

Policing Crowds: Case Studies from Las Vegas, Nevada

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25th Annual Problem-Oriented Policing Conference
October 19-21, 2015



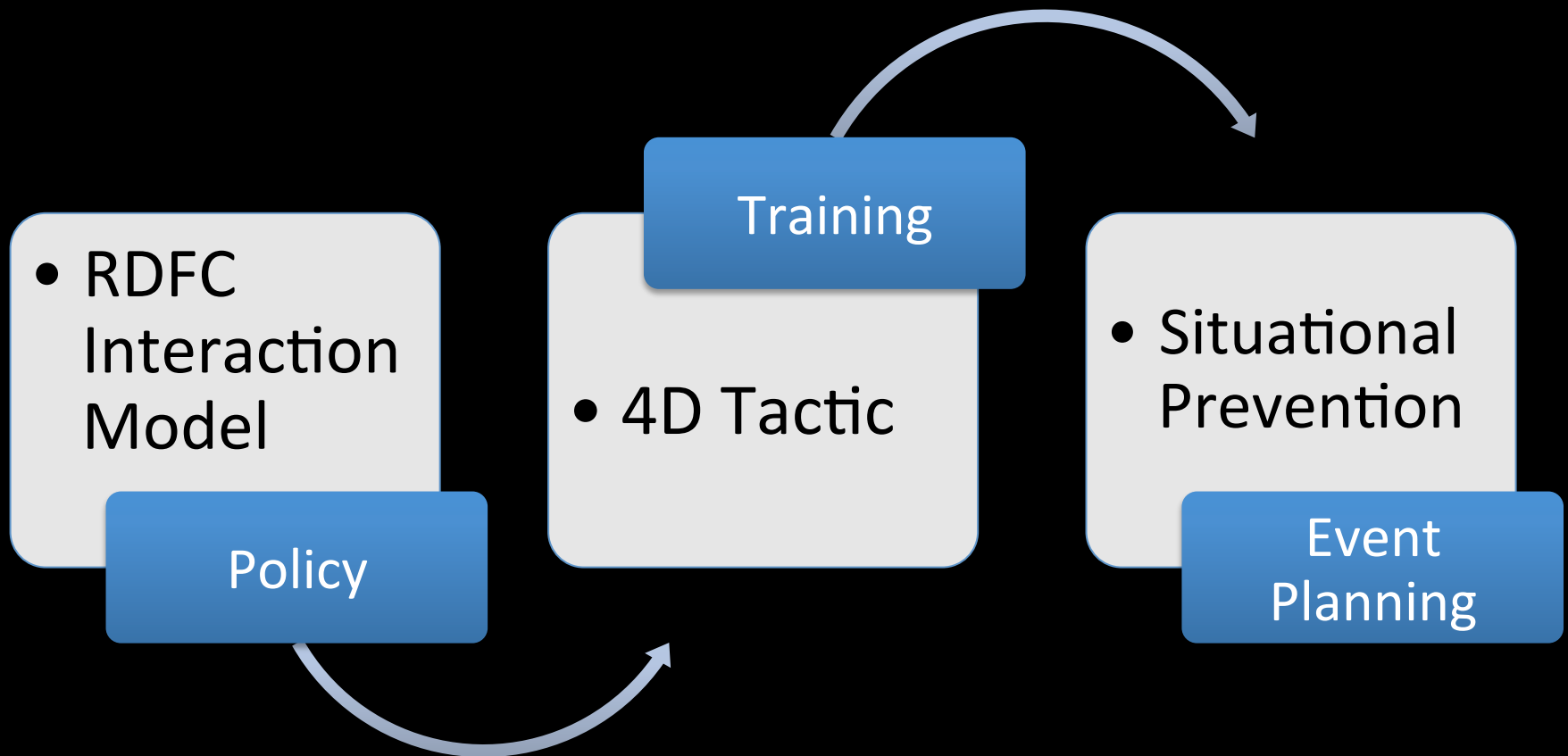
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Crowd Management



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Effective Crowd Management



Dynamics of Crowd Psychology

Reactance Theory

- The “you must/“you won’t” approach promotes resistance

Elaborated Social Identity Model

- Aggressive tactics encourage aggressive crowd behavior

Coercion Theory

- Predictability reduces tension and encourages compliance



Breakdown of Trust

Police incite
more harm
rather than less

Police use
unnecessary
force and
aggression

Police use force
against entire
crowd based on
actions of few

Police act in
unpredictable
or seemingly
biased ways



RDFC Interaction Model

Actions/reactions
that build
trust and support

Reasonable

Restrict fewest freedoms possible – intervene only to prevent harm

Disarming

Limit use of force, coercion, and intrusiveness

Focused

Target only harmful behaviors and conditions

Consistent

Deploy dependable and unbiased tactics



RDFC Interaction Model

Police actions that build public support and trust

DIMENSION	POLICE RESPONSE (FROM PUBLIC'S PERCEPTION)...
<u>R</u> easonable	protects individuals' rights and necessary to prevent harm.
<u>D</u> isarming	does not use avoidable force, coercion, or intrusiveness.
<u>F</u> ocused	targets only behaviors and conditions causing harm.
<u>C</u> onsistent	is dependable, unbiased, and generates positive interactions.



