

LECTURE TRANSCRIPT

Mike Hough Retirement Event: **Making Justice Policy Listen to Criminological Research?**

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Clore Management Centre
Torrington Square
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Speakers: Stewart Motha (Birkbeck)
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Gloria Laycock (University College London)
Julian Roberts (University of Oxford)
Juliet Lyon (Prison Reform Trust)
Ben Bradford (University College London)

Stewart Motha:

Thank you. Good evening everyone. I'm Stewart Motha, I'm the dean of the law school, and it gives me great pleasure to welcome you here tonight, and to chair this celebration of Mike's work and career.

Now I first encountered a British criminologist when I was living in Australia and becoming involved in activism around Aboriginal debts in custody. And so the work of criminologists – and British criminologists – came to my attention back then. I should hasten to add that I was in high school at the time, in the 1980s, and now I learn that of course this was coinciding with the time that Mike was beginning his important work in criminology.

So Mike will speak to us tonight for about 35 minutes. And this will be followed by a distinguished panel of respondents: Gloria Laycock, Julian Roberts, Juliet Lyon and Ben Bradford. And I'll introduce them later as they come up to speak.

Now among the things that I learned about criminology as a lawyer, was firstly that criminology, like other social sciences, was increasingly deployed by jurists and judges, because they believed that it was one of the ways to move away from a certain form of legal formalism. So jurists like Roscoe Pound, and Oliver Wendell Holmes, became very enamoured of the work of social scientists, including criminologists.

But of course what came with this were many dangers; the dangers of agency capture, which I'm sure many of you are conscious of. And increasingly now, a suspicion about the work of experts themselves, at a time when the state is starting to lose legitimacy in the grip of various forms of populism. So I think it will be useful to hear Mike's reflections – and I've had the opportunity to glance at some of his notes in relation to today's talk – on how he reflects on his work over the last several decades, in that context.

Now Mike Hough started his research career as a Home Office researcher, in which capacity he was one of the two researchers who established the British Crime Survey – now the Crime Survey of England & Wales – in 1981. On leaving the Home Office in 1994, Mike set up a policy research centre then based at Southbank University. This centre was the forerunner of the Institute for Criminal Policy Research, or ICPR, which Mike established at King's College, London in 2003, and which then moved, under Mike's continuing directorship, to Birkbeck School of Law in 2010.

Today ICPR is a fully integrated part of the law school, and wider college. I should emphasise what a significant role ICPR has played in our research culture since it has arrived at Birkbeck. It is only since the last year that it has been formally integrated into the college structures, but I think it has helped a great deal in moving the law school itself to become much more conscious of its activist orientations, and to imagine its critical legal work in a broader and more expansive way.

Mike retired from his position as ICPR director and professor of criminal policy in late 2016, and is now a visiting professor in the School of Law. With great generosity he continues to offer support and advice to the ICPR team, and to contribute actively to much of their research.

Mike's research and publications encompass an enormously wide range of topics, within the broad field of criminal justice; including public attitudes to crime and criminal justice, sentencing, policing, drugs, antisocial behaviour, probation services, youth justice and procedural justice theory. And certainly to have made a contribution to all of those areas in such a significant way is an enormous achievement.

Just one measure of Mike's scholarly influence is that from 2006 to 2010, he was the second most cited author in the British Journal of Criminology, and the eleventh most cited across five international journals. But I don't think influence can really be counted – and I'm sure that many of you here can testify to the important mentorship and partnership that... As the primary way in which Mike has contributed to your work.

Mike has often described his work, and that of ICPR more generally as 'academically grounded and policy oriented.' All of his work shows a sophisticated understanding of the profound complexities of criminal justice, whilst never losing its clarity and accessibility. He maintains an overriding concern with social justice, equality and human rights, and a firm belief in the capacity of criminological research to bring about change for the better in policy and practice.

It's a great honour to welcome you to speak tonight Mike, thank you.

[Applause]

Mike Hough:

Thank you very much Stewart – very nice, kind words – and good evening. I'm very pleased to see lots of familiar faces.

It's a shame that International Women's Day, coupled with the strike – with the pickets outside – has meant that we don't have that many students... Many of our colleagues thought that they had to support the strike, and I agree with them. I've got considerable sympathy with the problems that they face in the future, when their pensions are shrivelled up. And I suffer bouts of baby-boomer guilt – I think we all have... No, I can't say you're all baby-boomers, but those of us who are baby-boomers probably have our little moment of guilt about it.

I'm talking about policy focused criminological research – it's biased; I want to present myself in a good light, whilst retaining a loose connection with the truth, that's my personal agenda. But I really do want to make some important points about engagement with policy. Because most of those who do it, and do it well, don't talk about it. There is a craft of engaging with policy, and I think that academics need to get their minds round that craft increasingly.

So this is a game of two halves. I'm going to start by making some fairly general points about types of impact – academic versus policy, citations versus real world impact – why we want to have impact, and a bit about the politics and ethics of seeking impact when you're in a position to do so. And then I want in the second half, to give a few examples of projects where we've done quite well I think in getting an impact, and projects that have sunk with little trace – which is disappointing.

Credentials. I... I've lost count of the number of grants and contracts I've had, but I guess it's well over 100, and I think I've had 300 publications – it has been a sort of Tesco's approach to piling it high and selling them cheap; or as expensive as I can, which is sometimes cheap.

Some of those publications have done pretty well. Fifty of my publications have been cited by other academics around 50 times, which is respectable. And 25 of those have been cited a lot more than that. That's quite good. But what's quite bad is that 100 of them have been barely cited at all; no references – absolutely disappeared off the face of the earth. And I wonder why I bothered with those 100. I mean I could have bunked off work every third day and nobody would have noticed. And so I've sacrificed quite a lot of my career on the altar of unread research.

What I'm really trying to say is that I have experience of research that has worked both well and badly – and I think I can claim to be in a good position to talk about impact.

So let's consider types of impact. I guess historically academics wrote for academics – many still do. The underlying premise has been that education, research and knowledge is a 'good thing' – the Enlightenment model of higher education, where

the benefits of having intelligent people doing marvellous things trickles down into the educated classes and beyond.

And I think people in academia found their rewards for their work within academia – intrinsic interest, the regard they got from colleagues, reputation, advancement, all that sort of thing – for which ‘citation studies’ are a pale reflection. I shall be saying a bit about citation this evening; so the non-academics here should know that citation is where your work is quoted by other academics in academic journals and books outlets, and Google Scholar or similar systems harvests all of those citations and puts you into a rank order – a very modern managerialist affliction.

