



Problem-Oriented Guides for Police  
Problem-Solving Tools Series  
No. 2

# Researching a Problem

by Ronald V. Clarke  
Phyllis A. Schultze





**[www.PopCenter.org](http://www.PopCenter.org)**

## **Center for Problem-Oriented Policing**

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**Guide No. 2**

# Researching a Problem

Ronald V. Clarke  
Phyllis A. Schultze

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## About the Problem-Solving Tools Series

The problem-solving tool guides are one of three series of the *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police*. The other two are the problem-specific guides and response guides.

The *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police* summarize knowledge about how police can reduce the harm caused by specific crime and disorder problems. They are guides to preventing problems and improving overall incident response, not to investigating offenses or handling specific incidents. The guides are written for police—of whatever rank or assignment—who must address the specific problems the guides cover. The guides will be most useful to officers who

- understand basic problem-oriented policing principles and methods,
  - can look at problems in depth,
  - are willing to consider new ways of doing police business,
  - understand the value and the limits of research knowledge, and
  - are willing to work with other community agencies to find effective solutions to problems.
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The tool guides summarize knowledge about information gathering and analysis techniques that might assist police at any of the four main stages of a problem-oriented project: scanning, analysis, response and assessment. Each guide

- describes the kind of information produced by each technique,
- discusses how this information could be useful in problem solving,
- gives examples of the previous use of the technique,
- provides practical guidance about adapting the technique to the specific problem being addressed,
- provides templates of data collection instruments (where this is appropriate),
- suggests how to analyze data gathered by using the technique,
- shows how to interpret the information correctly and present it effectively,
- warns about any ethical problems in using the technique,
- discusses the limitations of the technique when used by police in a problem-oriented project,
- provides reference sources of more detailed information about the technique, and
- indicates when expert help in using the technique should be sought.



Extensive technical and scientific literatures cover each of the techniques dealt within the tool guides. The tool guides aim to provide only enough information about each technique to enable police and others to use it in the course of problem-solving. In most cases, the information gathered in the course of a problem-solving project does not have to withstand rigorous scientific scrutiny. Where greater confidence is needed in the data, police might need expert help in using the technique. This can often be found in local university departments of sociology, psychology and criminal justice.

The information needs for any single project can be quite diverse and it will often be necessary to employ a variety of data collection techniques in meeting these needs. Similarly, a variety of different analytic techniques may be needed to analyze the data. Some of the techniques may be unfamiliar to police and crime analysts, but the effort invested in learning to use them can make all the difference to the success of a project.



For more information about problem-oriented policing, visit the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing online at [www.popcenter.org](http://www.popcenter.org) or via the COPS website at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov). This website offers free online access to:

- the *Problem-Oriented Guides* series,
- the companion *Response Guides* and *Problem-Solving Tools* series,
- instructional information about problem-oriented policing and related topics,
- an interactive training exercise,
- online access to important police research and practices, and
- an online problem analysis module.



## Acknowledgments

The *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police* series is very much a collaborative effort. While each guide has a primary author, other project team members, COPS Office staff and anonymous peer reviewers contributed to each guide by proposing text, recommending research and offering suggestions on matters of format and style.

The principal project team developing the guide series comprised Herman Goldstein, professor emeritus, University of Wisconsin Law School; Ronald V. Clarke, professor of criminal justice, Rutgers University; John E. Eck, professor of criminal justice, University of Cincinnati; Michael S. Scott, clinical assistant professor, University of Wisconsin Law School; Rana Sampson, police consultant, San Diego; and Deborah Lamm Weisel, director of police research, North Carolina State University.

Nancy Leach and Cynthia Pappas oversaw the project for the COPS Office. Richard Allinson edited the guide. Research for the guides was conducted at the Criminal Justice Library at Rutgers University under the direction of Phyllis Schultze.

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## Introduction

Problem-oriented policing focuses, one-by-one, on specific problems of crime and disorder with the intention of identifying and altering the particular factors giving rise to each problem. The problems addressed in problem-oriented policing tend not to be confined to just a few police jurisdictions, but are more widely experienced. It is therefore likely that some other agency has tried to solve the kind of problem that you are dealing with now. Or perhaps some researcher has studied a similar problem and learned things that might be useful to your work. You could save yourself a lot of time and effort by finding out what they did and why. In particular, you can learn which responses seemed to be effective and which were not. So long as they made available a written report of their work, this guide will help you discover what they did.

† See Weisel (in press) for a comprehensive treatment of analysis.

Having found out what others have done, you cannot simply copy what they did. You will have to adapt any successful responses they used to your own situation. This guide does not tell you how to analyze and understand your own problem.† It will only help you to profit from the work of those who have dealt with a similar problem. It is designed to take you as quickly as possible to the information you need and to help you evaluate and make the best use of this information. In doing this, it assumes:

- *You are familiar with problem-oriented policing.* The guide assumes that a problem-solving model, such as SARA (Scanning, Analysis, Response, Assessment), is guiding your project. The guide will assist you at the Analysis and Response stages by pointing you to the possible cause of the problem you are tackling and to the ways you might respond.
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† Comprehensive descriptions are provided by Benamati et al. (1998) and Nelson (1997).

- *You are willing to consider new responses to the problem.* Rarely does police enforcement alone solve a persisting problem. To bring a lasting improvement, it is almost always necessary to modify the conditions giving rise to the problem, such as a lack of security or surveillance. Whatever measures you adopt must be carefully matched to the nature of your problem. Many of the measures are likely to be outside your experience and, indeed, that of most police officers. So, you need to learn about the ones that have been successfully used before in dealing with the kind of problem you face. While it is not usually recommended that a police agency blindly adopt another agency's responses to a problem, neither is it a good idea to be blind to what others have done. The key is to understand whether lessons learned elsewhere would apply under the conditions that exist for your problem.
  - *You have limited time.* The guide assumes that you have limited time to research best practice and that you want results quickly. You are not writing an academic paper where you might be faulted for missing a particular article or book. You are simply trying to find information that will help you with the practical task of dealing with your problem. For this reason, the guide does not provide a comprehensive description of all information sources, whether on the Internet or in libraries.† Rather, it is intended to help you find two main categories of information relevant to your task: (1) articles by researchers who have studied the problem you are facing and, (2) reports of police projects dealing with the problem. The first category of information will help you understand the factors giving rise to your problem; the second will help you find effective responses. Later in the project, you might wish
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to search for a third category of information: detailed information about a particular response (say, street closures or a publicity campaign) that you would like to implement.

