




## INTRODUCTION

# Editors' Introduction to the Special Issue of the *Annals* Dedicated to the Renowned Criminologist Professor David Weisburd

Tal Jonathan-Zamir , Badi Hasisi  and Gali Perry 

Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Jerusalem, Israel

**Corresponding author:** Tal Jonathan-Zamir; Email: [tal.jonathan@mail.huji.ac.il](mailto:tal.jonathan@mail.huji.ac.il)

This special issue is dedicated to the renowned criminologist, Professor David Weisburd, to mark his transition to Emeritus status at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 2022. An overview of Weisburd's achievements and contributions to the field of criminology could constitute a long and detailed paper, including his work on crime and place, policing and experimental criminology, and the numerous awards and prizes he has received over the years, such as the Stockholm Prize in Criminology and the Israel Prize. As described by the Academic Committee of the Rothschild Prize in Social Sciences (2002, iii), which Weisburd has also recently received:

Professor David Weisburd is renowned internationally for his contribution to solving challenging problems of crime and justice and for his excellence in research and scholarship. In a recent list of today's most influential criminologists, he was ranked second in the entire world. His discovery that 50% of crime is concentrated in about 5% of street segments or "hot spots" in major cities, shifted the long-standing focus from individual criminality and brought the criminology of place to the fore. Both in academic criminology, in social policies regarding crime prevention and in effective police deployment, the criminology of place has transformed the understanding of crime and responses to it.

At the same time, in this Introduction we wish to focus on a less familiar area to which Weisburd has made an exceptional contribution, which is also the topic of this special issue – Israeli criminology. We view his contribution to Israeli criminology as consisting of two main components which, as detailed below, are closely intertwined. The first of these is the "research component", that is, the cutting-edge scientific research Weisburd has carried out in Israel, which has not only contributed to our understanding of the Israeli criminal justice system, but has responded (through the Israeli context) to more general questions and challenges occupying criminologists worldwide. Because these studies were carefully thought

through and carried out with the highest rigour, and because they bear important, general implications for researchers, policymakers and practitioners, they were published in the top journals of the field, as well as in books and book chapters, as can be seen in Weisburd's impressive Hebrew University profile.<sup>1</sup> The second component of Weisburd's contribution to Israeli criminology is the more "qualitative" component, which focuses on Weisburd's unprecedented contribution to the field of criminology in Israel as a whole, including to the Institute of Criminology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, to the Israeli Society of Criminology, to other criminology departments across the country, and more generally to raising Israeli criminology as an academic discipline to the highest international standards. Below we describe some of these contributions and the unprecedented impact that Weisburd has had on the field.

Following an academic appointment at the School of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University, in 1993 Weisburd made "*Aliya*"<sup>2</sup> to Israel and began his position as an Associate Professor at the Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. During the first few years Weisburd focused on adjusting to Israeli academia, and specifically to Israeli mentality. He was particularly stunned and impressed by the warmth, caring and emotional nature of the personal interactions he saw here, which gave him a unique sense of family in academia. For him, this meant that to be an Israeli criminologist was to have a different type of collegial relationship from that he had known abroad. The adjustment was not easy, and during the first few years Weisburd focused on learning the social environment and cues, such as the "unofficial" dress code and nature of conversation, even with high-ranking government officials, which were very different from the norm in the USA. However, the academic side of things was never a problem. On the contrary – Weisburd was perceived by his colleagues as bringing state-of-the-art, cutting-edge research methods and approaches to Israel. The seriousness with which he treated research – using the right methods, accurate data, etc., has had tremendous impact on the new colleagues Weisburd began to work with. During this period, he carried out, for example, an assessment of a "community policing reform" in Israel (Weisburd *et al.* 1997; Weisburd, Shalev, and Amir 2002).

Throughout this period, Weisburd was also fully invested in keeping up with developments in criminology and criminal justice research and practice in the USA, and in the late 1990s took on, in addition to his appointment at the Hebrew University, a position as a Senior Research Scientist at the Police Foundation in Washington, DC. The resources and opportunities that were now available to Weisburd meant that he could do great research, including large-scale randomized controlled trials (e.g. Braga *et al.* 1999; Weisburd and Green 1995), and that he was gradually becoming the well-known, renowned criminologist he is today. Weisburd later transferred to the University of Maryland (for his US appointment) and subsequently to George Mason University, both leading institutions in criminology and criminal justice in the USA, which further strengthened his academic achievements and status. But importantly, Weisburd found it imperative to merge

<sup>1</sup>See the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, "David Weisburd." Retrieved 1 March 2024 (<https://cris.huji.ac.il/en/persons/david-weisburd>).

<sup>2</sup>"Going up" in Hebrew, a term used to describe Jewish immigration to Israel.

his two worlds together. He was interested not only in continuing his successes in the USA, where the major resources and opportunities were, but sought to take advantage of that success to raise Israeli criminology to the international level. This was expressed, for example, by working on joint projects on topics such as the implications of policing terrorism in Israel, which was funded by the National Institute of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security (Jonathan-Zamir and Weisburd 2013; Jonathan-Zamir, Weisburd, and Hasisi 2014, 2015; Weisburd et al. 2009). Such projects included the supervision and funding of Israeli doctoral students, who were trained at the highest international level and through the project became familiar and made connections with American researchers, practitioners and policy makers. His international success also made him valuable to the Hebrew University, which, in turn, supported him with funds and fellowships, which were used to further strengthen Israeli students and research.