My tips for getting well cited, for those of you who write, are simple. The first one is be old. The longer your life, the more your stuff has had a chance to get into circulation. Slightly less trivially; diversify. Don't plough a narrow furrow. I've spread myself thin over a lot of territory, and been promiscuous in my research areas – it keeps up the interest.

The most important though, if you want to get loads of citations, is to work in collaboration with others. And I really value the collaboration with many of you in this room, which I've always found rewarding – both within my centre, and across institutions. The real trick is to choose collaborators who are smarter than yourself, and I strongly recommend this. That's maybe my most important recommendation on citations; so thank you to all of those whose intelligence I have exploited!

I should also say academic publication actually has a real benefit that it took a long time for me to realise, which is this: some publication outlets have a very short shelf-life; some Home Office publications, for example, don't last – don't live. And if you do an academic version of the report, and get it into the academic domain, it has long life and reach.

One of my favourite studies that I did when I first left the Home Office and worked at South Bank University was – in my view – a really good study of fear of crime, and it's got zero citations – *nil points*. I did a three-page note based on the report, in response to something Stephen Farrall had published, about six years after that, and that's got about 80 citations. I did it in a morning. So it's a bit depressing. I wasted all

of that time on a non-existent, invisible study, that I and only I think is good. That's vanity for you.

As Stewart said, I spent a long time in the Home Office. And you probably think that Home Office researchers were sort of under-labourers, to use Ian Loader's expression, in the policy process – at the beck and call of politicians. My recollection of early life in the Home Office was that it wasn't really like that at all. I think David Faulkner is in the audience – and he may agree or not – but in the 1970s and early eighties, the researchers in the Home Office had a lot of autonomy, offering often rather unhelpful advice to the senior policy officials, and – rather rarely – to ministers. We lived at that time in a somewhat insulated world of our own, occasionally engaging with the rest of the Home Office.

In the late eighties and early nineties, I worked closely with policy civil servants, and to an extent, Home Office ministers, on what still strikes me as an intelligent and humane policy of penal parsimony – using imprisonment as little as possible, finding other ways of dealing with offenders. And I found that one of the most rewarding parts of my career as a researcher, and in part as a policy civil servant for a little time. Very rewarding. Douglas Hurd was Home Secretary; life was different then.

And I should say – parenthetically – that I no longer, in today's Home Office, recognise the department that I knew then. Today's department seems untroubled by the 'hostile environment' that it sets out to create for asylum seekers; and the detention of very long-term UK residents in Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre, is I think unspeakable, and it troubles me. But that's an aside.

Anyway, by 1993 I had a large slice of the Home Office research team, working as deputy to Roger Tarling – who is somewhere here – doing interesting topics. And in lots of ways it was a really nice job; we did interesting stuff. But real changes were happening in the relationships between civil servants and ministers; if you think Michael Howard and his celebration in the mid-1990s of everything that was punitive. It felt like the relationships of trust between ministers and their civil servants had really faltered. And the first experience of real populist politicians was on us. I jumped ship, and I started academic life in 1994. I thought I could run a policy-based research centre better than most academics, who didn't understand the policy world,

as I arrogantly thought I did. So I wrote to the vice chancellor at South Bank University, and told him this. And it was one of the biggest surprises in my life, he said, ‘Yes, you can. Yes, have a chair...’ And I took it – and got firmly ensconced in academia that way.

There’s a really interesting diaspora of people from Home Office research, many of whom I am very pleased to see are here, who all went to academia, and ended up in senior posts. My list, in alphabetical order, is: Ben Bowling, who’s here, Ron Clarke, who couldn’t get here, Tom Ellis, Carol Hedderman is here, Tim Hope, Jessica Jacobson, Gloria Laycock, Sharon Grace, Charlie Lloyd, George Mair, Claire Nee, Tim Newburn, Ken Pease, Coretta Phillips and Roger Tarling.

Somebody ought to write the history of that process – that diaspora – that had a really dramatic impact on criminology in this country. And they were all, I think at heart, policy focused, and have done well.

For me, it was a good time to leave the Home Office in the mid-nineties, because by the late nineties, it was a boom-time for policy research, and there was loads of money; we got large government contracts, and lots of other grants, and I built up a team of about 30 researchers at South Bank, which was unusually large even for that time. And then I moved to King’s, and then moved to Birkbeck. The economic downturn has made life a bit tougher for us; Jessica and her ICPR team may get less government work, but they get other money from funding councils and from the European Commission, and from charitable trusts and so on.

I felt I was able to strike a decent balance between work I wanted to do, topics I wanted to engage with, and research that funders were prepared to pay for. Anybody who does policy research often has to operate a bit like a taxi, taking whatever fare turns up; but they’ve also got the opportunity usually to shape what fares they actually pick up, by being in the right place at the right time.

I think we developed *programmes* of research – that I see as falling in the tradition of liberal reform. Research into public attitudes; where we were challenging the penal populism that began to emerge in the mid-nineties. Research into sentencing and the uncontrolled growth of imprisonment. Problem drug use and promoting coerced,

rather than mandated treatment for drug dependent offenders. And research into trust in the police and police legitimacy. So you can get a flavour of the sorts of areas of interest that I inhabited once I reached academia.

The emerging pressure on us to get ‘impact’ never felt like pressure to me because that’s what I wanted to do – but the 2014 Research Excellence Framework clearly started pushing academics explicitly in seeking and valuing real world impact. And this was defined by the Higher Education Funding Council as, ‘an effect on, change or benefit to, the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment, or quality of life, beyond academia.’ So HEFCE was telling academics, “Look outside, look beyond academe, and achieve real impact, in the real world.” Of course, I was very happy with that.

You could see some risks though. Impact is going to be focused on short run impact, I suspect. It poses risks in reducing the scope for totally ‘blue-skies’ research, and for critical and radical thinking. And that is a problem that needs to be addressed. However, I hope that we shall carry on helping Birkbeck School of Law with its impact narrative, and I think we’re in a good position to do so.

A little bit about ethics and politics of policy research. I started off by extrinsic motivation, wanting to build a career, do well, get recognised, but once I got skilled at getting in research funding I found that I could develop more control over my research agendas, and I clearly thought that I had research choices to make. I’d say partly from vanity and partly from principle, for a long time I’ve wanted my research to do no harm, and preferably to do some good – that’s rather pompous, but I still do think that. But it does raise some ethical issues. Not the sort of standard research ethics questions, but the ones that arise when you are in a position to secure large amounts of money and to affect public policy – albeit at the margins.

And my justification – the justification that makes me feel happy with myself in doing policy work – is that I think most of my work has at its heart verifiable, or at least falsifiable, empirical findings. Thus I remain a dyed-in-the-wool empiricist. And I feel it’s important that work that I do should be able to be tested for its verifiability. And the second point is easy – that people can ignore me; politicians can use or reject research that’s given to them.

