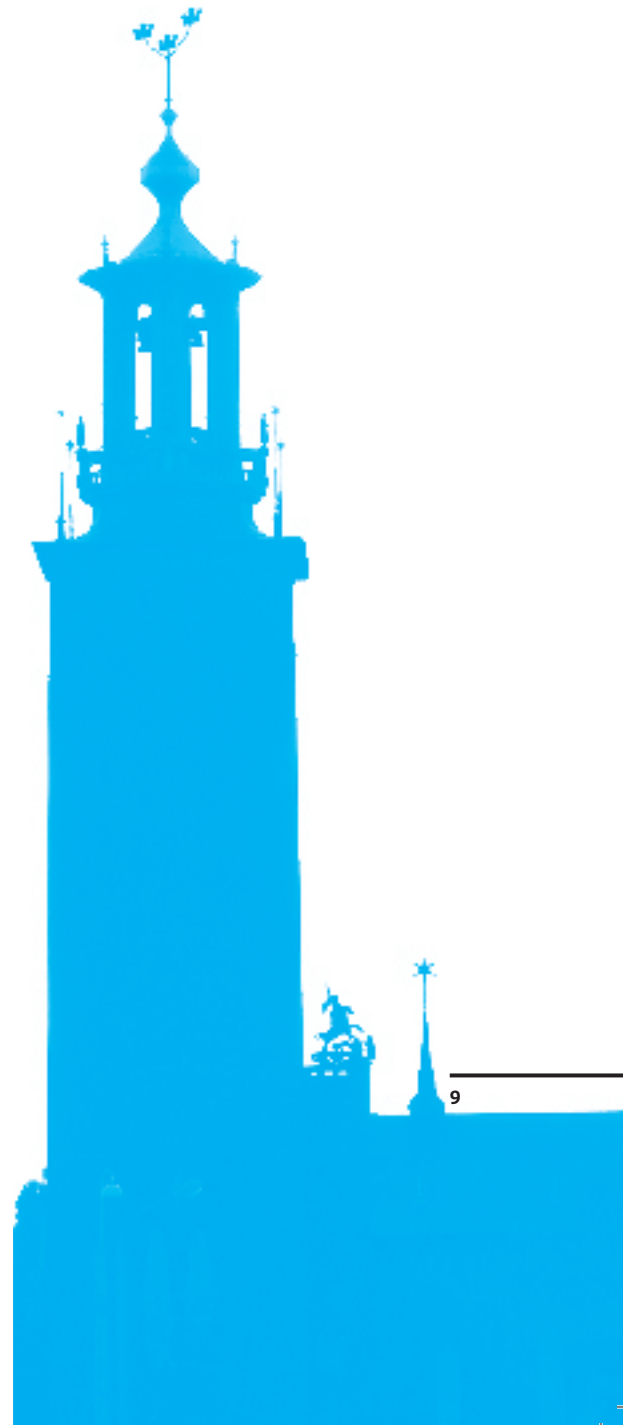
“The effects are small, admittedly, but they are there. In this field even small successes are relevant. Efforts soon pay for themselves financially. In addition there are savings in human suffering.”

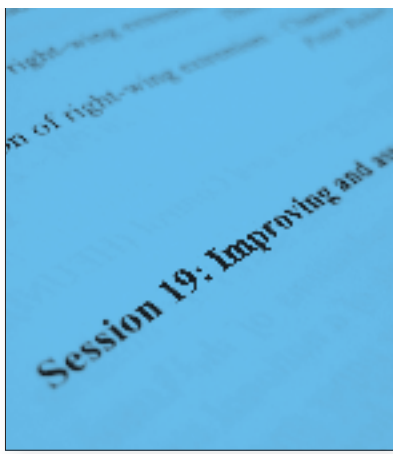
**Meta-studies have shown** that the best results are generally obtained from “multimodal” programs, which combine several different components, and from programs that use cognitive behavioral therapy. Treatment programs produce the poorest effects in relation to those children and young people with the lowest and the highest risks of developing antisocial behavior, and the best effects among those whose risk is assessed as medium-level. But Friedrich Lösel also voices a warning against over-reliance on a single method. Over the last ten to fifteen years, criminologists have been searching for techniques to help anti-social youngsters. It must not be forgotten however that individual factors in the young people concerned play an important role. It has been found for example that personal contact may be more important than the method itself.

