

Law Enforcement and the Mentally Ill: A Pathfinder

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American psychiatric hospitals began discharging severely mentally-ill patients under the policy known as deinstitutionalization in the early 1970s. Released back into neighborhoods in ever greater numbers, difficult encounters between the mentally unstable and community residents soon became increasingly common.

Over the past three decades, law enforcement has also undergone a paradigmatic shift. It has moved away from a traditional reactive model to one based on a concept called community-oriented policing. Community-oriented policing continues to be the policy of the majority of policing agencies today. Its key elements, problem-solving and the creation of partnerships with local stakeholders, provide the theoretical and practical underpinnings for the development of atypical techniques for handling potentially dangerous confrontations with those suffering from mental illness. This population is commonly known to law enforcement as EDPs, or Emotionally Disturbed Persons.

Scholarly research finds that fear of an inextricable link between mental illness and violence remains a concept firmly held by the general public, thus the belief that the mentally disordered are dangerous continues to dominate mental-health policy across the country. Given these circumstances, law enforcement will continue to find itself the first responder to calls involving EDPs for the foreseeable future.

Research on the plight of the deinstitutionalized mentally ill and law enforcement's role in managing this population is well documented in the literature of mental health, social work, law enforcement and public policy. This pathfinder has been created as a guide for locating relevant articles, books, statistics and reports both online and in print that examine police interaction with the mentally ill. Some materials might also be found under other topics, such as *police training*, *community-oriented policing*, *deinstitutionalization*, *community mental health*, *first responder*, and *crisis intervention*.

A search strategy that uses these descriptors as keywords or in combination as phrases linked by **AND** or **OR** will yield successful results.

Encyclopedias

The following are encyclopedias where you may find information on the broad topics of community policing, deinstitutionalization and mental illness.

Levinson, D. (Ed.). (2004). *Encyclopedia of Homelessness*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

<http://www.sage-ereference.com>

Sullivan, L. (Ed.). (2005). *Encyclopedia of Law Enforcement*. (Vols. 1-3). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. **HV7921 .E53 2005**

<http://sage-ereference.com/lawenforcement/>

Thackery, E., Harris, M. (Eds.). (2003). *Gale Encyclopedia of Mental Disorders* (Vols. 1-2). Detroit [MI]: Thompson Gale. **RC437 G35 2003**

Recent Books

A keyword search is the most productive search strategy for finding books on the police and the mentally ill in the CUNY+ catalog. Try keywords such as *police*, *law enforcement* and *crisis intervention* combined with *mental illness*, *mental disorders*, *mental disabilities* and *mental health* using **AND** or **OR**. Clicking on the book's record will provide subject headings which you might use to find other related materials.

Castellano-Hoyt, D. (2003). *Enhancing police response to persons in mental health crisis: Providing strategies, communication techniques, and crisis intervention preparation in overcoming institutional challenges*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas. **HV8079.3 .C37 2003**

Fisher, W.H. (Ed.). (2003) *Community-based interventions for criminal offenders with severe mental illness*. **RA790.6 .C575**

Hartwell, S. W. (Ed.). (2005). *The organizational response to persons with mental illness involved with the criminal justice system*. Amsterdam; Oxford: Elsevier JAI.
HN5 .R4 v.12

Jurkinen, T.J., Hoover, L.T., Sergevnin, V. (2007). *Improving police response to persons with mental illness: A progressive approach*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas.
HV7923. I56

Landesberg, G. (2002). *Serving mentally ill offenders: challenges and opportunities for mental health professionals*. New York: Springer Pub. **RC 451.4 .P68 S46**

Rodgers, B.A. (2006). *Psychological aspects of police work: an officer's guide to street psychology*. Springfield, IL: Charles C. Thomas. **HV8079.3 .R63**

Recent Journal Articles

The following electronic databases will provide you with an abundant number of scholarly and non-scholarly articles from the fields of psychology and criminal justice on mental illness and law enforcement:

- **Criminal Justice Abstracts**
- **Criminal Justice Periodical Index**
- **PsycARTICLES**
- **PsycINFO**

As with books, the best search strategy for these databases is one that uses keywords or phrases. Try using some of these terms in the table below and linking them with **AND** or **OR**.

mentally ill or mentally ill offenders	mental health services
mental disorders	legal processes
police personnel	crime
psychopathology	intervention

Below is a bibliography of scholarly and non-scholarly journal articles from 1999 to 2008 retrieved from the Criminal Justice Periodical Index, PsycINFO, and PsycARTICLES. These databases are available through the Sealy Library home page.