† Can be downloaded from [www.adobe.com](http://www.adobe.com)

- *You are not writing a formal literature review.* The guide will not include guidance about writing up the results of your literature search, but it will provide some advice about reading the material you find and extracting the information you need.
  - *You have Internet access.* Nowadays, it is very difficult to research a problem without having access to the Internet. The guide assumes that you have this access and that you are familiar with searching for information on the Internet. (Indeed, you might have found this guide on the Internet.) The computer you use will need a copy of Adobe Reader,<sup>†</sup> which allows you to read and download articles in portable document format (.pdf) that you find at websites on the Internet. Unless your computer has a high speed connection, this process of visiting websites and reading and downloading material can be slow and frustrating. Most computers in libraries have high speed connections and you can usually pay to obtain print copies of the material you have downloaded.
  - *You have library access.* The guide assumes that you have access to a large public library, or preferably a university or college library. Not only do these have computers linked to the Internet, but they also have paid subscriptions to some on-line sources of information that can be particularly helpful in your research. In addition, college or university libraries
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hold large numbers of books and journals that contain information that may be very relevant to your needs, especially if they have a criminal justice program. They also have professional librarians who can point you in the right direction and save you hours of work.

The guide recommends a particular sequence of steps to take in searching for material, which should lead you as quickly as possible to the information you need. Even so, unless you are lucky and hit upon the right material quickly, you can expect to spend many hours on the Internet or in the library. For most problems, there is relatively little available literature, and finding relevant articles and reports can be difficult. Rarely will all the information you need about your problem be in one place unless it happens to be the subject of one of the *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Series*. More usually you will have to piece together items of information from a variety of sources. At first, you should concentrate on understanding the factors that give rise to the problem. Later, you might concentrate on what others have done to reduce the problem. You might have to repeat your search as you narrow down the material you are seeking or as you need to find out more about particular aspects of a promising response. So, don't expect to complete your search all in one sitting. Instead, you might have to return to your computer or the library several times before you have assembled the information you need.



**The Best Place to Start**

The *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Series* is the best place to look for background research on a variety of common crime and disorder problems. Each guide summarizes the best available research on the causes of a particular problem, and also provides a blueprint for analyzing and responding to the problem. Guides have been published on such topics as drug dealing in privately-owned apartment complexes, thefts of and from cars in parking facilities, and burglary of single-family homes. Guides are continually being produced, and are available online through the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing at [www.popcenter.org](http://www.popcenter.org) and the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).





## Defining Your Problem

You will greatly reduce the time spent searching for information if you tightly define your problem. Let us say that you are dealing with a rash of vehicle-related thefts in your town. An Internet search on "car theft" could yield hundreds of "hits" or sources. It would take too long to scan through all these sources to find the ones most relevant to your particular problem. It is like a crime investigation with too many suspects, not too few! So it is important that you focus more tightly. What kind of car theft are you dealing with: Is it both thefts of cars and from cars, or is it just theft of cars? Try to focus on the largest component of your problem. If it is theft of cars, where are these cars being stolen—from the downtown area, from the suburbs or from university campuses? If from downtown, are most of the thefts from the street or from parking lots? If from parking lots, are these public or private, or from surface lots or decks. And so on.

Making your search too narrow (for example, "joyriding thefts from downtown lots at night,") might yield no useful literature because nobody has undertaken a study on precisely this topic. So even if this defines your problem exactly, you might have to broaden your search a little to find some relevant literature. For example, searches for "car thefts from parking lots" or "juvenile joyriding" might yield articles or reports that begin to help you understand your problem and begin to suggest some possible responses, even if most of what you find is not directly relevant.

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There are few firm rules about defining your problem to make your search efficient, though it is usually best to begin with a tight definition and broaden this progressively until you have begun to find relevant material.

### Formulating Search Terms

Having defined your problem clearly, you will then need to formulate a search term for use in searching online databases and website search boxes for relevant material. Make a list of words that come to mind when you think of your topic. These will be the "keywords" that you use for your search term. In doing this, think about words with similar or identical meanings. Think also about alternative spellings, especially British spellings ("behaviour" instead of "behavior," "organisation" instead of "organization," etc).

Your search will probably be an evolving process. You may need to revise your search term as you find out more about your topic. Keep a record of your search terms (with words or phrases exactly as entered), the name of the databases that you used, and the date of your search. Don't waste time figuring out the same thing twice!

Sometimes a search can be overly general (which results in too many hits) or overly specific (too few hits). To fine-tune your search, you can use: (1) phrases, (2) Boolean operators, and (3) truncation symbols:

- *Phrases.* Phrase searching is searching for words adjacent to each other (e.g., automobile theft; problem-oriented policing; crime prevention). Searching for phrases is a
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powerful technique for focusing precisely on the topic you want, because it excludes records with separated and irrelevant keywords. Not all electronic resources, however, support phrase searching.

- *Boolean operators.* You can use AND, OR and NOT (sometimes called Boolean operators) to link your search words together (use capitals for these operators). These will help you narrow or broaden your search to retrieve the information you need quickly.
  - Using AND: If you have a search term that is too general, you can append several terms together using AND (e.g., police AND prevention AND burglary). By stringing key terms together, you can further define your search and reduce the number of results.
  - Using NOT: To narrow a search, you can link words together by using NOT (e.g., burglary NOT robbery). This will help you to filter out specific topics you do not wish included as part of your search.
  - Using OR: To broaden a search, you can link synonyms together by using OR (e.g., cars OR automobiles OR vehicles). Linked by this operator, your words are searched simultaneously and independently of each other. When using both OR and AND in a search, use parentheses to enclose the words you are linking with OR. Examples would be:
    - burglary AND (police OR law enforcement), and
    - (juveniles OR teenagers) AND joyriding.
- *Truncation symbols:* Most databases allow use of a truncation symbol that is used to pick up words with variant spellings. The most commonly used symbols are \* and ?. For example: burglar\* will find burglar, burglars, burglary and burglaries.



The websites listed in the next section (and many others) have a search box, usually on the home page, which helps you find relevant material quickly. In some cases, the search box comes with a tutorial or specific instructions in its use, which you should always read.

