#100 (JERRY RATCLIFFE)

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Shelley Hyland:

Reducing Crime features conversations with influential thinkers in the police service and leading crime and policing researchers.

Jerry Ratcliffe is a professor of practice at the University of Pennsylvania where he is the faculty director of the Master of Applied Criminology and Police Leadership Program. He is also a scientific advisor to the International Association of Chiefs of Police. In this, the hundredth episode of Reducing Crime, he answers questions from listeners of the podcast.

Shelley Hyland:

This is Reducing Crime, and I'm Shelly Hyland, standing in as host for Jerry Ratcliffe. The reason I've stepped behind the microphone is that we thought for the hundredth episode, it would be fun to turn it around and throw questions at Jerry for a change. I should warn you that I haven't interviewed anyone since my grandmother for a high school history project, so I apologize in advance if this episode deviates from the normal Reducing Crime cadence.

Jerry's career began with London's Metropolitan Police, where he started on H District in the East End of London before moving to the Diplomatic Protection Group in the heart of the city. In 1995, he suffered an ice climbing accident while in the Scottish Highlands, and that curtailed his policing career after 11 years' service. Subsequently, armed with a PhD from the University of Nottingham, he coordinated Australia's national strategic intelligence course for several years before moving to Philadelphia full-time 25 years ago. He is now the faculty director of the Master's in Applied Criminology and Police Leadership at the University of Pennsylvania, the first dedicated policing degree at an Ivy League university. He has published extensively with numerous books and over a hundred scholarly articles.

Across various social media and outreach to friends, we inquired what you would ask of him. And so we sat down at our little weekend cabin to go through a few of your many questions...

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Well, this is exciting, isn't it?

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Shelley Hyland:

Definitely different to be on the other side here.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Well, for me as well, I feel I'm a much better host than I am answering questions.

Shelley Hyland:

We'll see. What else are we going to do on our lazy Sunday afternoons as we sit out here overlooking the water, drinking our coffee?

Jerry Ratcliffe:

All right, that's just being a bit flash, isn't it? Come on. #FirstWorldProblems.

Shelley Hyland:

So we got a lot of questions. People are very curious about your thoughts.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Oh God, this is terrifying. All right then. Let's dive on in.

Shelley Hyland:

Okay. So since this is the hundredth episode -

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Nine years in, still here.

Shelley Hyland:

Nine years.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

This is the start of the ninth year now.

Shelley Hyland:

Holy cow. Okay. Then how would you describe how the landscape has changed in policing since you started the podcast?

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Oh, bloody hell. Let's go back nine years. It's funny looking back on it now. We were all rather concerned with where policing was going post-Ferguson. Had no idea that George Floyd was coming around the corner and man, that just changed things. It's like it was Ferguson with steroids.

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And I think it obviously had a drastic effect on a multitude of things. I mean, with George Floyd, we'll take Philadelphia for example, because it's the place I know best. After Ferguson, we saw the election of a more progressive district attorney in Philadelphia and a recent paper a year or two ago by Tom Hogan argued quantitatively that the introduction of very progressive prosecution and some of the changes made to what cases were accepted for prosecution and what cases were not accepted for prosecution changed Philadelphia such that they were associated with an increase of about 75 homicides a year, which is pretty drastic. But then George Floyd came along and homicides doubled in Philadelphia. So we went from a low of around 250, possibly slightly less to more than 500 for 2020, 2021. It was pretty drastic.

Shelley Hyland:

Doubled.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Oh yeah, terrible. So the landscape of policing has seen a massive pendulum shift over the time of the podcast, and now it's coming back a little bit more because people are realizing that policing is really important. And rather than the nonsense of abolishing policing, which we heard about for a while and that seems to be going away quite rightly, we now are at the stage where we're back to thinking about how can we reform policing? How can we improve policing? How can we do incremental change to improve public safety? And I think more importantly, since the 21st century policing report, also think about improving the business of policing for police officers, which I think is really valuable.

