Investigator Guides: Explosion/Bombing and Fire/Arson Crime Scenes

This summer, NIJ released two more volumes in a series of hands-on, practical guides for public safety officers who investigate, identify, preserve, and collect forensic evidence. The series, which is designed to enhance the standard of practice in crime scene investigations, is being developed by key experts who handle these types of investigations every day and who are highly experienced in improved investigatory procedures.

The two most recent guides are A Guide for Explosion and Bombing Scene Investigation (NCJ 181869) and Fire and Arson Scene Evidence: A Guide for Public Safety Personnel (NCJ 181584). Like others in the series, both guides lay out protocols for collecting the kind of evidence that yields successful laboratory analysis and provides the criminal justice system with reliable evidence.

The guides are suitable for both highly complex and visible cases and those that attract less attention and fewer responses but may be just as complex for the investigator. They discuss prioritizing initial response efforts, evaluating the scene, documenting the scene, processing the evidence at the scene, and completing and recording the scene investigation.

Other titles in the series include:


Copies are available on NIJ’s Web page at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij or on the National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Center Web page at http://www.nlectc.org or by contacting NCJRS at P.O. Box 6000, Rockville, MD 20849–6000.

Evaluation of COPS Now Available

Late in 1994, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) was created to fulfill the congressional mandate of Title I of the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994 (the Crime Act) to put more police officers on the streets.

Title I also required that the COPS program be independently evaluated. Findings are now available from the evaluation of the process COPS has used to achieve its goals. Findings include the following:
The program accelerated the transition to locally defined versions of community-oriented policing in agencies that already were developing their own programs.

The 10 percent of jurisdictions that reported the highest murder counts received 50 percent of total COPS awards. On average, core cities received substantially larger awards per 10,000 residents than did the rest of the country, but the average award per 1,000 index crimes was less than two-thirds of that elsewhere.

By May 1999, 100,500 officers and equivalents had been funded. Of them, preliminary estimates indicate that between 84,700 and 89,400 will have been deployed by 2003. Because some officers will have departed before others begin service, the federally funded increase (based on awards through May 1999) in policing levels will peak in 2001 between 69,000 and 84,600 before falling to 62,700–83,900 in 2003. These estimates will be revised as data collected in mid-2000 are analyzed. The COPS Office has continued to award grants since May 1999.

The program accelerated transitions to locally defined versions of community policing. COPS funds seem more likely to have fueled movements toward adoption of community policing that were already accelerating than to have caused the acceleration.

An analysis found that the 1 percent of COPS grantees with the largest 1997 murder counts received 31 percent of all COPS funds awarded through 1997. The 10 percent of grantees with the highest murder counts received 50 percent of total COPS awards.

The complete Research Report, National Evaluation of the COPS Program—Title I of the 1994 Crime Act, details the findings of the independent process evaluation of the program's first 4 years. A shorter Research in Brief, The COPS Program After 4 Years—National Evaluation, summarizes the major findings of the full report.

The research team conducted three waves of surveys, site evaluations, and case studies. They found that departments accomplished their goals in one of three ways. Some departments hired police officers to engage in community-oriented policing activities. Other departments redeployed existing officers to community policing by increasing officer productivity through technology acquisition. Still other departments freed up officers for community policing by filling some administrative and specialist positions with civilians.


Additional statistics include:

- Geometric, harmonic, and triangulated means.
- Modification of the nearest neighbor and Ripley's K routines to allow edge corrections.
- Modification of the K-means clustering routine to allow more user control over initial seed selection.
- A whole new journey to crime module that includes journey to crime calibration and estimation routines.

Additional documentation has been added for these changes, including an entire chapter on the journey to crime (Jtc) estimation, which provides background to the method, the various options for running the routines, and a preliminary evaluation of the accuracy of these types of methods.

To download the free update and the additional documentation, visit the Crime Mapping Research Center Web site at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/cmrc.

**Improved CrimeStat Software Released**

A new supplemental statistical tool to aid law enforcement agencies and criminal justice researchers in their crime mapping efforts is now available.

Version 1.1 of CrimeStat, a Windows-based spatial statistics software program used in the analysis of crime incident locations, is an update to the program released in November 1999 and includes many improvements that make the software more versatile and user friendly.

General improvements include:

- Problems running in Windows 98 have been fixed. The new version works properly with Windows 95, Windows 98, Windows NT, and Windows 2000.
- The ability to exclude missing values, such as blank records, has been added.
- The screen resizes itself better for different monitor sizes.
- Graphical output of grid files and ArcView 'shp' files has been improved.
- MapInfo 'dat' files are supported.
- General ASCII 'grd' files are supported.
- 'Mif' files are restructured, allowing them to be read by MapInfo.