### **Refining Your Search**

As you begin to search, you may find that you are getting either too many hits (your search is too broad) or too few (your search is too narrow). In these cases you will want to broaden or narrow your search.

#### **Broadening Your Search**

- Try using synonyms and think of keywords that are more general.
- Try using fewer keywords. The more words you use, the more specific you become, and the fewer number of hits you will get. If you use fewer keywords your focus is widened, and you should get more hits.
- If you do need to search using a number of words, search them individually (or possibly in pairs) first.
- Use the "or" operator and truncation \* symbol.
- Use lower case, even for proper nouns. This will broaden your search.

#### **Narrowing Your Search**

- Be more specific. Evaluate your keywords and synonyms. Can you use more specific words to describe your topic?
  - Capitalize when appropriate. Some search engines are case sensitive. Use appropriate capitalization when you need to focus your search precisely.
  - Use AND. The Boolean operator "and" will limit your search to only those occurrences that include both terms, not just one or the other.
  - Use phrases.
  - Try using NOT. The Boolean operator "not" narrows the search by excluding certain words.
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## **Getting Started: The Five Most Useful Websites**

The best way to begin is by visiting the websites described in this section. These websites are the ones most likely to contain the kind of information you are seeking. Not everything on the websites will be of equal interest to you, and the descriptions focus on the sections that you are most likely to find useful. If you find nothing of relevance on these websites, it is unlikely that a more detailed search of the Internet from your computer at home, or the one at work, will yield much useful information, and it may be time for you to visit a library or get some expert help. Before doing that, however, it might just be worth undertaking a general search on the Internet using *Google* or other search engines, and also searching the electronic archives of some of the major newspapers. The next section of the guide tells you how to do this.

You will save time by visiting the websites in the order they are listed here. You may be tempted to skip the Australian and U.K. websites, but this would be a mistake. Problem-oriented policing is practiced widely in both these countries and many of the crime problems are similar to those in the United States. In fact, crime occurring, let us say in San Francisco, may be more like that in Sydney, Australia, than in a small town in Louisiana or Tennessee. It is also the case that more research has been conducted in the United Kingdom on specific crime problems than in the United States because of different criminological traditions in the two countries.

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† When you are searching for information on the World Wide Web, you may find "links" or "hyperlinks" that you can click on that will take you directly to another relevant document on the Web or to another place within the same document where more information related to the word in question can be found.

### **A Word of Warning**

Even with a high speed connection, you may experience numerous problems in connecting to websites, finding your way around them and locating and downloading documents that you know to be there. (Always check the number of pages to be downloaded.) Websites vary greatly in their ease of use and how regularly they are updated and maintained. A good website can deteriorate and a bad one can improve. Many are constantly being redesigned to improve them—but not always successfully. The Internet is also prone to many unexplained glitches and if you cannot gain access to a website or have a frustrating visit on a particular occasion, it can be worth trying again on another occasion.

### **Center for Problem-Oriented Policing ([www.popcenter.org](http://www.popcenter.org))**

Your first Internet stop should be the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing, which is a website developed with funding assistance from the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Service (the "COPS Office") specifically to help police undertake problem-oriented policing projects. The website is managed by the same organization that produces the *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Series* for the COPS Office. All the guides produced to date can be found here, as well as on the COPS website (see below). The website also has direct links<sup>†</sup> to all the other websites discussed in the section, as well as a number of others.

The first thing you should do is to check whether a guide already exists on your topic. If it does not, you should look at any guides that deal with related topics. For example, say your problem is one of drug dealing

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in a public housing complex. Assuming no guide on this topic has been written, but guides are available on "Drug dealing in privately-owned apartment complexes" and "Drug dealing in open-air markets," reading these guides might be helpful, even though they are not directly focused on your problem.

You should pay particular attention to the "References" listed near the end to see if there are books or articles you would like to read. Many of the references listed in the guides are available on the website in .pdf format and you can read and download these as well. If they are not on the website, this is because the copyright owners of the article have withheld permission for it to be made available on the website. (See "Visiting a Library" below for information about obtaining the article in this eventuality.)

It is important that you look at other sections of the website, which contain a wealth of other articles and reports. Especially important is the section on "POP Projects and Awards." This section contains hundreds of reports of problem-oriented policing projects submitted over the years for the annual problem-oriented policing awards in the United States (the Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing) and the United Kingdom (the Tilley Awards). The website's search engine allows you to search these awards by topic, so you can quickly identify the projects that are likely to be relevant and read or download the reports.

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## **National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) Abstracts Database (<http://abstractsdb.ncjrs.org>)**

The National Criminal Justice Reference Service is an information clearinghouse created by the U.S. Department of Justice for people involved in research, policy, and practice related to criminal and juvenile justice, and drug control. The "NCJRS Abstracts Database" is the largest collection of criminal justice abstracts in the world. It contains summaries of over 180,000 U.S. and international publications, including federal, state, and local government reports, books, research reports, journal articles, audiovisual presentations, and unpublished research. It contains far more material than the website for the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing, though only a small proportion of the abstracts deal directly with problem-oriented policing or specific crime problems. Even so, it is likely to contain material that will be useful to you.

In some cases the abstracts are linked to the full text of the article or report, which you can read online or download and print. Where reports and articles are not online, some are available free of charge. Many others are available for a small fee. This service is efficient—it generally takes no more than two to three weeks to receive the material. (It usually helps to refer to the NCJ number for each publication you want to order.)

The website includes an "online tutorial" on how to search the abstracts, which will save you time and help you find your material in an efficient way.

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## **The Home Office, United Kingdom** **([www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk))**

The Home Office is the government department responsible for U.K. internal affairs. It is roughly equivalent to the U.S. Department of Justice and has overall governmental responsibility for crime matters and the criminal justice system, including the police. As you might expect this is a large website with many links and, while you can browse the many sections, it is best to start with a "quick search" using the search box on the home page. You can ask it to search "any words" in your search term, "all words" or "exact phrase." Results will be delivered from three sources:

- the Crime Reduction Website (see below),
- the Research and Statistics Series published by the Home Office, and
- the Criminal Justice website of the Home Office.

You can choose to limit your search to any of these three sources. A small summary is given for each entry and you can click on the title to take you to the full document.

A useful section of the website for you to browse is "Research and Statistics." The Home Office sponsors or conducts a large amount of high quality research, much of it dealing with policing and specific crime problems.