Shelley Hyland:

Let's talk about evidence-based policing then over that time. Have you seen any changes in police departments adopting evidence-based policing? Maybe it's becoming more routinized in what police departments are doing or is it still on this glacial speed for adoption?

Jerry Ratcliffe:

I'm dying to know who came up with that question. Everything feels glacial when you're in the middle of it. If you think about evidence-based policing, it came into most people's awareness with the 1998 Police Foundation, now National Policing Institute paper by Larry Sherman. And it was accessible, it was easy to read, it was easy to understand. So we're talking about something that's been in place less than 30 years. So, considering where we are, you could argue that's a pretty good speed of adoption. Just the problem is I'm impatient. There are so many things that we don't know that could improve policing for public safety, for officer wellness, and we're still just doing stuff and not really testing and trialing it enough. The progress has been fantastic and now we're running a master's in applied criminology and police leadership at the University of Pennsylvania. It's the very first policing degree at undergraduate or graduate at an Ivy League university that is focused on evidence-based policing.

So the education sector's slowly coming around in places and I think police departments are, but yeah, I'd love to see more of it.

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Shelley Hyland:

So how do you think we can get agencies to adopt evidence-based policing in a more holistic way of doing business rather than as a piecemeal project?

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Yeah. I think it's going to take time. I remember years ago when I was in the Metropolitan Police, people saying change takes half of career, like 15 years for a 30-year career. And that may be the case. I think some changes come in awfully a lot quicker, but they're driven by crisis more than anything else. Evidence-based policing doesn't deal with a crisis. Evidence-based policing is a way to evaluate how you deal with other crises. I think it would be great to see it more centralized in things like promotion exams for selection for chief, centralized into education for the higher levels of police chiefs. It's not the core part yet. I don't think of things like SMIP. I don't think it's necessarily the core of the FBI National Academy here in the US. And I think in other countries it's really not a thing in terms of police leadership training and education.

Making inroads in those areas are going to become key. And I think it's really vital for police leaders to get on board with this because with more democratization of data, with the public more able to access information about crime and policing, external forces are going to push police to have to be more accountable for the strategies and the tactics they choose because other people are going to be able to look at it and say, "Hey, you've been doing this for six months and it doesn't look like it's worked. Why are you doing it?" And I think police leaders have to be able to answer that.

Shelley Hyland:

Going back to the training piece, if we look at basic academy training -

Jerry Ratcliffe:

I though we were about to look at the police academy movies, but all right then.

Shelley Hyland:

Well, oh man, then we have a lot of work to do. Well, let's focus on American policing.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

I've been here for a few years.

Shelley Hyland:

With the basic training that could be happening. So if you were to add one module or topic for basic training for police officers, what would it be?

Jerry Ratcliffe:

That's a good question because I was having this conversation with somebody the other day and I was skeptical of the idea of including it in basic training at all. My argument was that when people are at the police academy, the main thing

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that they're worried about is, "Do I understand the law? Am I going to deal with things correctly? Am I going to arrest people for the right things?" And I don't think they have enough bandwidth to take on something that's a bit more nuanced. The people I was chatting to were arguing the other way, that you have to start introducing it at some point, even just to give people an overview of it. And having thought about that more, I think they're right because that probably fits in with this younger generation. I mean, when I started as a police officer back in the mid 1980s, you turned up and you did as you were told, end of story.

Now it's a different generation. They're much more likely to question their, not disrespectful of authority, but they treat the notion of authority in a very different way. So they're much more likely to ask why are we doing this? What's the purpose behind this? What's going on? And that's okay. The onus is on the leaders to be able to justify that. So just a very brief overview of the subject would be worth it, yes.

Shelley Hyland:

All right. If we go back to the crux of evidence-based policing, which is the science behind the why, how much of what we commonly discuss as known has passed that scientific bar for that claim? Is there a reason the bar for what is known should be different in policing versus say other professions like the medical field?