Additional documentation has been added to help law enforcement agencies and criminal justice researchers in their crime mapping efforts.
Annual Research and Evaluation Conference Discusses “Change”

More than 890 people attended this year’s Annual Conference on Research and Evaluation, sponsored by NIJ and other OJP offices and bureaus. The theme was “Change: Past, Present, and Future.”

The theme of the conference reflected the content of four volumes in the newly published Criminal Justice 2000 series. (See page 35 for a complete description of Criminal Justice 2000.)

Plenary panels featured discussions about the nature of crime, policy changes related to incarceration and deinstitutionalization, and new problem-solving paradigms. Acting NIJ Director Julie E. Samuels hosted a question-and-answer session on NIJ issues and future plans.

More than 50 sessions were held during the 3-day meeting.

Keeping Schools Safe

“Security Technologies for School Safety” was the topic of a recent gathering for school principals and administrators, school security personnel, and law enforcement officers.

About 250 people attended the July conference in Dallas to learn more about strategies and special programs, gain better understanding of the appropriate and inappropriate uses of security technologies, and inspect a wide range of security technologies.

The conference was the first national forum for school administrators to focus on the application of security technology. The 3-day gathering was cosponsored by NIJ, the Departments of Education and Energy, and Sandia National Laboratories.

Using DNA for Investigations

Law Enforcement Summit. In July, NIJ hosted the National Law Enforcement Summit on DNA Technology to discuss the concerns law enforcement agencies have about integrating DNA evidence into the investigative process.

The summit was held in response to a recent recommendation by the National Commission on the Future of DNA Evidence. (See the January 1999 issue of the NIJ Journal for more

Fourth Annual International Crime Mapping Research Conference

December 9–12, 2000
San Diego, California

To what degree does location influence crime rates? Are certain areas more prone to criminal activities simply because of where they are? Find out at “Wheredunit? Investigating the Role of Place in Crime and Criminality,” the 4th Annual International Crime Mapping Research Conference.

This year’s conference includes workshops, plenary sessions, and panels on a variety of topics. From beginner to expert, analyst to manager, there are sessions that will educate you and keep you on the cutting edge of spatial analysis in criminal justice.

For more information about the conference and the Crime Mapping Research Center, visit the Center’s Web site at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/cmrc.

Register now at http://www.nijpcs.org/wheredunit
about the DNA Commission. Go to http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/journals.

More than 100 police chiefs, sheriffs, and other law enforcement officials attended the Summit to learn more about funding opportunities, educational resources, and investigative models.

**IACP Conference.** NIJ will sponsor a DNA-related program at the annual conference of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) in November. The program will offer guidelines on the application of DNA technology to old or cold cases. Participants will learn how to collect evidence not ordinarily considered when looking for DNA but which can yield valuable DNA results.

Also at the IACP conference will be an exhibit of NIJ’s National Law Enforcement and Corrections Technology Centers.

**International ADAM Holds 3rd Annual Meeting**

The countries participating in the International Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring (I-ADAM) program are working to standardize drug surveillance systems across nations so that comparative research can be conducted on the prevalence, incidence, and consequences of drug use. Seven countries are actively collecting I-ADAM data. They are: Australia, Chile, England, Malaysia, Scotland, South Africa, and the United States.

I-ADAM held its 3rd Annual Conference on September 21–23 in Washington, D.C. The NIJ-sponsored event provided a forum for the I-ADAM partners to assemble, share experiences, and discuss strategic planning issues.

In addition to the individual country status reports from each I-ADAM partner, meeting attendees focused on recent I-ADAM research findings, analysis of I-ADAM data, data availability and sharing, I-ADAM instrument enhancement and developments, cross-site comparability and training issues, different laboratory methods of drug testing, and future directions for I-ADAM.

For more information about I-ADAM, contact Bruce Taylor, Deputy Director, ADAM, at 202-305-1764, taylorb@ojp.usdoj.gov, or visit the I-ADAM Web site at http://www.adam-nij.net/iadam.htm.

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**Violent Crime Rates by Gender of Victim**

Violent crime levels declined between 1998 and 1999. Rates for men and women are getting closer.

Adjusted victimation rate per 1,000 persons age 12 and over.*

![Violent Crime Rates by Gender of Victim](image)


Note: Violent crimes included are homicides, rape, robbery, and both simple and aggravated assault.