**Crime Reduction Website, Home Office, United Kingdom**  
**([www.crimereduction.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk))**

The Crime Reduction website was established by the Home Office to provide a single point of access to U.K. government documents, statistics and legislation relating to crime reduction topics. The search box on the general Home Office website will allow you to search this website, but you should browse its two most important sections— the "toolkits" and the "mini-sites." The toolkits are similar in concept to the *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Series*, and are designed to provide practical guidance in dealing with the particular topic covered; the mini-sites bring together key information and new material on topics of concern to the government. The topics covered under both these sections are continually being expanded. The categories of crime covered in the toolkits include: vehicle crime, street crime and robbery, residential burglary, rural crime, racial crime and harassment, trafficking in people, arson, business and retail crime, and public transport crime. Those covered under the mini-sites include: domestic violence, street crime and victimization of college students.

**Australian Institute of Criminology**  
**([www.aic.gov.au](http://www.aic.gov.au))**

The Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) is Australia's national organization for the study of crime and criminal justice and for the dissemination of information on these subjects. It conducts and sponsors research, holds conferences and maintains a fine library. The website contains many full-text documents and reports. The best way to begin is by searching from the

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opening page. A short description is provided of each entry yielded by the search. By clicking on the title, you can get a fuller description and you can also download full-text copies of many of the documents. The website also allows you to search the library catalog, which will yield material not accessible through the home page search box. However, little more than the title of the document is listed so this will be of limited value to you.

## **Other Useful Websites**

You may not have found much information directly relevant to your problem at the five recommended websites and you may wish to explore others. Those listed here sometimes contain useful material not available elsewhere and are worth a visit.

### **Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) ([www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov))**

The COPS Office provides grants to state and local law enforcement agencies to hire and train community policing officers, acquire and deploy new crime-fighting technologies, and develop and test innovative policing strategies. The website allows you to download or order COPS publications that deal with problem-oriented policing. These can be downloaded or ordered from the website. The *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Series* can be downloaded from this site. The COPS website has links to its network of Regional Community Policing Institutes.

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The COPS Office website is a good resource for problem-oriented policing.

## Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) ([www.policeforum.org](http://www.policeforum.org))

PERF is a national membership organization of police executives from large law enforcement agencies. Its mission is to improve policing and advance professionalism through research and involvement in public policy debate. The website may be entered as a guest or as a member. It contains POPNet, a searchable database of problem-oriented policing projects, many of which are also included in the "Goldstein Awards" on the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing website. "Publications and Information Services" lists publications for sale from the "online store" and "public publications" that may be downloaded free.



## **Community Policing Consortium ([www.communitypolicing.org](http://www.communitypolicing.org))**

The Community Policing Consortium, funded by the COPS Office, is a training and technical partnership of five of the nation's leading law enforcement organizations: the International Association of Chiefs of Police; the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives; the National Sheriffs' Association; the Police Executive Research Forum; and the Police Foundation. Its mission is to deliver community policing training and technical assistance to police departments and sheriffs' offices. The website's "electronic library" contains community policing publications, some of which can be downloaded. It also allows you look for information in back issues of three of the consortium's newsletters: "Sheriff Times," "Community Policing Exchange" and "Community Links."

## **Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science ([www.jdi.ucl.ac.uk](http://www.jdi.ucl.ac.uk))**

The Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science at London University is devoted specifically to reducing crime through teaching, research and public policy analysis. The website lists "Crime Science: Short Reports" for practitioners and policymakers concerned with finding ways to reduce crime and disorder. "Ad Hoc Publications" covers a general range of research from the Institute. Some publications are available in full text, while for others only a brief summary is provided.

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### **Police Foundation ([www.policefoundation.org](http://www.policefoundation.org))**

The Police Foundation conducts a wide range of research projects on a variety of policing issues. The website lists the Foundation's publications under "List and Order Form." A short summary of each publication is provided. Many of the publications can be downloaded free of charge while others can be ordered for a small fee. The "Ideas in American Policing" series and "Crime Mapping News" are also in this section.

### **International Association of Chiefs of Police ([www.theiacp.org](http://www.theiacp.org))**

The largest police association in the world, IACP is dedicated to advancing professional policing. The most useful section of the website is "Publications," which provides current and back issues of "Police Chief Magazine". Many of the articles are available in full text. A search capability is provided for the periodical, but it is limited to searching only recent issues of the magazine. A second useful section is "Research Center Documents," which contains the full text of many recent reports of the IACP.

### **RAND (Public Safety and Justice Center) ([www.rand.org/psj](http://www.rand.org/psj))**

The RAND Public Safety and Justice center conducts research and analysis on various public safety issues, including: illegal immigration and border control; domestic counter-terrorism, terrorism preparedness, threat and vulnerability management; drug use and prevention;

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violence prevention; and a wide range of issues relevant to law enforcement. Website publications are arranged by category, or one can search by specific words. Many of the reports can be downloaded free.

**FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin**  
**([www.fbi.gov/publications/leb/leb.htm](http://www.fbi.gov/publications/leb/leb.htm))**

"FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin" is published monthly by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The website contains full text of all issues. No search function is available, but you may have found references to articles from this journal when you have used other indexing or abstracting services.

**California Commission on Peace Officer Standards & Training (POST) Library**  
**([www.post.ca.gov/](http://www.post.ca.gov/))**

The POST Library was established to assist the Commission, staff, and California peace officers in their research efforts. The POST Library database contains citations and brief abstracts for over 48,000 articles dating from the early 1960s. Where possible, links to the full text are included. Keyword searching is possible in the abstract/table-of-contents field. Many of the Command College projects ("futures studies" that are similar to masters' theses) are available in full text on the Internet. Books are loaned directly to POST staff only, but others may borrow materials via interlibrary loan through their local library.





## Expanding Your Internet Search from Your Home or Office

Your search of websites is likely to have produced useful articles and reports that you have been able to download and read. It is also likely to have alerted you to the existence of other articles and reports that you were not able to obtain on the Internet. This is the point when you will need to visit a library (see the next section). On the other hand, you might have found very little of value or you may wish to spend just a little more time searching from your home computer or the one at work. To make the best use of your time, there are three things you might consider doing: (1) making a general search of the Internet using *Google* or similar search engine, (2) searching the online archives of some large newspapers, and (3) searching some online databases.

