

Youth Crime and Justice: Statistical 'Evidence', Recent Trends and Responses

5**Tim Bateman**

Introduction

Perhaps the most common characterisation of contemporary youth justice reforms (particularly in England and Wales), especially by those who have engineered them, is that they are 'evidence led'. Frequently, statistical information is presented as hard incontrovertible 'fact' to back such claims, implying thereby that any commentator who has reservations about the trajectory of current youth justice policy is irrational, or politically motivated. But it is not so clear that the data point unambiguously to the conclusions drawn (principally that youth crime is becoming more serious and more widespread), nor is it obvious that recent trends justify the forms of response around which policy has been, and is being, shaped (primarily increasing modes of intervention and ultimately penal expansion).

The current chapter questions whether statistics can be relied upon to provide an objective account of youth crime, while acknowledging that certain trends may be discernible in the data. It seeks to argue that statistical information might reveal as much about the way that the youth justice system has changed in its treatment of young people who offend as it does about the behaviour of the children themselves. In exploring these themes, claims that the 'new youth justice' (Goldson, 2000) rests upon firm statistical foundations will be subjected to critical scrutiny.

Telling the same story different ways

There is no shortage of data on crime in England and Wales. Criminal statistics are collated regularly and allow analyses at some considerable level of detail. These are supplemented by large-scale victimisation surveys and studies of self-reported offending. Any analysis of recent trends in youth justice has, therefore, plenty of statistical information on which to draw, but there is a problem of interpretation. The data do not in themselves tell an unambiguous story; they can be read in various ways.

In January 2005, on the publication of the quarterly update of crime statistics, to September 2004, the accompanying Home Office press release trumpeted that crime was continuing to fall. The text gave prominence to the claim that violent offending had reduced by 9 per cent over the previous year, and had fallen 36 per cent since its peak in 1995 (Home Office, 2005a). The *Independent* newspaper, however, had a different take, headlining a 'leap in violent crime and gun offences', and noting that, during the relevant quarter, there were 306,200 offences of violence compared with 289,800 over the same period in the previous year (Barrett and Dean, 2005). Meanwhile, *The Guardian* newspaper, perhaps characteristically, took something of an intermediate position, noting that 'violent offences rise, but overall crime is down' (*The Guardian*, 2005).

Such inconsistencies are readily explained. The statistical bulletin, upon which each newspaper account is based, contains two sources of data that point in different directions: offences reported to, and recorded by, the police on the one hand; and victimisation data from the British Crime Survey, based on self-reported experiences of crime, on the other (Allen et al., 2005). The diverse forms of interpretation which the data-sets invoke are not without political and social significance. Thus, prior to the re-election of the New Labour government in May 2005, Michael Howard, then leader of the Opposition, was able to point to police figures showing an increase in crime of 850,000 under Tony Blair's last administration. In turn, the prime minister, drawing on results from the British Crime Survey, asserted a 25 per cent reduction in offending over the same period (Garside, 2004).

The potential to mislead

Explaining how it is possible to use different strands of statistical information to create divergent interpretations is an important matter. In itself, however, this fails to illuminate the 'truth' or actual reality. Indeed, it is not immediately apparent how competing readings of the data might be reconciled and, as one commentator has pointed out, the 'true facts' about youth crime are unknowable in principle (Muncie, 2001; 2002). There are at least five distinct, but inter-related, difficulties.

First, what constitutes an offence varies over time and place. The age of criminal responsibility, for instance, imposes a relatively arbitrary limit on the extent

of youth crime: whereas in Scandinavian countries, anyone below the age of 15 years is deemed incapable of committing an offence, in England and Wales a child is held criminally responsible from the age of ten. Until 1998, it was presumed that a child under 14 years of age was incapable of differentiating between right and wrong sufficiently to justify criminal proceedings unless the prosecution was able to adduce evidence to the contrary. This presumption of *doli incapax* was removed by the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, ensuring that large numbers of children aged 10–13 years, who would not previously have received a formal disposal, were exposed to the full rigours of the criminal law (Bandalli, 2000). The inevitable result was to inflate the numbers appearing in the official statistics.

