

Longitudinal Research in the Social and Behavioral Sciences:  
An Interdisciplinary Series

Rolf Loeber  
David P. Farrington

# Young Homicide Offenders and Victims

Risk Factors, Prediction, and  
Prevention from Childhood

 Springer

LONGITUDINAL RESEARCH IN THE  
SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES  
**An Interdisciplinary Series**

**Series Editors:**

**Howard B. Kaplan**, *Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas*

**Adele Eskeles Gottfried**, *California State University, Northridge, California*

**Allen W. Gottfried**, *California State University, Fullerton, California*

---

For further volumes:

<http://www.springer.com/series/6236>



Rolf Loeber • David P. Farrington

# Young Homicide Offenders and Victims

Risk Factors, Prediction, and  
Prevention from Childhood

With Contributions by:

Robert B. Cotter, Erin Dalton, Beth E. Ebel,  
Darrick Jolliffe, Frederick P. Rivara,  
Rebecca Stallings, and Magda Stouthamer-Loeber

Forewords by Kathleen M. Heide and Irvin Waller



Springer

Rolf Loeber  
Department of Psychiatry  
University of Pittsburgh  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213  
USA  
and  
Free University  
Amsterdam  
The Netherlands  
loeberr@upmc.edu

David P. Farrington  
Cambridge University  
Institute of Criminology  
Cambridge CB3 9DA  
UK  
dpf1@cam.ac.uk

ISBN 978-1-4419-9948-1 e-ISBN 978-1-4419-9949-8  
DOI 10.1007/978-1-4419-9949-8  
Springer New York Dordrecht Heidelberg London

Library of Congress Control Number: 2011931973

© Springer Science+Business Media, LLC 2011

All rights reserved. This work may not be translated or copied in whole or in part without the written permission of the publisher (Springer Science+Business Media, LLC, 233 Spring Street, New York, NY 10013, USA), except for brief excerpts in connection with reviews or scholarly analysis. Use in connection with any form of information storage and retrieval, electronic adaptation, computer software, or by similar or dissimilar methodology now known or hereafter developed is forbidden.

The use in this publication of trade names, trademarks, service marks, and similar terms, even if they are not identified as such, is not to be taken as an expression of opinion as to whether or not they are subject to proprietary rights.

Printed on acid-free paper

Springer is part of Springer Science+Business Media ([www.springer.com](http://www.springer.com))

## Foreword by Kathleen M. Heide

In 1993, US attorney Janet Reno was asked at a news conference what was the greatest single crime problem facing the USA. Without a moment's hesitation, Ms. Reno said "youth violence" (Kantrowitz, 1993). For 10 consecutive years, arrests of young Americans, particularly juveniles, for violent crime, including homicide, had risen (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1985–1994). Calculation of the absolute and relative levels of youth involvement in arrests for murder over the period 1958–1993 underscored the seriousness of the problem. The arrest rates for 15–19 year olds recorded in 1992 and 1993 were the highest for any age group during the 36-year-period under review (Smith & Feiler, 1995). Experts, including James A. Fox, Charles Patrick Ewing, and Al Blumstein predicted that youth involvement in homicide would continue to rise as the new millennium approached because the population of youths in the USA was on the increase (Heide, 1999).

Shortly after making that pronouncement, Janet Reno was a featured speaker at the American Society of Criminology conference. The large ballroom was filled to capacity. Ms. Reno thanked the audience of over 1,000 attendees for the important work that criminologists were doing. She emphasized that government needed our research to drive policy. However, she emphasized that government did not have the time to wait for long-drawn out research studies. The nation in times of crisis, such as the current one involving youth violence, needed answers fast.

The reality, as scholars know, is that good research based on adherence to strong scientific principles takes time. The present work by Rolf Loeber and David Farrington and their research team has been ongoing for over two decades. It is indeed extraordinary research and has the potential to pay huge dividends in terms of saving lives, decreasing human suffering, and improving the quality of life for many Americans.

