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Article

Do Parole Boards Punish Testimony?

By: Robert Worley

If we already worry about jailhouse informants fabricating stories to curry favor with the state, should we not be equally concerned about the opposite danger: inmate witnesses withholding the truth for fear of angering the state. This second danger is quieter, harder to detect, but damaging in ways that are less visible.

While I've never seen a parole hearing in person, the script is familiar from televised hearings, and it's usually the same. The prisoner enters the room like an actor hitting his mark, head held high enough to appear confident yet bowed just slightly so as not to offend the board, holding up certificates meant to prove rehabilitation. The board runs through its familiar questions about insight, remorse, and community safety, while everyone in the room knows the real test is not rehabilitation but performance. The prisoner must perform the role of a compliant inmate: not so compliant as to seem institutionalized, but convincing enough to satisfy an audience that holds all the power.

But what happens when a prisoner has testified in a criminal trial on behalf of a defendant, or even as a witness for the plaintiff in a civil lawsuit—perhaps even a case against the institution itself. What if, by offering words the state would rather not hear, the prisoner risks being denied parole

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Consider the doctrine. The Supreme Court in *Greenholtz v. Inmates* (1979) told us that parole is not a constitutional right, but a mere “hope.” Yet even a “hope” cannot be denied as punishment for constitutionally protected speech. The government cannot penalize a witness for telling the truth under oath. This rule absolutely should be extended to inmates in parole proceedings: the state cannot say, “Because you testified against us, we are denying you release.” That would be retaliation, plain and simple, and courts from *Franco v. Kelly* (2d Cir. 1988) to *Bridges v. Gilbert* (7th Cir. 2009) have confirmed that retaliation for testimony or grievance-filing is actionable under 1983. But the reality is parole boards are not required to justify their decisions with precision. They can deny release without ever mentioning testimony and instead rely on routine language about lack of insight, the nature of the crime, or continued threat. Unless someone leaves a paper trail—a stray remark in a file or a careless admission on record—the retaliatory motive vanishes into thin air. Denial of parole, in this sense, becomes the most elegant and untraceable weapon of all. Meanwhile, each board member is free to fall back on reasons like insufficient rehabilitation or risk to reoffend, broad justifications expansive enough to fit almost any decision. This is the genius, and the danger, of discretionary power: it allows retaliation without ever appearing retaliatory.

This is not to suggest that all parole board members act with retaliatory motives. Many approach their work with a great deal of integrity and professionalism. But, consider the stakes involved. When incarcerated witnesses believe that testifying on behalf of a defendant could cost them parole, it means fewer prisoners willing to take the stand, fewer truths revealed, and more silence in the courtroom where justice supposedly thrives on openness. The problem does not stop with one inmate’s parole hearing; it spreads outward, touching defendants who lose testimony, juries who

never hear critical evidence, and judges who rule in cases warped by fear-driven silence. It is not enough for courts to repeat that prisoners retain some constitutional rights. What is needed are real safeguards: parole boards required to provide transparent, reviewable reasons with judges willing to take a close look at how discretion in parole hearings can be used to prevent inmates from testifying at trials. The real danger is not fabricated testimony but the truths never spoken, erased before they ever reach the courtroom.

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The Citizen's Guide to Public Safety in the Era of Trump

By: *Martin Alan Greenberg*

In most of the nations of the world, the main profession for coping with crime and disorder is the police. Even tiny Vatican City, the world's smallest independent country, is "protected by the Swiss Guard, an elite unit provided by Switzerland, whose members take oaths to protect the Pope. Vatican City also relies on the Italian police and military for additional emergency support" (Sanusi 2024). In the United States, "when you think of the police you think primarily of local police and state highway patrols. Depending on where you live, you may include sheriffs and their deputies in the kinds of police you know. In reality, however, there are dozens of kinds of police. Park rangers and marine patrols are also considered police, as are federal police like the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), the Border Patrol, the U.S. Marshal Service, the Secret Service, the Coast Guard, and many others. Some communities also have volunteer police, auxiliary police, and reserve police. In addition to police hired by the local, state, and federal governments, there are also thousands of people who are hired privately, such as mall guards or security guards, who perform police-like services" (Wirths & Bowman-Kruhm, 1998, p. 3). Currently, in the U.S., the Trump administration has unilaterally decided to send agents of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and various state units of the National Guard to help enforce local and federal laws in certain cities. ICE is a federal law enforcement agency under the supervision of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Its stated mission is to conduct criminal investigations, enforce immigration laws, preserve national security, and protect public safety.

A citizen's approach to public safety in the era of President Trump, such as the deployment of volunteer police (Auxiliary or Reserve), is needed. This approach is emphasized because it not only recognizes the important role of private citizens in their own protection, but because it offers a broad approach to public safety. It stresses the importance of developing the essence of professionalism in the field of policing—the building up of trust between the people and the police. Without such a relationship, criminals may walk among us to commit harm because of citizen apathy or fear. The augmentation of police strength through the training and use of volunteer police should completely alleviate the need for National Guard troops. However, under the Trump administration, Congressional action is probably needed to curtail any unnecessary operations of ICE.