Second, police-recorded crime invariably gives a partial account of offending since, for a variety of reasons, around half of criminal incidents are never reported. Many, for instance, are not brought to police attention because they are considered insufficiently serious, or there is no loss involved (Salisbury, 2003). Conversely, any expansion in private insurance cover has the potential to inflate the number of minor matters that make their way into police statistics, since making a claim is dependent on reporting the offence. By the same token, crimes against those who lack the means to insure their property are likely to be relatively under-represented in sources of official data.

Third, large numbers of offences are committed which either have no obvious direct victim – for instance, possession of cannabis – or never come to the victim's attention – such as thefts from the workplace. Such 'victimless' incidents tend to be bypassed by both police data and the British Crime Survey. Indeed, the direct experience of victimisation is central to what features on the statistical radar. For this reason, official data are likely to understate considerably the volume of white-collar and corporate offences, transgressions which, by their nature, are predominantly committed by professional adults, the wealthy and the powerful, rather than by (predominantly poor, working-class) children.

Fourth, it is obviously impossible to attribute responsibility if no offender is apprehended. 'Clear-up rates' have tended to fall since the 1980s and now stand at just below one in four (23.4 per cent) (Thomas and Feist, 2004). This 'justice gap', between recorded crime and that which results in a substantive disposal, initiates considerable conjecture with regard to the proportion of unsolved offences (75 per cent of the total of all reported and recorded crime) that can reasonably be attributed to young people.

Finally, matters are complicated by the fact that fluctuations in criminal statistics may have little to do with shifts in children's criminality but derive instead from changes in legislation, policy or professional practice. For example, the replacement of cautioning by the final warning scheme in England and Wales, following the implementation of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, rigidly limited police decision-making discretion following the arrest of a suspect under 18 years of age (Pragnell, 2005). The effect was to expand the use of

formal measures to deal with matters which would otherwise have met with an informal response, previously estimated to account for around 10 per cent of all cases involving young people (Audit Commission, 1996). The reform accordingly had an inbuilt tendency to inflate recorded youth crime while at the same time increasing the proportion of children prosecuted for relatively minor offending (Bateman, 2003).

From statistical analysis to youth justice reform

Such difficulties in interpreting the data are not simply limited to abstract theoretical interest. Statistical analysis can promote responses that impinge on children who break the law in a direct fashion. They have material effects. Youth crime has become increasingly politicised, giving rise to a justice system which is arguably ever more punitive in its dealings with children who offend and demonstrates a reduced tolerance for such young people in comparison to adults (Goldson, 2002a). Accordingly, the potential deployment of criminal statistics to support different political agendas is a matter of considerable concern to anybody with an interest in a just, rational and effective youth justice system.

More concretely, the recommendations of the Audit Commission's (1996) influential *Misspent Youth* report, largely credited with providing the blueprint for New Labour's post-1997 youth justice reforms, relied heavily on a particular reading of statistical trends. The report argued that data suggesting a substantial reduction in youth crime since the early 1980s were not persuasive. That conclusion, complemented by a political stance that implied that much youth offending was routinely and unjustifiably minimised, was employed by the incoming Labour government to affirm that there would be *No More Excuses* (Home Office, 1997). Significant change, in the shape of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and a swathe of subsequent legislation, followed. Alongside some more welcome reforms (such as the establishment of multi-agency youth offending teams more generously resourced than the services that they replaced), sat other less palatable developments. Forthwith, even a minor infraction of the law, if committed by a child, was to elicit a criminal justice intervention.

As the logic of the interventionist impulse plays out, the limits of the youth justice system have become increasingly blurred. Low-level disorder has become conflated with crime, evidenced by a near obsession with attending to anti-social behaviour, and the development of enforcement measures that target young people disproportionately. Preventive work with children deemed to be 'at risk', who by dint of age or lack of adjudicated offending would previously have been regarded as beyond the purview of criminal justice responses, has become an area of rapid growth. This, despite limited evidence to support such an approach (Armstrong, 2004), and in the face of well-articulated concerns about the 'likely impact of such an early induction into the criminal justice system on the self-perceptions, and subsequent conduct of the children identified' (Pitts, 2005: 9).