“The conclusion is that preventive and therapeutic programs show encouraging results. But we need more research. The programs are not prescriptions, merely guidelines.”●

ÅSA BOLMSTEDT IS A FREE-LANCE JOURNALIST

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**Session 19:**  
Improving and assessing policing police practices

# Knowledge of local problems is beneficial to police work

**Police work is often measured in terms of the number of offenders apprehended or of successful police investigations. But the content of the work of the police is not studied as frequently. What methods are actually to be preferred in police work? What works and what doesn't?**

TEXT: ÅSA BOLMSTEDT

**What does "good policing"** actually mean? What does it look like? Having long focused on issues of quantity, criminologists have at last begun to study quality.

"We often measure how many suspects the police apprehend, but we seldom study how well the police act when they do so,"

provement. In about half of the cases they acted in an exemplary fashion, in the others they could have done better. There were cases of both the overuse and the under use of police power."

He also studied whether the social status of the suspect played any role in the way the

studies in Sweden. He observes that half of the international studies arrive at the conclusion that zero tolerance works, half that it does not.

The Swedish studies found no evidence of a relationship between zero tolerance policing and a reduction in the number of serious crimes. Admittedly levels of car theft had fallen in connection with the implementation of a zero tolerance approach, but there was no decrease in the number of robberies or burglaries. The findings from a case study in which Peter Lindström compared Eskilstuna and Örebro showed that increased interventions against drug crime led to a reduction in burglaries, but not in robberies. In fact robbery levels increased in Örebro, where the police had taken the hardest line in the battle against drugs.

"The conclusion is that we do not know whether zero tolerance works. We have no evidence that it does. On the contrary, an aggressive policing strategy may lead to growing discontent, particularly in socially deprived areas."

**In the United Kingdom** a reform involving an increase in the number of neighborhood police officers is in the process of

*"The conclusion is that we do not know whether zero tolerance works."*

says Stephen Mastrofski, of George Mason University in the USA.

To study this issue, he observed 502 meetings between police officers and suspects in Richmond, Virginia. He examined whether it was appropriate to apprehend the suspect and the way in which the police behaved. In particular he was curious about the ways in which they exercised their powers.

"Only in a few cases, about one in ten, was the behavior of the police unacceptable. But at the same time there is room for im-

provement. Younger people were treated more roughly however.

**In Sweden**, Associate Professor Peter Lindström has examined how well zero tolerance, i.e. the idea that tougher interventions against minor offences lead to a reduction in the number of serious crimes, works in practice. He has both reviewed existing international studies of zero tolerance policing, and has also carried out his own



**Session 54:** Improving policing through evidence-based approaches



being implemented and is currently being evaluated. It is hoped that the proximity to local residents will have positive effects on both crime prevention and public confidence in the police.

Interviews with 300 people conducted prior to the introduction of the reform and again once it had been in progress for a year showed that public confidence in the police rose in areas that were assigned more neighborhood police officers, by comparison with areas not included in the reform process.

The conclusion is that three factors are essential to successful policing that will win the confidence of the public: the police must be visible and accessible, the local community must be involved in the identification

of perceived problems, and there must be purposeful police work focused on tackling criminality and disorder.

“Some police districts produced much better results than others. Perhaps this provides the key to how we ought to work in future. These police districts had been careful to identify local problems in consultation with representatives of the local community and they knew who the lawbreakers were,” says Rachel Tuffin, who conducted the interviews.

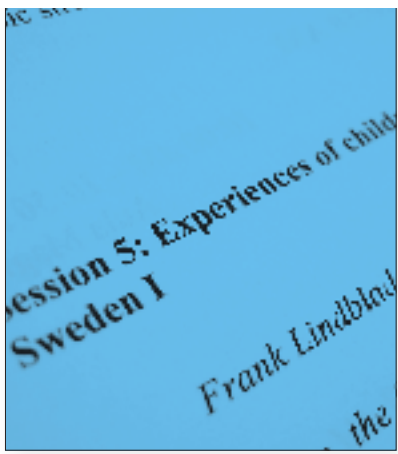
**Peter Stelfox**, of the National Centre for Policing Excellence in the United Kingdom, is pleased that attention is being focused on the need to professionalize police

work, but points out that there is no discussion of what is actually meant by professionalization.