All citizens—young, middle-age, and senior—can reduce criminal opportunity. Better informed citizenry and better security methods can be practiced with aid of volunteer police. For example, volunteer police can lead efforts in every community to establish a senior citizen shopping program that provides safe bus transportation and a police presence on certain days in specific shopping areas. In such a program, volunteer police can also provide a training program for senior citizen volunteers. Upon completion of a special course, the seniors return to their home, apartments, or housing projects and act as crime prevention liaisons between the police and residents of their area. Moreover, in cash-strapped communities, in order to supplement school safety police departments might assign auxiliary police officers to assist with supervision during the lunch hour. Every school day an auxiliary officer could park his or her patrol vehicle in front of the school to enhance the police department's visibility. The

auxiliary officer could then patrol the school hallways and during the lunch period help supervise the lunch room and playground for various time periods. In addition, if reserve or auxiliary volunteer police officers were to be elevated to the ranks of school resource officers (SROs), they would be able to present law-related curriculum to students, faculty, and parents; provide informal, law-related counseling to students, teachers, and parents; mediate student conflicts; help guide students and parents to appropriate community services; and work closely with full-time school resource officers, social workers, counselors, and administrators to ensure students have access to all available resources they might need.

Furthermore, the largest volunteer and unpaid auxiliary police force in the U.S. exists in New York City, with more than 4,000 members. They do not carry firearms and are directed to not intervene in dangerous situations or confront suspects. They do possess batons for self-protection and radios to contact full-time police. On the other hand, it would be most beneficial if their training was upgraded to the model used for Norway's regular full-time police—also a largely unarmed organization. The Norwegian government provides extensive training for its law enforcement personnel because the nation considers policing to be an elite occupation. "The force accepts less than 15 of the qualified candidates who apply each year. Once accepted, candidate officers are required to earn a three-year bachelor's degree, a year of study in ethics and society, a fourth year of shadowing officers, and a final year completing an investigative research thesis" (Boland, 2020).

The fact is that in many areas, the full-time police have been given an impossible responsibility. They cannot prevent crime altogether, and whatever amount of crime they actually do prevent by their presence on the street cannot readily be demonstrated. On the other hand, new statistical

methods of analysis with data collected by expert volunteer police may help fill in the missing data. The use of volunteer police offers numerous opportunities to learn about the effectiveness of many different strategies. Significantly, until the police are willing to recognize the importance of the volunteer police strategy, they will continue to do what they have always done—"muddle through," coping in a more or less satisfactory way and oftentimes lacking the help and trust of the community. Such lethargy ignores the important influences of social cohesion and resiliency for the achievement of domestic security—factors readily enhanced through volunteer police programs.

Volunteer policing offers limitless opportunities for strengthening civic responsibility. Nearly 50 years ago, Michael Canlis, Sheriff Coroner of San Joaquin County, California, implemented a program of citizen involvement in its most direct form by using its auxiliary police force. When Canlis's project was put into place, the San Joaquin County Sheriff's Department already had an unusually effective auxiliary system. The first auxiliary class graduated from an intensive training course in 1952. These members were sworn in as deputy sheriffs, carrying all the authorities and responsibilities of regular officers. Under Canlis's direction, the auxiliary force, on a weekend in February each year, assumed total operation of the department for a 24-hour period (Burden, 1976). While this experiment is not currently possible in America's large cities, such as Chicago, Philadelphia, or New York City, volunteer police units can build community trust and expand the resources of any police department throughout the year.

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Martin Alan Greenberg (PhD, Criminal Justice, The City University of New York; JD, New York Law School) is the author of 8 books concerning public safety issues, especially the role of citizens in the co-production of safer communities. His ninth book entitled *Engaging Underprivileged Children in the Nation's Capital: The Officer Oliver A. Cowan Story* will be published by Bloomsbury in 2026. He has served as both a professor and administrator of criminal justice programs for more than three decades. His practitioner roles have included work as a senior court officer/acting court clerk, judicial aide, probation officer, auxiliary police deputy inspector (New York City), and school security aide. He is the immediate past president of the Virginia Association of Criminal Justice Educators and recently completed a term as chair of the ACJS Section on Cybercrime, Terrorism, and Security Studies. He has been active in the ACJS since 1971.