The importance of critical engagement with official statistics becomes clear. Making the data useful depends upon asking the right questions, however. Owing to their intrinsic limitations, the data cannot provide an accurate picture of the *volume* of youth crime. Providing that judicious caution is exercised, and proper account is taken of supplementary contextual information, however, it may nonetheless be possible to draw reasonable conclusions about youth crime *trends* in cases where different data-sets point in a consistent direction or, alternatively, inconsistencies in such sets can be analytically explained. Finally, to limit the focus to the behaviour of young people would itself be a mistake, because the statistics are also vulnerable to the impact of systemic change. Any comprehensive account of what youth crime statistics reveal, therefore, will of necessity need to look beyond youth offending itself, to the nature of policy responses and state interventions into the lives of children who transgress the law.

Unwarranted conclusions and consequences

The extent of youth crime

In January 2005, the Home Office published the first results from a new official source, the Crime and Justice Survey, including what proved to be some headline grabbing figures on self-reported offending by young people (Budd et al., 2005). The survey revealed that almost a third of males aged 10–17 years in England and Wales admitted having committed an offence within the past year. According to *The Guardian*, the report 'branded' one in four teenage boys 'a serious offender' (Travis, 2005). It is not difficult to see how such figures, cited out of context, can contribute to a widespread public perception that offending by children is out of control, which in turn requires, and justifies, a tough response (Goldson, 2002b). But a more careful reading of the same statistics, considered contextually, leads to substantially more measured conclusions. In fact, just 17 per cent of boys aged 10–17 years were classified as having committed a serious offence within the past 12 months. The figure in *The Guardian* headline applied to those defined as serious or prolific offenders. The criterion used to demarcate serious criminality also merits attention. A serious offence, for these purposes, means any theft of vehicle, burglary (domestic or commercial), robbery, theft from person, assault resulting in injury (however minor), or selling Class A drugs (whatever the amount, and within a context of most sales being made between friends). While teenage involvement in such activities is no doubt a concern, many of the incidents captured by this measure would almost certainly not correspond to the public's general conception of 'serious'.

Assault occasioning injury, for instance, accounted for the majority of self-reported offences falling within this category of 'seriousness'. Considering that over 10 per cent of boys and girls aged 12–13 years, and 16 per cent of 14–15-year-olds, admitted being responsible for such assaults in the past year, playground fights leading to grazed knees, or bruised arms, are likely to feature

highly. Conversely, less than 1 per cent of those under the age of 18 years admitted burglary, robbery or selling Class A drugs, arguably the more genuinely serious of the qualifying offences (although even these cases can include relatively minor infractions).

Perhaps more importantly, findings of high levels of offending are not new. They certainly do nothing to support the contention that youth offending is significantly worse than it has been in the past, or that the youth justice system, prior to 1997, was 'excusing' young people's offending. Pearson's (1983) classic study has shown conclusively that while each generation looks back to a 'golden era' in which young people were less lawless, all attempts to find such a past have proved fruitless. New Labour's reforms of youth justice might reasonably be read as an attempt to reconnect with an earlier period of time (however illusory) within which most young people learned 'respect' and those who broke the law were held to be fully responsible for their actions. But while such a position may yield electoral benefits, it has less justification within a context of 'hard evidence'.

The prevalence of offending revealed in the Crime and Justice survey is similar to, or in some cases lower than, that found in previous self-report studies. Thus Budd et al. (2005: 69) conclude that the 'stability in the offending levels ... might point, then, to a picture of little change in offending by young people'. Similarly, while there are genuine difficulties of comparison over time – statistics are not broken down in the same way – surveys from the 1970s suggest that high levels of self-reported offending by young people are remarkably enduring, and may have been higher in the past. Belson's (1975) survey of schoolboys, for instance, recorded that 70 per cent admitted ever having stolen from a shop, compared with an equivalent figure of 57 per cent for total offending – albeit for both boys and girls aged 14–15 years – in the Crime and Justice survey (Budd et al., 2005).