Arey, J., Wilder, A. (2002, April). The New Orleans crisis team. *Law & Order*, 50(4), 66-71. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.

Bellah, J. (2002, April). Recognizing mental illness. *Law & Order*, 50(4), 48-51. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.

Dufresne, J. (2003, August). Communication is the key to crisis de-escalation. *Law & Order*, 51(8), 72-75. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.

Fuller, J. (2000, November). Cultural diversity?: Don't forget the disabled! *Law & Order*, 48(11), 84-85. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.

Kasanof, A. (2002, April). NYPD emergency psychological technician course. *Law & Order*, 50(4), 110.

Klein, M. (2002, February). Law enforcement's response to people with mental illness. *FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin*, 71(2), 11-14. Retrieved March 26,

2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.

Link, B.G., Phelan, J.C., Bresnahan, M., Stueve, A. & Pescosolido, B.A. (1999). Public conceptions of mental illness: Labels, causes, dangerousness, and social distance. *American Journal of Public Health*, 89(9), 328-333. Retrieved February 17, 2008 from PsychINFO database.

Marley, J.A., Buila, S. (1999). When violence happens to people with mental illness: Disclosing victimization. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 69, 398-402. Retrieved February 18, 2008 from PsychINFO database.

Miami-Dade uses advanced training for responding to mentally ill persons. (2006, September). *Crime Control Digest*, 40(35), 1-2. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.

Peck Jr., L.W. (2003, January). Law enforcement interactions with persons with mental illness. *TELEMASP Bulletin*, 10(1), 1-11. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.

Perez, A., Liefman, S. & Estrada, A. (2003). Reversing the criminalization of mental illness. *Crime & Delinquency*, 49(1), 62-78. Retrieved February 16, 2008 from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.

Perrou, B., Pyers, L., Aveni, T. (2004, October). Successful approaches with edps. *Law & Order*, 52(10), 126,128-130,132-133. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.

Psarra, V., Sestrini, Z., Petsas, D., Gerontas, A., Garnetas, C., et al. (2008). Greek police officers' attitudes towards the mentally ill. *International Journal of Law &*

- Psychiatry*, 31(1), 77-85. Retrieved February 23, 2008 from PsychARTICLES database.
- Reuland, M., Margolis, G. J. (2003, November). Police approaches that improve the response to people with mental illnesses: A focus on the victims. *The Police Chief*, 70(11), 35-39. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.
- Ruecker, R.C. (2008, January). Law Enforcement Response to the Mentally Ill. *The Police Chief*, 75(1), 6. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.
- Sanow, E. (2006, December). Crisis intervention team. *Law & Order*, 54(12), 26-28,31-32,34-35. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.
- Sanow, E. (2006, December). New liability with mentally ill. *Law & Order*, 54(12), 6. Retrieved March 26, 2008 from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.
- Scuro Jr., J.E. (2001, October). Predicting future dangerous activity. *Law & Order*, 49(10), 22-24. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.
- Seattle police mental illness. (2001, October). *Law & Order*, 49(10), 6-8. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.
- U.S. Department of Justice. (2000, July). *Memphis, Tennessee, police department's crisis intervention team*. Retrieved March 28, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodical database.
- Van Blaricom, D.P. (2000, March). Handling the mentally ill: There are no shortcuts for

officers. *Police*, 24(3), 32-34. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.

White, M.D., Ready, J. (2007). The Taser as a less lethal force alternative. *Police Quarterly*, 10, 170-191. Retrieved February 25, 2008 from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.

Weiss, J., Dresser, M. (2000, June). Reaching out to the mentally ill. *Law & Order*, 48(6), 133-136. Retrieved March 26, 2008, from Criminal Justice Periodicals database.