“To me professional work is a mixture of knowledge, practice, and the real problems that every police officer encounters. We must find out what individual police officers know and are capable of, instead of simply focusing on the group level. Today we know what they achieve with their investigations, but not how they go about getting there. To study this process we must first create common concepts and get people to use them in practice.”

ÅSA BOLMSTEDT IS A FREE-LANCE JOURNALIST

READ MORE AT [WWW.CENTREX.POLICE.UK](http://WWW.CENTREX.POLICE.UK)



**Session 5:**  
Experiences of children as crime victims

**FOOTNOTE:** The study was carried out together with Pär Anders Granhag, Gothenburg University, and Sven Å. Christianson, Stockholm University.

# Interview style has an effect when questioning children

**Children often tell the truth, but leave out sexual information when interviewed by the police. This is shown by a study of children who have been subjected to verbal sexual abuse.**

TEXT: SUSANNE ERIKSSON

**One and the same man** subjected 64 children to verbal sexual abuse by phone. Thanks to the culprit's own meticulous documentation, Lina Leander, a doctoral student at the Department of Psychology at Gothenburg University, has been able to study both the children's evidence itself and also how it was affected by police interview techniques.

The perpetrator was very methodical. He telephoned children between the ages of eight and sixteen and introduced himself as a university employee. He asked questions which the police later found documented in a questionnaire. They began with questions of a non-sexual nature but then went on to sexual matters. The man recorded the children's answers methodically.

**No less than 81 per cent** of what the children said when questioned by the police proved to be correct. A further 10 per cent was partially correct. But the children left out a lot of information. Since the research team were able to check which questions the man had put to the children – often questions of a very serious sexual nature – they were able to examine how much of this information was described to the police by the children. It turned out that they omitted the majority of the sexual information (97 per cent) but reported much more of the neutral information (30 per cent).

“There is reason to believe that the children remember the sexual, abnormal information just as well as or better than the neutral information and thus there is reason to suspect that they deliberately leave out the sexual information, perhaps because they

are ashamed,” says Lina Leander.

“Obviously it is also important to be aware of this when questioning children who have suffered physical sexual abuse.”

**Lina Leander** has also studied how the police interviewing style influenced the children's statements. The police officers were all plain clothes detectives, some of them men and some women, and all were used to interviewing children. The different types of questions asked by the police at interview were recorded and coded on the basis of amongst other things whether or not the questions were open ended. The initial phase of the questioning, at which point trust has to be established between interrogator and child, i.e. before the child is asked about the offence itself, proved to have a bearing on how detailed the children's answers were later in the interview.

The study shows a positive correlation between the number of personal questions put by the interrogator at the beginning of the interview (e.g. “What is your favorite subject at school?” or “How many brothers and sisters have you got?”) and the amount of detail given by the children at a later stage in the interview process. There was also a positive correlation between how much information the interrogators provided about themselves and about the interview (“My name is Eva, I'm used to talking to children about things that are hard to talk about,” etc.) and the level of detail subsequently provided by the children.

“In other words the interview style was found to be very important to the children's evidence,” concludes Lina Leander. ●

## Children constitute important witnesses

Children can act as witnesses and assist in securing a conviction. This applies both to a child who has been a victim and to one who has witnessed abuse. And detailed information is important in helping the police to collect evidence. This was the message presented by Frank Lindblad, associate professor in child psychiatry at the Karolinska Institute, who has studied sex offences against children for many years.

During the Symposium he presented the case of a girl who described a male pre-school teacher who had urinated on a sofa. A forensic examination enabled the police to link the man to the sperm that was subsequently found on the sofa. Together with other evidence, this testimony led to a conviction.

In another case where it was possible to prove the abuse of ten children – because it had been recorded on film – the research team and the police were able to establish that in roughly half of the cases the children told the truth about the sexual abuse, while half of the children reported nothing at all.