Self-report surveys do not appear to provide any evidence that youth offending was rising throughout the 1990s and recorded crime figures show a significant, and sustained, decline in children entering the criminal justice system for a period extending over two decades. Between 1980–1990, the number of children aged 10–16 years cautioned or convicted for an indictable offence fell from 175,700 to 110,800 (Rutherford, 1992). The implementation of the Criminal Justice Act 1991 extended the jurisdiction of the youth court (from children aged 10–16 inclusive to those aged 10–17 inclusive) and this makes direct comparisons with the earlier period difficult. Nonetheless, the apparent fall in youth crime continued unabated from 1992 onwards. Ironically, by 1996, when the damning assessment contained in the Audit Commission's *Misspent Youth* report was published, detected youth crime was almost 14 per cent lower than it had been four years earlier. The decline continued at a similar rate up to, and beyond, implementation of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Nacro, 2005a).

As noted above, the Audit Commission (1996) was not persuaded by such data, arguing that the figures might be explained in ways that do not necessarily imply

a fall in youth offending. One disputed issue relates to demography. The number of young people aged 10–17 in the overall population has fallen, and a reduction in youth crime might accordingly be anticipated. But from the mid-1980s onwards, detected indictable offences per 100,000 of the population in the relevant age group also fell in line with the decline in absolute numbers (Barclay and Turner, 1991). The Audit Commission was able to argue a contrary position only by assuming that young people acquitted by the courts can legitimately be counted as 'offenders' (Jones, 2001).

As signalled earlier, a second critical question concerns the proportion of offences not reported to the police – or those recorded but undetected – that can reasonably be attributed to young people. The Audit Commission (1996) assumed that if one in four *known* offenders is below the age of 18 years, young people can be considered responsible for a quarter of *all* offending. It followed that, since both the British Crime Survey and police data indicated that overall offending was higher in 1996 than in 1981, youth crime must have risen. Denis Jones (2001), however, in his perceptive critique, provides three convincing arguments for rejecting that assumption. First, the attrition rate (from undetected crime to detected crime) is unlikely to be the same for adults and children since children's offending 'is less sophisticated, less pre-meditated and more liable to detection' (Jones, 2001: 365). Second, there are significant differences in the pattern of adult and youth crime. Children are less likely to commit offences such as fraudulent use of credit cards, theft from employer, and a range of more serious crimes involving firearms, blackmail and murder. They cannot legitimately be considered responsible for a quarter of such incidents. Third, the statistics for detected offending are distorted in ways that ensure young people are over-represented. Policing and the nature of youth crime combine to generate higher arrest rates for children: youth offending is frequently more visible because it tends to occur in public places rather than, for instance, the home or the office; at the same time, police stop and search powers are disproportionately targeted at young people, particularly black youth or those living in areas marked by deprivation and poverty (Goldson and Chigwada-Bailey, 1999).

There are positive reasons too to take seriously the fall in youth offending, evidenced by data on detected crime. Other measures are broadly consistent with such a trend, at least during the 1990s. Police-recorded crime fell every year between 1992 and 1999; moreover, the Home Office attributes subsequent increases to changes in the counting rules and the adoption of more consistent recording practices under the National Crime Recording Standard. The British Crime Survey, which had registered an increase in victimisation up to 1995, also shows sharp reductions in the period since. On this measure, the risk of being a victim is currently at the lowest level since the survey began in 1981 (Finney and Toofail, 2004). Changes in the extent of youth crime cannot, we must conclude, provide an evidential rationale for a more interventionist, or authoritarian, response from the youth justice system.

Growing out of crime

One of the political criticisms levelled at youth justice practice, prior to the post-1997 reforms, was its adherence to the concept that, since juvenile offending was a relatively common feature of adolescence rather than the result of 'individual pathology', the large majority of those committing offences would, if left to their own devices, 'grow out of crime', as part of the maturation process (Rutherford, 1992). The New Labour White Paper *No More Excuses* (Home Office, 1997: Preface) bluntly stated that: 'the research evidence shows that this does not happen'. With this assertion, the government again followed the Audit Commission lead. The *Misspent Youth* report (1996) presented two contra-indicators to the 'growing out of crime' thesis. First, it argued that the known rate of offending by young adult males had risen significantly. Second, it contended that the peak age of known offending by males had increased from '15 years in 1986 to 18 years in 1994' (Audit Commission, 1996: 12). No evidence was offered of a rise in young adult offending, and the claim derives little backing from official data. Between 1984 and 1991, known offending for males aged 17–20 years fell from 119,700 to 111,100 (Home Office, 1987; 1993). The equivalent figures for 18–20-year-olds for 1992 (following the removal of 17-year-olds to the jurisdiction of the youth court) and 1996 (the year of the Audit Commission's report) were 82,700 and 70,500 respectively (Home Office, 1994; 2000).