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Interesting question. There are some things that we absolutely are really quite sure about, so we know hotspots policing works. There are things that we say cross the bar. They're not guarantees that they'll work, but the argument is the preponderance of evidence is such that if you do these things, you're much more likely to be successful than if you don't do these things or vice versa. The DARE program, for example, doesn't have any effect on drug and alcohol use. Bootcamps tend not to have any effect as well. Hotspots policing does work. Focus deterrence seems to work, but I actually think we need to also think about the policing part. There's a tendency for some people to kind of say, "Well, that worked in Philadelphia, so it would never work in Baltimore or it worked in Baltimore, so it'll never work in Wisconsin." Or that's an empirical question.

In other words, we'll try it and test it and find out. That's the way to solve that problem. It doesn't mean it's guaranteed to work every single time. You could patrol a crime hotspot in Philadelphia for 10 minutes every week. Yeah, you're not going to have any effect. So there are questions that we still have to answer around dosage. There are questions we have to answer about what officers do in those areas. Does it make a difference if you're in a vehicle or on a bicycle if you're with two officers or one officer or 10 officers, if you do more community related work in the hotspot, if you do more enforcement related activities? So I think we've got some good ideas in a very broad brush sense, but getting down to the minutia, the nuances and how it affects different populations and different dosages, that is still very much unknown.

So I think there's tons of work to be done even in the things that we kind of know work.

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Shelley Hyland:

Okay. I would follow up with, it seems to me particularly when you want to compare evidence-based policing to, let's say a medical profession, it's more of a soft science versus a hard science debate because when you're testing something in the medical field, it seems much more black white versus in the social sciences when we're talking about criminology, there's a lot of gray. So do you think we can even get to that rigor and that this works, this doesn't work that you can get with the hard sciences?

Jerry Ratcliffe:

It does feel that way, doesn't it? I think the medical field have the advantage that they have much more controlled environments and that reduces the number of variables. If you're a surgeon, you are constantly seeing patients who are fundamentally unconscious and lying on a table in front of you, there's limitations there, right? Yeah. The patient isn't swinging a fist at you or isn't high on drugs or they haven't got -

Shelley Hyland:

Maybe when they get into the hospital, but then they're able to knock them out.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Yeah. Well, the emergency room is a good example Of That. There are far more variables In The emergency room because everything's kicking off. But if you're a surgeon and you're testing out new surgery tools and you're seeing dozens of patients a day, yeah, you're not having to deal with them swinging a baseball bat at you or just when you're in the middle of something, a traffic accident happens 30 yards away from you, which is something that happened to me when I was on the street, middle of dealing with something serious. Now there's a traffic accident. Now it starts raining. We have in policing many more variables. I think that's why Neil DeGrasse Tyson once said that the social sciences are harder because human beings are nonlinear, but we can certainly continue to make progress and give, especially frontline officers and managers and leaders making decisions, continue to improve the guidance we can give them and say that none of this is guaranteed, but this is the best guess, best available evidence that we can give you and here you go.

Good luck.

Shelley Hyland:

Related to that, what is the intersection with crime science? What is crime science and what do you think the status of that is within the United States compared to the UK where it's much more ingrained in evidence-based policing that's being done over there?

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Yeah. Crime science is a catch-all term for the introduction of more scientific methodology and rigor, but also to bring more of the generalized science from criminology, crime science is a little bit more, let's focus on the crime, the crime event itself. So moving away from the motivations of the offender and going, let's just accept that people are motivated

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to commit crime if there are opportunities, let's look at the crime event itself. How can we change the opportunity structure for that crime event? The example I always like to use is turnstile jumping. If you go and speak to criminologists who are trained in the sociological, criminological thought, mainstream criminologist, they'll say the only way to prevent turnstile jumping in places like the Philadelphia subway and the New York subway is to improve education, is to reduce poverty, is to reduce unemployment. The crime science approach is let's design a better turnstile and then test to see whether that actually has the effect.

