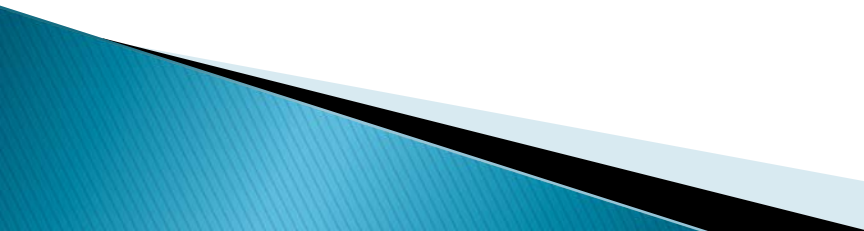


Social Science Research and Crime and Crime Control

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Context Of Research and Its Interaction with Policy

- ▶ Considerable increase in understanding
 - Impressive in the light of limited expenditures
 - NIJ (~\$50 million for crime and criminal justice)
 - National Institute of Dental Research (~\$400 million)
 - ▶ Implementation into policy strongly affected by the political environment
 - Some improvements in recent years
 - Provoked by the crunch in state budgets
 - ▶ Inherent tension between science and ideology
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Policy Environment

- ▶ Public becomes concerned about crime
 - Particularly specific crime types
 - Drugs, sex crimes
- ▶ Demands political system to “do something”
 - System has only a limited repertoire for response
 - Politics demands an immediate response
 - Response mostly limited to increasing incarceration
 - Can increase severity (time served) and certainty (probability through mandatory sentences)
 - Early-age prevention is demonstrably cost-effective
 - Payoff occurs on someone else’s watch
 - Politically weak response to immediate concerns

Efforts to understand crime trends

- ▶ Reasonably good at explaining retrospectively
 - Demographics, especially baby boomers
 - Crack-market violence, recruitment of kids as replacements
- ▶ Better estimates of the role of incarceration in crime trends
 - Lock-'em-up advocates attribute all decreases in crime to incarceration
 - But crime went up when prison went up
 - Violent crime dropped by ~45% in the 1990s
 - About 25% of the drop was attributable to prison

Research on criminal careers

- ▶ Study of longitudinal patterns of offending
- ▶ Empirical measurement of key parameters
 - Participation rate
 - Offending frequency (λ)
 - Career duration: time from initiation to termination
 - Shorter than presumed
 - Residual duration following some intervention
 - Desistance patterns
 - Trends in seriousness of offenses
 - Crime switching: specialization vs. generality
- ▶ New methods: trajectory analysis

Measurement of the macro effects of incarceration

- ▶ Incapacitation effects depend on criminal-career parameters
 - Offending frequency (λ) ~ crimes averted per year
 - Career duration
 - Prison capacity is “wasted” after career terminates
 - Replacement of offenders in the community
 - Drugs, burglary, etc.
- ▶ Deterrence of offenders
 - Relationship between sanction policy and crime

Deterrence

- ▶ Economists know that sanctions/prices reduce demand
 - Impressive array of econometric analyses
- ▶ Many problems identified
 - Endogeneity exists throughout the CJS
 - Sanctions affect crime, but crime affects sanctions
 - Convincing instruments are difficult to find
- ▶ Strong research on certainty vs. severity
 - Little to be gained from increasing severity
 - Much better to increase certainty, e.g., by better policing
 - Much to be gained by reducing severity and using resources elsewhere

Micro-effects on prisoners post-release

- ▶ Is prison criminogenic or rehabilitative?
 - Inevitably some of both on different individuals
 - Difficulty of identifying relative amenability
 - Some findings suggesting the criminogenic effect
 - Networking with other prisoners
 - Difficulty of reentering post-release
 - Rehabilitative effect could come from the pain of the sanction alone – “specific deterrence”
 - Rehabilitation could also come from a variety of treatment programs
 - Particularly drug treatment – 80% of prisoners have some drug involvement
 - Rehabilitation programs are strong candidates for experimental evaluation

Recent history of rehabilitation

- ▶ Careful experimental evaluation of particular treatments for prisoners in ~1960s
 - Predominant null effects: “Nothing Works”
 - Narrowly prescribed treatments vs. diverse needs
 - Response from the left: do less imprisonment
 - Counter response from the right: lock ‘em up, throw away the key
- ▶ “Reentry” is the new “rehabilitation”
 - Realization that there are effective treatments
 - Tested and found effective
 - Treatments begin in prison and continue in the community