Several of the studies of sex offences against children that were presented at the Symposium were financed by the state Fund for the Victims of Crime, which is administered by the Crime Victim Compensation and Support Authority. Any person convicted of a crime punishable by a prison term is required to pay the sum of 500 SEK into the fund. ●

**Session 44:**  
Effectiveness of criminal justice sanctions.  
What works?

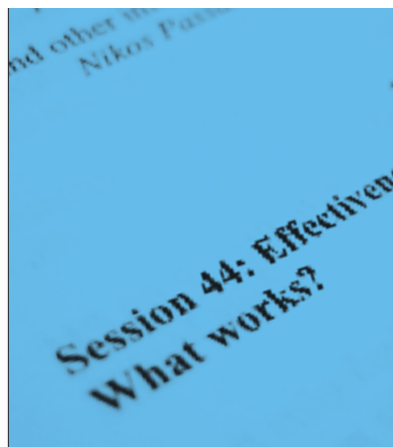


PHOTO: THOMAS WACSTRÖM

CORRECTIONS

Doris MacKenzie

# Which forms of treatment really work?

**The number of inmates in American prisons has risen dramatically since the 1980s. Many of them are recidivists, which has thrown the spotlight on the question of rehabilitation and treatment. Which treatment programs actually work? And can GPS surveillance reduce the risk of reoffending?**

TEXT: ANNIKA LARSSON

Every year 650 000 people are released from prisons in the USA having served their sentences. Two-thirds of them are back in prison within three years. Professor Doris MacKenzie of the University of Maryland has studied which treatment programs work and the nature of the scientific foundations on which they are based.

“At the same time as we are locking up more and more people we have begun to move from rehabilitation to a belief that nothing works. But research shows that there are effective programs,” she said, during a seminar on the effectiveness of correctional care.

Amongst other things inmate study programs, irrespective of whether they were theoretical or vocationally oriented, were found to produce promising results. Cognitive behavioral therapy, sex offender treatments, the USA’s “drug courts”, substance abuse treatment, and multi-systemic therapy (MST) were also found to work well.

“What the programs that worked had in common was that they created the conditions for change in the individual.”

**Only when the individual** is ready for change can he or she benefit from the opportunities that are provided, for example in the form of work or social contacts.

According to Doris MacKenzie it is difficult to provide a general answer to the question of how much these programs affect the level of

reoffending, but she estimates the size of this effect at between 10 and 20 per cent.

The programs that did not work also turned out to have various characteristics in common. They had little or no theoretical basis, and they were focused on punishment and control or on examples intended to frighten offenders into refraining from reoffending.

**In another American study**, Associate Professor Brenda Blackwell of the University of Georgia is evaluating a project involving the GPS surveillance of prisoners released on parole. Persons in the state of Georgia who had served sentences for serious sex crimes or crimes of violence were divided into two groups. One group was supervised by a passive GPS system, where the information was uploaded once a day. It was thus impossible to supervise these parolees in real time. The other group was supervised using an electronic tag. The results are not yet finalized but according to Brenda Blackwell, the GPS system has not been impressive.

“This may to a high degree be due to the way the technology has been used. The use of a passive GPS system, without supervision in real time, makes very little difference.” ●

ANNIKA LARSSON IS A FREELANCE JOURNALIST

READ MORE ABOUT DORIS MACKENZIE’S RESEARCH AT [WWW.EVALUATINGCORRECTIONS.ORG](http://WWW.EVALUATINGCORRECTIONS.ORG).

## Dutch test GPS and tag

The question of whether GPS technology can be an effective tool for extending the area of application for the electronic tag in the penal system is highly topical, and projects studying this question are underway in many parts of the world. In the Netherlands a project is being conducted that involves the use of GPS surveillance for certain groups who have been placed on probation.

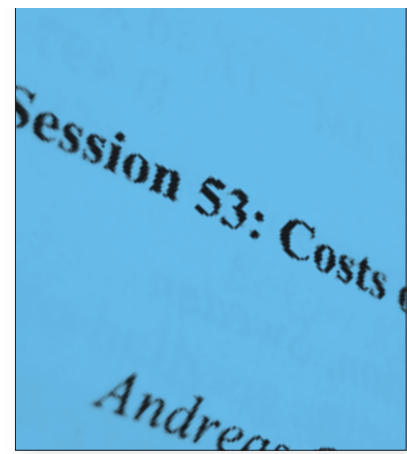
“In view of the experiences of other countries, the trial will involve offenders convicted of crimes of violence, particularly those who have repeatedly assaulted their partners, and young offenders,” said Michiel van der Veen, the project leader employed by the Dutch Correctional Service.

“The idea is that GPS surveillance, together with other measures, will help to reduce the proportion of reoffenders.”

The trial has so far chiefly been concerned with designing the technology and testing it on individuals. The project is planned to involve 50 participants when fully operational.