RDFC Interaction Model



What are our
primary goals
when policing
crowds?



Las Vegas Protests



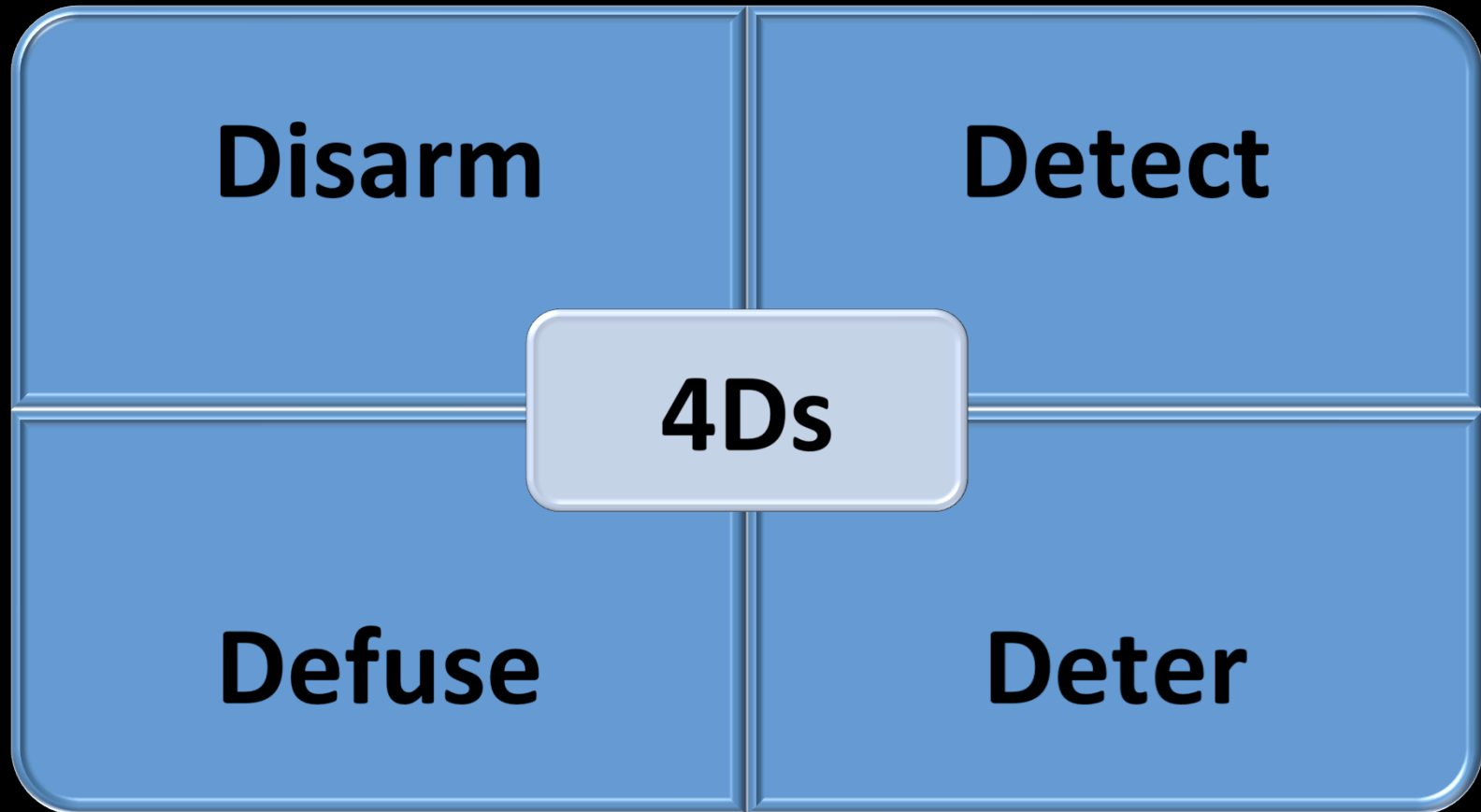
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Crowd Behavior/Response Typology

Response style	Civilian	Officer
Suppressor	Reports a suspicious backpack in restroom	Offers assistance to visibly agitated fan
Reactor	Stops drunk friend from climbing over railing	Responds quickly to reported fighting
Enabler	Cheers on fans throwing objects onto field	Fails to properly search entering persons/bags
Promoter	Attempts to bring weapons into venue	Responds aggressively to minor infractions



4D Tactic



Disarm

Engage Early & Often

- Every interaction is an opportunity to create a “force multiplier”

With the crowds on your side, it is easier to play up to your potential.