*Young Homicide Offenders and Victims: Risk Factors, Prediction, and Prevention from Childhood* focuses on 37 convicted homicide offenders, 33 arrested homicide offenders who were not convicted, and 39 homicide victims. This scientific study by Loeber, Farrington, and their colleagues is groundbreaking in many respects: (1) longitudinal nature of the study; (2) large sample of subjects (1,517 males); (3) comparative analyses of convicted homicide offenders with homicide arrestees who

were not convicted; (4) systematic study of both homicide offenders and victims; (5) utilization of several other control groups, including nonviolent boys, violent boys, and shooting victims; (6) exploration of 21 explanatory and 19 behavioral risk factors; (7) inclusion of both self-reported delinquency and official reports (arrests and convictions) for many different types of criminal behavior committed by boys up to age 14; (8) use of multiple informants (the youths, their parents, and teachers) and standardized measures when appropriate and available (e.g., California Achievement Test, Hollingshead Index based on parental education and occupational prestige, 1990 census data re: evaluation of neighborhoods, and Revised Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children); (9) at least yearly assessments over a decade or more of dozens of background and behavioral development variables under investigation; and (10) application of an increasingly sophisticated series of analyses that included both bivariate and multivariate analyses. Each of these methodological design issues is noteworthy. To have all of them in one study is unparalleled and deserving of the highest accolades.

This book is one of many significant works to emerge from the Pittsburgh Youth Study (PYS), a prospective longitudinal study that consisted of repeated assessments of three community cohorts of inner city boys. The study began in 1987 when the boys were in the first, fourth, and seventh grades in Pittsburgh public schools. Participation by the boys and their parents in the PYS was exceedingly high, ranging from 84 to 86% across the three cohorts. In an effort to increase the number of high-risk males in the follow-up cohort, the researchers devised a screening instrument using information from the boys, their parents, and teachers to identify the 30% of the boys that were most antisocial. Another 30% of the boys were randomly selected from the remaining 70%. The extensiveness of the follow-up available varied by cohort. The youngest cohort ( $n=503$ ) was assessed 18 times from ages 7 through 19, and the oldest cohort ( $n=506$ ), 16 times, from ages 13 to 25. The middle cohort ( $n=508$ ) was assessed only seven times, from ages 10 to 13. There were no gaps in the assessment intervals. Accordingly, as noted by the authors in Chap. 2, "the study is uniquely poised to investigate individuals' onset of delinquency and substance abuse, and individual's continuation of and desistance from these behaviors."

Longitudinal studies exist that have investigated the difficulties and mental health issues faced by adolescents during their development. Some of these research efforts have examined youth involvement in substance abuse, delinquency, and high-risk behavior (e.g., Brunswick, n.d.; Resnick et al., 1997). The present longitudinal study stands alone in having the follow-up data to assess, from its initial cohort, a sample of boys who were subsequently arrested and convicted of murder.

Among those convicted, offenders ranged in age from 15 through 26 years at the time of the killing. Approximately 72% were in their teenage years when the murder occurred (19% were under age 18). All but two of the convicted murderers (94%) were under age 25 at the time of the homicidal event. Recent research has indicated that the part of the brain most associated with critical thinking and decision making (prefrontal cortex) does not complete its development until the early 20s, and, perhaps, not until about age 25 (Beckman, 2004; Giedd, 2004).

Accordingly, the findings of this study may be appropriately discussed with reference to the available literature on juvenile, adolescent, and youth homicide.

Although there is an extensive body of research available on youth homicide, the literature has suffered from several serious limitations that the present work has overcome. The literature on juvenile and adolescent murderers has consisted predominantly of studies with small samples. Research studies of homicide by juveniles and other young offenders have been primarily clinical in focus (Heide, 2003). Samples have often been convenience samples, such as youths referred to mental health professionals for evaluation (e.g., Bender, 1959; Bailey, 1996; Corder, Ball, Haizlip, Rollins, & Beaumont, 1976; Cornell, Benedek, & Benedek, 1989; Myers, Scott, Burgess, & Burgess, 1995), those referred to juvenile or adult court (Roe-Sepowitz, 2009; Sorrells, 1977; Zagar, Busch, Grove, & Hughes, 2009), inmates incarcerated for murder or attempted murder that they committed as juveniles (e.g., Heide, Spencer, Thompson, & Solomon, 2001; Hill-Smith, Hugo, Hughes, Fonagy, & Hartman, 2002) or juvenile murderers on death row (Lewis et al., 1988).

Given their largely retrospective nature, these earlier works can rarely speak authoritatively about causal factors. With the exception of a few studies, such as those recently published by Zagar and his colleagues (Zagar et al., 2009), prior studies have not used control groups so it is unknown whether factors identified as defining young homicide offenders would apply to other groups, such as violent offenders or delinquent youth in general.