And so it doesn't worry about motivations. It just worries about how can I make the opportunity to commit crime harder?

Shelley Hyland:

What is the status of the adoption of this crime science approach in the United States and other places? Are you seeing a shift moving towards this way of thinking?

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Yeah, it's tough. I think America has this very longstanding tradition where criminology has long been thought of as a subdiscipline of sociology and so it inherits these sociological approaches. That more sociological understanding offenders kind of approach has been the mainstay of American criminology for such a long time. And so it's perpetually churning out more scholars who are trained and raised in that environment. It's had a number of rather negative effects. You see the field tends still to be dominated in the United States, especially with journal articles and papers that do these long-winded regression models, kind of look at a gazillion factors, none of which that anybody in a reasonable public policy world can have any impact on. So they're kind of interesting from an intellectual perspective, but if you're actually trying to do something about crime, it's pretty useless stuff. There's really nothing there to tap into.

I think UK has its areas of criminology I haven't got a lot of time for either, but there is at least a sort of groundswell of people going, "Let's do the practical stuff. Let's see what we can actually do. Let's test policies."

Shelley Hyland:

This is a good segue into, you got a very loaded question, which is how do you feel about the American Society of Criminology? But we're not going to go there.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

There's some very nice people there. Good people on both sides.

Shelley Hyland:

No, we're just not going to go there. What advice would you give a sworn officer who is interested in research or is a pracademic and wants to attend a conference?

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Jerry Ratcliffe:

There are reasons that you see more police folk at some conferences than others. Follow the herd. I don't recommend the American Society of Criminology conference to people. I've had quite a few people in policing go and they always come away rather disappointed. I think the American Society of Evidence-Based Policing, which we are hosting in Philadelphia at the University of Pennsylvania this coming June from the 14th to the 16th would be an absolute one to turn up to and people are very welcome to come and join us in Philadelphia. I also think ACJS is a bit more practical and you see more police officers at the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. The Problem Oriented Policing Conference is another one, which is in...

Shelley Hyland:

Austin this year.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Austin, and it's in November.

Shelley Hyland:

Correct.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Yeah. And so in the UK, you've got Evidence-Based Policing Conference, you've got a Crime Science Conference, and in Australia, they have a fantastic conference coming up in April, which is kind of the global society of evidence-based policing. So certainly the societies of evidence-based policing, crime science, ACJS, the Problem-Oriented Policing Conference. You're going to find more police practitioners there, and there's a reason for that. It's just a lot more practical, a lot more value.

Shelley Hyland:

As someone who is an excellent speaker and -

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Not that you're biased in the slightest, but thank you. Yeah.

Shelley Hyland:

I think there are many people that would concur with that opinion.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

I'm going to have to cut this fluffing out.

Shelley Hyland:

Do you have any tips on how to present complex information in a way that people can grasp and do something with?

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Jerry Ratcliffe:

Possibly one of the ways to manage that is to try and take an opportunity to teach it to people before you present it, because it does wonders to stand in front of a classroom or a few colleagues and try and explain a complex idea as simply as possible. The other thing to question is why are you trying to explain an inherently complex idea, especially if it's technical or statistical? Is that actually what the audience needs? There's a tendency, especially with academics and crime analysts can sometimes fall into this. We want to show you how hard we worked. We want to show you how clever we are and what we managed to do. A lot of the time with a practitioner audience, that's not what they need to hear. What they want to walk out of the door, "What do I need to know to be able to do my job better?" And I think if you reframe how we think about presentations away from, "This is my opportunity to show you how clever I am," to, "Here's an opportunity for you to take away something that's really practical and useful that completely reframes how you think about approaching presentations." With that in mind, complicated ideas have to be broken down, to come back to the question, actually try and answer it, have to be broken down.