Dissertations and Theses

Another electronic source you may want to utilize is the **Proquest Dissertation & Theses** database. This database contains an enormous number of works on this subject, including those on the history of caring for the mentally ill in the United States, the politics behind deinstitutionalization, the efficacy of community policing in general and its relevance to the issue of the mentally disordered in particular. Below are selected dissertations and theses that may provide you with additional background information and place into context milestone events in the evolution of public policy. To find documents in this database, search by using keywords and phrases including *mental health, mental illness, law enforcement, community policing, nonlethal weapon, taser* and *deinstitutionalization*.

Arceri, T. (1997). A study of 40 years of news coverage of community mental health policies. Ph.D. dissertation, The Yeshiva University, United States—New York. Retrieved February 8, 2008, from ProQuest Digital Dissertations database. (Publication No. AAT 9809601).

Billet, P.D. (2007). *America's transition to community-oriented policing*. Retrieved from Proquest Dissertation & Theses. (Publication No. AAT 1448191).

- Burris, D.V. (2004). *Why the policies of deinstitutionalization failed*. Retrieved from Proquest Dissertation & Theses. (Publication No. AAT 1418951).
- Cseh, A. (2006). Mental health and the labor market. Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Kentucky, United States—Kentucky. Retrieved February 9, 2008, from Proquest Digital Dissertations database. (Publication No. AAT 3259109).
- Hochbaum, C. H. (2002) Deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill in New York State: An examination of the strategy of co-optation. Ph.D. dissertation, The Yeshiva University, United States--New York. Retrieved February 8, 2008, from ProQuest Digital Dissertation database. (Publication No. AAT 3061110).
- Pitaneelabout, T. (1997). The use of the internet by law enforcement personnel. Ph.D. dissertation, The Sam Houston State University, United States--Texas. Retrieved February 23, 2008, from Proquest Digital Dissertations database. (Publication No. AAT 9807585).
- Schoeberlein, R. W. (2006). Mental illness in Maryland: Public perception, discourse, and treatment, from the colonial period to 1964. Ph.D. dissertation, The University of Maryland, United States--Maryland. Retrieved February 7, 2008, from ProQuest Digital Dissertations database. (Publication No. AAT 3212604).
- Silver, E. (1999). Violence and mental illness from a social disorganization perspective: An analysis of individual and community risk factors. Ph.D. dissertation, The State University of New York, United States--New York. Retrieved February 18, 2008, from ProQuest Digital Dissertations database. (Publication No. AAT 9933575).

Weiss, D. P. (2006). The evolution of community policing over twenty years: From theory to implementation and beyond. Ph.D. dissertation, The Claremont Graduate University, United States--California. Retrieved February 21, 2008, from Proquest Digital Dissertations database. (Publication No. ATT 3197907).

Online Reports and Resources

Here is a list of articles, reports and websites from online journals, public health agencies and private organizations that will provide you with further information on mental illness and police response.

Department of Health and Human Services. (n.d.). *Mental health: A report of the surgeon general*. Retrieved February 8, 2008, from

<http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/mentalhealth/home.html>

MacArthur Foundation (2001, February). *The MacArthur violence risk assessment study*.

Retrieved February 18, 2008, from

<http://www.macarthur.virginia.edu/violence.html>

Mayo Clinic (2006, August 17). *Defining mental illness: An interview with a Mayo Clinic specialist*. Retrieved February 5, 2008, from

<http://www.cnn.com/HEALTH/library/HQ/01079.html>

Munetz, M.R., Fitzgerald, A., Woody, M. (2006). Police use of the Taser with people with mental illness in crisis, *Psychiatric Services*. Retrieved February 24, 2008,

from <http://www.psychservices.psychiatryonline.org/cgi/content/full/57/6/883>

National Institute of Mental Health. (n.d.). Retrieved February 5, 2008, from

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/index.shtml>

Talking to “invisible” people: How to communicate with the mentally ill in times of crisis. (2006, March). Retrieved March 27, 2008, from

<http://www.officer.com/publication/printer.jsp?id=26209>