Previous studies of young murderers, however, have made important contributions in suggesting factors that appear to be associated with killings committed by young people. These include psychological disorders, particularly mood disorders (depression), behavioral disorders (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, Oppositional Defiant Disorder, Conduct Disorder), anxiety disorders (Post-traumatic Stress Disorder), and substance abuse and/or dependence. In addition to mental health problems, family problems, including parental substance abuse and criminality, domestic violence, child maltreatment, and broken homes, have frequently been found in the backgrounds of young homicide offenders. Truancy, low school achievement, dropping out, expulsion from school, and a history of antisocial and criminal behavior have been identified among youths involved in murder. The extent to which generalizations can be drawn from these studies to the population of youth homicide offenders has been unknown. With the publication of *Young Homicide Offenders and Victims: Risk Factors, Prediction, and Prevention from Childhood*, many of the questions about which variables distinguish young convicted killers from other groups of their peers, such as unconvicted homicide arrestees, violent offenders, and homicide victims, can now be answered.

Several analyses of juvenile homicide offenders have been undertaken by teams of researchers using the Supplementary Homicide Report database (Heide, Solomon, Sellers, & Chan, 2011). Information on murders (criminal homicide and nonnegligent manslaughter) and homicide arrestees is voluntarily submitted to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reports Program by law enforcement agencies on murders known to them. However, this database, although national in scope, is limited to basic victim and offender demographic information (age, race, gender, victim-offender



relationship), case-related variables (weapon used, codefendants, situation type, homicide circumstance), and incident-related information (state, urban level, population density, offense year, etc.). These studies are valuable in describing the correlates of youth homicide. The data set, however, does not contain variables that measure social or behavioral characteristics of victims and offenders. Given the cross-sectional nature of these analyses, conclusions about causal factors involved in youth homicide are not possible.

The present work, unlike earlier ones, can speak confidently to causation. Given the assessments of youth taken initially at 6 month and then yearly intervals, the temporal order of events could be measured. The PYS data set stands alone in providing causal information about the early risk factors and problem behaviors of boys who later became homicide offenders or victims. Early risk factors included, for example, factors involving the youth's birth, school performance, psychopathic traits, mood indicators, measures related to family functioning, child-rearing practices, SES, and bad neighborhood. Behavioral risk factors included indicators of conduct disorder, attitudes favorable to delinquency and substance abuse, measures of difficulties with a parent, involvement with delinquent or substance abusing peers, attitudinal and behavioral measures of school difficulties, and measures relating to weapons, gang involvement, and drug use and selling. Most of these data came from parents and the boys. Information was also obtained from the boys' teachers and educational achievement tests.

Predictors of homicide offending were not limited to explanatory and behavioral risk factors. In an effort to improve on the accuracy of the prediction of convicted homicide offenders, self-reported offending and official reports of delinquent acts committed up to age 14 obtained from police and the courts were measured. Criminal risk factors assessed included self-reported crimes involving violence, property, drug use and selling, and other deviance, such as using alcohol or tobacco, or being drunk in public. Arrests and convictions for violence, property crimes, or other crimes, such as drugs, mischief/disorder, other/conspiracy, or any other arrest prior to age 15 were also included.

The analyses undertaken by the authors were colossal in nature, meticulous in execution, and unprecedented in many respects. Their innovative approach to studying homicides by young offenders uncovered many important findings with potentially significant implications for theory, policy, and future research. The authors' decision to divide homicide arrestees into two groups (those who were convicted and those who were not convicted), for example, resulted in several interesting findings. Surprisingly, analyses revealed little overlap between the two groups. The groups tended to differ from one another with respect to explanatory and behavioral risk factors. Socioeconomic factors (broken family, family on welfare, young mother, unemployed mother, low socioeconomic status) were more characteristic of convicted homicide offenders. In contrast, behavioral factors (truancy, low school achievement, low school motivation, nonphysical aggression) were more associated with homicide arrestees.

One of the most fascinating findings to emerge from making the distinction between homicide arrestees and convicted homicide offenders involved race.