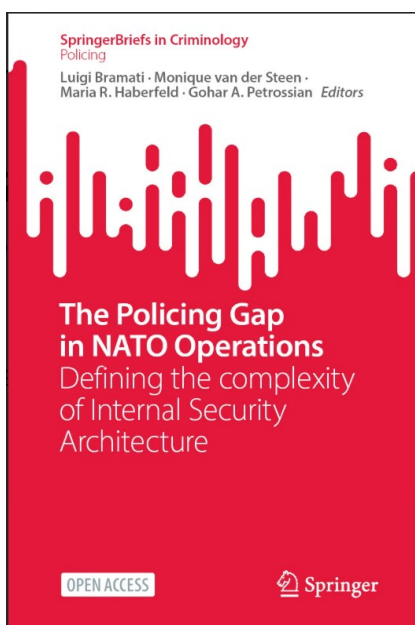
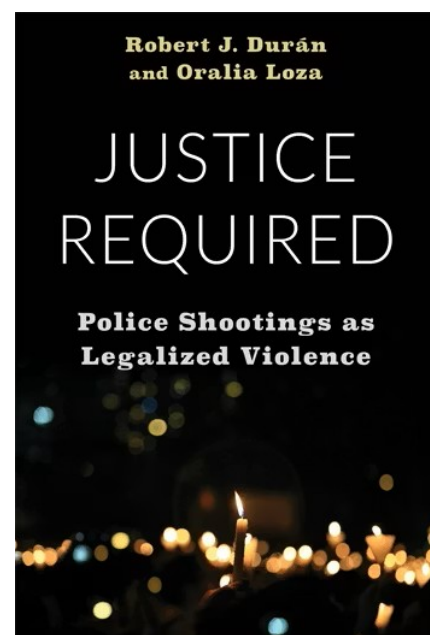


Natasha N. Johnson, Ph.D. and **Nicholas Cammack** published the following article:

Cammack, N., & Johnson, N. N. (2025). Age of "consent": A review of statutory rape laws in the United States. *The Pursuit Journal*, 8(2), 168-195.

Nicholas is an MSCJ student at Georgia State University, which makes this collaboration even sweeter. Long story short, he was supposed to be my 2025 Spring GTA, but by the time I learned the news, my courses were already live, so we had to reset rather quickly. So (and this was still in January), I sat him down, asked him what specifically he was interested in investigating, and he quickly said, "I want to look at statutory rape laws across the US". With that, I had him begin by writing a literature review in Spring 2025. Some rounds later (which included my transition to Augusta University Summer/Fall 2025), we submitted our manuscript to *The Pursuit Journal* in July and our proposal to ACJS in September. We received TPJ R&R notification on October 11, an acceptance from ACJS on October 23, resubmitted our revision to TPJ on November 4th, and here we are today!

Robert J. Durán and **Oralia Loza** published "Justice Required: Police Shootings as Legalized Violence" with Columbia University Press. Police have remarkably broad discretion to use deadly force. Evidence shows that more than 1,000 shooting deaths occur each year at the hands of the police in the United States, disproportionately in minority communities and often under questionable circumstances. Despite public outrage, there continue to be obstacles to assessing the extent of bias and addressing the harms of police violence, including a lack of transparency and limitations on access to data. *Justice Required* is a groundbreaking quantitative and qualitative investigation of police violence. Robert J. Durán and Oralia Loza provide a comprehensive data analysis of all police shootings in Denver, Colorado, over nearly forty years, highlighting persistent patterns of racial and ethnic inequality. They examine the institutional and political dynamics that thwart efforts to hold police officers accountable after controversial incidents. Durán and Loza contextualize the data with regional comparisons and enliven the analysis with vivid storytelling. *Justice Required* argues that while police shootings are typically treated as a criminal justice issue, they should be understood as a public health problem. Rigorous and urgent, this book provides evidence-based, data-driven solutions to prevent further loss of life and promote accountability.



Luigi Bramati, Monique van der Steen, **Maria R. Haberland**, and Gohar A. Petrossian Edited "The Policing Gap in NATO Operations: Defining the Complexity of Internal Security Architecture" with Springer. This open access brief examines NATO's Stability Policing doctrine through an interdisciplinary lens, bridging military doctrine with social science to enhance the understanding and planning of stabilization operations. By addressing the policing gap—the absence of local law enforcement capacity to maintain security and the rule of law—the research highlights the complex interplay between formal and informal centers of power that shape internal security dynamics. Drawing on expert testimonies from high-ranking military officials, policymakers, and practitioners with experience in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Sahel, the Horn of Africa, Libya, and the Balkans, this brief provides unique insights into the realities of stabilization missions. It introduces the concept of Internal Security Architecture, offering a systematic framework to analyze the power structures that influence security and policing. Through a rigorous methodology and an unprecedented collaboration between military, academic, policing, and think-tank experts, this research operationalizes innovative theoretical concepts. It proposes a set of analytical tools to map and assess internal security structures, supporting military planners and stability policing commanders in designing more effective interventions.

ACJS Directory of Policy Experts

A Directory of Policy Experts is now live on the ACJS website – see <https://www.acjs.org/directory-of-policy-experts/>. This directory includes those current ACJS members who had previously been incorporated in the Crime & Justice Research Alliance's expert directory.