† The website's uniform resource locator (URL), which is a standard way of identifying website addresses, provides useful information about the provenance of the site and can help you evaluate the information it contains. The suffixes you are most likely to encounter are: **.edu** = American educational institution; **.org** = non-profit organization; **.gov** = organization of the American government; **.com** = commercial enterprise; **.ac** = overseas academic institution. The URL may make use of a two-letter country suffix. Those you are most likely to encounter are: **.au** = Australia; **.ca** = Canada; **.nl** = Netherlands; **.se** = Sweden; **.uk** = United Kingdom.

### Searching the Internet Using Google ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com))

*Google* is considered the premier search tool on the Internet, featuring not only the best web search engine, but also many additional features such as the ability to search .pdf files. To enter a query into *Google*, just type in a few descriptive words and hit your "enter" key (or click on the Search button) for a list of relevant web pages.† These tend to be listed in order of importance as calculated by the number of links to the site.

Because *Google* only returns web pages that contain all the words in your query, narrowing your search is as simple as adding more words to the search terms that you have already entered. Your new query will return a



smaller subset of the pages *Google* found for your original "too-broad" query. Search for phrases by enclosing them in quotation marks. Words enclosed in double quotes ("problem-oriented policing") will appear together in all results exactly as you have entered them. *Google* also supports the OR operator. To retrieve pages that include either word A or word B, use an uppercase OR between terms (e.g., auto OR cars OR vehicles).

*Google* has released a new search tool called *Google Scholar* ([www.scholar.google.com](http://www.scholar.google.com)) that enables you to search scholarly literature, including peer-reviewed articles, books, and technical reports. A search might lead you to a citation for an article or book (which you will have to obtain from a library) or sometimes to a full text report.

#### **Another Word of Warning**

Unlike scholarly books and journal articles, websites are seldom reviewed or refereed. You need to be critical of the information you use when it comes from the Web, because anyone can make a website that looks expert. In general, rely more heavily on those sites sponsored by colleges and universities, government agencies, and professional organizations.

### **Online Newspaper Archives**

Newspapers sometimes print stories about new forms of crime or accounts of police innovations in controlling a particular problem. Indeed, these stories and accounts might reach the newspapers before they reach the professional or academic journals. Newspapers, especially those with a national readership and high standards of reporting, can therefore sometimes be the best source of up-to-date information. These newspapers generally

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provide free online access to their archives of past issues, although you may need to register first. Some examples are the **San Francisco Chronicle**, the **Washington Post**, the **New York Times**, and the **Chicago Tribune**.

### Online Databases Requiring a Fee

There are some useful databases that can be searched from your office or home computer, but to use them properly you will have to pay a fee. This can sometimes be a useful alternative to visiting a library (where you can often access the databases without charge).

- *Questia* ([www.questia.com](http://www.questia.com)) is an online library offering the full text and images of scholarly books, journals, magazines, and newspaper articles in the humanities and social sciences. You can search the collection at no cost, but if you need access to the full text of any document you must purchase a subscription to the service.
- *Ingenta* ([www.ingenta.com](http://www.ingenta.com)) is a searchable database of more than 11 million citations from over 25,000 publications. Electronic, fax, and pay-per-view document delivery is available for many of the articles.
- *PsycINFO* ([www.apa.org/psycinfo](http://www.apa.org/psycinfo)) contains abstracts of journal articles, dissertations, technical reports, and English-language chapters and books in psychology and related disciplines such as sociology, education, law, psychiatry, and anthropology. It includes coverage of several criminal justice periodicals. It is available in college or university libraries and in large public libraries, but it also offers a pay-as-you-go option that provides access to the database for a 24-hour period. During that time period you may view, print, and download records. Because *PsycINFO* is an abstract



database, it does not have the full text of the articles. You may be able to purchase some of the articles for a fee, but you will probably need to visit your local library for assistance in locating the articles you have selected.



## Getting Advice

You might find that seeking help and advice from some other people can greatly speed up your search. Among those to consider are:

† See Velasco (2005) and Weisel (2005).

### Crime Analysts

If your department is large enough to employ crime analysts, they might help you search the Internet for useful material. This is particularly the case if a crime analyst has been assigned to help with your project. Crime analysts are generally comfortable with using computers and are accustomed to searching for material on the Internet. Recent manuals and other publications for crime analysts have recognized the important role they can play in researching problems for a police department.†

### Other Police Departments

"Cold calling" other police departments is rarely productive, but if your search has revealed that a particular police department has tackled a similar problem, it is worth calling that department. Try to speak to the officers originally involved in the project and try to get a copy of the report if one was produced.

### Local College or University Faculty

If your local college or university has a criminal justice program, you might be able to obtain helpful advice on your problem from a faculty member. Do not expect the professor to spend much time on your problem, but he or she might be able to suggest sources for you to explore. Look at the institution's website to find out as much as possible about the interests of the faculty before

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attempting to contact anyone. If you call and leave a message, be sure that the professor can reach you easily. For anything more than an hour or so of consultation, the faculty member might expect compensation, although some state universities consider assistance to government agencies within that state to be part of their faculty's regular service mission.

### **National Experts**

A particular expert's name might appear repeatedly during your Internet search and it can sometimes be helpful to contact that person by email to ask for advice. Remember that these experts are likely to be very busy people. You should contact them only when you have exhausted other possibilities, and you should only ask them for a specific piece of information that they can provide quickly. Experts cannot be expected to summarize their publications for you. They will not reply to general queries such as, "Any information you can provide about my problem will be gratefully received." When asking for references to useful articles, list those that you have found most helpful to date. The expert will then be able to tell at a glance whether you have missed anything really important, and he or she is more likely to supply the key reference. Do not expect to engage an expert in a prolonged email correspondence unless he or she has invited you to email again.



## Visiting a Library

As explained above, you can obtain some articles and reports not available on the Internet through the NCJRS. In some cases you may be able to call or write to the agency or organization that issued the report for a copy. But in most cases, the only practical method of obtaining an article or report not available on the Internet is by visiting a public library or, better still, a university library. Most of them, except the smallest public libraries, have professional librarians to help you locate material and online subscriptions to information sources not available to you at home or work. Since the services available at public libraries and university or college libraries are different, these are discussed separately below.