Similarly, the recorded rise in the peak age of offending for males was not indicative of a gradual process over the period in question, as the Audit Commission account implied. It had already risen to 18 years by 1988 (Barclay and Turner, 1991) and has remained stable in every subsequent year to 2003, with one single exception in 2002 when the peak age fluctuated to 19 years (Nacro, 2005a). Furthermore, a rise in the age at which the occurrence of offending is highest does not necessarily entail a failure to 'grow out of crime'. It is equally compatible with a relative fall in offending by children and young people. Given the reduction in detected youth crime during the 1980s this is indeed a plausible explanation. More concretely, significant decreases in offences of theft and handling stolen goods, offences disproportionately associated with younger children, combined with a relative stability in violent crimes – more prevalent among older teenagers – would be expected to lead to a rise in the peak age for all offences. That is precisely what happened in the mid-1980s (Barclay and Turner, 1991).

Indeed, evidence for the continued relevance of the maturation thesis remains persuasive: most young people will, if given the opportunity to 'survive adolescence without a major sacrifice in life chances' (Zimring, 1978), develop into more-or-less law-abiding adults. The Youth Lifestyles Survey (Flood-Page et al., 2000) confirms that from the age of 18 years, self-reported offending begins to decline, and the fall is both sharper and earlier for violent offences, which appear to be particularly age dependent. The prevalence of property crime remains relatively constant until the late 20s, but there is an important shift in

the nature of such offending: shoplifting and handling stolen goods fall, while workplace fraud and theft increase as young adults enter the labour market. If the latter two offence types are excluded, Flood-Page et al. (2000) confirm that boys do 'grow out of crime' as they make the transition to adulthood. The Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions and Crime, a longitudinal study of 4,300 children who started secondary school in 1998, draws similar conclusions, though more boldly stated, and with an important caveat:

much youth offending should be treated as natural and normal, and will fade as young people grow into adulthood, provided that there is no drastic response to the offending that is seriously damaging to the teenager. This applies equally to girls and boys. (Smith and McAra, 2004: 21)

The creation of a 'new youth justice' (particularly in England and Wales) was predicated on an assumption that increasing youth lawlessness and a failure to mature out of offending necessitated a radical cultural shift. Criminal behaviour was not to be 'excused' and any child caught offending should expect a formal criminal justice sanction. Early intervention was not, moreover, to be restricted to those who offend and the reach of the youth justice system would extend to children below the age of criminal responsibility and those whose behaviour fell short of adjudicated offending (Goldson, 2005). The argument thus far is that the statistical evidence supposedly underpinning such reform is weak. But the problem goes further than this. It may also be the case, as some have argued, that erroneous and/or distorted readings of crime statistics have served to legitimise drastic responses to young people who offend, of the type that Smith and McAra caution against, and that such interventions are, in themselves, seriously damaging and disfiguring of the maturational process.

Statistical evidence of damaging responses

The punitive turn, alluded to earlier in this chapter, had its roots in the early 1990s, predating New Labour's post-1997 youth justice reforms. Thus the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 reinforced pre-existing policy trends rather than marking a sharp departure from the immediate past. While criminal statistics may have provided no legitimate *basis* for the development of an increasingly authoritarian climate, the material *effects* of that shift are clearly visible in the data. Two features, an increase in the rate of prosecution and a rise in the use of custody, are characteristic of the treatment of all children in trouble in recent years – though they have manifested themselves most acutely in the way that girls are processed through the youth justice system (Gelsthorpe, 2005).