– Julius Erving (Dr. J)



Defuse

Positive Communication

Don't say this...

- “It’s the law.
- “You can’t stand here.”
- “If you don’t do as I say, then I will arrest you.”

Instead say this...

- “So that we can keep people safe.”
- “Do you folks need directions?”
- “I need your help so that you don’t miss any of the event.”



Detect

Crowd Violence “Triggers”

Venue Characteristics

Performance proximity
Seating arrangements
Stadium location
Place reputation
Temperature
Noise level

Event Characteristics

Crowd demographics
Performance quality
Performer behavior
Alcohol regulation
Event significance
Event duration
Crowding

Contributing
Factors

Staff Characteristics

Training Presence
Experience Communication



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Deter

Vigilance and Quick Response

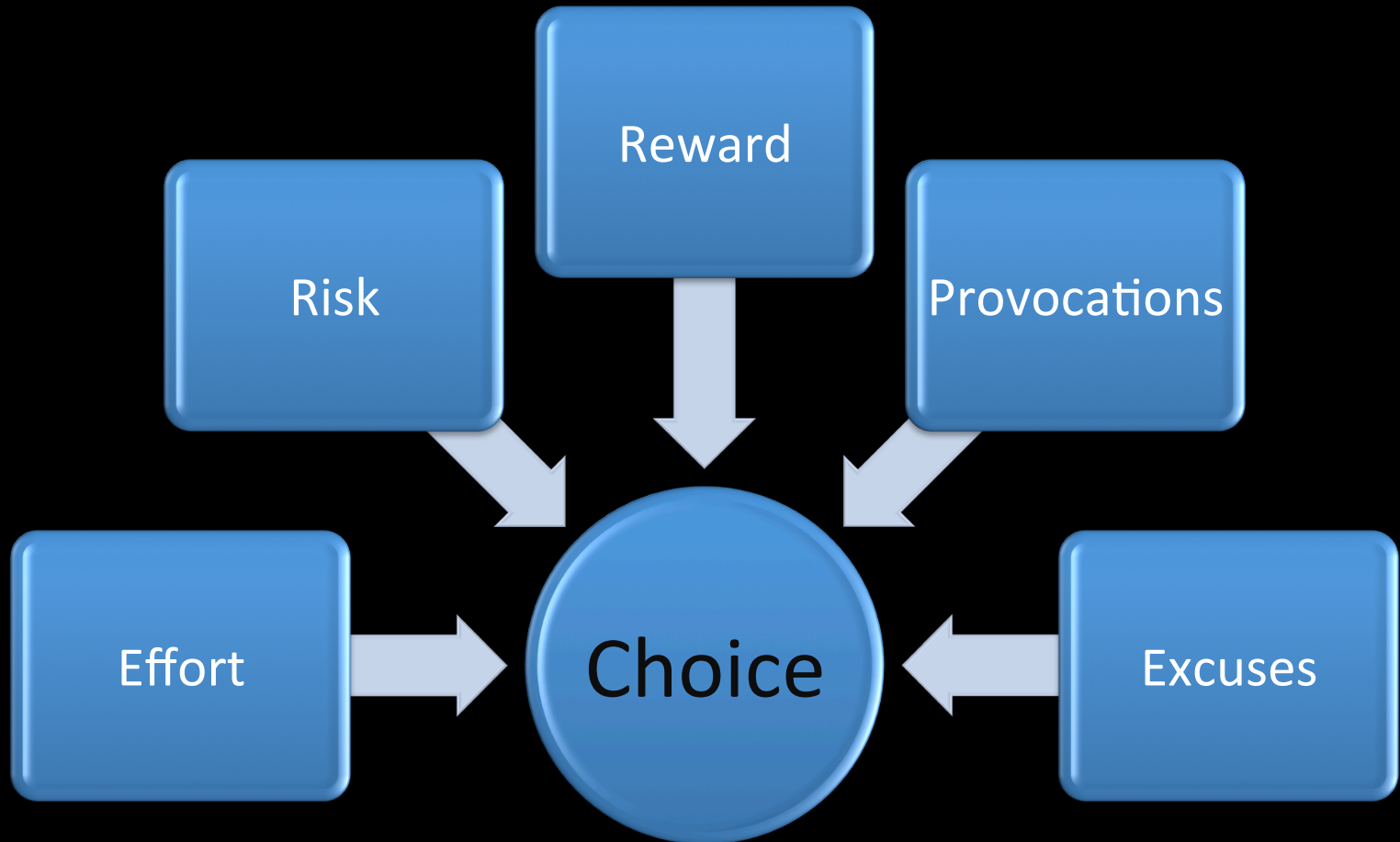


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5 opportunity dimensions that influence offender (human) decision-making



Crowds Create Dangerous Conditions

Provoke

- Swarming
- Crushing
- Rushing
- Pushing
- Shoving
- Falling
- Waiting

- Jump/breach barriers
- Start a fire
- Buy more/get alcohol

Easier

- Sense of anonymity
- Escape into masses
- “Gang-up” on others

Less Risky

Rewarding

- Many potential targets
- Provides excitement
- Reaction of others

Excusable

- “I didn’t know”
- “I was drunk”
- “Everyone else did it”



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25 Techniques – Situational Crime Prevention