Response to the drug problem has been a major source of CJ growth

- ▶ Drug offenders comprise over 20% of state prisoners and over 50% of federal prisoners
 - Legislatures “cracked down” on “lenient” judges who were giving probation
 - Imposed mandatory minimums of years that got extended to 5 years and then 10 years
- ▶ Long sentences are inherently of limited effectiveness
 - Replacements nullify any effects of incarcerating drug sellers
 - No incapacitation or deterrence

New treatment regimes introduced

- ▶ “Celerity” (rapid response) has been identified as an important 3rd dimension of deterrence
 - Particularly suited to drug-dependent offenders
- ▶ HOPE program for drug-dependent probationers introduced in Hawaii
 - Weekly drug test on random days
 - Failed test quickly leads to a few-day jail sentence
 - Impressive results follow from quick reinforcement
- ▶ South Dakota 24/7 sobriety program for DUI
 - Alcohol tests every morning and evening
 - Or ankle bracelet in SCRAM (Secure Continuous Remote Ankle Monitor)
 - Similar short jail sentence if test failed
- ▶ Replications of HOPE currently being tested

Research in police management

- ▶ Focus on “hotspots” that account for a very disproportionate amount of crime
 - ~5% of the streets account for over 50% of the crime
 - Crime is diminished through deterrence
 - Limited concern about displacement elsewhere
- ▶ COMPSTAT initiated in New York city
 - Computer display of crime incidents provided a basis for holding commanders accountable
 - Stimulated development of crime analysis by police
 - Increasing presence of crime analysts among PDs

Longitudinal studies

- ▶ Initiated by Wolfgang using arrest histories of boys born in Philadelphia in 1945
- ▶ Elliott followed with interviews of a US-representative longitudinal sample
- ▶ Now have multiple samples in Cambridge, Pittsburgh, Rochester, Chicago, etc.
 - Important findings: risk and protective factors
 - Examining next-generation delinquency
- ▶ Longest longitudinal study builds on Sampson-Laub follow-up into the 70s of '30s Glueck data
 - Identified factors contributing to desistance: marriage, steady job, etc.

Redemption Research

- ▶ Criminal Records are ubiquitous
- ▶ Criminal histories are ubiquitous and widely available
- ▶ Many people are haunted by a stale record
- ▶ Hazard of a rearrest declines with “time clean”
- ▶ Crosses the arrest risk of the general pop’
 - That should be the “redemption time”: 7–10 years
 - Depends on crime type and age at prior arrest
 - Refrain from distributing records
- ▶ States are implementing – have a standard

Insights into juvenile developmental processes

- ▶ Growth in juvenile crime led to increased policies to treat juveniles as adults
 - Legislative mandates to send kids to adult courts
- ▶ Steinberg et al. highlighted the limited development of juveniles' cognitive skills
 - Influenced the US Supreme Court to prohibit LWOP
 - *Graham v. Florida* decision
 - Except for murder, but the same issues prevail
 - Also capital punishment (*Roper v. Simmons*)
 - Likely to contribute to more sensitive handling and enhanced treatment of juveniles

Genetic considerations

- ▶ There has long been a search for a “crime gene”
- ▶ It has long been known that maltreated boys did more violence as adults
- ▶ Caspi/Moffitt had a long-standing longitudinal study of delinquency in New Zealand
- ▶ They more recently took DNA samples of their cohort
- ▶ Major finding: maltreated boys with the MAOA gene did violence, but those without did not
- ▶ Emphasized the importance of gene - environment interaction