I'll make an attempt at it. You can teach people complicated stuff, but it's much easier to break it down into small manageable chunks with simple signposts that guide them from one piece to another. Right now, we're leading into the ICP, Inc. Association of Chiefs of Police Conference, and we have a fantastic session coming up there, which is three hours. And in those three hours, there are six presentations an hour and we allow 15 minute breaks. So if you're presenting in that session, you've got six minutes. That is not the time to come across with complicated ideas. That's the time to come up with, here's what you need to know, why this is important, is going to help you, what big ideas and the big picture and where you want to apply this, and you're done.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Okay, let's switch topics. Roll it back.

Shelley Hyland:

I have something that's floating through my head that I'd like a question for you.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

You want to switch topic now, don't

Shelley Hyland:

You? I do. You're not obliged to ask everybody's questions.

Shelley Hyland:

No, I know that, but you mentioned a variety of evidence-based policing conferences are around the globe, and I'm trying to think back to somebody that you may have had on your podcast that has worked in three different countries, and I don't think anybody has other than you. So I think it would be interesting to hear your perspective on how you've seen evidence-based policing conducted in the three places that you've lived and worked, and that would be Australia, the UK, and the United States.

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Jerry Ratcliffe:

There are a lot of similarities, and the main problem we have with evidence-based policing is that in too many places it's surviving in the practitioner field, in policing itself on individual champions. So specific individuals who are kind of heroically going out and they're doing really fascinating individual studies. Those folk are pioneers and they are blazing a trail, and I've tried to have many of them on the podcast as guests because their work really needs to be highlighted. So that's the first stage of evidence-based policing development is definitely the sort of individual pioneer in a couple of places. Certainly the masters in police leadership, the MST at the University of Cambridge has been a central place in taking the next step, which is training a generation of police leaders who've gone back to their police departments who have done studies. That's the kind of drive that we're trying to push with the master's in applied criminology and police leadership at the University of Pennsylvania.

We're trying to create a cohort of leaders who are not threatened by the idea of doing a study. I think the last stage is just generalized adoption that this becomes normal. Yeah, as a police department, we test and try things before we implement them wholesale, but I don't think anywhere's really there, but I do think that too many places are still in the first mode, which is, "Oh yeah, we got that weird guy over there that keeps wanting to do studies and stuff and look at data." We want to rescue those people, bring them to stage two, which is come to the University of Pennsylvania and do the MCPL, the master's in applied criminology and police leadership, come and meet a cohort of other people who are doing it so you're not feeling like you're the crazy one person in your department.

Shelley Hyland:

What is one thing that you would change about policing if you could? So that could be American policing, that could be policing in general, it could be another country. This was a question from a non-American, so I think it was posed as this is where you've been working the most in the past 20 some years. Yeah, so it could be policing in general or specific to America.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Oh God. Well, one thing about America that drives me crazy is you drive 10 minutes, you're in a different jurisdiction. All the police cars are different. The uniforms are... Can we just have something that looks the same in terms of police cars for crying out loud? You get to a large incident and there are six different designs of police car all over the place. Other public suppose know it? I don't know. That drives me nuts. The bigger picture question, developing just this culture of curiosity that we talk about in evidence-based policing, just being a bit more curious about the job, for most people, this will be the predominant occupation that they will do during their working lives, and people are surprisingly uncurious about how to do it. And it's a trite phrase that gets trotted out in every presentation. Every presenter says it, how we've always done it.

And you don't actually hear people say how we've always done it because they know it sounds naff, but you see the resistance just start to build when you suggest there may be other ways of doing it. I mean, roll call is a good example. Every department kind of well does roll call the way they think a roll call should be done. And one component of roll call is officer safety, and I care a great deal about officer safety over the years. And so officer safety is something I care

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about, as I think we all should, right? Roll call has a role to play in that, and we have no idea how to do roll call. Every department does it so differently. It's kind of got to make a difference. I'm sure it probably does in a small way, but there's just a lack of curiosity.

It's just kind of, "Well, let's just do it this way." And that seems to be the end of the conversation.