The rate of diversion from court – the proportion of convictions, cautions, reprimands and warnings that result in a pre-court disposal – declined from 73.5 to 55.9 per cent between 1992 and 2003, leading to a consequent proportionate

increase in prosecution (Nacro, 2005a). At the opposite end of the system, deprivation of liberty is increasingly common, with black and minority ethnic children hit particularly hard (Kalunta-Crompton, 2005). Between 1992 and 2003, the number of custodial sentences rose by 55 per cent and the growth would have been much sharper but for a significant fall in the latter year (Nacro, 2005a). On one estimate, and whilst acknowledging that there are difficulties of comparison (Muncie and Goldson, 2006), the level of custody in England and Wales is, relative to the 10–17-years-old population, four times higher than that in France, 10 times higher than that in Spain and 100 times higher than that in Finland (Nacro, 2003a). The growth in the numbers of children locked up is almost entirely due to harsher treatment, rather than changes in the pattern of youth offending and youth crime. For instance, not only are theft and handling stolen goods increasingly more likely to attract a custodial outcome, but the average length of sentence has also risen from 3.9 months in 1993 to 6.1 months in 2003. The equivalent sentence lengths for burglary are 4 and 7.8 months respectively (Home Office, 2005b).

The deleterious effects of custody on the lives of already disadvantaged, and frequently vulnerable, children are well documented (Nacro, 2003b), but two sets of statistics from official sources stand out. The first indicates that attention to evidence would dictate a reduction rather than an increase in the use of detention: 82 per cent of boys released from young offender institutions in 2001 were reconvicted within two years of release. For those with between 3–6 previous convictions, the figure rose to 92 per cent (Home Office, 2004a). The second confirms that penal custody constitutes a 'seriously damaging' response. During 2002, there were 460 recorded incidents of children self-harming in young offender institutions (National Audit Office, 2004). No doubt many lesser incidents go unreported.

Few would doubt the harmful effects of custody, but it is important to acknowledge evidence that prosecution too is harmful. Johnson et al. (2004) have recently reported that formal involvement in the criminal justice system is correlated with increased delinquency, which in turn has negative consequences for children's subsequent life chances. In Northamptonshire, practice has, to date, resisted a rigid application of the final warning scheme's 'three strikes' model, inserting an additional layer of 'informal action' into the pre-court process, on the basis of research findings that prosecution should be delayed beyond the fourth proceedings if it is not to exacerbate the risk of reoffending (Kemp et al., 2002).

Acting on the available evidence then, would imply a set of policy responses serving to expand the practice of diversion and limit the imposition of custodial sanctions. Furthermore, there are additional grounds for developing such an approach. Recent analysis has illuminated an inverse correlation between the rate of diversion and the use of custody (Bateman, 2005; Nacro, 2005b). A clear historical pattern emerges from the statistical data. During the 1980s, the proportion of cases resulting in a caution rose from 44 to 75 per cent, leading to a

significant fall in court throughput (Rutherford, 1992). An increase in the *rate* of custody might have been expected as a growing proportion of relatively trivial offences were filtered out at the pre-court stage. In the event, custody as a proportion of convictions remained remarkably stable, leading to a fall in the *absolute number* of custodial disposals in line with the drop in the court population. The 1990s provided a mirror image of that pattern: a decline in the rate of diversion led to an influx of less serious offences into the court arena, generating an overall rise in convictions, despite the fall in known offending. Once again, the *rate* of custody remained relatively stable even though the courts were dealing with a growing proportion of trivial cases. The inevitable result was that, as the pool of children sentenced in court has expanded, so too have the numbers of children consigned to penal institutions.

Why this pattern should obtain is not immediately obvious, but it seems likely that the psychological impact of increases in the court population, particularly against the backdrop of heightened media and political sensitivity to youth offending, is to suggest that youth crime is spiralling upward, and that tough measures are required to combat it. At the same time, early entry to the court system generates a longer 'criminal history' leading to an accelerated, upward, trajectory along the sentencing 'tariff'. Whatever the mechanism, the statistical evidence supports the conclusion that 'the demise of diversion has in effect been a consequence of, but has also contributed to, the punitive environment in which decisions to deprive children of their liberty are taken' (Nacro, 2005b: 29). This finding has a particular contemporary significance. In consulting over what steps youth justice should take in the coming period, the government has signalled its desire to curb the use of custody for young people in England and Wales, but at the same time it has reiterated a commitment to the final warning scheme, in its current, rigid, configuration (Home Office, 2004b). An evidence-led policy would suggest that the two strategies may not be compatible.

