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## Special Issue Introduction: Crises in Policing

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**Abstract:** The special issue of the *International Journal of Police Science*, Crises in Policing, covers a wide range of topics centered on the various crises facing law enforcement globally and in the United States. In the call for papers, we identified these crises as "often global in scope and have the potential to erode public trust and legitimacy of police and law enforcement agencies worldwide."

### Keywords:



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The special issue of the *International Journal of Police Science*, *Crises in Policing*, covers a wide range of topics centered on the various crises facing law enforcement globally and in the United States. In the call for papers, we identified these crises as “often global in scope and have the potential to erode public trust and legitimacy of police and law enforcement agencies worldwide.”

Our solicitation listed the following topics:

Police-community relations, perceived/actual inequity, and erosion of public trust, police use of deadly force, police recruitment, hiring, and retention of qualified officers, police suicides, emotional trauma and wellness, police response to the mentally ill and homeless, police response to active shooter and school violence, police corruption and misconduct, police response to riots, disorder, and public order incidents, police response to transnational organized crime and gangs, police radicalization and extremism (including police gangs).

While it was impossible to comprehensively address all the issues mentioned in the call for papers, the final result in this special issue touched on nearly every theme in one fashion or another. We are confident that “Crises in Policing” pushes the literature forward on these important topics.

The Special Issue “Crises in Policing” has six articles which range the gamut from crises in recruitment to the role of police in substance abuse prevention, to the cognition within the area of police special operations, to the crises of missing Indigenous women and jurisdictional hindrances, police response to mental health, and an article summarizing the “The Early Warning” Network, which provided a model for law enforcement/intelligence sharing to address the law enforcement and intel community failures of 911. Additionally, this special issue contains two book reviews on recently published seminal works, on the *Boston Police Strike of 1919* by Will Oliver and Samantha Simon’s *Before the Badge: How Academy Training Shapes Police Violence*.

This introduction will briefly discuss and summarize the contents of the special issue, introducing the article topics, authors and tease some of their key findings. It will conclude with a discussion of the avenues for future research, including areas on which we did not receive articles that are relevant to the crises in policing today. These issues include the crises of legitimacy within London’s Metropolitan Police force, among others. The United States is today in a reactionary moment following the George Floyd protests at the height of the Black Lives Matter Protest Movement. The election of Donald Trump and the spread of right-wing populism globally has changed many of the debates related to the crises in policing. Yet, globally, societies have failed to address the underlying issues related to the crises in policing. This special issue contributes to those unaddressed issues.

The articles are summarized and briefly discussed below:

1. In “Terrorism Early Warning and Intelligence Fusion” by John P. Sullivan provides an overlook of the intelligence law enforcement intelligence fusion conducted in Los Angeles in the late 1990s, which then served as an intellectual practical and academic model for other areas including the federally mandate fusion centers in the post 911 environment. This article provides a literature review, summary, and encapsulation of the body of work leading to the fusion centers. This article directly speaks to one of the key crises in policing: the inability to share information amongst law enforcement and intelligence apparatuses, leading to significant security failures.
2. In *The Recruitment Crisis in Policing: The Downstream Effect of Exceptional Declines in Criminal Justice Student Enrollment* by Ilir Disha, Collen P. Eren assessed criminal justice major enrollment in the New York area. They find a declining post-pandemic enrollment among criminal justice majors, which is worse than that of other majors. This decline in enrollment suggests that the aftermath of the George Floyd protests may have impacted criminal justice

studies more than others, which in turn may mean that police departments have a reduced recruitment pipeline.

