

**PROBLEM-ORIENTED
POLICING:
From Innovation to
Mainstream**

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Editor

Crime Prevention Studies
Volume 15

Criminal Justice Press
Monsey, NY, USA

Willan Publishing
Devon, UK

2003

CRIME PREVENTION STUDIES

Ronald V. Clarke, Series Editor

Crime Prevention Studies is an international book series dedicated to research on situational crime prevention and other initiatives to reduce opportunities for crime. Most volumes center on particular topics chosen by expert guest editors. The editors of each volume, in consultation with the series editor, commission the papers to be published and select peer reviewers.

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**ISSN (series): 1065-7029
ISBN: 1-881798-37-2 (cloth)
ISBN: 1-881798-38-0 (paper)**

CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| Preface..... | iv |
| <i>Johannes Knutsson</i> | |
| Foreword..... | v |
| <i>Ingelin Killengreen</i> | |
| Introduction..... | 1 |
| <i>Johannes Knutsson</i> | |
| On Further Developing Problem-oriented Policing: The Most Critical Need, the Major Impediments, and a Proposal..... | 13 |
| <i>Herman Goldstein</i> | |
| Getting the Police To Take Problem-oriented Policing Seriously..... | 49 |
| <i>Michael S. Scott</i> | |
| Police Problems: The Complexity of Problem Theory, Research and Evaluation..... | 79 |
| <i>John Eck</i> | |
| The Sequence of Analysis in Solving Problems..... | 115 |
| <i>Deborah Lamm Weisel</i> | |
| The Role of Research and Analysis: Lessons from the Crime Reduction Programme..... | 147 |
| <i>Karen Bullock and Nick Tilley</i> | |
| Problem Orientation, Problem Solving and Organizational Change..... | 183 |
| <i>Michael Townsley, Shane D. Johnson and Ken Pease</i> | |
| Repeat Victimization: Lessons for Implementing Problem-oriented Policing..... | 213 |
| <i>Gloria Laycock and Graham Farrell</i> | |
| Advancing Problem-oriented Policing: Lessons from Dealing with Drug Markets..... | 239 |
| <i>Rana Sampson</i> | |
| Thefts From Cars in Center-City Parking Facilities: A Case Study in Implementing Problem-oriented Policing..... | 257 |
| <i>Ronald V. Clarke and Herman Goldstein</i> | |

PREFACE

The idea for this book started with a conversation between Ron Clarke and me during a walk in Margaret River by the Sea, Australia, while bird watching. Inspired by scenery and birds, we discussed the state of policing. In particular, we discussed why problem-oriented policing, a sound way of conducting police business, is rarely implemented well. We found this question so troubling that we decided it would be worth convening a small meeting of experts to explore the various reasons for this state of affairs, and to find ways in which the problem-oriented approach could be brought more fully into the mainstream of policing.

Having agreed on that course of action, the next step was to get necessary funding. I was sure it would be possible to arrange a conference on the subject in Norway, since I was convinced that the newly appointed National Police Commissioner at the Norwegian Police Directorate, Ingelin Killengreen, would immediately realize the value of such a meeting. A week later, after a short meeting with her, she gave her full support.

This is the background to the invitations sent to Ron Clarke, John Eck, Graham Farrell, Herman Goldstein, Deborah Lamm Weisel, Gloria Laycock, Rana Sampson, Mike Scott, Nick Tilley and Michael Townsley to prepare the papers included in this book. These papers were discussed at a small conference at Kleivstua, just outside Oslo, between 21st and 24th April 2002, in magnificent surroundings, with the view from the hotel of fjords and snow-clad mountains. Just after the meeting, I had a final discussion with Ron Clarke at Ugglarp on the west coast of Sweden, where we did some more walking and bird watching. We concluded, with the presentations and discussions fresh in our memories, that the prospects were in fact promising for mainstreaming problem-oriented policing. However, it will take a strong, dedicated effort both from academics and police to realize the full potential of the approach.

Of all who have contributed to the book, I would especially like to thank Herman Goldstein for his continual insistence on improving the quality of policing and Ron Clarke for his help in bringing the idea of the book from initial conception into realization.

Johannes Knutsson
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FOREWORD

The development process in crime mirrors the development process in society. Likewise, the methods for preventing and combating crime mirror society as such. For many years, we have based our police methods on experience and common sense, and it is still as important as ever to take into account the police officer's practical knowledge and experience in regard to what works and what does not. On the other hand, it is equally important to realise that the police must be part of progress in general, and that it is necessary to make use of knowledge available — including knowledge based on empirical research. The police must play an active part in what has become a knowledge-based society. This is the only way in which we will be able to lay the foundations for a policing focused on crime prevention.

The organisational structures of the police vary at the international level. Besides, there are also considerable differences when it comes to the choice of police methods. Still, quite a few countries have reached the understanding that both the choice and development of methods should be based on research and scientific knowledge. Norway is one of the countries which, in recent years, has come to realise the importance of establishing a research milieu connected to the field of policing. Problem-oriented policing has become a central issue, and it has been emphasised in the Police Academy's education and training activities. This is of great importance to Norway, being a small country when it comes to population and having a modest amount of police officers as well as a low crime rate.

Problem-oriented policing has both succeeded and supplemented crime prevention and community policing as the main areas of interest and development for many years now. What all areas have in common is the understanding that the war against crime is not won by repressive measures and subsequent responses alone. Several countries have run successful projects, and have had good results. There may not be scientific documentary proof for all results. Still, there is a range of good — and concrete — examples showing that results are improved when the police make use of thorough knowledge and good analyses concerning the problems they are to solve, before measures are taken.

As the professional head of the Norwegian police I do believe that the problem-oriented approach is an efficient and workable method

of policing. This is why the Norwegian National Police Directorate warmly supports the work initiated by the Research Department of the Norwegian National Police Academy. Correspondingly, we support the efforts now made in order to implement this work in the police students' training and education.

The idea for this book originated with the director of research at the Norwegian National Police Academy, Johannes Knutsson, and Professor Ronald V. Clarke of Rutgers University. All contributors are highly esteemed researchers on an international level. Some of them have, for years, been leading figures in the police research milieu. From a Norwegian point of view we are pleased to note that many Norwegian police officers are well acquainted with — and interested in — the work of these scholars.

I would like to thank Johannes Knutsson and Ronald V. Clarke for all their efforts, and moreover, to thank all the authors for responding to this initiative with valuable and very informative contributions. I am convinced that this book will be read — and applied. It will prove to be a useful tool in putting problem-oriented policing into practice.

Ingelin Killengreen
National Police Commissioner, Norway