Also, ACJS has an established protocol for additional members who would like to be considered for inclusion in the Directory of Policy Experts – see <https://academyofcriminaljusticesciences.growthzoneapp.com/ap/CloudFile/Download/LEnKY67r>.

The ACJS President has encouraged the Public Policy Committee to consider a second initiative – a directory of members with skills in program and policy evaluation that could be marketed to agencies and NGOs, domestic and international, looking for assistance in determining the effectiveness of their practices. This might seem redundant with the policy expert directory, but in my experience, that directory mainly generated calls from the media looking for expert opinions, not from agencies or NGOs looking for assistance.

The Public Policy Committee would be interested in any thoughts on this idea.

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James Tuttle's *Crime Wave: The American Homicide Epidemic*

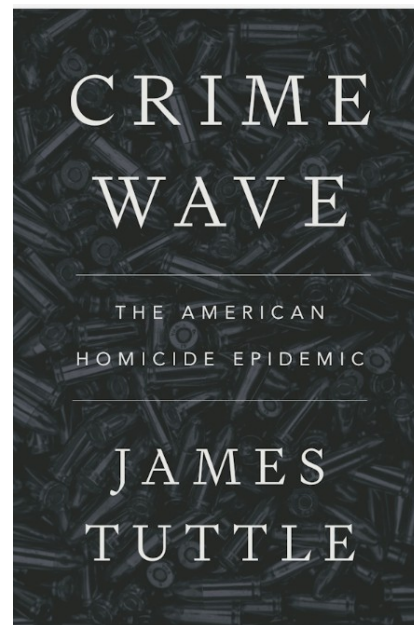
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Review by Ali Kamali
Lamar University

Introduction

Homicide remains the most consequential and visible indicator of public safety in the United States. Unlike many other offenses, each homicide produces a permanent loss, ripples through families and neighborhoods, and directly tests the credibility of the criminal justice system. After two decades, during which many jurisdictions experienced historically low levels of lethal violence, the sharp rise in homicides beginning in 2020 forced agencies, researchers, and communities to reassess long-held assumptions about the “crime decline.” The timing of this shift alongside a global pandemic, widespread social disruption, and highly publicized crises of police legitimacy put unusual pressure on institutions that already operate at the edge of their capacity. As homicide totals climbed and clearance rates strained, long-standing debates about policing, firearms, community investment, and the role of social policy returned to the center of national attention.

James Tuttle’s *Crime Wave: The American Homicide Epidemic* (2025) offers a timely synthesis of these developments. The book’s central claim is not merely that homicide increased, but that the surge exposed deeper structural vulnerabilities: economic precarity, weakened community institutions, contested police-community relationships, and the sheer availability of lethal means. Tuttle places the 2020s in a longer



historical arc, arguing that cycles of rising and falling violence are recurrent in American life, and that policy responses tend to swing between punitive expansion and reformist retrenchment. By pairing descriptive trends with accessible narrative, *Crime Wave* seeks to inform a wide audience of policymakers, practitioners, journalists, and students while framing homicide as a multidimensional problem that resists single-cause explanations.

This review evaluates *Crime Wave* on two fronts that matter in graduate scholarship: explanatory power and practical relevance. First, I examine how convincingly Tuttle connects pandemic-era conditions to classic criminological frameworks (e.g., strain, social disorganization, routine activity) and to what extent the argument aligns with peer-reviewed evidence on trends, mechanisms, and policy levers. Second, I assess the book against the lived realities of homicide work. During the years Tuttle analyzes, I served in homicide investigations in Harris County. That vantage point—managing scenes, interviewing reluctant witnesses, and tracking cases from initial call to filing—provides a disciplined way to test whether the book’s claims match observable dynamics without turning this review into a memoir. Where practitioner insight is used, it is included narrowly to illustrate

mechanisms (e.g., legitimacy and cooperation; availability of firearms and lethality), not to substitute for scholarship.

The review proceeds in a standard scholarly structure to meet the assignment rubric. After a concise overview of the book's organization and main claims, I offer a critical analysis that highlights strengths (historical framing, accessible synthesis, attention to institutional trust) and limitations (methodological opacity, shallow theoretical application, limited engagement with firearm policy and non-urban contexts). I then situate *Crime Wave* within the peer-reviewed literature on pandemic-era homicide trends, firearm policy, community capacity, and place-based prevention, clarifying where the book's narrative is supported, where it is incomplete, and where it risks overgeneralization. The final sections consider the book's contribution to the criminal justice system policy discourse, investigative practice, and scholarly dialogue and summarize why *Crime Wave* is best read as an agenda-setting text that should be paired with mechanism-focused research when designing responses.