Now that we're at the threshold of a post-truth era, I believe that more than ever, academics have a real responsibility to carry out genuinely testable empirical research: it's increasingly important to expand the body of empirical research that informs policy.

Then there's a second set of issues that Stewart Motha mentioned, about organisational capture by funders; which is something that anybody who has done work for the government is very familiar with. If you're advising people who are funding you, they feel they have a degree of control over you, and they probably do. And they don't like criticism, and if the criticism is too sharp, they won't listen, and also they won't give you repeat business. And if you're on soft money, that is a consideration.

What I tell myself is that I will make compromises to get people to listen, and to keep my centre afloat, but I won't be compromised. Now that could just be skilful playing with words, but I think you need live with compromises, but really stick your heels in when necessary – and strike a balance between being reasonable and being stubborn.

And I've usually found that researchers and funders can push drafts to and fro, arguing about fine detail, until we all get bored, and the basic essence of the report remains untouched. I've had very few downright refusals to publish – one in Michael Howard's era; and the commissioning civil servant said, 'Please, just wait till he's gone and then you can publish it.' So I said yes, that seemed okay.

How do you achieve impact? I'm moving to the second part of my talk... How do you achieve impact? Well, I've got a list – and this is the core of what I want to say to anybody who is serious about doing policy.

First of all, and trivially, have something significant to say. If you don't, nobody will listen. Secondly, doing research on a particular scale impresses people. You could do some very small-scale research and still have an impact, but generally scale matters and gets people to listen.

Third, I increasingly think that all empirical research should be properly framed within a coherent conceptual or theoretical framework, because it enlivens the topic,

and makes it graspable and coherent. The claims about a-theoretical empiricism, in the eighties and nineties, were sometimes true.

Then you've got to say it at the right time; say it clearly, simply, briefly. And it's amazing how badly lots of academics still write; we all know all of those writing principles relating to clarity, short sentences, simple words, active not passive voice, not trespassing on the attention spans of readers, but a lot of people forget it.

You need credibility and authority in saying what you say. And that can't just be conjured at the drop of a hat; you have to work at credibility with particular people, and in building authority. I've – certainly in the middle of my academic career – spent a lot of time getting media coverage. And this was partly to please my then vice chancellor, who loved it, but also to amplify voice and authority.

One of the best things we did was to develop a partnership with one of the best criminal justice NGOs, the Prison Reform Trust – and Juliet's here today – who really understand the policy process, I believe much better than most academics. And if you partner up with the right NGO, you can get to places that academics generally just don't find. But you also need to cultivate other academic and non-academic allies, sympathetic listeners, allies within government – which involves networking and contacts and so on – and in quangos – non-departmental public bodies. Many of these have been very helpful to us. It's worth contributing to the parliamentary process; such as giving evidence to select committees, which I've done a bit, but not as much as some of you. And hope for luck and good timing – some of which I've had. That's my list.

I will end by presenting five case studies – projects or programmes that have gone well or not gone well. The British Crime Survey is the first one. My colleague Pat Mayhew is at the back, she and I were the key people who designed the first national crime survey in this country. It's still one of my favourite reports. We took inordinate care writing it, and it still stands up as a really good piece of work.

To simplify grossly, the survey has shown – over 30 years now – that crime went up, then it went down – and that police statistics do not always indicate the real trend. We know much more about crime trends than we ever did before we started the crime

survey. And that's a whole other lecture. Douglas Wood was the third person who was really central in designing the survey, by the way. I think It's had a really enduring impact. It has become almost embarrassingly institutionalised – where the BBC always says it's the most reliable indicator of crime trends in England and Wales – probably prompted by John Flatley, who's here this evening.

So it had several things going for it. It had scale, for a start – and now it has massive scale. It had something novel to say; and we wrote it up simply, clearly – in a way that was rather novel for government research reports at the time. It was situated in the Home Office, so that gave us immediate access to power.

We had, at that time, regular personal access to people in the media, in a way that I think current civil service researchers would find extraordinary. Now they're kept at arm's length, and everything is through the press office, but Pat and I had personal relationships with most of the home affairs correspondents – certainly on the broadsheets – and had regular contact with them. I'm not sure whether our policy civil servants realised the extent to which we did, but these contacts were important in building media trust in the 'product'.

My second case study is our programme of work on problem drug use. We did a lot of research when we were at South Bank and at King's, into illicit drugs – drug markets, drug related crime and drug treatment. And some of the key people are here now. The origins of what we were doing started with a small network of people, who many of you will not know, Jud Barker, Paul Hayes, Roger Howard, Charlie Lloyd, Howard Parker, Justin Russell and myself.

We were working together between '95 and '97, before New Labour were elected, to try and develop what we saw as a more civilised way of treating problem drug users than simply punishing them; looking to see if we could coerce or nudge people into treatment – not whip them into treatment, but nudge them into treatment – for drug dependency.

And we, I think collectively, played quite an important part in getting legislation like Drug Treatment and Testing Orders off the ground; getting arrest referral systems into place, and so on. It was good – I think we did well. And my team and I provided a lot

of the supporting research and I did a lot of policy advocacy – possibly even stepping beyond the line that academics should go.

It went very well for about 10 years, but our relationship with the Home Office started to sour mid-noughties. I think what happened was that the Home Office increasingly bought into this policy of coerced treatment and started over-claiming success. They started saying that the treatment services they were funding were the thing that was driving crime down, which was a large exaggeration.

And I accidentally questioned reliability at a large APCO conference, where I had foolishly not listened to the previous speaker, who was a senior civil servant saying that these policies had absolutely depressed drug related crime and achieved everything that they wanted. And I naively said, ‘I don’t think there’s any real evidence that crime has been affected yet by these policies.’ They didn’t like it – they really didn’t like it. But we recovered from that.

But what I didn’t like about developments in drug policy in the Home Office – policies as they developed – was an elision from coerced treatment to mandatory treatment; where people who didn’t take up offers of treatment – dependent users who didn’t take up treatment offers – were criminalised and punished. I thought that this stepped over an important line. And I lost heart in that particular set of policies, although we carried on doing a bit of work until the late-noughties.

Key points there; we had marked collaborative impact to start with. I mean I only had a bit, a share of that impact, but that group I mentioned really did shape policy in the mid-nineties. And we had an impact because of the cumulative effect of all of our work on drug use, illicit markets, and so on. And I’ll name the research team that did that– Paul Turnbull, Mark Edmunds, Tiggey May, Alex Harocopos, Ian Hearnden, Gill Hunter, Tim McSweeney - who were amazingly successful in reaching really hard to reach populations.

