
Introduction

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Crime prevention has made rapid progress during the past two decades. This is especially true of situational crime prevention and problem-oriented policing. Each has accumulated a substantial body of evaluated practice and an extensive theoretical and methodological literature to support that practice. In fact, in recent years, the literatures of these two fields have converged, and there has also been some blurring of practice so that, for example, problem-oriented policing projects now make increasing use of techniques and concepts drawn from situational prevention. This is not surprising because, despite their different origins - one in police organizational theory and the other in criminology - the two approaches share some important assumptions about the best way to prevent crime, including the need to focus on immediate causes of highly specific forms of crime and the desirability of adopting an "action-research" methodology (Tilley, 1999). Unfortunately, both crime prevention approaches also share a weakness - the focus of the present volume - which is that they have neglected implementation, i.e., the stage when measures identified during analysis are put into practice.

Weaknesses of implementation have been identified by critics (Hope and Murphy, 1983; Grabosky, 1996) and advocates alike (Goldstein, 2003; Clarke, 1998; Scott, 2000). Particularly significant is that Herman Goldstein, the founder of problem-oriented policing, has expressed disappointment with the quality of many projects undertaken in its name. Not only has analysis been weak, but they have also fallen back on traditional policing measures at the response stage and have failed to identify measures that would address the immediate causes of the problem.

These observations serve as the starting point for this volume. All the chapters have been written by academics with a long-standing interest in crime prevention, most of whom have been directly involved in implementing situational or problem-oriented projects. The chapters cover a wide range of topics. Some focus on problems of implementing single crime prevention *projects*, whereas others deal with implementing broader crime prevention *programs* encompassing many different projects. Some are very practical, providing concrete guidance on how to get the most out of crime prevention schemes, while other chapters are almost philosophical in their outlook. In this Introduction, we will not attempt to summarize each chapter since they all carry abstracts and all are clearly written. Instead, we will draw our own conclusions from the chapters and their discussion at the conference held in advance of their publication. While some chapters range more widely, we focus on situational prevention and problem-oriented policing and set out our conclusions under the ten headings below.

1. Change takes longer than expected

We have already noted that substantial progress in situational prevention and problem-oriented policing has been made. Nevertheless, many contributors expected progress to be faster and some of the chapters have a disillusioned tone. In fact, it takes a long time, perhaps even generations, to effect fundamental change in social policy, and crime policy is no exception. Both the general public and those who work within law enforcement and the criminal justice system believe that the best way to deal with crime is to change offenders, either through treatment or through punishment. These beliefs are strongly held and derive from deeper beliefs about morality and human nature. Consequently, it is very difficult to persuade people that it is more effective to reduce crime opportunities than to change offenders by punishing them or treating them.

2. The theory is robust

However disillusioned some of the contributors might seem to be, none questions the theoretical basis of situational crime prevention and problem-oriented policing and all accept that, (1) immediate situational factors play a strong part in causing crime problems, (2) these factors can generally be changed, and, (3) immediate reductions can result in crime and disorder. Rather, they believe that "implementation failure," not "theory failure," was responsible for the disappointing results of some projects and programs.

3. Implementation is not easy

Advocates of situational crime prevention and problem-oriented policing have often argued that the preventive measures suggested by these approaches, which may entail rather basic improvements in security, are much easier to implement than social prevention measures. That may be true, but at the same time the difficulties of opportunity reduction have been considerably underestimated. Seemingly simple measures can in fact be rather difficult to implement for a variety of technical, managerial and social reasons.

4. The sources of project failure are generally well understood

The many sources of project failure are reviewed in the chapters by Brown and Scott. Brown's discussion is based on his experience of crime prevention and community safety projects in the United Kingdom, while Scott's is based on his knowledge of problem-oriented policing projects in the United States. Consequently they focus on somewhat different factors, but, fortunately, their experience is being distilled for practitioners in a "Problem Solving Guide" on implementation that they are writing together for the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing. Meanwhile, we would identify a short list of requirements for successful implementation as follows: (1) a highly skilled and motivated project manager (see point 7 below), (2) adequate financial resources and staffing, (3) needed support and cooperation from partner agencies, and, (4) measures that are supported by evidence; are aimed at close causes, not distant ones; employ clearly stated mechanisms; are sustainable and do not require supervision; are not too costly or technically complex; and do not take much coordination between organizations. Furthermore, as suggested in Bowers's and Johnson's chapter, experience from crime prevention projects makes it possible to antici-

pate threats to implementation and to weigh advantages or disadvantages with different courses of action.

5. Programs seem more vulnerable to failure than projects

The reasons for program failure have been less studied, though three of the chapter authors - Brown, Homel and Hough - draw lessons from the U.K. Crime Reduction Program launched in the late 1990s. This is the largest national crime prevention program to date. It avoided the problem of imposing solutions (see point 6 below) by allowing local projects to choose measures depending on the local situation. Even so, all three authors believe that the program failed to meet its goals because of implementation problems, though each has a different "take" on the specific nature of the problems. Brown views the program from a local perspective, and argues that better project monitoring was needed. Hough blames the political management philosophy that inspired the program, under which central government set the national goals but required local organizations to meet them. An unintended consequence of this approach, according to Hough, is that simplified and populist policies will be advocated, since they reward actors at the central level. To avoid this trap, Hough advocates a more decentralized performance management system, where local authorities set their own goals instead of just determining their own solutions. Finally, Homel argues that the program was supposed to operate in a complex organizational environment, but failed largely because of lack of qualified staff, inadequate leadership and support from central and regional levels, and weak project management at the local level. He reports that the problems encountered are not unique to the U.K. experience, but have emerged in similar programs elsewhere in the world. His remedy is to treat the entire program, with all its different levels, as a single integrated system. It is particularly important to have a well-staffed centre that can provide leadership for the program and that is capable of giving advice and support on crime prevention matters, on budgets, on training, on reporting standards and on a variety of other technical matters.