Race was not significantly related to convicted homicide offenders after the effects of other risk variables were controlled. However, when homicide arrestees were combined with convicted homicide offenders, African American race remained a significant predictor of combined homicide offenders. This research calls into question the practice frequently employed by researchers of using homicide arrestees as accurate measures of homicide offenders. In this case, combining 33 homicide arrestees with 37 convicted homicide offenders increased the sample size in these analyses from 37 to 70. The present research suggests that at least among urban African American adolescents and young adults, the percentage of homicide arrestees who will be found guilty of homicide may be significantly less than the number arrested, perhaps, by as much as by 40% or more. The authors offered several reasons for the large number of homicide arrestees not being convicted. These included lack of evidence, racial discrimination, or witness intimidation by homicide arrestees. Clearly more research is needed.

This study found that similar proportions of the PYS sample became convicted homicide offenders (2.4%) and homicide victims (2.6%). Interestingly, the convicted homicide offenders more closely resembled the homicide victims than the arrested homicide offenders. As noted by the authors, the strongest predictors of homicide victims tended to be the same as the strongest predictors of convicted homicide offenders. Both groups had committed serious delinquency prior to age 15. However, unlike convicted homicide offenders, race continued to predict homicide victims after controlling for the effects of all explanatory risk factors. The authors noted that this result is likely due to the fact that 37 of the 39 victims were African American.

One of the most intriguing analyses undertaken by the authors involved determining whether a dose-response relationship existed between the number of explanatory, behavioral, and criminal risk factors and the probability of becoming a convicted homicide offender. The researchers found that the integrated homicide risk score for the prediction of convicted homicide offenders from the whole population indicated that the probability of becoming a homicide offender increased as the number of risk factors increased. However, the false-positive error rate (Type 1 error) was very high, indicating that many individuals identified as potential homicide offenders did not commit homicide. At the same time, the false-negative error rate (Type 2) was moderately high, suggesting that, perhaps, as many as 40% of homicide offenders were missed.

Similar analyses showed that the probability of becoming a homicide victim also increased as the number of risk factors increased. The risk factors predicted homicide victims almost as well as convicted homicide offenders. However, once again, issues of Type 1 and 2 errors were present.

Although replication in research is both desirable and necessary, findings in this study appear generalizable to the population of young urban males arrested and convicted of homicide in the USA. As Loeber and Farrington demonstrated, findings related to the homicide offenders and their victims did not appear to be restricted to the Pittsburgh area. The murder offenders and victims in the PYS resembled their counterparts in the Allegheny County in which Pittsburgh is located in terms of

gender, race, weapon use, neighborhood disadvantage, homicide motive, and criminal record. Comparisons between PYS homicide offenders and their victims with their urban counterparts in the USA, although limited, suggested many similarities between the groups. One of the most disturbing similarities found on the county, city, and national levels involved the exceedingly high overrepresentation of African American young males among both homicide offenders and victims.

The authors tackled the controversial issues raised by their findings. They addressed the high proportion of PYS youths who engaged in violent behavior and analyzed predictors of violent offenders who did not become homicide offenders or victims, or shooting victims. They noted the high involvement of African American males as both homicide offenders and victims, and offered explanations for their disparate findings regarding the significance of race. Loeber and Farrington discussed the theoretical aspects of the development of violence and homicide offending, with special attention given to the “Integrated Cognitive Antisocial Potential” (ICAP) theory designed to explain offending by lower class males (Farrington, 2003).

The authors proposed the use of screening instruments to identify youths at high risk of killing or being killed. They argued that these instruments should assess needs in addition to risks. The emphasis, they maintained, must be on helping children and their families, and not on stigmatizing and punishing them.

The findings reported in *Young Homicide Offenders and Victims: Risk Factors, Prediction, and Prevention from Childhood* make a compelling argument for intervention. One finding that may surprise many readers is that the homicide offenders in the PYS had received a variety of services for their mental and behavioral problems. Obviously these interventions were not successful in preventing the boys from subsequently committing homicide. Loeber and Farrington argued persuasively that implementing interventions based on programs that have proven success records and are targeted at high-risk populations on a national level is needed. Using simulated models, the authors showed that these programs could save many lives and could result in saving billions of dollars due to reduced incarceration costs.