Professor Mike Nellis of Strathclyde University in Scotland has followed the development of electronic tagging over a period of many years. His main question during the Symposium was whether the tag constitutes an ethically acceptable alternative. His own opinion was that the tag may be perceived as a more far-reaching intervention than is generally realized. For a tag to be ethically justifiable it is therefore vital for the individuals concerned to have the right to refuse and to instead serve their sentence in prison. ●

STINA HOLMBERG IS A HEAD OF DIVISION AT BRÅ.



# What does crime cost?

**What do crime and crime prevention cost? How much can be saved by preventing crime? Is it even possible to find out? Three of the world's most knowledgeable criminologists in this area took part in the Stockholm Criminology Symposium.**

TEXT: ERIK GREVHOLM

**Debora Moolenaar** from Holland told the Symposium that crime in her native country cost more than 1,200 euro per year per head of population, and at the same time she stressed the unreliability of the calculations on which this figure is based. Richard Dubourg from the UK believed that the methods currently available do not allow for the calculation of the real total costs of crime, but that it is possible to obtain a picture of how certain types of crime are associated with higher costs than others. Mark Cohen from the USA described how methods are currently being developed to measure the costs of crime on activities that lie at some considerable distance from the offence itself, from the victim or from the work being conducted to combat crime, including for example costs that are consequences of the fear of crime among the general public.

Research into the costs of crime is a developing field of study, and one where there

are also crying out for the means of calculating both the costs of anti-crime measures and the amounts that can be saved by investing in these. Why, then, isn't the research community rushing to meet this need for information? The answer to this question is as simple as it is challenging – as was expressed very clearly at the seminar. Quite simply, accurate calculations of the costs of crime, and of any savings that can be made through the implementation of crime-prevention measures, are very difficult.

**The three experts** described the lack of the statistical information required for such calculations. To start with, the actual number of crimes committed has to be calculated for different types of crime. But no country really knows how many cases of assault, threatening behavior, sex offences, burglaries and so forth are actually committed. Estimates here

in this context. And if one instead shifts to a focus on attempting to estimate that savings that a certain course of action may produce, researchers are once again reminded of the absence of reliable figures. For most of the preventive measures that are implemented, there are no practical ways of calculating how many crimes are prevented, which makes it impossible to analyze potential savings.

**The difficulties encountered** by the pioneers in this field of research are therefore instead restated as challenges and strategies for finding a way forward. Debora Moolenaar emphasized the possibility of better estimates of crime figures offered by the Dutch annual victim and security study that is currently under development. Richard Dubourg provided an account of the British view that the most important thing need not be to calculate all the costs that may arise from various types of crime. He instead visualized rougher but more uniform comparisons focusing on which types of crimes produce greater or lesser costs for individuals and society. Finally Mark Cohen presented a picture of a number of unutilized methods for processing the results of both existing and future questionnaire surveys, which may improve our knowledge of the costs of crime both large and small. He is also considering the question of how the costs and length of prison sentences affect the total cost picture. This area of research may thus have a quite explosive potential, even if it has not as yet caused very much of a stir. ●

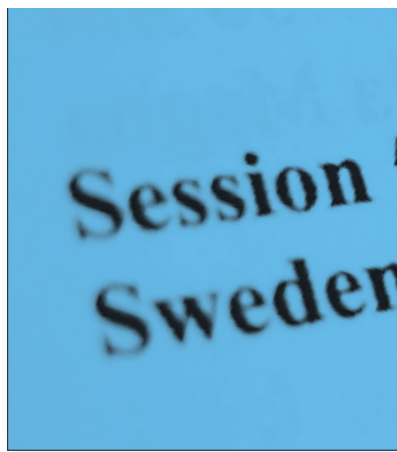
*“Research into the costs of crime is a developing field of study.”*

may be substantial gains to be made. But few researchers have as yet been attracted by the possibility of studying the financial consequences of crime. There are thus major opportunities to contribute to the measurement of the total costs of different types of crime. In the context of competition over scarce resources, such information is of course invaluable to decision-makers both within and

may thus quite naturally be well off the mark. Secondly, crime may result in a large number of direct and indirect costs of which only a few are known and even fewer are statistically documented. There is no information describing how a particular type of assault affects the long-term income and consumption patterns of victims and their families, for example, which may be very important