In short, my thesis is that *Crime Wave* succeeds as a clear, timely, and persuasive framing of the homicide surge and its institutional implications, but it falls short of the methodological precision and policy specificity that graduate-level analysis requires. Read alongside the empirical literature, however, the book can productively anchor discussions about what works: targeted, procedurally just enforcement in micro-places; focused-deterrence and outreach for the highest-risk networks; firearm-risk interventions within state legal frameworks; and durable investments that strengthen collective efficacy. This review aims to make that bridge explicit, linking Tuttle's accessible narrative to the evidence base practitioners and policymakers need.

Overview of the Book

Tuttle opens by situating the 2020s increase within America's longer crime history: the run-up in homicide across the 1970s–80s, the pronounced decline from the mid-1990s through the 2010s, and the uneven upticks of the late 2010s that set the stage for the pandemic surge. This historical lens matters because it tempers alarmism; waves of violence have recurred, and the nation has navigated them before, albeit at great human cost.

The early chapters present descriptive patterns: where homicide rose most sharply, how firearm involvement magnified lethality, and why the problem cannot be dismissed as a single-city anomaly. Tuttle highlights large metros (e.g., Chicago, Houston, Philadelphia) to illustrate both common national currents and local divergence. He underscores the importance of clearance rates, arguing that unsolved killings can feed cycles of retaliation and discourage cooperation with police.

Subsequent chapters array potential drivers: pandemic-related shocks (economic disruption, social isolation, frayed services), conflict over policing in the wake of high-profile incidents, and the easy availability of firearms. Tuttle argues that these forces overlapped, converting more conflicts into shootings and dimming the capacity of institutions—schools, courts, police, community groups—to interrupt violence. He also emphasizes political polarization: debates over “defunding” or ramping up punitive policy often unfolded along partisan lines, crowding out evidence-based consensus.

Throughout, Tuttle gestures to classic criminological frameworks—strain theory to frame pandemic stressors, social disorganization to capture

weakened collective efficacy, and routine activity theory to explain shifts in guardianship and opportunity—without deeply applying them as analytical engines. He blends statistics and narrative case vignettes to keep the book accessible to policy audiences and the public. The trade-off is breadth over depth: readers get a strong sense of the problem’s scale and complexity, but less clarity about causal weight or the relative effectiveness of alternative responses.

Scholarly Analysis

Strengths

Accessible synthesis with historical depth. Tuttle’s narrative presents the homicide surge as part of a recurring U.S. pattern, not a black swan event. That frame aligns with scholarship showing that lethal violence ebbs and flows alongside demographic change, drug markets, and institutional responses (Blumstein & Rosenfeld, 2018). By resisting single-cause explanations, *Crime Wave* offers a wide-angle view that is genuinely useful to policymakers and journalists who must communicate uncertainty without paralysis.

Attention to institutional trust and community consequences. The book repeatedly stresses that fear of violence does more than endanger individuals; it corrodes neighborhood cohesion, undermines cooperation with investigators, and weakens the perceived legitimacy of the state. That emphasis tracks closely with empirical work showing how exposure to violence drives residents away from formal institutions, including the police, courts, and city services (Kirk & Papachristos, 2011).

Recognition of overlapping drivers. Tuttle avoids the trap of monocausal accounts. He connects firearm availability, social strain, and weakened institutions to a rise in lethal outcomes, a multi-factor story

consistent with pandemic-era analyses that documented broad, firearm-driven increases across diverse cities (Rosenfeld & Lopez, 2022).

Limitations

Methodological opacity. The book references national and city data but does not demonstrate how sources were harmonized, which time windows were used, or what statistical choices were made. That leaves the causal claims under-specified relative to peer-reviewed work that carefully details data and methods (Rosenfeld & Lopez, 2022). For a scholarly audience, this is a meaningful gap. Tuttle’s empirical foundation provides a valuable macro-level view of homicide trends, but it relies primarily on aggregate FBI and CDC data, which limits causal inference about community-level mechanisms. A more robust mixed-methods design combining quantitative trend analysis with qualitative interviews could have offered richer insight into the social contexts behind the numbers. Additionally, future research could clarify how Tuttle’s operational definitions of “epidemic” and “wave” differ conceptually, ensuring consistency across datasets.

Underdeveloped policy levers around firearms. Tuttle accurately notes that widespread firearm access increases lethality, but he stops short of engaging evidence on which specific statutory regimes are most associated with lower homicide. Peer-reviewed studies find significant associations between more restrictive state gun laws and reduced firearm homicides (Siegel et al., 2020), suggesting a concrete policy dimension that *Crime Wave* largely leaves unexplored.

Shallow theoretical application. Strain theory is invoked, but the mechanisms of how negative affect and blocked opportunities translate into violent coping are not traced with the specificity found in contemporary formulations (Agnew,

2019). Likewise, routine activity theory's triad of motivated offenders, suitable targets, and capable guardians (Cohen & Felson, 1979) maps neatly onto pandemic disruptions (closed institutions, uneven guardianship, new patterns of exposure), yet *Crime Wave* treats it as backdrop rather than an explanatory spine.