3. In "*Elite Minds: A Serious Game for Assessing Cognitive Abilities in Police Special Operation Forces Recruitment*," Fabian Muhly, Philipp Leo, and Alain Dössegger argue that "serious games" through tabletop exercises can provide a powerful tool for evaluators of police special operations personnel to assess their cognitive abilities in stressful situations. This use of serious games is analogous to the increasing use of war games within the defense community and operational planning.
4. In "Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in the US: A Case Study Examining Police Jurisdictional Issues," Scott Duncan takes on the difficult subject of missing and murdered women in Indigenous communities. This constitutes a crisis in policing because he speaks to the failures of law enforcement to assist marginalized communities in an effective fashion. It finds one of the key issues is the multi-jurisdictional nature of the problem. These issues cross federal, state, local, and tribal boundaries creating a vexing sieve in which cases can fall through the cracks.
5. In *The Role of Law Enforcement in the Reduction of Substance Use and Other Behavioural Health Risks: Substance Use as a Focus: United States as an Example* by Zili Sloboda and Christopher Ringwalt, One of the key issues that arose out of the George Floyd protests and had its roots in the Black Lives Matter protests which preceded it was the notion of "defund the police," which became a trite slogan that initiated discussions of increased funding for mental health prevention. The authors here present a discussion of the role of law enforcement in substance abuse prevention and call for high-level leadership to "braid" together policing and other "professional orientations" to address mental health issues.
6. "Police and Mental Health: Exploring Co-Response Models and Best Practices" by Bianca Eloi, Addison Shemin, Anna Feinman, Francesco Yopez-Coello, Jacie Brown, Roshni Joseph, Matthew Schumacher, and Bruce Bongar evaluates police involvement in mental health crises and response. It evaluates crisis intervention teams (CIT), finding mixed results and calls for the better collection of data on police responses to two mental health crises. It also finds that police approaches that take into account mental health issues improve community policing efforts in relations with local communities. Thus, this article speaks directly to one of the key issues unresolved at the heart of all crises in policing: the crisis of legitimacy between law enforcement in the societies in which they believe.

The special issue on crises in policing also contains two important book reviews on major historical and contemporary trends in policing. These reviews by important scholars on seminal works are very timely despite the fact that one is clearly historical.

1. Professor Brendan Dooley of Mount St. Mary's University reviews Professor Willard Oliver's 2023 book, *The Boston Police Strike of 1919*. Dooley finds that Oliver's account of the strike provides in depth historical perspective without imposing an ideological bent on this important, relevant yet increasingly forgotten event in policing history.

2. University of Texas, Austin Professor Michael Sierra-Arévalo reviews Samantha Simon's book *Before the Badge: How Academy Training Shapes Police Violence*, which speaks directly to how police training has aided in militarizing policing.

### *Conclusion*

The special issue on "Crises in Policing" has covered many topics. This wide coverage is core to the mission of the *International Journal of Police Science*, which seeks to expand and push forward the modern policing literature on essential topics. Further, it seeks to bridge the gap between practitioners and academics. This issue touches upon major factors critical to addressing the various crises in policing, including but not limited to recruiting, cognition, and police special operations, the police role in addressing substance abuse, the police role in addressing mental illness, multi jurisdictional hindrances to solving crimes related to missing women in Indigenous communities, and failures and ways to address information sharing problems among law enforcement and the intelligence community.

### *Avenues for Future Research*

While this special issue has covered significant ground, it has only touched the surface of the myriad issues encompassed by the theme of the crises in policing. Considerable work is still needed to address the various crises in policing. Future special issues should attempt to address some of the following topics:

First, the policing community needs more global perspectives and examples from policing worldwide. In short, we need a more cosmopolitan perspective on policing because valuable lessons can be gleaned from diverse case studies.

Second, the London Metropolitan Police is one of the most historically important police forces in the world and has suffered a significant crisis in legitimacy. An in-depth case study on this agency's various issues is sorely needed.

Third, more research is needed on the militarization of policing and the impact that it has on violence and community relations.

Fourth, the impact of transnational criminal organizations on policing must be studied. This issue is particularly important as the Trump Administration designates many of these groups as foreign terrorist organizations, but long before that designation, corruption was a critical issue facing policing.