Beyond his direct contribution to the Institute of Criminology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (of which he was the Director for 10 years), Weisburd sought to make an impact on Israeli criminology more generally. At the time, there was almost no collective activity of Israeli criminologists. Criminology departments worked in isolated environments, competing over scarce resources. Weisburd, however, believed that “a rising tide lifts all boats” – the success of each and every Israeli criminologist contributes to everyone associated with what was then a very loose community of Israeli criminologists. Weisburd believed that his growing influence in the USA could be harnessed to change this community, and worked hard with the Israeli Society of Criminology, first as the Chair and later as the Honorary President, to strengthen our sense of community. This was expressed, for example, in the first Biennial Meeting of the Israeli Society of Criminology, which took place in May 2013. The conference, which was a great success, led to a tradition that has persisted ever since. He also initiated and carried out large-scale research projects with Israeli criminal justice agencies in collaboration with criminologists from throughout the country, which were incredibly important in promoting evidence-based policy in Israel. The two largest, most significant research projects at the time included a study examining the impacts of all Israel Prison Service rehabilitation programmes conducted with Badi Hasisi and Efrat Shoham (e.g. Elisha et al. 2017; Hasisi et al. 2016, 2017; Haviv et al. 2019; Shoham et al. 2018; Weisburd and Hasisi 2018; Weisburd et al. 2017) and a study with Badi Hasisi assessing the outcomes of a strategic reform in the Israel Police– the “EMUN” reform initiated by the former commissioner Roni Alsheikh (e.g. Weisburd et al. 2020). As noted, such studies were designed and carried out in a way that made them relevant not only to the Israeli context, but for making more general contributions to the science of criminology. Together with Israeli colleague Badi Hasisi and European colleagues, Weisburd also led a Horizon 2020 grant on the processes leading to organized crime and terrorist networks, which has again contributed to the funding and training of Israeli criminology students (e.g. Hasisi et al. 2019; Weisburd et al. 2022; Wolfowicz et al. 2019, 2021).

Over the last decade, Weisburd sought to take a step back and let his former students and protégées, many of whom play leading roles in academia and practice today, take the lead, while he remains in the role of “senior advisor”. His “mantra”, however, continues to guide us all: First, there can be no compromise on serious,

thoughtful, research. Studies must always be of the highest quality in terms of the research design, data collection and analysis, and contribution to the general literature. Israeli criminology cannot be only about the local context, and must be of the highest quality. Second, “Let’s get it done!” Sometimes we will fail, and that is okay. But if we let the bureaucratic, financial, technical and other expected obstacles stop us from trying – we will never really do anything exciting and groundbreaking. And last – Israeli criminology as a community is not a zero-sum game – when one wins the others lose, but a win-win situation – the success of any one of us reflects on the community of Israeli criminologists as a whole and contributes to everyone’s success.

On a final note, it is important to emphasize that Weisburd attributes much of his success in contributing to Israeli criminology to the many students, colleagues, protégées and friends who have worked with him over the years and went along with his vision, while also recognizing his limitations, for example in working with the bureaucracy and understanding the nuances of Israel. In this special issue we provide the stage for the work of some of these colleagues. The papers touch on diverse issues, such as public attitudes and the criminal justice system, crime and place, courts and rehabilitation, and crime in the context of a political conflict. We view this special issue as a way of expressing our deepest gratitude to Professor David Weisburd for making Israeli criminology the collegial, vibrant, diverse and exceptional community it is today.

## References

- Academic Committee of the Rothschild Prize in Social Sciences.** 2022. *Rothschild Prizes 2022*. Jerusalem, Israel: Yad Hanadiv.
- Braga, A. A., D. L. Weisburd, E. J. Waring, L. G. Mazerolle, W. Spelman, and F. Gajewski.** 1999. “Problem-Oriented Policing in Violent Crime Places: A Randomized Controlled Experiment.” *Criminology* 37(3):541–80.
- Elisha, E., E. Shoham, B. Hasisi, and D. Weisburd.** 2017. “For Prisoners, ‘Work Works’: Qualitative Findings from an Israeli Program.” *The Prison Journal* 97(3):342–63.
- Hasisi, B., T. Carmel, D. Weisburd, and M. Wolfowicz.** 2019. “Crime and Terror: Examining Criminal Risk Factors for Terrorist Recidivism.” *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 36:449–72.
- Hasisi, B., E. Shoham, D. Weisburd, N. Haviv, and A. Zelig.** 2016. “The ‘Care Package’, Prison Domestic Violence Programs and Recidivism: A Quasi-Experimental Study.” *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 12(4):563–86.
- Hasisi, B., D. Weisburd, N. Haviv, E. Shoham, and A. Zelig.** 2017. “‘The Rock of Sisyphus’: Treatment of Addicted Inmates and Recidivism in Israel.” *Megamot* 52(2):259–300 (in Hebrew).
- Haviv, N., B. Hasisi, D. Weisburd, E. Shoham, and M. Wolfowicz.** 2019. “Do Religious Programs in Prison Work? A Quasi-Experimental Evaluation in the Israeli Prison System.” *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 16:505–33.
- Jonathan-Zamir, T. and D. Weisburd.** 2013. “The Effects of Security Threats on Antecedents of Police Legitimacy: Findings from a Quasi-Experiment in Israel.” *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 50(1):3–32.
- Jonathan-Zamir, T., D. Weisburd, and B. Hasisi.** 2014. *Policing Terrorism, Crime-Control and Police-Community Relationships: Learning From the Israeli Experience*. New York: Springer.
- Jonathan-Zamir, T., D. Weisburd, and B. Hasisi** (editors). 2015. *Policing in Israel: Studying Crime Control, Community, and Counterterrorism*. Boca Raton, FL: CRC Press.
- Shoham, E., A. Zelig, B. Hasisi, D. Weisburd, and N. Haviv.** 2018. “‘The Whole is Greater Than the Sum of the Parts’: Prison Staff Perceptions of Domestic Violence Rehabilitation Programs.” *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology* 62(11):3298–321.