Urban concentration with insufficient attention to context. The book leans on big-city exemplars. That risks flattening heterogeneity because rural and suburban homicides often involve distinct situational dynamics and social networks (Pizarro et al., 2011). Disaggregating by place type can reveal different prevention levers.

Practitioner Lens

From a homicide investigator's vantage point, several of Tuttle's emphases track with practice:

Firearms magnified conflict. Cases that began as interpersonal disputes over money, relationships, or perceived disrespect more often ended in shootings because a gun was immediately present. In earlier years, comparable disputes might have resulted in minor injury; in 2020–2022, lethality felt more probable. This aligns with the “means matter” logic and empirical firearm-policy findings (Siegel et al., 2020).

Legitimacy and clearance. Witness cooperation weakened. Families voiced fear of retaliation and skepticism that their participation would lead to resolution. Lower clearances then fed cynicism, which further discouraged cooperation, a loop consistent with research on violence and institutional trust (Kirk & Papachristos, 2011).

Layered causal bundles. Many incidents reflected stacked risks: substance abuse, acute stress, untreated trauma, prior exposure to violence, and neighborhood norms that tolerated armed self-help.

Crime Wave acknowledges these elements but does not fully center them, which matters because interventions often work by interrupting one or more links in those chains.

This practitioner perspective does not contradict the book; it illustrates where a more granular, mechanism-first account would sharpen causal inference and intervention design.

Connections to the Literature

To gauge *Crime Wave*'s scholarly contribution, it helps to map its claims onto what peer-reviewed research already shows.

Pandemic-era trends and firearm centrality. Rosenfeld and Lopez (2022) used systematic multi-city data to document broad homicide increases beginning in 2020, emphasizing that firearm incidents accounted for most of the rise. Their methods, transparency, and comparative approach provide the rigor that Tuttle's high-level synthesis lacks, while largely corroborating his descriptive narrative.

Social organization and trust. Kirk and Papachristos (2011) show how sustained exposure to neighborhood violence erodes institutional trust, diminishing cooperation with police and increasing legal cynicism—precisely the feedback dynamics Tuttle highlights. Their evidence makes concrete the “trust” mechanisms the book treats narratively.

Firearm policy variation. Siegel et al. (2020) aggregated state firearm laws over decades and found significant associations between more restrictive frameworks and lower firearm homicide rates. This line of research indicates that the “guns increase lethality” point has policy-specific contours—information the book could have leveraged to move from diagnosis to remedy.

Strain and opportunity structures. Agnew (2019) refines general strain theory by specifying how negative stimuli (e.g., unemployment, family conflict) generates anger and, under certain conditions, violent coping. In parallel, routine activity theory (Cohen & Felson, 1979) clarifies how pandemic-induced shifts in guardianship (closed schools, reduced formal surveillance) and exposure created new opportunity structures. Together, these theories offer a mechanism-rich blueprint that *Crime Wave* cites but underutilizes.

Place-based prevention and focused strategies. Multiple meta-analyses and reviews suggest that tightly focused strategies can reduce violent crime without broad net-widening: hot spots policing (Braga et al., 2014), focused-deterrence group violence interventions (Braga et al., 2019), and community-partnered approaches that strengthen local capacity (Sharkey, 2018). Tuttle mentions community programs but does not differentiate which approaches have robust evidence versus those that are aspirational.

Contextual heterogeneity in homicide. Pizarro, Zgoba, and Jennings (2011) emphasize how offender/victim lifestyles and situational contexts vary across homicide types and places, implying that one-size solutions underperform. This cautions against extrapolating from big-city narrative to national remedy.

Overall, the literature supports Tuttle's high-level picture—violence rose widely; guns mattered; institutions and communities strained—while demonstrating that a mechanism-focused, evidence-based toolkit exists and can be more prescriptive than *Crime Wave* suggests.

Contribution to the Criminal Justice System

From a policy perspective, the book contributes meaningfully to ongoing debates about violence

prevention, law enforcement resource allocation, and the social costs of gun proliferation. The book's clearest contribution is agenda-setting. By narrating the homicide surge across multiple domains—social stress, firearms, institutional legitimacy—*Crime Wave* helps move policy conversations beyond polarized binaries. It encourages leaders to treat violence as a multi-system problem requiring layered solutions rather than a single ideological fix.

Practice relevance. For investigators and line officers, the book validates the on-the-ground reality of 2020–2022: higher caseloads, more firearm-involved disputes, thinner cooperation, and mounting emotional toll. That recognition matters for organizational learning and resource planning (e.g., redeploying investigative capacity, investing in witness support and protection, and building durable community partnerships to shore up legitimacy).