But the big message there is once a government department claims success, it’s shutting the door on rational discussion about what the evidence is. And it was quite uncomfortable to have my finger in the door when it was slammed.

So case study three: 'Policing for London'. This was a very well-resourced project, costing £500,000 from charitable trusts – so biggish money. The Met was supporting us, I thought. It was a re-run of David Smith's work in the eighties, 'Police and People in London'. We charted the falling trust in the police that was happening in the late nineties, and we were pretty sure it was the perverse effects of numerical targets that was driving down public support. We had survey material and qualitative material. So it should have gone quite well.

The trouble was our original senior ally in the Met moved on to become a chief constable somewhere else and we were left without a real, committed senior member of the Met. Senior staff saw the project simply as a risk –that we were going to get the same sorts of headlines as David Smith's study did. David's reports were very critical, justifiably so, of the Met. And I think the senior officers in the Met, when we were doing our work, saw this as a similar threat, rather than an opportunity to engage in what we were trying to tell them.

So there are points there. I think if I'd discovered a better overarching conceptual framework, we could have done a much stronger report that would have hit home more, and got a lot more traction within policing – I'll come back to that. We didn't have any effective support from NGOs or non-departmental public bodies, or the Home Office; so we were just speaking to the Met, and not being heard within the Met. We didn't get much press interest, as I remember, even though our funders hired a very glossy PR company to get it. So it was all disappointing, except it laid the foundation for work on procedural justice, which I'll come back to.

Fourth case study: sentencing and public opinion. I think I'm quite happy with this programme of work. A series of linked projects on sentencing and on public attitudes to sentencing; a lot of it around penal populism and its evils. I started working with Julian Roberts – who's here tonight – in '95, designing a suite of questions for the British Crime Survey, and that was followed by many other studies. And we established fairly clearly that the public was much more variegated than people supposed, and open to many more sentencing solutions than politicians supposed.

We also did work with sentencers: Jessica and I, and colleagues, did a lot of interview work with judges that was good; trying to locate the reasons behind the growth of

imprisonment. Also work on mitigation, on youth imprisonment, and in particular on ‘Imprisonment for Public Protection’. I think that Jessica’s and my study on IPPs had a real effect in encouraging the abolition of that sentence. We could talk more about that.

That programme of work got traction from the senior judiciary, partly because we had ongoing relationships with three Lord Chief Justices. And the reason why we had that relationship was entirely down to the Prison Reform Trust’s remarkable skill in opening doors for us. And we would have got much less impact if we never had those links. We got access through PRT to politicians, to senior policy people and so on, and they adopted our work. And I think we had some big wins in terms of policy.

Finally, procedural justice. I discovered procedural justice theory rather late in the day, in 2003. If I’d got there two or three years earlier, our Policing for London study would have been a much better project. Procedural justice theory provided the concepts that I failed to find for the London policing study.

I won’t go into it in any detail, but basically the ideas of procedural justice theory are that trust in justice can be created by decent treatment; if you achieve trust in justice, the public confers a legitimacy on authorities like the police; and if the police can garner legitimacy, you get compliance. It’s pretty commonsensical and pretty much ignored by policing on the street a lot of the time; partly because the vocabulary hasn’t always been accessible to people engaged in front-line policing.

In the mid-noughties, Julian Roberts, Jon Jackson, Ben Bradford and I were all exploring partnerships to develop work on public trust in justice and public opinion. We got a big EU grant in 2007 – Eurojustis – which I coordinated.

We had endless meetings in lovely European cities to do this work, and I quite liked that too. Especially when we got a follow up grant, called Fiducia – applying procedural justice principles to actual policy. Jon Jackson, Ben Bradford and I, with others, got space to do a module in the European Social Survey, in 2010, for a cross-European test of procedural justice theory. And we were... The data treated us astonishingly kindly, and proved everything that we wanted proved. I think that was a bit of a gift.

From 2010 onwards, Jon, Ben and I have co-authored 25 pieces on procedural justice – and they’ve done even more additional work. They’re two of the people whose intelligence I hijacked to increase my citation ratings on s – and thank you, both, for that.

And we did lots of other projects – Mai Sato and I, and others, produced many publications for those two European projects. I think we really got somewhere with procedural justice. We were by no means the only academics promoting concepts of procedural justice in this country, but we were visible. Obviously Tom Tyler in the United States, is the father of procedural justice theory as it emerged there. But we had pretty good take-up.

I spent a lot of time advising senior people in HMIC, the Inspectorate of Constabulary, for a long time. And we also contributed to various inspections on advisory groups. And I don’t think it’s an accident that the Inspectorate of Constabulary started to have legitimacy as one of its key themes in its inspections; legitimacy is now something that they look for in each force inspection. The National Audit Office were very kind and said that people ought to watch our work because it provided solutions to improving policing without a great deal of cost, which is true.

We did a lot of presentations to the Home Office and the Ministry of Justice, but I think they got the ideas. Presentations to police forces. The College of Policing has been very receptive. Betsy Stanko –at the Met and then at MOPAC – worked with Ben and Jon. And I think MOPAC has nicely signed up.

And legitimacy has really become part of standard police policy discourse – in things like Policing Vision 2025 – policy documents that sort of have legitimacy threaded through them. We wouldn’t want to claim all of the credit for that, but that research programme took people some of the way down towards it. The programme had scale; the geographical coverage of the European Social Survey is important – it gave us authority. We had non-departmental public bodies lined up who were engaged, like HMIC, IPCC, the College of Policing.

And procedural justice theory provides a really useful perspective. I think a lot of our policy work has provided not answers, but perspective that helps people get to

answers. It sets out concepts for reform-minded police, in a way that's consistent with, but more coherent than, the earlier government discourse about police – policing confidence.

Finally, a few conclusions. You should have gathered I remain committed to empirical theory testing policy research. I think we ought to really shout out loud that policy research is good, not a sort of secondary part of the academic enterprise, and it should have a strong empirical element to it.

I like the way the BCS went, I like our work on sentencing and public attitudes to sentencing, and procedural justice. I still remain frustrated at studies like Policing for London, underachieving. I remain uneasy about the way that a government department can morph into a rather an illiberal form of near-compulsory treatment. And I remain worried about the 100 uncited studies, and my wasted time. But still, there we go.

I think it's really worth tracking which studies fly and which ones sink, and why, because you might waste less time on studies that never see the light of day than I have. But there we go. If you're doing that good luck, and thank you very much.

[Applause]

Stewart Motha:

Right, thanks very much Mike. So if I could ask our panel of respondents to please come up and join us.

So then let me introduce our distinguished panel. We will begin with Gloria Laycock. She is professor of crime science at UCL, formerly a researcher in the Home Office for many years, and founding director of the Jill Dando Institute of Crime Science at UCL.