The reduction in human suffering by families, friends, and other survivors of both homicide victims and homicide offenders that would flow from the savings of lives is incalculable. The elimination of terror that holds countless men, women, and children, particularly those who live in poor communities, hostage in their own homes is not just a lofty goal. *Young Homicide Offenders and Victims: Risk Factors, Prediction, and Prevention from Childhood* provides a blueprint for the USA to achieve a healthier and safer society for all its members.

Kathleen M. Heide  
Professor of Criminology  
College of Behavioral and Community Sciences  
University of South Florida

## References

- Bailey, S. (1996). Adolescents who murder. *Journal of Adolescence*, 19, 19–39.
- Beckman, M. (2004). Crime, culpability, and the adolescent brain. *Science*, 305, 596–599.
- Bender, L. (1959). Children and adolescents who have killed. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 116, 510–513.
- Brunswick, A. F. (n.d.) *Harlem longitudinal study of urban black youth, 1968–1994*. Retrieved: [http://hdl.handle.net/1902.1/00845\\_UNF:4:6,128:zmyHvveCO6LrHnfxycgV4w+PR/2Hc4b9hT4r1Gn0oBo=Murray Research Archive \[Distributor\] V2 \[Version\]](http://hdl.handle.net/1902.1/00845_UNF:4:6,128:zmyHvveCO6LrHnfxycgV4w+PR/2Hc4b9hT4r1Gn0oBo=Murray Research Archive [Distributor] V2 [Version]).
- Corder, B. F., Ball, B. C., Haizlip, T. M., Rollins, R., & Beaumont, R. (1976). Adolescent parricide: A comparison with other adolescent murder. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 133(8), 957–961.
- Cornell, D. G., Benedek, E. P., & Benedek, D. M. (1989). A typology of juvenile homicide offenders. In E. P. Benedek & D. G. Cornell (Eds.), *Juvenile homicide* (pp. 59–84). Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press.
- Federal Bureau of Investigation. (1985–1994). *Crime in the United States (1984–1993)*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- Giedd, J. N. (2004). Structural magnetic resonance imaging of the adolescent brain. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1021, 105–109.
- Heide, K. M., Solomon, E. P., Sellers, B. G., & Chan, H. C. (2011). Male and female juvenile homicide offenders: An empirical analysis of U.S. arrests by offender age. *Feminist Criminology*, 6(1), 3–31.
- Heide, K. M., Spencer, E., Thompson, A., & Solomon, E. P. (2001). Who's in, who's out, and who's back: Follow-up data on 59 juveniles incarcerated for murder or attempted murder in the early 1980s. *Behavioral Sciences and the Law*, 19, 97–108.
- Hill-Smith, A. J., Hugo, P., Hughes, P., Fonagy, P., & Hartman, D. (2002). Adolescent murderers: Abuse and adversity in childhood. *Journal of Adolescence*, 25, 221–230.
- Kantrowitz, B. (1993, Aug 2). Teen violence – Wild in the streets. *Newsweek*, pp. 40–46.
- Lewis, D. O., Pincus, J. H., Bard, B., Richardson, E., Feldman, M., Prichep, L. S., et al. (1988). Neuropsychiatric, psychoeducational, and family characteristics of 14 juveniles condemned to death in the United States. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 145, 584–589.
- Myers, W. C., Scott, K., Burgess, A. W., & Burgess, A. G. (1995). Psychopathology, biopsychosocial factors, crime characteristics, and classification of 25 homicidal youths. *Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 34, 1483–1489.
- Resnick, M. D., Bearman, P. S., Blum, R. W., Bauman, K. F., Harris, K. M., Jones, J., et al. (1997). Protecting adolescents from harm: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health. *JAMA*, 278(10), 823–832.
- Roe-Sepowitz, D. E. (2009). Comparing male and female juveniles charged with homicide: Child maltreatment, substance abuse and crime details. *The Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 24(4), 601–617.
- Smith, M. D. & Feiler, S. M. (1995). Absolute and relative involvement in homicide offending: Contemporary youth and the baby boom cohorts. *Violence and Victims*, 10, 327–333.
- Sorrells, J. M., Jr. (1977). Kids who kill. *Crime & Delinquency*, 16, 152–161.
- Zagar, R. J., Busch, K. G., Grove, W. M., & Hughes, J. R. (2009). Summary of studies of abused infants and children later homicidal, and homicidal, assaulting later homicidal, and sexual homicidal youth and adults. *Psychological Reports*, 104, 17–45.