### Public Libraries

The public library serving your town or county might be closer than the nearest university library and has the great advantage of being open to any member of the public. The librarians are also likely to be especially helpful to local police. However, do not expect to find the books or articles you want to read on the shelves of your public library, even if it serves a large city. The material is usually too specialized for a general readership and to find it you will usually have to go to a college or university library. What you can expect to get at any reasonably large public library is personal help from the librarians with your search. You can also expect to find three important resources:



- *Computers with high speed connections to the Internet.* High speed connections make searching for and downloading material much easier and less frustrating. Unless your home computer or the one you use at work has a high speed connection, you might find it more efficient to use those at the public library.
  - *Subscriptions to online databases.* Many public libraries carry subscriptions to some useful online databases, particularly *ProQuest*, *Ebsco* and *InfoTrac*.
  - *ProQuest* is a Web-based information service providing access to a number of databases covering various subject disciplines. Some of the databases included are ABI/Informal Global, Social Science Plus, Criminal Justice Periodical Index, newspapers, etc. The service provides citations, abstracts, and some complete (full text) items from magazines, journals, and newspapers covering all subject areas. Not all libraries subscribe to all of the databases that are part of the *ProQuest* group, so you will need to see what databases are provided by each individual library. If you are fortunate enough to have access to the Criminal Justice Periodical Index (CJPI), this should be your database of choice. CJPI offers coverage of 59 criminal justice titles, as well as indexing and abstracts for another 140 relevant U.S. and international journals.
  - *Ebsco* provides "Academic Search Premier," a multi-disciplinary database that includes abstracts and indexing from more than 4,000 scholarly publications covering a wide field of academic endeavor. Full text is provided for many of the articles. This source also includes indexing for several major U.S. newspapers.
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- *InfoTrac* is an electronic resource that provides access to more than 8,500 periodicals—from the *New York Times* to general interest magazines, business and technology publications, and law and academic journals.

† It can be difficult to borrow copies of dissertations and some reference books.

Once you have obtained a library card, you might be able to gain access to the library resources from your home computer, including access to these and other databases.

- *Interlibrary loan*. This service allows participating libraries to obtain most books, articles or reports that you might need by requesting a copy from the nearest library possessing the material.† You will be required to complete an interlibrary loan request form that the library will supply. This form requires the title of the work, the author, publisher, place of publication and date. If you are requesting a journal article, you will need to supply volume and page numbers. In most cases it takes about two weeks to obtain the material, but rarer material can take up to six weeks. The library will usually notify you when the material has arrived and you will have to collect it. Loans are not usually renewable and can be kept a maximum of one or two weeks.

## University or College Libraries

Unless you are enrolled as a student, you cannot always gain access to these libraries. You might expect to be more warmly received at a state college or university than at a private institution, but libraries vary greatly in their access policies and it is always worth going there in person and asking if you might be allowed to use the library. In



some cases, you may be able to become a "Friend of the Library" for a nominal fee, which will allow you to borrow books and access other services of the library. In other cases, you might be granted certain privileges but not others. For example, you might be allowed access to the books and journals, but might not be allowed to make use of the library's interlibrary loan service.

- *The library's collection.* The articles or books you want to read might be held in the library's collection. This is much more likely to be the case if the college or university has a criminal justice program, especially one at the graduate level. Even then, however, the library might not hold copies of lesser-known books and many reports. The library's card or electronic catalog will help you find the journal or book if the library holds it, but it is important that you have the following details: exact title of the article or book, the full name of the author(s), and the year of publication.

When the college or university has a criminal justice program, ask the librarian to tell you where the books and journals are shelved that are used mostly by the criminal justice faculty and students. An hour or two browsing these shelves might turn up useful material. If the librarian is a criminal justice specialist, he or she might be able to direct you to the most productive sources.

- *Online resources.* You can expect the college or university library to have full subscriptions to the databases mentioned above that you can access either from home on limited fee-paying basis or from a large public library, including *PsycINFO*. Another valuable online resource available at most college and university libraries is *SocioFile*, which indexes approximately 2,300
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journals from 55 countries. It covers sociological topics such as alcohol and drug abuse, counseling, crime, law, public administration, public affairs and violence.

- *Criminal Justice Abstracts*. A very important resource is online access to Criminal Justice Abstracts (CJA), but you are only likely to find this at colleges and universities with a criminal justice program. CJA provides comprehensive coverage of the major journals in criminology and related disciplines, extensive coverage of books, and access to reports from government and nongovernmental agencies from 1968 to the present. It is prepared in cooperation with the Don M. Gottfredson Library of Criminal Justice of Rutgers University. Topics include crime trends, prevention projects, corrections, juvenile delinquency, police, courts, offenders, victims, and sentencing. CJA is available in both a print edition from Sage Publications and an online version from Cambridge Scientific Abstracts. The online version is much larger than the print version.

Compared with NCJRS abstracts, CJA focuses more on the criminology and criminal justice literature, and as such provides greater coverage of academic journals, nongovernmental research, and scholarly books. NCJRS Abstracts tends to focus more on policy issues related to the U.S. government, and it provides more coverage of government-sponsored research and the less-academic magazine literature.





## Evaluating Your Primary Sources of Information

Though your search may yield information from a wide variety of different sources, your primary sources of useful information are likely to be: (1) articles by researchers who have studied the problem you are facing, and (2) reports of police projects dealing with the problem. This section is intended to help you read and evaluate these two sources.

### Academic Articles

Unless you are dealing with an extremely common problem, do not expect to find more than a few academic articles directly relevant to your topic. Academic criminologists tend to be more interested in crime and delinquency in general than the very specific forms of crime that are typically the focus of problem-oriented policing projects. Criminologists also tend to be more interested in "distant" causes of crime—such as social disadvantage, psychological impediments and dysfunctional families—than in the "near" causes of a problem, which include situational factors such as poor security or lack of surveillance. As a police officer, you can do little about the distant causes, but you may be able to alter the situational factors. Consequently, even when you find academic articles dealing with your problem, you might find that the causal factors they identify will provide you with little help in developing an effective response.

Academic articles follow a fairly standard format designed to help readers decide quickly how relevant the article is to their interests. Most articles begin with an abstract. This

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† For more details on the requirements of an evaluation see the POP Guide on *Assessing Responses to Problems: An Introductory Guide for Police Problem Solvers*.

is usually a single paragraph, which includes information about the data used for the study and a summary of the main findings. The abstract should tell whether you want to look more closely at the article. If so, go to the end of the article and read the "Summary," "Discussion" and/or "Conclusions." Only if the article seems valuable need you read more. Even if it is valuable, you may not need to read the literature review at the beginning of the article or the methodological sections dealing with data, analysis, and results. On the other hand, when the article is not directly relevant to your needs, you might still find useful material listed in the "References" at the end, which you might try to find and read.