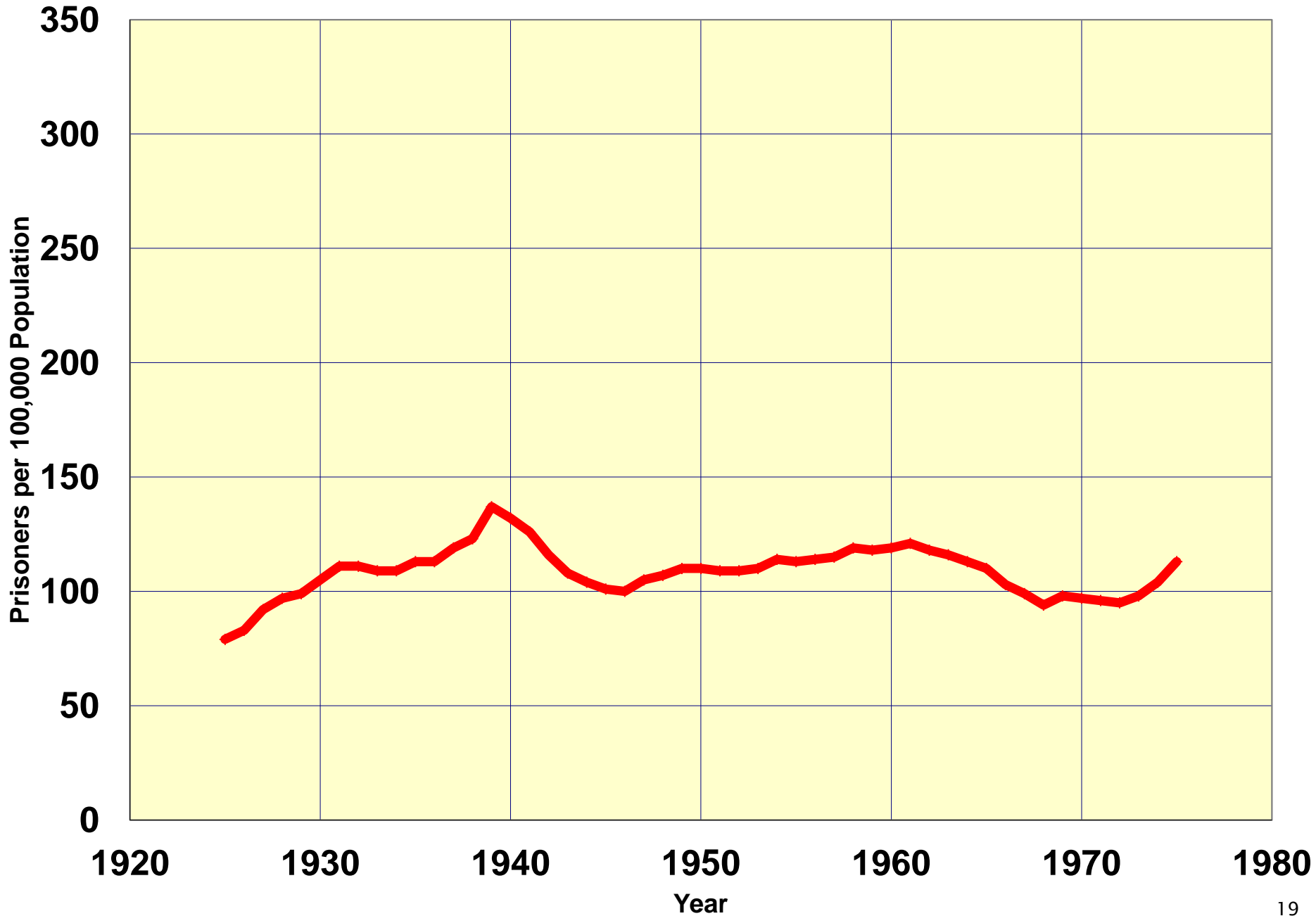
Sentencing guidelines

- ▶ Stimulated by Don Gottfredson's research on sentencing decision-making in 1970s
- ▶ First guidelines implemented by Minnesota
- ▶ Half the states now have guidelines
- ▶ Initial objectives were to reduce disparity
 - Particular concern about different treatment by race
 - Variety of approaches using normative judgments and empirical characterization of current policies
 - Typically invoke a matrix of offense seriousness by prior record
 - Varying degrees of flexibility for judges

Dynamics of principles

- ▶ Greenwood developed an approach for “selective incapacitation”
 - Developed a model to identify high- λ offenders
 - Castigated because it would introduce disparity
 - Later research indicated that prisons already contained many high- λ offenders
 - “stochastic selectivity” – they roll the dice more often
- ▶ Sentencing commissions are currently hard at to reduce prison populations without increasing crime
 - Most introducing various forms of “risk assessment”
 - This inherently increases disparity