6. Programs to implement standard solutions are especially vulnerable

Both problem-oriented policing and situational crime prevention require that tailor-made solutions be identified for specific crime problems. Context is all important, and something that works in one setting will not necessarily work in another, even one that seems similar. This explains

why some programs that have sought to introduce opportunity-reducing measures on a wide scale.- such as improved street lighting, neighborhood watch and closed-circuit TV surveillance of public places - have usually produced disappointing results, at least when compared with the introduction of the more careful use of these measures in discrete locations. This does not mean that situational or problem-oriented measures can never have broad benefits. One example of such benefits is the European Union's requirement to install immobilizers on all new cars, which seems likely to reduce overall levels of car theft in many EU countries (Brown, 2004). Even in this case, however, the effects of immobilizers will not be uniform. They will probably have a greater effect on joyriding and more opportunistic thefts than on organized, professional thefts of expensive vehicles.

7. Professional and committed leadership is vital

Homel's chapter argues that strong and committed leadership is vital to the success of crime prevention programs. While not always mentioned in reports (see Knutsson's chapter for an exception), this is equally true for projects. Those who lead successful projects often show considerable energy, as well as tenacity and persistence, well beyond the call of duty. All the contributors to the volume cited examples in discussion of such individuals. In some cases, their efforts were obstructed by colleagues (junior or senior) in their own agencies. More often, they had to beg, threaten and cajole those in other agencies to supply data or make some essential contribution to the project. The Goldstein and Tilley awards in problem-oriented policing (see www.popcenter.org for a repository of submissions) exist partly to recognize the contribution of these individuals.

8. The need to incentivize implementers has been neglected

In his chapter, Ken Pease focuses on the frequent lack of fit between the intentions of those who promote crime prevention schemes and those who must implement them. In many instances, there is no obvious benefit for the implementer in taking part in a crime preventive scheme. The implementer may also be independent of the intender and hence not susceptible to pressure. Even in organizations with explicit crime prevention goals, there may be little congruence between the preferred activities of the organization and the actions they are expected to undertake for the project. For example, many local community safety and crime prevention

agencies in the U.K. have a preference for "social" prevention. In these cases, it is important to find ways of making situational prevention and problem-oriented policing more attractive and rewarding to them.

9. Partnerships can be a trap

Partnerships between different agencies are essential to the success of many crime prevention projects because the solutions often demand coordinated action among a variety of public and private "stakeholders" (see Knutsson's chapter for an example). But partnerships must be very carefully managed or they can doom a project. It is particularly important to avoid forming a partnership before it is clear who can make an effective contribution to the solution. Too often, forming a partnership is the first step in a crime prevention project. This can mean that planning gets bogged down in looking for a role in the solution for every partner, however unrealistic this might be. While this might purchase some temporary goodwill, it is ultimately a source of frustration and delay. Forming a partnership should wait until analysis of the problem has clarified which agencies have the responsibility and the *competence* (see Gloria Laycock's chapter) to implement solutions. Delaying until this point can be difficult, since there is often the expectation that a collaborative venture is needed. It may also be the case that the analysis of the problem requires help from a variety of agencies. However, it is best to seek this help, not in "partnership" meetings, but directly from the agencies concerned. In this way, there need be no presumption that agencies consulted during the project will also have a role in the solution.

10. Ways to communicate "tacit" knowledge must be found

This last conclusion is one of the most important to emerge from the book because it points the way to speeding up the adoption of situational prevention and problem-oriented policing and to helping overcome some of the problems of implementation. All the contributors to this volume are actively engaged in communicating academic knowledge about crime prevention to the practitioners who must put it into practice. Most have provided consultancy advice, but generally they have concentrated on (1) writing pamphlets for practitioners (for example the U.S. COPS Office-sponsored "Problem Solving Guides" and many of the reports in the Home Office Police Research Series), and, (2) helping to develop materials for the Home Office Crime Reduction and the Center for Problem-Oriented

Policing web sites. However, Tilley makes clear in his chapter that, important as these efforts may be, they are not sufficient on their own because the knowledge being communicated is much more complex than was first assumed. For example, preventive measures have to be carefully tailored to the specific context in which they must be implemented. This is a challenging task that takes highly skilled and experienced personnel. Much of the necessary expertise consists of "tacit" knowledge, learned while practicing through personal contact with an accomplished practitioner. Tilley recommends a system of apprenticeship where this type of knowledge can be passed on. It would "involve the simplest possible text guidance backed by personal training and supervised practice, offering limited but growing discretion as the apprentice practitioners come to show that they have sufficient skill and understanding to make their own decisions and depart from strict rules without discussion and approval."

In summary, implementation of problem-oriented policing and situational prevention has been neglected by scholars, who have tended to assume that this stage of the problem-solving process is comparatively straightforward. However, experience has shown that many projects fail for a variety technical, management and "political" reasons. Although there is less experience of implementing crime prevention programs, it is already apparent that these may be even more prone to failure than projects - perhaps because there is so much more to go wrong. On the more positive side, important lessons have also been learned that should guide future practice. Some of the most important of these are that skilled, committed leadership is vital for the success of both projects and programs; that partnerships must be carefully managed if they are to assist, not undermine, implementation; and it must not be assumed that project implementers are fully committed to the opportunity-reduction approach. Finally, it has now been recognized, contrary to early assumptions, that the problem-solving approaches discussed in this book are not straightforward, and that the required knowledge to put them into practice cannot be fully communicated in written texts, even ones that are easy to read and understand. Finding ways to communicate this tacit knowledge will constitute an important challenge to the advocates of situational prevention and problem-oriented policing.



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