- Weisburd, D., M. Amir, I. Barak, A. Tennenbaum, and O. Shalev.** 1997. "Committee Report – Community Policing in Israel – Opportunities and Risks." *Mishtara Vechevra* 1:109–30 (in Hebrew).
- Weisburd, D., T. Feucht, I. Hakimi, S. Perry, and L. Mock** (editors). 2009. *To Protect and to Serve: Policing in an Age of Terrorism*. New York: Springer.
- Weisburd, D. and L. Green.** 1995. "Policing Drug Hot Spots: The Jersey City Drug Market Analysis Experiment." *Justice Quarterly* 12(4):711–35.
- Weisburd, D. and B. Hasisi.** 2018. "The Winding Road to Evidence-Based Policy in Corrections: A Case Study of the Israeli Prison Service." *Israel Law Review* 51(1):111–25.
- Weisburd, D., B. Hasisi, Y. Litmanovitz, T. Carmel, and S. Tshuva.** 2020. "Institutionalizing Problem-Oriented Policing: An Evaluation of the EMUN Reform in Israel." *Criminology and Public Policy* 19:941–64.
- Weisburd, D., B. Hasisi, E. Shoham, G. Aviv, and N. Haviv.** 2017. "Reinforcing the Impacts of Work Release on Prisoner Recidivism: The Importance of Integrative Interventions." *Journal of Experimental Criminology* 13(2):241–64.
- Weisburd, D., O. Shalev, and M. Amir.** 2002. "Community Policing in Israel: Resistance and Change." *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies and Management* 25(1):80–109.
- Weisburd, D., M. Wolfowicz, B. Hasisi, M. Paolucci, and G. Andrighetto.** 2022. "What is the Best Approach for Preventing Recruitment to Terrorism?: Findings from ABM Experiments in Social and Situational Prevention." *Criminology and Public Policy* 21(2):461–85.
- Wolfowicz, M., Y. Litmanovitz, D. Weisburd, and B. Hasisi.** 2019. "A Field-Wide Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Putative Risk and Protective Factors for Radicalization Outcomes." *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* 36:407–47.
- Wolfowicz, M., S. Perry, B. Hasisi, and D. Weisburd.** 2021. "Faces of Radicalism: Differentiating Between Violent and Non-Violent Radicals by Their Social Media Profiles." *Computers in Human Behavior* 116:1–10.

**Tal Jonathan-Zamir** is an associate professor at the Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Her work, published in leading journals, focuses on policing, particularly police–community relations and evidence-based policing. She has investigated police legitimacy and procedural justice from the perspective of citizens, communities, police officers and neutral observers in diverse contexts such as routine encounters, security threats, protest events, airport security and street level. She has also examined the psychological mechanisms underlying police officers' orientation to evidence-based policing, effective mechanisms for police training, and the effects of COVID-19 on police–community relations in Israel.

**Badi Hasisi** is a full professor and Chair of the Institute of Criminology, Faculty of Law, The Hebrew University. His work focuses on the interaction between minority communities and criminal justice agencies. He also specializes in homeland security and the crime–terrorism nexus. He was awarded the 2018 prize for best article by the Israeli Organization of Law and History and the Fattal Prize for Excellence in Legal Research and Criminology. Professor Hasisi has also served as the Executive Editor of the *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* and acts as the current chair of the Israeli Society of Criminology.

**Gali Perry** is a senior lecturer at the Institute of Criminology, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Her research interests include the policing of political extremism, political violence, terrorism and longitudinal research designs.

---

**Cite this article:** Jonathan-Zamir, T., Hasisi, B., and Perry, G. 2024. Editors' Introduction to the Special Issue of the *Annals* Dedicated to the Renowned Criminologist Professor David Weisburd. *International Annals of Criminology* 62, 3–7. <https://doi.org/10.1017/cri.2024.15>