## Reports of Police Projects

Again, unless you are dealing with a very common problem, do not expect to find more than a few highly relevant police projects. The greatest limitation of those you do find is likely to be that claims of success frequently have to be treated with a considerable skepticism. Rarely are projects properly evaluated, with comparisons of crime data before-and-after the project, or with crime data for a "control" group or area not included in the project.† Even some projects that have received Goldstein or Tilley awards (see the section above on Center for Problem-Oriented Policing) have not been evaluated in full accordance with social science research standards. Further, you should beware that a response that has worked in a particular town or neighborhood might not automatically work in yours. This could be because of specific circumstances that make your situation different from earlier ones. Or it could be that the effectiveness of a specific response depends partly on the other responses



introduced at the same time. This does not mean that it is a waste of time looking at what other police agencies have done. To the contrary, this past experience is always an important source of ideas about what might be helpful in your situation and what might not. But in reaching decisions about the responses you want to implement, you must always weigh the information obtained from any particular project together with all the other information you find.





## Using the Information You Have Found

Make a copy of any highly relevant material you find in the course of your search because you may want to consult it repeatedly. Highlight particularly relevant passages or, better still, stick a "post-it" label on the page with a brief note about the topic. You can then find the relevant passages without having to flip through the entire article or report, and you can easily remove these labels when you have finished dealing with the topic.

† For a fuller discussion of these questions, see Clarke and Eck (2003).

## Understanding Your Problem

One of the principal objectives of conducting a literature search is to learn what others have discovered about the causes of the kind of problem you are tackling, particularly its "near" causes (those factors that most immediately contributed to the problem). Knowing what they have found will be useful to you in analyzing your own problem. Your analysis can check whether factors that have been implicated in the past also hold true in your situation.

It is only when you have achieved an understanding of your problem that you can expect to identify effective responses. You will know you have achieved this understanding when you are able to provide answers to the five "W" and one "H" questions:†

- *Who is involved?* Are the offenders juveniles? Juvenile gangs? Organized criminals? Addicts? Opportunists? Ordinary members of the public?



- *What exactly do they do?* The essence of problem-oriented policing is to focus on a very specific problem. This is because specific problems demand specific solutions. Answering this question helps you to identify the specific problem that you wish to focus on.
  - *Why do they do this?* For theft the motive will be obvious, but much can be learned about specific motivation from the nature of the goods stolen. Motives for many other expressive or violent crimes may be more obscure.
  - *Where do they do this?* Try to describe the usual setting. Sometimes the sequence of events takes place in several locations. For example, a car might be stolen from a parking lot, moved to a garage for stripping of valuable parts, and then dumped on wasteland. Understanding the physical setting in which problems occur often leads to opportunities to alter that physical setting.
  - *When do they do this?* Householders or car owners might know only that their car was stolen "sometime during the weekend." For many interpersonal crimes, however, the victim will be able to report precisely when the crime occurred, which may permit inferences about such matters as whether the streets were deserted.
  - *How do they carry out the crime?* Crime is a process, with several steps from initiation to completion. At each step the offender must make decisions about working with others and about employing specific knowledge and tools. These decisions are heavily influenced by the offender's need to complete the crime quickly, with minimum effort, and without being caught. The
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details of the situation are crucial to these decisions. To take a simple example, car thieves are more likely to avoid parking lots with strong lighting, closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras and full-time attendants than ones without these forms of security.

When you can answer these sorts of questions with reasonable certainty, you will have developed a hypothesis about your problem. A hypothesis is a statement that explains why the problem is occurring. The hypothesis points you in the direction of certain responses and away from others.

### Identifying Responses

Keep a record of responses you identify by constructing a summary grid similar to that found at the end of each of the problem-specific guides in the *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Series*. For each response, note the prime source and explain how the response works, the conditions under which it works best, and any special considerations, such as costs or legal requirements. Your grid should have one row for each response and five columns as below:

This table will be a summary of the most valuable results of your search. You might need more detailed information for the responses you believe will be most effective in

	Response	Source	How It Works	Works Best If...	Considerations
1					
2					



† The *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police* now include a Response Guide Series that presents detailed information about commonly used responses.

your situation. For example, if you think you might want to install CCTV cameras to improve surveillance, you might need information about the different CCTV systems on the market, their costs and their relative advantages and disadvantages.† Returning to your computer and the library one more time should help you find the facts you need and enable you to profit from the experience of others.

#### Ten Tips For Researching a Problem

1. Check the *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Series*.
2. Browse [www.popcenter.org](http://www.popcenter.org), especially the Tilley and Goldstein awards.
3. Browse [www.crimereduction.gov.uk](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk)
4. Try to get access to *Criminal Justice Abstracts*.
5. Visit your local library and speak to a librarian.
6. Whenever possible, use a computer with a high-speed Internet connection.
7. Make copies of the best articles and reports you find.
8. Look for additional material to read in the reference lists of any useful article.
9. Develop a hypothesis about the causes of your problem.
10. Organize information about responses in a summary grid.



## Conclusion

The Internet and the development of online social science databases have made it much easier for you to find research and best practice that can help with your problem-oriented project. A few hours spent at the computer, and time spent in a nearby public or college library, can unearth a wealth of relevant material. For some problems that are new or rare, the haul might be more meager. And it is sometimes difficult to find your way around the Internet or locate the material in libraries. But it is always worth seeking to profit from the labors of others. Learning what they have discovered could jump-start your efforts and save you valuable time later in your project.





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## About the Authors

### Ronald V. Clarke

Ronald V. Clarke is a professor at the School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University. He previously headed the British government's criminological research department, where he had a significant role in developing situational crime prevention and the British Crime Survey. Clarke is the founding editor of *Crime Prevention Studies*, and his publications include *Designing Out Crime* (HMSO 1980), *The Reasoning Criminal* (Springer-Verlag 1986), *Business and Crime Prevention* (Criminal Justice Press 1997), and *Situational Crime Prevention: Successful Case Studies* (Harrow and Heston 1997). Together with Herman Goldstein, he has worked on problem-oriented policing projects for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg (N.C.) Police Department. Since 1998, he has chaired the selection committee for the annual Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing. Clarke holds a doctorate in psychology from the University of London.