Increase Effort	Increase Risks	Reduce Rewards	Reduce Provocations	Remove Excuses
Harden Targets	Extend Guardianship	Conceal Targets	Reduce Frustrations	Set Rules
Control Access	Natural Surveillance	Remove Targets	Avoid Disputes	Post Instructions
Screen Exits	Reduce Anonymity	Identify Property	Reduce Emotional Arousal	Alert Conscience
Deflect Offenders	Place Managers	Disrupt Markets	Neutralize Peer Pressure	Assist Compliance
Control Tools	Formal Surveillance	Deny Benefits	Discourage Imitation	Control Drugs & Alcohol



New Year's Eve on the Strip

- Four-mile long casino-resort corridor on Las Vegas Boulevard
- Approximately 400,000 people attend the annual event
- Second largest New Year's celebration in the United States



NYE Situational Tactics

Overhead pedestrian walkways closed to prevent missile throwing or jumping from bridges

**Increase
Effort**

**Control
Access**

Live-feed video surveillance; use of correctional staff / horse patrol

**Increase
Risks**

**Strengthen
Formal
Surveillance**

Participants causing harm are quickly removed from the crowd so the party can continue

**Reduce
Rewards**

**Deny
Benefits**

Officers dressed in “soft” uniforms rather than militarized / riot gear

**Reduce
Provocations**

**Reduce
Emotional
Arousal**

Portable toilets / trash bins / plastic cups made readily available

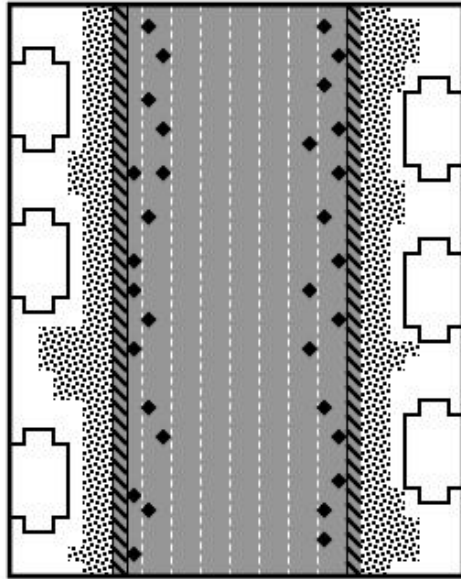
**Remove
Excuses**

**Assist
Compliance**



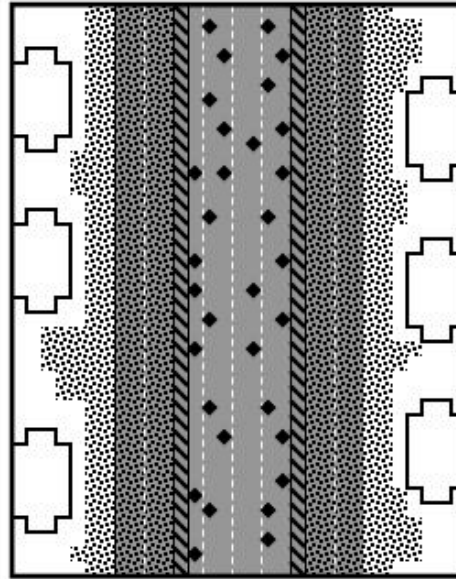
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Barricade Strategy