Shelley Hyland:

You mentioned roll call, and you received a question about another process that has been rolled out in many police departments, and that's Compstat.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Did we actually receive any questions or are you just making up shit to drop me in it? Are you just making up questions so that I get dropped in the shit?

Shelley Hyland:

No, you could blame Matt for this one.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Ashby?

Shelley Hyland:

No, Gillespie.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Bloody troublemaker.

Shelley Hyland:

Is the CompStat process generally still a good tool to address crime?

Jerry Ratcliffe:

In a minority of circumstances.

Shelley Hyland:

Oh, interesting.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

In a few circumstances, there are definitely some police leaders who are just unaware of what's going on in their districts or divisions or precincts. So in a small group of cases, yes, that's kind of public forum to be held accountable, to get their shit together and be a bit more aware of what's going on, for sure. However, for the majority of cases, and I'm lucky I get invited to go to police departments and I go to compstat meetings if I can. The vast majority of them are

not fit for purpose because they undermine what we understand about long-term crime prevention. We know from decades of studies of problem-oriented policing that it's about addressing key problems with tenacity to stay with a problem and figure out what the underlying reasons are and to deal with the council and improve the streetlights or public housing security, just stick with a problem and go through all the iterations needed to fix it.

CompStat drives short-term thinking. Short-term thinking never fixes long-term problems. So CompStat was an innovation for sure. And to hold people accountable when they weren't accountable, it was fantastic for the time. But now here we are 30 plus years down the line, the way that CompStat's done in most police departments actually undermines long-term problem solving. If 90% of the responses that police leaders give when they're in a CompStat meeting is saturation patrol, I'll move more police officers there, there's a fundamental problem with it because that doesn't work in long-term crime prevention.

Shelley Hyland:

You received one question that actually looks at non-police agencies. It's a nice breakaway from all the policing questions that we've been covering. How can we strengthen the opportunities for non-police agencies to take a lead in problem-oriented policing and crime reduction?

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Well, it fits nicely with the question you just asked because we need to reform CompStat. Right now, if you think about a problem such as traffic accidents at a major intersection, CompStat would drive a police leader to drop a car there twenty four seven or however during the times of the accident. We might do some fancy analysis with crime analysis and say, "Well, here are the days when we get most accidents at this intersection and here are the times." And so we create some overtime. We put a police officer there and we dump a car there with an officer there. And guess what? We have fewer accidents problem solved. The real solution is to change the street engineering or change the phasing on the traffic lights or to install traffic lights or put a roundabout only because in many places like here on the Eastern Shore of Maryland, people aren't used to roundabouts.

And for those of us who are used to them, or traffic circles as they're sometimes called, it provides endless hours of entertainment as people cannot navigate a simple road structure. Anyway, let's get off ranting about that.

Shelley Hyland:

As you divert to Maryland drivers.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Oh my God, Maryland drivers. So we know that there are long-term solutions, which would save having a police officer there, but CompStat drives the first response. It drives a, "What are you doing about this problem now?" And the only thing the poor captain or major can do is go, "I'll send some cops down there because they can't change the street engineering." But of course, as soon as they temporarily fix the problem, it goes away from everybody's consciousness

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and we never get round to the underlying street engineering fix that would solve the problem in the long term. So I have a question for you. What's it like being the host of a podcast for an episode?

Shelley Hyland:

As an introvert, I find it nerve-wracking. And having never done this before, it is way harder than I anticipated it being. I did not want it to just be me asking you questions and you answering, but that is so how this has gone down. I really thought we would just have a normal conversation like we would normally have over dinner or over coffee, and that is not what this has turned into. So I hope it's not completely boring for the listeners and being like, "Oh God, this is like every other podcast I listen to," because one of the beauties of reducing crime is that for me, and I know for other people talking to them, why it stands out is because you're having conversations with people. It never feels just like a question answer. And unfortunately, I think your Pinnell 100th episode is going to now be like, "Oh."

Jerry Ratcliffe:

It's been great. It's just a number. It's been great.