Scholarly bridge. As a public-facing synthesis, *Crime Wave* can direct practitioners and policymakers toward the peer-reviewed strategies most likely to help: (a) targeted place-based policing with procedural justice safeguards; (b) focused-deterrence and street-outreach partnerships for group violence; (c) credible-messenger programs and trauma-informed services; (d) firearm-risk interventions keyed to local legal authorities; and (e) community capacity investments that sustain collective efficacy. Tuttle signals many of these ideas but seldom names or weights them; his contribution is to set the table for evidence-based selection.

Limits that invite action. Because the book is light on methods and causal mechanism testing, it should not be the sole basis for policy design. Its best use is to orient decision-makers, then point them to the rigorous literature and local data work necessary for tailoring interventions. The study's

limitations warrant careful attention, particularly regarding scope and methodology. While Tuttle's national overview is compelling, regional variations and cultural factors remain underexplored. Addressing these nuances could enhance the book's explanatory power and practical relevance.

Conclusion

Crime Wave is strongest as a clear, historically informed account of why homicide re-emerged as a national crisis and what that crisis means for communities and institutions. Tuttle's synthesis captures the complexity of overlapping stressors—pandemic shocks, firearm availability, strained legitimacy—without collapsing into a single-cause story. The book's accessibility makes it valuable to non-academic audiences who need a coherent picture quickly.

For scholars and practitioners seeking “what works,” however, *Crime Wave* is an entry point rather than a destination. It lacks the methodological transparency, theoretical precision, and policy specificity that the peer-reviewed literature already offers. When placed alongside that research, the path forward becomes clearer: combine targeted, procedurally just policing in micro-places; focused deterrence and outreach for the highest-risk groups; legal-risk tools and state policy levers that reduce firearm lethality; and durable investments that strengthen neighborhood collective efficacy. From a homicide investigator's perspective, these are the ingredients most likely to move clearance, interrupt retaliation, and reduce the routine presence of guns in conflicts.

If the goal is to ignite productive dialogue and to motivate agencies to connect practice with evidence, Tuttle's contribution is timely and worthwhile. The next steps belong to practitioners, policymakers, and researchers willing to translate that dialogue into locally tailored strategies evaluated with rigor.

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The evolution of data ecosystems, encompassing vast administrative records, sensor-based crime mapping, social media feeds, and open-source databases, presents an opportunity for theoretical innovation. This issue calls for research that uses these unique sources of data not merely to describe patterns but to interrogate, refine, or extend classical criminological theories such as strain, social disorganization, or routine activity theories. Contributions will demonstrate how these types of data, potentially through using new methods (e.g., machine learning, network analysis, spatiotemporal modeling) can be harnessed to generate theory-driven insights, test mechanisms across scales, and resolve long-standing debates within the discipline. For example, to what extent would real-time and discrete movement patterns (e.g., from mobile GPS and social media check-ins) challenge spatial-temporal assumptions of routine activity theory? Might satellite imagery provide new social disorder indicators, allowing to refine social disorganization theory? Would new data about ordinary social networks, instead of merely co-offending networks, allow us to refine social network assumptions about how deviant behaviors are transmitted across peer groups, revisiting differential association theory? Or, does the analysis of new data (e.g., online forums) call for integrated or new theories altogether? As new data infrastructures continue to develop and become a popular new standard, this issue seeks to push toward theoretical innovation in the current digital era.

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Hai Thanh Luong

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By: Áine Josephine Tyrell and Ben Douglas-Jones

Bloomsbury Professional

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Special Issue Justice Evaluation Journal

The Justice Evaluation Journal (JEJ) announces its first Special Issue (Volume 8, #2, 2025). Articles draw on research conducted as part of the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Smart Policing Initiative, reflecting contemporary approaches to policing and justice practice. The issue was guest edited by Kenneth Novak and Scott Decker of CNA. The following articles are part of the Special Issue:

The Smart Policing Initiative: 15 Years of Evidence-Based Innovation in Policing Practice

Christopher M. Sun, James R. Coldren, Jr., & Alexa P. Blondin

Published Online: March 7, 2025

<https://doi.org/10.1080/24751979.2025.2474121>

Policing in High-Risk Violent Offenders: Smart Policing in Syracuse

Robert E. Worden, Madison A. Bryant, Kenan M. Worden, Richard H. Trudell, & James M. Miller

Published Online: March 10, 2025

<https://doi.org/10.1080/24751979.2025.2473358>

Regionalized Police Response to Sexual Assault: A Pilot Study

Lisa Ingarfield, Kim Messina, Daniel M. Leeds, & Greg Sadar

Published Online: March 7, 2025

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A Randomized Controlled Trial of a Hot Spots Policing Initiative in Suburban and Rural Areas

Cory P. Haberman, Bradley J. O'Guinn, Matthew McGrath, Akshata V. Kumavat, & Augusto Orue

Published Online: March 17, 2025

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Institutionalizing Evidence-Based Policing through a Case of Place Approach in Suffolk County, New York