## Foreword by Irvin Waller

This book faces the stark reality that rates of homicide in the USA far exceed those of any other rich democratic nation. Drs Loeber and Farrington are internationally the undisputed gurus of scientific analysis of how young boys develop into serious adult offenders and of what might cause those levels of violence. In this book, they have done it again by carefully and rigorously showing which negative life experiences predispose young males to becoming killers or the killed – the ultimate crimes.

Starting with some key statistics, they show how certain young African American males grow up to kill or be killed. They point to the importance of being born to young mothers, experiencing family break-up and suffering a family on welfare. They recall how drug dealing, hand guns, and school failure are just some of the experiences that differentiate those who kill or get killed from those in the same neighborhoods who survive. These are familiar territory to those who have worked to stop crime, but they take on a special importance when focused on homicide.

But the book does not stop there, since they have chapters that focus on the potential return on investment from tackling some of the negative life experiences at very early stages. One of their chapters convincingly shows how Nationwide implementation for at-risk families of the Nurse Home Visitation Program and the Perry Pre-school Program will each prevent between 20 and 24% of all homicides, reducing the cost of incarceration by about \$3–6 billion per year and an estimated \$5–10 billion in the costs of loss of life.

At a time when voters are calling for cutting deficits and ensuring taxpayers' money is used responsibly, these models provide a basis for significant reallocations. Indeed, the Obama administration has already started with \$8 billion over the next 10 years for nurse home visitation. But the evidence in this book justifies a more significant rebalancing of budgets from overspending on an incarceration industry whose growth has exceeded that of many governmental sectors. Currently, the US incarcerates one in four of all prisoners worldwide and still has the highest rates of homicide. Reallocating 10% of the \$70 billion each year spent on incarceration would rapidly bring the US annual rates of homicide closer to those of other rich democratic nations. That is saving 3,000 or likely many more lives each year. The evidence to justify these investments is in this book.

In the last chapter, the gurus open the debate on ways to get more investment in programs that are effective in reducing violence. They discuss some important next steps, including the implementation in Pittsburgh of Stop Now and Plan (SNAP). Earlier evaluations of this program show considerable promise and so likely would result also in reductions in violence and homicides nationwide.

But much more is possible, if the conclusions can be framed appropriately for legislators at all government levels. Indeed, this book becomes available at an opportune time. The World Health Organization is planning to follow-up its seminal report on preventing violence with a report that will update the evidence and assess the extent to which countries are implementing strategies that prevent violence.

There are a growing number of governments who are investing in evidence strategies that include a government responsibility center to use evidence such as that in this book. This interest comes from books such as *Less Law, More Order: The Truth about Reducing Crime* that take the conclusions from the work of the gurus, frame it for government in terms of reducing numbers of crime victims, argue the case for the return on investment, and establish permanent strategies and responsibility centers to shift funds from what does not work to what does.

This book is an important addition to the scientific literature that provides a further evidence base for shifting policies from eighteenth-century thinking about punishment to twenty-first century action to stop homicides and violence. If you start with the conclusions from the gurus, you will be drawn back quickly to read the chapters that form the basis for what is a very hopeful and overdue vision that homicide is eminently preventable if you use the Loeber and Farrington science to make policy. This is not just for academic journals but the real world of stopping crime and protecting victims.

Irvin Waller  
President, International Organization for Victim Assistance  
Founding and Past Executive Director, International Centre  
for Prevention of Crime, affiliated with the United Nations  
Professor of Criminology, University of Ottawa

# Preface

Among the books published on homicide, this volume is the first to use prospective longitudinal data to predict homicide offenders and victims from childhood risk factors and to consider preventive interventions for homicide in a systematic manner. Each book has its own history and this volume has a long history. When faced with increasing numbers of homicide offenders and homicide victims in the Pittsburgh Youth Study, the second author convinced the first author of the need to undertake extensive analyses and write this volume. Many interfering tasks occurred over the years and the volume only gradually took shape with long intermissions.