Conclusion

Criminal statistics cannot provide a 'true' picture of young people's offending, but to completely disregard their significance on that basis would be unwise. Asking the right questions, while recognising the limitations of the data, has the potential to generate an important body of knowledge with which to inform youth justice policy. In subjecting the data to critical scrutiny, serious questions emerge relating to the legitimacy of the more interventionist and expansionist elements of contemporary youth justice reform. At the same time, such reforms have served to reinforce aspects of a 'new punitiveness' (Goldson, 2002b), and, in so doing, may also have encouraged seriously damaging responses to children in trouble. The statistical evidence suggests that New Labour's 'evidence-driven' youth justice may actually exacerbate the problems of youth crime that it purports to positively address.

References

- Allen, J., Dodd, T. and Salisbury, H. (2005) *Crime in England and Wales: Quarterly Update to September 2004*, Statistical bulletin 03/05. London: Home Office.
- Armstrong, D. (2004) 'A Risky Business? Research, Policy, Governmentality and Youth Offending', *Youth Justice*, 4(2): 100–16.
- Audit Commission (1996) *Misspent Youth: Young People and Crime*. London: Audit Commission.
- Bandalli, S. (2000) 'Children, Responsibility and the New Youth Justice,' in B. Goldson (ed.) *The New Youth Justice*. Lyme Regis: Russell House Publishing.
- Barclay, G. and Turner, D. (1991) 'Recent Trends in Official Statistics on Juvenile Offending in England and Wales', in T. Booth (ed.) *Juvenile Justice in the New Europe*. Sheffield: Joint Unit for Social Services Research.
- Barrett, D. and Dean, N. (2005) 'Leap in Violent Crime and Gun Offences', *The Independent*, 25 January.
- Bateman, T. (2003) 'Living with Final Warnings: Making the Best of a Bad Job?', *Youth Justice*, 2(3): 131–40.
- Bateman, T. (2005) 'Reducing Child Imprisonment: A Systemic Challenge', *Youth Justice*, 5(2): 91–105.
- Belson, W. (1975) *Juvenile Theft: The Causal Factors*. London: Harper and Row.
- Budd, T., Sharp, C. and Mayhew, P. (2005) *Offending in England and Wales: First Results from the 2003 Crime and Justice Survey*. Research Study 275. London: Home Office.
- Finney, A. and Toofail, J. (2004) 'Levels and Trends,' in T. Dodd, S. Nicholas, D. Povey and A. Walker (eds) *Crime in England and Wales 2003/2004*. Statistical Bulletin 10/04. London: Home Office.
- Flood-Page, C., Campbell, S., Harrington, V. and Miller, J. (2000) *Youth Crime: Findings from the 1998/1999 Youth Lifestyles Survey*. Research Study 209. London: Home Office.
- Garside, R. (2004) *Crime, Persistent Offenders and the Justice Gap*. London: Crime and Society Foundation.
- Gelsthorpe, L. (2005) 'Girls in the Youth Justice System', in T. Bateman and J. Pitts (eds) *The RHP Companion to Youth Justice*. Lyme Regis: Russell House Publishing.
- Goldson, B. (2000) *The New Youth Justice*. Lyme Regis: Russell House Publishing.
- Goldson, B. (2002a) 'New Labour, Social Justice and Children: Political Calculation and the Deserving–Undeserving Schism'. *British Journal of Social Work*, 32 (September).
- Goldson, B. (2002b) 'New Punitiveness; the Politics of Child Incarceration', in J. Muncie, G. Hughes and E. McLaughlin (eds) *Youth Justice: Critical Readings*. London: Sage.
- Goldson, B. (2005) 'Taking Liberties: Policy and the Punitive Turn', in H. Hendrick (ed.) *Child Welfare and Social Policy*. Bristol: The Policy Press.
- Goldson, B. and Chigwada-Bailey, R. (1999) '(What) Justice for Black Children and Young People?', in B. Goldson (ed.) *Youth Justice: Contemporary Policy and Practice*, Aldershot: Ashgate.
- Guardian*, The (2005) 'Violent Offences Rise but Overall Crime is Down', 25 January.
- Home Office (1987) *Criminal Statistics for England and Wales 1986*. London: HMSO.
- Home Office (1993) *Criminal Statistics for England and Wales 1992*. London: HMSO.
- Home Office (1994) *Criminal Statistics for England and Wales 1993*. London: HMSO.
- Home Office (1997) *No More Excuses: A New Approach to Tackling Youth Crime in England and Wales*. London: The Stationery Office.