Cynthia Lum, John Sumwalt, Christopher S. Koper, & Kevin Petersen

Published Online: March 2, 2025

<https://doi.org/10.1080/24751979.2025.2474099>

An Evaluation of a Major Expansion in Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) Technology

John A. Shjarback & James A. Sarkos

Published Online: March 6, 2025

<https://doi.org/10.1080/24751979.2025.2473363>

A Primer on the Design, Delivery, and Evaluation of De-escalation Training: Explaining the Impactful Findings from the Tempe Smart Policing Initiative

Carlena Orosco, Michael D. White, & Dane Sorensen

Published Online: March 7, 2025

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Kay Lang, Justin Sanford, & Christopher Murtagh

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Pre-Arrest Diversion-To-Treatment for Adults with Substance Use Disorder: Health Outcomes and Predictors of Program Completion

Alice Zhang, Jennifer E. Nyland, Joseph A. Balles, Mary F. Henningfield, & Aleksandra E. Zgierska

Published Online: March 6, 2025

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Recent Publications:
October 29, 2025 - December 29, 2025





Positive Exposure and Play: Developing Positive Attitudes Toward Police

By: Darla E. Drummond & Carrie L. Maloney

Children and youth frequently encounter law enforcement; this may be informal or formal and can occur in the home, the community, or in the school. According to the Pennsylvania Association of School Resource Officers (pasro.org), there are approximately 23,400 sworn school resource officers in the U.S. While many of these police-youth encounters do fall into the informal interactions category, law enforcement agencies in the U.S. made approximately 684,230 arrests of persons under the age of 18 in 2019 (ojjdp.ojp.gov). According to a study conducted by Geller and Fagan (2019), the average age of first contact with police is 12 years old. A 2022 study examined the outcome on youth of negative contacts with police and found that the more negative contacts that occurred, the more committed juveniles are to violating the law and the less favorable their attitudes are toward police (Whitehead & Lab).

Significant research shows that young children, generally, start out with a favorable view of police officers, with law enforcement portrayals in cartoons and movies assisting with the perception (Padilla & Fine, 2020). This relatively high regard for police is stable at age seven, regardless of racial and ethnic backgrounds. However, as children get older, their perceptions of police change. The same 2020 study mentioned above (Padilla & Fine) found that White youths' perception of police remains stable from 7–14, Latino kids' perception of police begins to drop

around age 9, and Black children's perceptions decline consistently and drop every year from 7–14. Similarly, a 2023 study (Hurst & Frank) found longitudinal trends regarding overall juvenile negative attitudes toward the police, mentioning that favorable attitudes have actually decreased compared to 15 years earlier in the same jurisdiction.

Many programs across the country attempt to foster a positive relationship between police officers and children/youth through mentorship, such as the Police Athletic League teen boxing program in Philadelphia (Kopelman, 2025). Locally, we had the opportunity for the last two summers to work with a STEAM and literacy summer camp to bridge this divide with an even younger group of children, those in grades K–6. While not a daily part of the programming, we were able to collaborate with law enforcement officers to create ways in which they could interact with the campers to build positive relationships and introduce the children to what police officers do. The first year we worked with the camp, we created a "Who stole the cookie from the cookie jar" scenario built upon the classic children's song from the early 1900s. This game introduced fingerprinting techniques to the children and allowed them to gather "clues" to find the figurative culprit, ending in a tasty treat for all. Law enforcement officers assisted with the investigation and the "arrest" of the individual responsible for the theft. They were also readily available for questions concerning police investigations and the role of police.

This year, campers were encouraged to use deductive reasoning while watching a mock surveillance video of an individual stealing an item. They worked with police to lift fingerprints, make estimates on characteristics of the individual, and

examine footprints to help solve the crime. The older children in the group were also able to apprehend and handcuff the suspect when they tracked all of the evidence. In addition to solving the crime, the campers also had the opportunity to tour police vehicles and ask questions about the gear used. Campers were also given a tour of the police station and shown the interior of interrogation rooms. They also had the ability to examine the two-way mirror and other physical and architectural elements of the police station.

Overall, law enforcement officers and campers alike reported favorable outcomes from the interaction; many remembered the activity from the year before and were excited to interact again with the police. This event allowed the police officers involved to connect to the community and foster relationships with youth and families. In addition, this program allowed approximately 100 children (K–6) to develop positive perceptions of law enforcement while building their critical thinking

skills and utilizing deductive reasoning. Nurturing trust and cooperation between law enforcement and youth not only helps promote positive perceptions, but also encourages youth to become active participants in their communities (www.forwardpathways.us).

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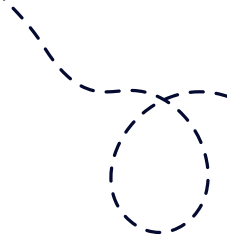
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