* The National Crime Victimization Survey redesign was implemented in 1993; the area without shading is before the redesign and the shaded area after the redesign. The data before 1993 are adjusted to make them comparable with data collected since the redesign.
Graduate Research Fellows 2000 Announced

NIJ’s Graduate Research Fellowship Program provides dissertation research support to outstanding doctoral students undertaking independent research on issues in crime and justice. The Graduate Research Fellows for 2000 are:

- **Edward Allen**
  Hindelang Criminal Justice Research Center
  State University of New York at Albany
  Policing by Injunction: Problem-Oriented Characteristics of Civil Gang Abatement
  James R. Acker, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor

- **Sarah Dugan Goodrum**
  Department of Sociology
  University of Texas at Austin
  Homicide Bereavement and the Criminal Justice System
  Mark Stafford, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor

- **Caterina Gouvis**
  School of Public Affairs
  American University
  Routine Activities of Youth: The Importance of Place and Time in Understanding Victimization In and Around Schools
  James P. Lynch, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor

- **Jarret S. Lovell**
  Rutgers, State University of New Jersey
  Media Power and Information Control: A Study of Police Organizations and Media Relations
  George L. Kelling, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor

- **Jeff Maahs**
  Department of Criminal Justice
  University of Cincinnati
  Maternal Risk Factors, Early Life Events, and Deviant Outcomes: Assessing Pathways From Birth Through Adolescence
  Paul Mazerolle, Ph.D., Faculty Advisor

First W.E.B. DuBois Fellow Announced

NIJ’s first W.E.B. DuBois Fellow is Becky Tatum, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Georgia State University, Department of Criminal Justice, for her proposal “The Role of Social Support on Adolescent Crime: Identifying Race, Class, and Gender Variations.”

The W.E.B. DuBois Fellowship supports innovative research that will enhance justice and advance public policy decision making on issues related to crime, violence, and the administration of justice. Fellows are selected because they make a clear contribution to the effort to advance the field of knowledge regarding the confluence of crime, justice, and culture in various societal contexts.

W.E.B. DuBois (1868–1963) was one of the foremost early leaders in the struggle for racial equality in the United States. A founder of the NAACP, he was a scholar as well as an activist; his book The Souls of Black Folk is a classic exposition of “the meaning of being black.”

As a social scientist, DuBois challenged discriminatory ideologies and institutions and advocated social change. His classic study, “The Philadelphia Negro,” published in 1899, was a groundbreaking sociological study of that city’s black community, one of the first research projects to combine urban ethnography, social history, and descriptive statistics.

The next W.E.B. DuBois Fellowship Application deadline is February 1, 2001. For information about the program, please contact Cynthia A. Mamalian at 202–514–5981 or mamalian@ojp.usdoj.gov.
Secondary Data Analysis Solicitation

The NIJ Data Resources Program was established to ensure the preservation and availability of research and evaluation data collected through NIJ-funded research. Data sets collected through NIJ-funded research are archived and made available to others in order to support new research to replicate original findings or test new hypotheses.

The next two deadlines to submit proposals for analysis of existing data are January 25 and May 25. For more information about the Data Resources Program, visit the NIJ Web site at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/daprog.htm.

More SACSI Sites Selected

The Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative (SACSI) is a new way of making communities safer. It relies on data and information analysis, boosts the U.S. Attorney’s role as a key community problem-solver, and asks researchers to serve as navigators—observing, analyzing, and recommending changes in direction. (For more information about SACSI, see “Using Knowledge and Teamwork to Reduce Crime” in the October 1999 issue of the NIJ Journal, available at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij/journals.)

The Department of Justice has selected 5 additional sites to join the 5 original SACSI sites. The new sites are: the Eastern District of Missouri (St. Louis), the Eastern District of Michigan (Detroit), the Northern District of Georgia (Atlanta), the Western District of New York (Rochester), and the District of New Mexico (Albuquerque).

NIJ is now in the process of selecting research partners at each of the 5 new sites. For more information about SACSI, contact Erin Dalton at 202–514–5752.

2001 Solicitation for Investigator-Initiated Research

NIJ has issued open solicitations to the criminal justice research field to propose innovative research endeavors. Under NIJ’s investigator-initiated program, applicants may submit proposals to explore a wide range of research and evaluation topics relevant to criminal justice policy or practice, supporting NIJ’s broad portfolio of both basic and applied studies.

Awards are usually 1- to 2-year grants ranging from $25,000 to $300,000.

The next applications are due by January 17, 2001, and will include research on violence against women.

Visit the NIJ Web site at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij for the latest information on all NIJ’s solicitations.