Shelley Hyland:

Well, you got a lot of questions about the... Podcast. And I think it would be nice to close out with a couple of questions that are more podcast specific.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Well, now when I look around the podcast field, see now there are new podcasts all over the place. It would just a wash with podcasts, but I've seen a lot of podcasts come and a lot of podcasts go. But yeah, I'm feeling old. This is like the granddaddy of podcasts, right?

Shelley Hyland:

Well, hundred episodes over nine years, that's an accomplishment.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

It's something.

Shelley Hyland:

What do you hope that students or listeners get out of listening to your podcast?

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Oh, I hope, and people have told me, people get something from every episode. There's always something that my wonderful guests and people have given up their time. And some people have been really, really nervous as well, but they've stepped up and they've just got nuggets, sometimes whole episodes of great, deep, meaningful insights. But there's always a nugget in every episode where I think there's something that we can take away and go, "Oh, that's really insightful. That's thoughtful. I could use that." On the academics, we just often read their scholarly work and it's

dry and it's academic. With police leaders, we don't get a chance to sit and have in depth conversations with them. We see them in one minute soundbites on the evening news when the shit's hit the fan, but we never actually get a chance to have a deeper understanding of how they approach their job and how they came by it.

So with everybody, I think it's provided a medium just to have a bit more insight than you can get in the other more structured ways in society that we get information from people. And it's provided an opportunity for them to elaborate on some of that stuff. And I hope that people have been able to get something from every episode.

Shelley Hyland:

I've always found it fascinating having listened to them all.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Masochist.

Shelley Hyland:

There hasn't been one episode where I haven't walked away with learning one new tidbit about either the person or the topic area that they're talking about. You've done such a great job picking a variety of different folks that touch this field. It's not just been academics, it's not just police leaders. It's not just the United States. You've really been methodical on how you find people and how you've approached this podcast.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Well, to paraphrase Tyrion Lannister, I know people and I drink.

Shelley Hyland:

That is true. There is a lot of drinking in your podcast. I feel like maybe had we put the Baileys in the coffee, I wouldn't have been so nervous.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

You didn't? Oh, I was already. I'm well ahead of you.

Shelley Hyland:

So as we wrap this up, if you keep doing this for another nine years -

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Oh God, don't threaten me like that.

Shelley Hyland:

What do you think we'll be talking about in episode 200?

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Jerry Ratcliffe:

Never going to happen by the way. But you know what it's like? You watch me do this. It takes two days of editing because I hate listening to unedited podcasts. So it takes two days of editing just to get every episode ready. But if I'm crazy enough to keep going a little bit more, I would love for us to be talking about the mainstreaming of evidence-based policing because I think it has to come whether the field wants it or not. As I said earlier, we've democratized police and crime data and information. Now you can download for places like Philadelphia, geolocated every single traffic stop, every single pedestrian stop, you can download every single crime incident. There's just going to be more scrutiny on policing, on the decisions that are made and on the activities that people who participate and who work in policing function and do.

We need evidence-based policing to make those decisions better and to make those decisions defensible. And I hope sooner than 200th episode, I hope we're very quickly talking about how this has become mainstream, not because officers are forced into it, but because they see the benefit of evidence-based policing as this is actually really going to help my career.

Shelley Hyland:

Okay. I feel like that's a good way to wrap this up. Been a pleasure. Sort of.

Jerry Ratcliffe:

Well, this was fun.

Shelley Hyland:

Yes, it was fun. It's about time that you were on the other end and answering the questions. I just

Jerry Ratcliffe:

I deserve no less. Yeah. Thank you, Shelley.

Shelley Hyland:

That was episode 100 of Reducing Crime, recorded in September 2026 on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. If you want to use this podcast in your class, DM Jerry for multiple choice questions for every episode, and you could also find a transcript of this episode at reducingcrime.com. This podcast is available on Spotify, SoundCloud, Apple, and other providers.

And as Jerry would say, be safe and best of luck.

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