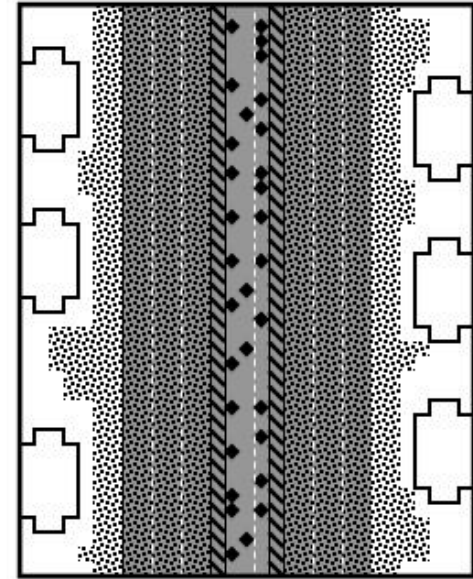
6:00PM

Las Vegas Blvd closed to vehicle traffic – barricades keep pedestrians on sidewalks



7:00PM

Officers move barricades toward the boulevard center as crowd size increases



8:00PM

Pedestrians restricted only from center lanes as the midnight fireworks display approaches

Geographic Features



Casino



Las Vegas Blvd



Barricade



Crowd

♦ Police officers



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**Increase
Effort**

**Increase
Risks**

**Reduce
Rewards**

**Reduce
Provocations**

**Remove
Excuses**

**Harden
Targets**

**Natural
Surveillance**

**Remove
Targets**

**Reduce
Frustrations**

**Alert
Conscience**



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New Directions for LVMPD

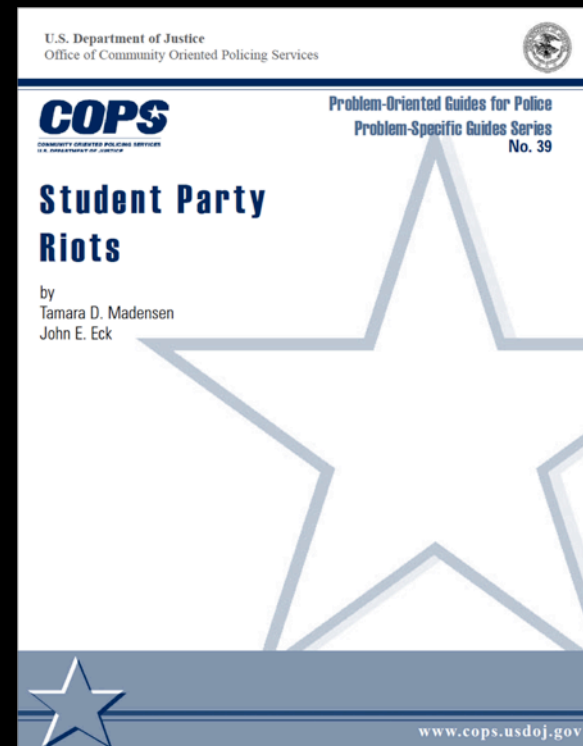
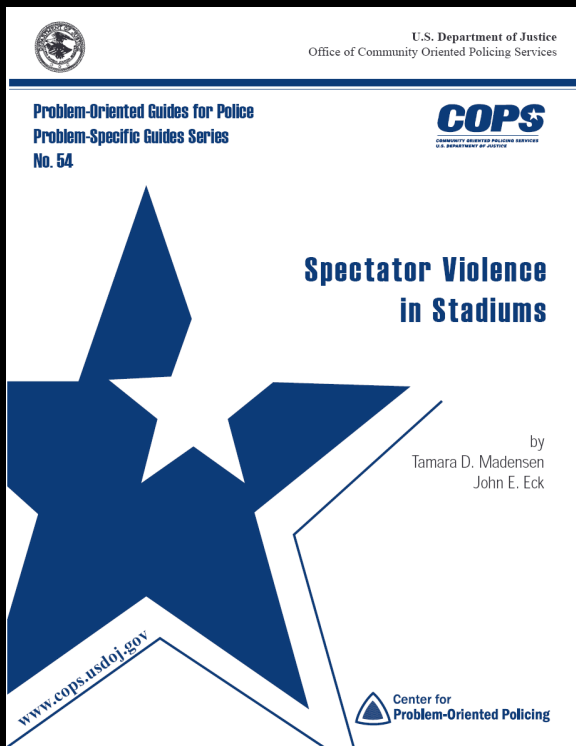
- Updated academy curriculum
- Foot patrol in tourist corridor
- UNLV-LVMPD Partnerships



Additional Resources

Center for Problem-Oriented Policing

Download free @ www.popcenter.org



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