ERIK GREVHOLM IS CHIEF COORDINATOR AT BRÅ

READ MORE AT [WWW.HOMEOFFICE.GOV.UK/RDS](http://WWW.HOMEOFFICE.GOV.UK/RDS)



**Session 2:**  
The academic status  
of the discipline of criminology

# Criminology on the march

**What is the state of criminology in the world? And how should the subject be developing in order to meet the demands of today? The chair of the International Society of Criminology, Tony Peters, spoke on the subject.**

TEXT: SUSANNE ERIKSSON

In many countries, criminology still does not enjoy any major status as a subject in its own right. However, there are exceptions. In North America and Canada the subject has been around for a long time and there are even special "Criminal Justice Schools". In Sweden criminology is found as a subject in its own right only at Stockholm University. Criminological research is nonetheless being conducted at a number of universities, colleges and research institutes, albeit often at departments of sociology, psychology or law.

"Criminology as an individual subject is becoming increasingly familiar in different parts of the world," says Tony Peters, chair of the International Society of Criminology (ISC).

"The new prize for criminology constitutes another step towards raising the profile of criminology as one of the most rapidly expanding subjects in the social sciences."

Tony Peters believes that as a result of new courses and the growth of the subject in general, universities and colleges are now supplying professional criminologists to occupy different positions within the justice system and at other organizations and agencies. He argues further that this involves an entirely new role for students of criminology and one that they need to be prepared for. Another big difference compared with the past is the enormous focus on crime in the media.

"I remember a time when crime was reported on page five or six. Now crime news completely dominates certain types of newspaper."

Tony Peters points out that many criminologists are frustrated by the way that crime is presented in the media. He feels that the profession has an important function to fulfill as experts. He would like to see courses set up that integrate criminology with media and communications studies.

"We must ensure that our students are prepared to play the role of experts in the media and to contribute to an improvement in the quality of the information supplied to the public."

Last but not least, Tony Peters underlines how important it is to listen to practitioners.

"It is important that we meet those who utilize the information supplied by criminology; for them to be able to ask questions." ●

## Further reading:

- International Society of Criminology – <http://perso.orange.fr/societe.internationale.de.criminologie/>
- European Society of Criminology [www.esc-eurocrim.org/](http://www.esc-eurocrim.org/)
- American Society of Criminology – [www.asc41.com/](http://www.asc41.com/)

## Several explanations for the crime rate drop in the USA

In the early 1990s crime levels began to decline sharply in the USA. The year 1993 is often spoken of as the year that witnessed the start of "the crime drop in America". In his address to the Stockholm Criminology Symposium, Alfred Blumstein, best known as one of the true pioneers of criminal career research, offered four important explanations for the drop in crime.

The first of these related to increased efforts to restrict access to firearms. The late 1980s and early 1990s had seen a sharp rise in levels of violent crime, and particularly in offences involving the use of weapons. This led to intensified efforts to reduce both crimes of violence and the number of weapons in circulation. The police confiscated many weapons, particularly from young people, which contributed to a decline in violent crime.

The second explanation discussed by Blumstein was the war on drugs, and the war on crack cocaine in particular. The crack epidemic peaked at the end of the 1980s and in the early 1990s. The demand for crack then declined sharply and marijuana replaced it as the dominant drug. Crack is associated with crimes of violence, which is not the case for marijuana, at least not to the same extent. Blumstein sees this as an important explanation for the reduction in crime from 1993 onwards.

The third explanation that was discussed was the incapacitation effect. A greater number of active criminals were imprisoned and therefore had no opportunity to commit offences out in the community. There was a sharp increase in the number of prison inmates by comparison with preceding periods.

In conclusion, Blumstein emphasized economic explanations for the reduction in crime. The USA experienced an economic upturn, which made it easier for young people to enter the labor market instead of becoming actors on the drug market. ●

ROBERT SVENSSON IS A RESEARCHER AT BRÅ.

The second *Stockholm Criminology Symposium* is arranged in conjunction with *The Stockholm Prize in Criminology*, in Stockholm, Sweden, June 4-6, 2007.

Hosted by The Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention (Brå) and The International Society of Criminology (ISC) at the Stockholm University.

For information about *The Stockholm Criminology Symposium* and *The Stockholm Prize in Criminology*, please visit [www.criminologyprize.com](http://www.criminologyprize.com)