- Home Office (2000) *Criminal Statistics for England and Wales 1998*. London: The Stationery Office.
- Home Office (2004a) *Offender Management Caseload Statistics 2003*. Statistical Bulletin 15/04. London: Home Office.
- Home Office (2004b) *Youth Justice – the Next Steps: Summary of Responses and the Government's Proposals*. London: Home Office.
- Home Office (2005a) *Crime Continues to Fall*. Press release 015/2005. London: Home Office.
- Home Office (2005b) *Sentencing Statistics 2003 England and Wales*. Statistical Bulletin 05/05. London: Home Office.
- Johnson, L., Simons, R. and Conger, R. (2004) 'Criminal Justice Involvement and the Continuity of Youth Crime', *Youth and Society*, 36(1): 3–29.
- Jones, D. (2001) 'Misjudged Youth: a Critique of the Audit Commission's Reports on Youth Justice', *British Journal of Criminology*, 41: 362–80.
- Kalunta-Crumpton, A. (2005) 'Race, Crime and Youth Justice,' in T. Bateman and J. Pitts (eds) *The RHP Companion to Youth Justice*. Lyme Regis: Russell House Publishing.
- Muncie, J. (2001) 'The Construction and Deconstruction of Crime', in J. Muncie and E. McLaughlin (eds) *The Problem of Crime*. (2nd edn) London: Sage.
- Muncie, J. (2002) 'Official Crime Statistics: Next to Useless?', *Safer Society*, 11 (Winter 2001/2002).
- Muncie, J. and Goldson, B. (eds) (2006) *Comparative Youth Justice*. London: Sage.
- Nacro (2003a) *A Failure of Justice: Reducing Child Imprisonment*. London: Nacro.
- Nacro (2003b) *Counting the Cost: Reducing Child Imprisonment*. London: Nacro.
- Nacro (2005a) *Some Facts about Young People who Offend – 2003*. Youth crime briefing. London: Nacro.
- Nacro (2005b) *A Better Alternative: Reducing Child Imprisonment*. London: Nacro.
- National Audit Office (2004) *Youth Offending: The Delivery of Community and Custodial Sentencing*. London: The Stationery Office.
- Pearson, G. (1983) *Hooligan: A History of Respectable Fears*. Southampton: Macmillan.
- Pitts, J. (2005) 'The Recent History of Youth Justice in England and Wales', in T. Bateman and J. Pitts (eds) *The RHP Companion to Youth Justice*. Lyme Regis: Russell House Publishing.
- Pragnall, S. (2005) 'Reprimands and Final Warnings', in T. Bateman and J. Pitts (eds) *The RHP Companion to Youth Justice*. Lyme Regis: Russell House Publishing.
- Rutherford, A. (1992) *Growing Out of Crime: The New Era*. Winchester: Waterside Press.
- Salisbury, H. (2003) 'Trends in Crime', in J. Simmons and T. Dodd (eds) *Crime in England and Wales 2002/2003*, Statistical Bulletin 07/03. London: Home Office.
- Smith, D. and McAra, L. (2004) *Gender and Youth Offending*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh Press.
- Thomas, N. and Feist, A. (2004) 'Detection of Crime,' in T. Dodd, S. Nicholas, D. Povey and A. Walker (eds) *Crime in England and Wales 2003/2004*, Statistical Bulletin 10/04. London: Home Office.
- Travis, A. (2005), 'One in Four Teenage Boys Branded a Serious Offender', *The Guardian*, 26 January.
- Zimring, F. (1978) *Confronting Youth Crime*. New York: Holmes and Meier.