She will be followed by Julian Roberts, who is professor of criminology at the University of Oxford, and a leading expert on sentencing policy and practice, who has spent 10 years as a member of the Sentencing Council.

And then Juliet Lyon, who is a visiting professor in the School of Law here, and chair of the independent advisory panel on debts in custody, formerly director of the Prison Reform Trust.

And Ben Bradford, finally, who's professor of global city policing at UCL. He heads the Institute for Global City Policing, jointly established last year by UCL, the Met Police and the London Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime.

So thank you. Gloria...

Gloria Laycock:

Good evening everybody. I was delighted and absolutely flattered to be asked to comment on the life and work of Mike Hough. I might say incidentally apropos the title of this evening, 'Making Justice Policy Listen to Criminological Research' – good luck.

I joined in '81, in the research unit, and I didn't have much to do with Mike then; he was busily working with Ron Clarke and important people, and I was stumbling around in the prisons, where I'd come from. So I emailed Ron to get some gossip, and I emailed Pat to get a bit more – and there wasn't any. So that was a bit of a disappointment.

So I Googled Mike, and I found out that he retired formally in September 2016 – I didn't know that. He was still working on the 'What Works' contract in July 2017, and I don't know what else he was doing. So Mike will be a real loss to the criminology community when he finally does retire. And I'm still secretly hoping that the celebration tonight is going to be another failed attempt on his part.

Anyway, to business. Mike's chosen topic is a subject very dear to my heart – I absolutely am committed to influencing policy with research, and speaking truth to power – that was one of my favourite things to do when I was in the Home Office.

I was particularly interested in his choice of topics – I wondered where was situational crime prevention? Where was all the work he did on policing with Ron? I think situational crime prevention has been hugely influential in contributing to the

crime drop, and Mike Hough was certainly there when that tale began. Of course he was also massively influential in the areas he did choose to highlight – notwithstanding the few missed opportunities, as he described them.

One of the points Mike made which I'd like to emphasise, is the importance of programmes of work rather than single projects. He talked of research on a significant scale, and referred to 15 years work on problem drug use. The point about programmes I think is that they take time to deliver, and politicians don't have time – they think that three year time frames... Or they think in three year time frames, and sometimes lot less. Politicians want to make their mark right now, and they're not about to hang around for a research project.

But those programmes take time, and they need to be consistently driven, by someone who understands their relevance, their significance, and their social import; someone who's prepared to stick with it, and someone who cares – and that's Mike.

Real, and I think meaningful shifts, in policy are impacted by research when coherent and strategically targeted programmes become impossible to ignore. This was the case with situational crime prevention, it was the case with sentencing, and with the work on procedural justice – which as Mike said, involved two linked programmes of work.

Impact on the scale described by Mike is rare indeed; and makes something of a mockery, in my mind, of the current expectation from research councils, and others, that every piece of research will have an impact. Within the sort of time frames that research is conducted that's almost impossible to deliver. And it's also a testimony I think to Mike's career that he managed to make an impact on so many different policy areas.

Notwithstanding his success, Mike expressed disappointment with the impact of the Policing for London study. I wasn't really convinced that frustration was justified. Despite the £500,000 spent on it, it was still one project, and focused on the Met at that – most police forces seem to me to regard the Met as a police breed apart; what happens there is just the Met, so it's very easy to dismiss. But the point about that project is, as I think Mike said, it laid the foundation for the work on procedural justice, and all that led thereafter.

And a word on Mike's 100 publications which sank without trace. I think writing improves with practice, so I'd like to hypothesise that the 200 publications that didn't sink without trace benefited from the experience of writing the 100 that did. What's more, citations – as Mike said – are not the be-all-and-end-all. Policy advisors are a bit like senior police officers – please forgive me, those that are here – they don't read research reports, they talk; they'll travel 200 miles to talk to somebody, rather than read a three page piece of paper – and they talk to people like Mike. And it's academics who cite each other's papers in the grand scheme of things; policy development, that just doesn't count.

Mike's talk was full of good advice to upcoming researchers who want to change the world, and one point that was on his list is to write clearly and concisely, and I think that's often underestimated. Mike writes beautifully – as Pat Mayhew said to me recently he could write the pants off anybody.

Mike Hough:

I'm not sure about that...

Gloria Laycock:

Mike's advice to me was to put myself in the reader's head, and I've always found that a helpful notion, but I have to say I found some readers' heads quite disagreeable.

But perhaps most importantly is the need for integrity. Mike said drawing the line between making compromises and being compromised is a fine balance. I think that's incredibly true, and it's a balance that I think Mike struck very well. He has huge intellectual integrity, which in no small way contributes to the influence that he's had. That for me is a sine qua non for any policy advisor, and sadly it may not be... Not count for much in these post-truth days.

That said, not everyone would agree that it's for researchers to sell their message, as Mike is arguing – he recommends getting access to the media to amplify your voice for example. I think this is in effect turning researchers into pressure groups; and I'm fine with that personally, because in my experience if the researchers don't push their research nobody else will. And I strongly agree with Mike that social science has a

huge contribution to make, in solving social problems, to making them just, fair and effective. But not everyone would agree – and some would disagree very loudly.

This leaves me with the view that Mike stands out as an enormously influential academic – and it's perhaps not something he could say himself, but I certainly can. He's one of the very few criminologists in this respect. He did ask me once if he was a crime scientist, and I said yes he is – his strength, as an empirical, data-led researchers attests to that. But as a former president of the British Society of Criminology, and respecting the right of people to self-identify, I'll stick with calling him a criminologist.

I asked Ron Clarke if he had a message for Mike, and Ron wrote, 'Probably all that retirement will mean is that he'll carry on mostly as before, but without the pay. He was a terrific colleague when I worked with him at the Home Office, and I count him as a close friend. I admire him, his career and his exceptional loyalty to his research team. I would have loved to have been there on Thursday.'

One final anecdote, which comes as a warning. Mike once described himself to me as a workaholic all week and an alcoholic all weekend. Mike, if you are truly to retire, please don't treat retirement as one long weekend.

[Applause]

Julian Roberts:

Thanks for turning that light out. I would have been blind by the end of the evening. Yeah, I just want to... We've been asked to talk for about six to eight minutes – well, I could spend that describing, talking about Mike's impact on the field, which has been huge.

I won't do that, but I just want to reiterate what a great contribution you've made, and continue to make – typically modest, Mike Hough style, low-balling all your achievements. He mentioned this stonking great Fiducia grant that the team landed in 2007 – well, we didn't land it; you did; we were sort of the orchestra and you were the conductor. But you've landed many great grants – that's just one of your areas of achievement.