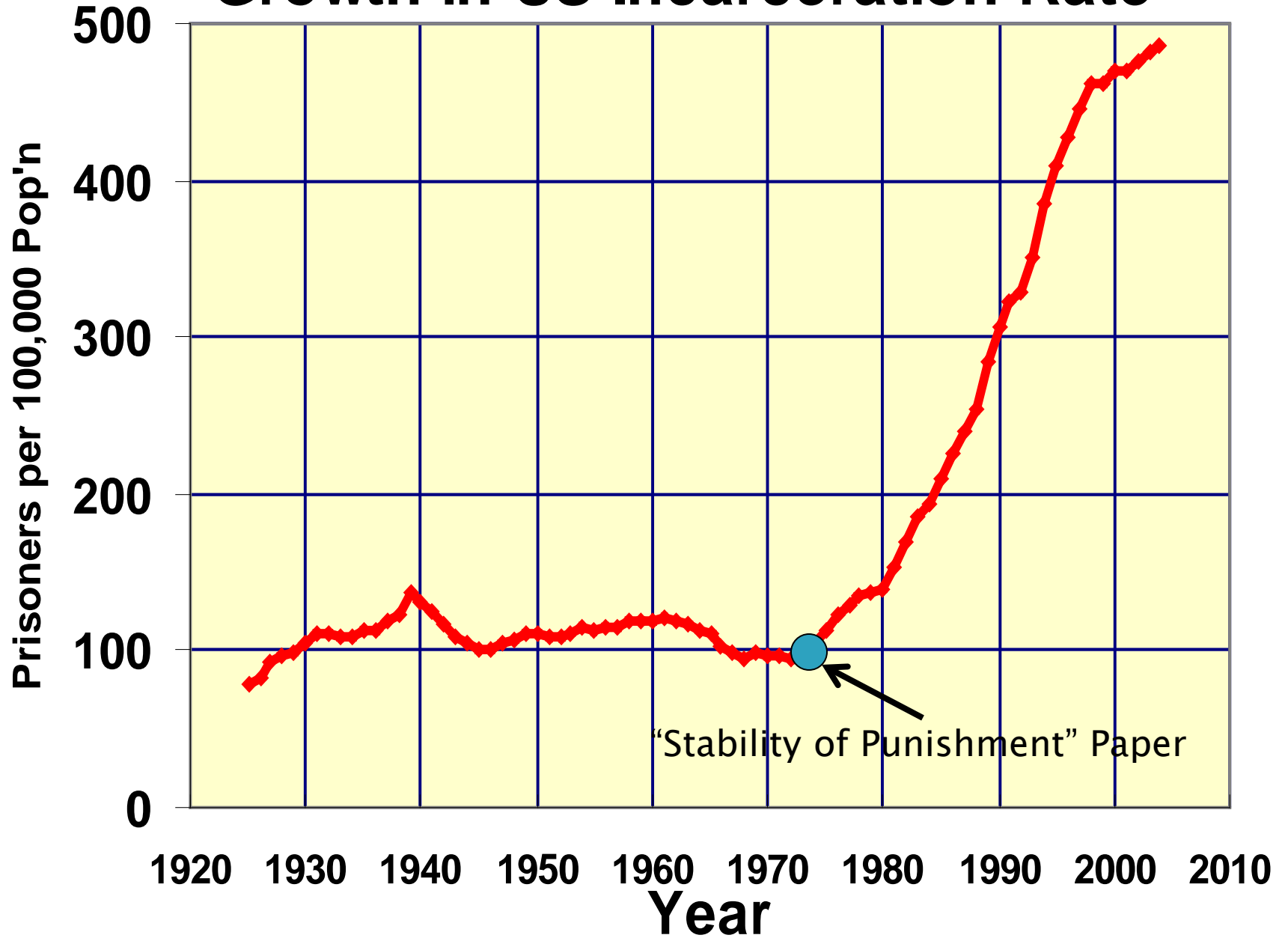
U.S. Incarceration Rate: 1925-1975



“Stability of Punishment”

- ▶ Blumstein–Cohen paper in 1973
- ▶ Similar patterns in other countries
- ▶ Clear evidence of a homeostatic process
 - System can become tougher when crime rates are down – hit on pornography
 - System can become more lenient when prisons become full – earlier parole

Growth in US Incarceration Rate



Response to “mass incarceration”

- ▶ Many studies highlighted the ineffectiveness of high incarceration
 - Especially so for drug offenders
 - Comparison of severity with certainty
 - Need for greater efforts at rehabilitation/reentry
- ▶ Political/ideological forces carried the day
- ▶ Deinstitutionaliz'n of mentally ill ⇒ MI in prison
- ▶ States' budget crunch is forcing response
 - Many large states have dropped prison populations with no increase in crime
 - Texas, New York, Michigan, etc.
 - Setting examples for other states
 - We can hope to see more attention to the earlier research

Atty. Gen. Holder appoints SAB

- ▶ AG has often emphasized the importance of science in developing evidence-based policy
- ▶ Moved this discussion forward in late 2010
- ▶ Appointed a Science Advisory Board for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP)
 - Some excellent members and three outstanding practitioners (Bratton, McKee, Cabral)
- ▶ Charge was to inject perspectives of science into the DNA of the Justice Department
 - An intriguing challenge – especially after Holder leaves office
 - But an important recognition of the contributions of science – in an unexpected place

Questions, Suggestions