### Phyllis A. Schultze

Phyllis A. Schultze is the director of the Rutgers University Criminal Justice/NCCD library collection. She is co-author of *Criminal Justice Information: How to Find It, How to Use It* and served on the editorial board for the *Encyclopedia of Crime and Punishment* (Sage 2002). Schultze earned a bachelor's degree from Calvin College and a master's in library science from Rutgers University. She serves as co-chair of the World Criminal Justice Library Network and is a member of the American Society of Criminology and the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences.

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## Recommended Readings

- **A Police Guide to Surveying Citizens and Their Environments**, Bureau of Justice Assistance, 1993. This guide offers a practical introduction for police practitioners to two types of surveys that police find useful: surveying public opinion and surveying the physical environment. It provides guidance on whether and how to conduct cost-effective surveys.
  - **Assessing Responses to Problems: An Introductory Guide for Police Problem-Solvers**, by John E. Eck (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2001). This guide is a companion to the *Problem-Oriented Guides for Police* series. It provides basic guidance to measuring and assessing problem-oriented policing efforts.
  - **Conducting Community Surveys**, by Deborah Weisel (Bureau of Justice Statistics and Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 1999). This guide, along with accompanying computer software, provides practical, basic pointers for police in conducting community surveys. The document is also available at [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs).
  - **Crime Prevention Studies**, edited by Ronald V. Clarke (Criminal Justice Press, 1993, et seq.). This is a series of volumes of applied and theoretical research on reducing opportunities for crime. Many chapters are evaluations of initiatives to reduce specific crime and disorder problems.
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- **Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing: The 1999 Herman Goldstein Award Winners.** This document produced by the National Institute of Justice in collaboration with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and the Police Executive Research Forum provides detailed reports of the best submissions to the annual award program that recognizes exemplary problem-oriented responses to various community problems. A similar publication is available for the award winners from subsequent years. The documents are also available at [www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij](http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij).
  - **Not Rocket Science? Problem-Solving and Crime Reduction**, by Tim Read and Nick Tilley (Home Office Crime Reduction Research Series, 2000). Identifies and describes the factors that make problem-solving effective or ineffective as it is being practiced in police forces in England and Wales.
  - **Opportunity Makes the Thief: Practical Theory for Crime Prevention**, by Marcus Felson and Ronald V. Clarke (Home Office Police Research Series, Paper No. 98, 1998). Explains how crime theories such as routine activity theory, rational choice theory and crime pattern theory have practical implications for the police in their efforts to prevent crime.
  - **Problem Analysis in Policing**, by Rachel Boba (Police Foundation, 2003). Introduces and defines problem analysis and provides guidance on how problem analysis can be integrated and institutionalized into modern policing practices.
  - **Problem-Oriented Policing**, by Herman Goldstein (McGraw-Hill, 1990, and Temple University Press, 1990).
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Explains the principles and methods of problem-oriented policing, provides examples of it in practice, and discusses how a police agency can implement the concept.

- **Problem-Oriented Policing and Crime Prevention**, by Anthony A. Braga (Criminal Justice Press, 2003). Provides a thorough review of significant policing research about problem places, high-activity offenders, and repeat victims, with a focus on the applicability of those findings to problem-oriented policing. Explains how police departments can facilitate problem-oriented policing by improving crime analysis, measuring performance, and securing productive partnerships.
- **Problem-Oriented Policing: Reflections on the First 20 Years**, by Michael S. Scott (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2000). Describes how the most critical elements of Herman Goldstein's problem-oriented policing model have developed in practice over its 20-year history, and proposes future directions for problem-oriented policing. The report is also available at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov).
- **Problem-Solving: Problem-Oriented Policing in Newport News**, by John E. Eck and William Spelman (Police Executive Research Forum, 1987). Explains the rationale behind problem-oriented policing and the problem-solving process, and provides examples of effective problem-solving in one agency.
- **Problem-Solving Tips: A Guide to Reducing Crime and Disorder Through Problem-Solving Partnerships** by Karin Schmerler, Matt Perkins, Scott Phillips, Tammy Rinehart and Meg Townsend. (U.S.



Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 1998) (also available at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov)). Provides a brief introduction to problem-solving, basic information on the SARA model and detailed suggestions about the problem-solving process.

- **Situational Crime Prevention: Successful Case Studies**, Second Edition, edited by Ronald V. Clarke (Harrow and Heston, 1997). Explains the principles and methods of situational crime prevention, and presents over 20 case studies of effective crime prevention initiatives.
  - **Tackling Crime and Other Public-Safety Problems: Case Studies in Problem-Solving**, by Rana Sampson and Michael S. Scott (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2000) (also available at [www.cops.usdoj.gov](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov)). Presents case studies of effective police problem-solving on 18 types of crime and disorder problems.
  - **Using Analysis for Problem-Solving: A Guidebook for Law Enforcement**, by Timothy S. Bynum (U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2001). Provides an introduction for police to analyzing problems within the context of problem-oriented policing.
  - **Using Research: A Primer for Law Enforcement Managers**, Second Edition, by John E. Eck and Nancy G. LaVigne (Police Executive Research Forum, 1994). Explains many of the basics of research as it applies to police management and problem-solving.
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## Other Problem-Oriented Guides for Police

### Problem-Specific Guides series:

1. **Assaults in and Around Bars.** Michael S. Scott. 2001.  
ISBN: 1-932582-00-2
  2. **Street Prostitution.** Michael S. Scott. 2001. ISBN: 1-932582-01-0
  3. **Speeding in Residential Areas.** Michael S. Scott. 2001.  
ISBN: 1-932582-02-9
  4. **Drug Dealing in Privately Owned Apartment Complexes.**  
Rana Sampson. 2001. ISBN: 1-932582-03-7
  5. **False Burglar Alarms.** Rana Sampson. 2001. ISBN: 1-932582-04-5
  6. **Disorderly Youth in Public Places.** Michael S. Scott. 2001.  
ISBN: 1-932582-05-3
  7. **Loud Car Stereos.** Michael S. Scott. 2001. ISBN: 1-932582-06-1
  8. **Robbery at Automated Teller Machines.** Michael S. Scott. 2001.  
ISBN: 1-932582-07-X
  9. **Graffiti.** Deborah Lamm Weisel. 2002. ISBN: 1-932582-08-8
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