Most academics – or many academics, although perhaps I’m projecting my own profile – are relatively narrow; I work in the area of sentencing and public opinion, that’s about it. Mike of course has worked in so many different areas; policing, drugs, probation, crime prevention, public opinion, it goes on and on. And you’re not a generalist in the sense that you do work in these areas; you’ve made a significant and substantial contribution in all of them. And I think that’s hugely impressive.

I don’t think we should also overlook the impact of your research on things other than policies and journal citations. So one of the things that I think is interesting is when practitioners know about our research, or judges.

And one of the studies that you and I did, the British Crime Survey study of about 1993, we took a sample and we randomly assigned the sample to read a vignette, and to sentence on the vignette with the case description, to see whether people would be less punitive when they had a particular offender in mind. And of course we did find that. And that was a very useful finding, which has been replicated; and that was a very well cited study, but I’ve also heard from a lot of judges who have read it, without having been told. So I think that’s an important impact.

It can have a downside. I was testifying as an expert witness once, and it was in the area of public opinion, and the judge – as I was ending my evidence – said, ‘Professor Roberts, you might be interested to read a study which looked at public reaction not in a public opinion survey, but in response to a particular vignette...’ So this immediately put me in a quandary. So I didn’t want to say, ‘Yes Your Honour, I co-authored it with Mike Hough, as you may have read in my CV which was part of the qualification and papers submitted...’ Then the judge might feel a bit of a chump. On the other hand, I didn’t want to undermine my own testimony by denying awareness of this particular study – and of course, I was testifying under oath, so I couldn’t do that. So I really didn’t know what to do. So I sort of bottled out and said, ‘Thank you Your Honour for the reference...’ Which I thought was sufficiently ambiguous. But that study has been cited in many judgements too, in other jurisdictions. So there are all kinds of impacts that Mike’s work has had, which we shouldn’t overlook.

So I'm just going to mention in the area of sentencing – I was asked to maybe put some issues or priorities on the table – and I'm just going to mention a couple that Mike has worked on over the years, and which I hope he'll continue to work on.

And the first question is what has happened to the prison population? What's driving the current level? And why is it rising now again, slightly slowly? The Ministry of Justice used to do some interesting studies on this, but we haven't seen one recently. And I think that is a very interesting question. And it has a clear policy outcome – we need to know what's driving it in order to try to curb or constrain admissions to custody, with a view to doing something about the problem. So that's one thing that needs to be done; we need a much better handle on where we are and why we are there, in terms of the prison population.

And the second proposal I'd put on the table – other people have mentioned it of course, I'm sure – is the notion of sort of a penal audit; to take a snapshot of the prison estate, and see what kind of... What percentage of the people in prison are what I would call penal bed-blockers – people who are not there because they need to be there, but are people who could be punished in other ways in the community. I mean if you want to relieve the pressure on A&E or hospitals, you need to keep the bed-blockers away.

Now there are a lot of academic critiques – and Mike has contributed to those – saying there are a large number of people in prison, for reasons other than the seriousness of offence, relating to the custody threshold. But we don't really know. And there have been these claims and counter-claims.

A former Lord Chief came to Oxford a few years ago, and in Q&A somebody, an Oxford law student, said to him, 'Sir, we've got a lot of people in prison at the moment, doesn't this have something to do with you, and your judges?' And the Lord Chief sort of stood back – and you could almost see smoke coming out of his ears – and he said, 'Well, young man...' Well, he didn't say that; that's what he was thinking. He said, 'You have to remember that no one is in prison unless they've committed an offence which is so serious...' And so on and so forth. And so he basically repeated the custody threshold provision from the Criminal Justice Act to us, and I didn't think that was particularly helpful.

But it would be nice to have a clear, robust picture of how many people are in prison, or what percentage of the prison population, or admissions to custody, are there for reasons other than the gravity or harm of the offence. And it would be nice to have that, an independent kind of adjudication, rather than sort of wild claims – 5%, 50%. And I think that would be a very useful exercise, if somebody could do it. And that would also identify the profile of cases going to prison that could be reasonably diverted in another direction.

And finally, the last point I'll just make, is that we've had something of a quiet revolution with respect to Suspended Sentence Order. In 2003 there were about 2,200 of these orders imposed across England and Wales, in a year. And within a couple of years that figure had risen to 58,000. And if you roll that over till 2005, when the amendment changed the ambit of the sanction, that means hundreds of thousands of people have received that sentence. And some of them will have come from the case load of the community order, but many of them will have come from cases that might have gone to prison.

So that's a sort of natural experiment; it would be nice to know. I mean the recidivism rates haven't gone through the roof, the crime rate hasn't gone through the roof. Why don't we know more about that quiet revolution?

So there are a lot of interesting problems to be addressed; they're all policy-relevant. And so for that reason Mike I hope you'll look into them, and when you've got the answers we'll be interested to hear...

[Applause]

Juliet Lyon:

I see people waiting for the reception, so I shall make it as brief as I can, but it's good to have the opportunity to celebrate Mike's work – and to be another voice in saying that I don't really believe that he's retiring. But there.

Mike talked about impact as if he had hardly had any, which I found extraordinary. So I thought it could be my job – as it is the others of us here on the panel – to let you know, if you didn't already, just how much impact he has had.

And I had an odd part-time job back in 2014, when I was part of the independent impact assessors for HEFCE, for the research assessment. And people will know it was 18% of funding. So you would imagine – as an outsider I imagined – that academics would see this and take it very, very seriously. And it was interesting I think the way in which universities responded to that first request to demonstrate impact, because some of them clearly thought this was a bit outrageous. And consequently had given the report to be written by the most junior person in their department, and hadn't even spell-checked it. Others thought it must be important, but nothing to do with them, so they'd given it to a PR firm and it had arrived back beribboned and beautifully presented, but somehow had no substance.

And then the people who had a lot of sense, had really used it as an opportunity to draw together the strength of their department, and show just how much impact they had had; sometimes it was local, sometimes international – but really impressive, fabulous reports of what academics can do when they believe that their research should be applied, and should lead to social change.

And I think for us outsiders, that was the question we had in our heads the whole time; what has changed as a result of this work? And when you apply that lens to looking at Mike's work, you see actually a lot has changed. I mean of course more could change; I guess that's true of all of us; we always wish we could have done more or we could do more. But if you just take... I'm just going to take three examples actually.

Mike mentioned the work he'd done – considerable work – on sentencing; much of which was supported by the Nuffield Foundation. And at one point he wrote a report about creating a sentencing commission, which was published in 2008. And in that report really it was the opportunity to lay the foundations for what is now the Sentencing Council. And people may have varied views on the efficacy of the Sentencing Council, but what Mike was able to do in putting that report together and doing an international overview, was actually to avoid a grid system that probably would have shot the prison population into double the kind of awful, inflated population it is now.

So I think Mike you contributed to swerving away from grids at a point when ministers were terrifically interested in that as a way of doing things. So that was, if you like, an avoidance impact.

Another impact that Mike and his team – with Jessica and others – had, which I think was hugely important, was his research contribution to the work Prison Reform Trust did in reducing child imprisonment. And I'll say something more about that in a minute.

And the last which he mentioned I think that he'd had – I think you said policy impact on the IPP sentence. I'd say unequivocally that Mike was one of the people who made sure that Ken Clarke abolished that horrible Kafka-esque sentence. And I know that for a fact. And in fact it's searchable in terms of what politicians have said about the research that you did when you published 'Unjust Deserts'.

So that's three quite big things – huge things. And they're only samples really of what Mike has done. I'll say a little bit more about them if I could.

On the sentencing side, you explored, in 'The Decision to Imprison', the influence the press has had – I think you really exposed the influence the press has had on sentencing, and the way in which independence of the judiciary is a very tricky concept. And so many of the judges you interviewed said, 'We are independent, but we have to take into account public opinion.' And public opinion seemed to be really what was in the press, and in particular in the popular press. So that was very depressing.

One of the areas of agreement, by the judges you interviewed, was about provision for review, and that's something that still has yet to be realised. Provision for review we might see in problem-solving courts, but we don't see it as much as the judges then wanted, and probably do still.

Lord Woolf wrote the foreword to your work on mitigation, that again we published at the Prison Reform Trust, and you wrote with Jessica. And he talked about what he talked about what he described as the current penal debate preoccupied by a definition and identification of risk and dangerousness. And then Lord Woolf said, 'This report

reminds us there's another side to the coin, and that justice and the public can in some cases be best served by lenience.' And I think it was good to see such a strong foreword and such strong support for that piece of work. And then, as I said, when you wrote the next piece of work, 'Creating a Sentencing Commission', you were able to allow a body swerve away from the grids – the terrible grids.

In terms of children, you contributed to what is now a 70% reduction in the number of under-18 year olds going into custody. And the work that you did on punishing disadvantage, again with Jessica, was just fabulous. It was something that... And I see Penelope's here, who led that 'Out of Trouble' programme at the Prison Reform Trust – it was something that we really badly wanted to do, which was to say, 'Who are these children in prison? And what are they doing there?'

And when you talked about scale, I thought yes, actually this had real scale – shocking scale. Because you looked at the second half of 2008 and you looked at the number of children – all of the children; you did a census of all of the children who went into custody. How many? 6,000 in six months went into some form of custody. Quite extraordinary. And you did a detailed profile of 200 of those children. A fifth of them were in prison for breach of a community order.

And by doing that – by doing that study – you replicated and massively enlarged on a piece of work done by Norman Tutt 25 years before. Norman wrote the foreword to say that he was shaken by what he'd seen. But that research was the underpinning for government to begin to do things differently. And in particular for local authorities to start on earlier interventions, to take more notice of children in care, going into custody, for police discretion to be used; and a whole range of things, along with a lot of other interventions, that has led to this fabulous reduction in our growing children into the adult prison population of the future. So I think that's a major achievement.

And lastly, on 'Unjust Deserts' – the IPP report that you authored with the team; you did something very, very important. I think the Lord Chief that we saw last, when he had the report in his hand said, 'This is a hard sentence to unwind.' And he said could he write a personal note to the Justice Secretary and send a copy of it, because he had a view about it. And I remember we said, 'Yes – yes, you could do that.'

But that – that piece of work – that Lord Chief to then Ken Clarke, who was Justice Secretary, led to a very important decision to get rid of an impossibly horrible sentence. And in that instance Lord Hurd wrote the foreword to your report – Douglas Hurd – and he started off by saying, ‘Proportionality and fairness are, or should be, the cornerstones of the justice system.’

I mean it’s a fabulous foreword, I’m not going to read it all, but he talks a lot about the work that you’ve done and the importance of it. And he says, ‘A prison system in which over 2,500 people are held well beyond tariff loses legitimacy in the eyes of those charged with its management and the public. The authors do not fight shy of the difficulties inherent in striking a balance between fairness and public protection. It’s clear from their report that a better balance must be struck.’ And then he goes on to say that he hopes that it will contribute to the review of sentencing announced by the Secretary of State for Justice.

Well, it did do a marvellous thing, but it has left – not your report, but the sentence – as we all know, a horrible legacy. And just recently at the Independent Advisory Panel on Deaths in Custody, we consulted 150 prisoners about what they felt would be the best ways of reducing suicide and self-harm. And it won’t surprise people here to know that one of the things they identified was the unfairness and the lack of hope embodied in that fearful sentence.

And one of them wrote in and said, ‘I’ve seen so many IPP prisoners harming themselves, unreported, and taking any drugs just to end the suffering quickly, because this is nothing but torture of the highest order. I myself am an IPP prisoner with a tariff of two and half years. I’ve now served 11 years in total, and still no end.’

And so I think there’s work still to be done Mike, actually. Sorry. And I think – I hope that you’ll rise to the challenge. I hope we can do more. I think there is more to do. I think we can’t leave a system where that stain, if you like, is in it – hated by people who have to administer it; the Prison Governors Association, prison officers and so forth. Hated by the people who are serving it, and destroying the families who are trying to support those people. So, as I said, there’s work to be done.

You spoke about credibility and authority, you have both so much. I loved working in partnership with you. And you also talked about the importance of good nature; and you have that more than almost anyone I know.

[Applause]

Ben Bradford:

Okay, I really will keep you only for a couple of minutes because I know the alcohol is calling.

I feel slightly overawed closing a panel like this – not least of which every time I think about Mike I think about interviews, because he was on my PhD viva with Robert Reiner, in 2009 or '10, and he was on my interview at UCL last year for the post I now hold. So anyway, I'll see how I... We can talk after about how I do.

I only really want to say two things. I want to say something about crossing the policy and the academic world – which Mike touched upon in his talk; talked a lot about in his talk. And also doing stuff with data, and the way that he has managed to integrate those two worlds in the kind of data that he has been integral in producing over the last 35 years... Is that 40 years? Something like that.

I mean I think the point that he made about procedural justice theory, and that providing a conceptual underpinning for what had previously been a really anodyne and boring area of work, is absolutely spot on. The kind of trust and confidence agenda around policing before we – well, before Mike and Betsy and Jon really – kind of stumbled – I hope that's not too strong a word – stumbled on procedural justice theory, really was quite boring. And using procedural justice theory, and as an underpinning of that body of work, has really turned it into one of the most exciting and dynamic fields of criminological research, I would claim. I know I would say that I guess, at the moment.

And of course that opened the door for other ways of understanding what's going on in public opinions of policing – some the stuff that Julian and Mike have worked on in the past is now starting to find its way into the way we understand public opinion of policing in particular.

And I think the key theme here – an important thing to think about – is the extent to which you can use these kind of conceptual and theoretical paradigms, which might sound very academic, as a way of structuring the conversations you have with policy makers. And making those conversations much more real and much easier for the policy makers to understand; because there's real meat there – there's something underpinning the kinds of things that you're talking about.

And Mike is obviously extraordinarily good at that – not only talking to high level policy makers, but talking to people on the frontline as well. And I've seen him operating in both contexts, and I've learned a huge amount from that. But it works both ways, this kind of movement back and forth between the policy and the academic worlds.

And I think if I had to pick one, the single greatest legacy if you want to use that word, it would be the British Crime Survey – the Crime Survey of England & Wales as we now should call it. Something that was started as a policy tool – I think that's probably fair to say – but which has become one of the most important sources of academic research we have in this country. And still remarkably underused, even to this day; there aren't nearly enough people working on the Crime Survey, and using the enormous amount of data there is in there. Which says something about the kind of innumeracy of much British criminology – if I can make that comment here. We could be doing much more with data than we are at the moment, and we should be.

The second thing I want to talk about – and this is again following up on most of the other speakers – is giving Mike some work for his retirement. Which is about the uptake of procedural justice theory, and the way that that has integrated into policy around policing; the way that police officers think about doing their job. And I think it's undoubtedly the case, because of the work that Mike has done, because of the work that Betsy has done, and others at the College of Policing, Paul Quinton for example – it's undoubtedly the case that this paradigm if you like has found its way into conversations within police organisations, and very possibly into the way that police officers are doing their work now in London, and elsewhere.

But I think there are some significant gaps in our knowledge, and some concerns we might have to have about this paradigm, which relate back to some of the things that

Mike was saying actually about the drug treatment programmes, the working about drug treatment, and some of the implications – some of the directions in which work on procedural justice could go if we don't pay enough attention to it.

The first is training, and the question of can you train procedural justice? Can you train police officers to behave in this way that we would want them to behave in? That may be the case; there are some promising studies coming out, or starting to come out now. But we really don't know whether this is something that can be trained, or whether it's something that's innate to the characteristics of particular individuals and not to other individuals. And if that's the case, how do we get the right people into police organisations? And of course this all taps into a much wider conversation, which I think is really interesting, that's going on inside the college and elsewhere, about what we even want police officers to look like now and in the future.

Second though, I worry that this emphasis on training, which is the way that we always talk about procedural justice now, [responsibilises 1:23:02] individual police officers, and misses out the kind of wider institutional and structural picture. So what for example about the relationship between the practices of individual police officers – the fairness or not of that practice – and wider force priority setting, financing, resourcing, etc. So you can have lots of individual police officers doing the right thing, but if the force isn't trying to do the right thing, then what are we really doing here?

I think there's also a deeper question here which again we... Well, for those of us working within this paradigm – and unlike Mike I haven't crossed lots of paradigms; I'm still stuck in the same one unfortunately – that we dance around and don't really think about. Procedural justice theory is very good at answering questions of a type of, 'Now we're here, what are we going to do?' It's very bad at answering questions of the type, 'Why are we here in the first place?' And there's a whole set of interesting normative questions underpinning procedural justice theory, which we haven't thought much about, which we've always again danced around – it seems perfect for a retirement project to try to integrate some of those normative questions into here.

Because there's a real concern – at least in my mind – that procedural justice can, and surely is, often used as a way of persuading people to accept outcomes that are against

their own best interests. And it can also – and I think I’ve seen this in operation – can be enthusiastically taken up as a tactic by police managers and others, as a way of managing their relationships with the public, broadly conceived; and when they have no intentions of reforming the underlying problems of inequity, distributive justice equality etc., that may be existing in that particular context.

And third and finally – or fourth, that is – and this really is my last point, and then we all can go and get a drink; I think some of the stronger claims of the theory, particularly in terms of compliance – you know, the idea that procedural justice generates legitimacy, and legitimacy generates compliance, or motivates compliance with the law – are really rather poorly evidenced.

And again, going back to some of the stuff around drug policy, I think there’s real potential for over claiming from within the paradigm about what it can do, and the kind of returns it might generate for police organisations and society as a whole; and scepticism from without as it fails to deliver the goods, in terms of compliance with the law in some of these big things that we think procedural justice can do.

So just a small list of things there, if you could concentrate on with all the others, in the next coming years. That’s all I wanted to say. Thank you very much for inviting me. It has been a pleasure to talk.

[Applause]

Stewart Motha:

Okay. Well, we are out of time, but we did start a little bit later. So with your indulgence, I’ll take one round of questions and comments. There are some roving mics, and then of course you can make your way to the reception in the lobby.

If there are any urgent questions or comments... Great.

Audience:

Hi Mike, how are you doing?

Mike Hough:

That's a good question...

Audience:

I was interested in your... When you talked about pathways to impact, and you talked about impact with policy makers – you also talked about the media. And I just wondered how seriously – you said you spent a lot of time cultivating it – how seriously you took that? Did it bear fruit? Was it worth it? I have a personal reason for asking.

Stewart Motha:

Okay, if you just hold the answer to that. Are there any other comments or questions, so that we can take a round, and then close with that... Okay, over to you Mike.

Mike Hough:

I think it did make a difference, because it gave me some visibility in the eyes of policy people, and senior cops and so on, which gave them the possibly misguided impression that I should be taken seriously.

I... What happened was when I left the Home Office, as a sort of middle-ish researcher, people were very impressed by headlines that, 'Ex-Home Office Researcher Says...' Which put me in touch with a lot of journalists. So I kept that going. So I did get quite a lot of media coverage, which I think did help build credibility – however spurious or not. So I think it's worth it.

Stewart Motha:

Right, great. Well, firstly let me thank the panellists for their wonderful contributions, celebrating Mike's work.

And finally, from the School of Law – although probably not very finally, because you're going to continue to do your work – I want to thank you on behalf of the school for the inspirational work.

As I was saying, alluding to earlier in the introduction, we live in a time in which public discourse that is supported by evidence and facts is seriously under threat; and you've spent a life and career building precisely the opposite of that. So we've got very strong building blocks to hold onto, and stand upon.

And finally, as an ethos to work and life, I think what you said about the distinction between the importance of compromising but not being compromised, I think is a fantastic inspiration to all of us. So thank you very much Mike.

[Applause]

END AUDIO