Work on this book was supported by grants 96-MU-FX-0012 and 2005-JK-FX-0001 from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), grants MH 50778 and 73941 from the National Institute of Mental Health, grant No. 11018 from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, a grant from the Department of Health of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and a grant from the Centers for Disease Control (administered through OJJDP). Analyses in Chap. 8 were supported by a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Grant to Dr. Frederick P. Rivara. However, this sponsor has not participated in the design and conduct of the study, collection, management, analysis, interpretation of the data, preparation, review, of approval of the report. Dr. Beth Ebel has had full access to all of the data and takes responsibility for the integrity of the data and the accuracy of the analysis in Chap. 8.

Points of view or opinions in this book are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of any of the aforementioned agencies. We are particularly grateful to Maureen Brown and Jennifer Wilson for their efficient administrative help, and to Rebecca Stallings for her most efficient preparation of the data and checking of the constructs. We also thank the following individuals for their most generous help and advice: Mark Berg, Alfred Blumstein, Matt Durose, Anthony Fabio, Megan Good, James C. Howell, Patrick A. Langan, Janet L. Lauritsen, Dustin A. Pardini, James Rieland, Richard B. Rosenfeld, Howard N. Snyder, Brandon C. Welsh, Helene R. White, Norman White, and James Williams. Foremost, we are very grateful to the staff and the participants of the Pittsburgh Youth Study who laid the foundation for this volume. In addition, we owe much to our co-authors: Robert B. Cotter, Erin Dalton,



Beth E. Ebel, Darrick Jolliffe, Dustin A. Pardini, Frederick P. Rivara, Rebecca Stallings, and Magda Stouthamer-Loeber. We are very much indebted to Magda Stouthamer-Loeber for supervising and guiding the study over decades and for her unwavering confidence that we would complete this book.

Pittsburgh, PA  
Cambridge, UK

Rolf Loeber  
David P. Farrington

## Endorsements

*This is a fascinating, pioneering book. Based on results from the Pittsburgh Youth Study, it identifies childhood risk factors that predict involvement in homicide as offenders and victims, and it offers provocative simulations of the potential impacts of possible prevention strategies. The authors' sophisticated analyses demonstrate convincingly the considerable value of prospective longitudinal data for enhancing our understanding of the etiology and control of lethal violence.*

Steven F. Messner, Ph.D.  
Distinguished Teacher Professor, Department of Sociology,  
University at Albany, SUNY  
President, American Society of Criminology

*How do homicide offenders differ from other violent offenders with respect to early-life and more proximate risk factors? How do homicide offenders differ from homicide victims? Is it possible to predict, years in advance, who will kill or be killed? Until now, homicide researchers could only speculate about the answers to these and related questions, or the answers were based on crude and often unreliable data. This book changes the game in violence research. Analyzing richly detailed data from a community sample of boys studied from early childhood into young adulthood, Loeber and Farrington dissect the developmental pathways that lead to lethal violence and propose interventions to ameliorate the early-life risk factors that otherwise lead predictably to violence and death. The analysis is masterful, the prose is readable, and the achievement is nothing short of stunning. This book is required reading for veteran researchers, students, criminal justice and public health professionals, and anyone who wants to know what cutting edge research on a critical public problem looks like.*

Richard Rosenfeld, Ph.D.  
Curators Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice,  
University of Missouri-St. Louis  
Past President, American Society of Criminology

*Beginning with Wolfgang's classic Patterns in Criminal Homicide, many important books on homicide have followed but none has recently emerged as a turning point in the field. That is, until now. Loeber and Farrington's volume is a collection of firsts in many respects, primarily because it is the first to use prospective longitudinal data to predict homicide offenders and victims from childhood risk factors as well as to consider prevention/intervention efforts in great detail. In very short order, Young Homicide Offenders and Victims: Development, Risk Factors, and Prediction from Childhood will become one of those key books that sits on the desks and shelves of students, academics, practitioners, and policy makers alike. But, unlike some others, this is one that will be read, reread, and learned from in many respects.*

Alex R. Piquero, Ph.D.  
Gordon P. Waldo Professor of Criminology  
Florida State University

*This book will stand the test of time as a landmark homicide study. Principally, it is the first of its kind to analyze the development of a representative sample of homicide offenders and victims over the life course, from childhood to adulthood. Moreover, the researchers are two of the most renowned developmental criminologists in the world.*

James C. Howell, Ph.D.  
Senior Research Associate  
National Gang Center



# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>Young Male Homicide Offenders and Victims: Current Knowledge, Beliefs, and Key Questions .....</b>	<b>1</b>
	Rolf Loeber and David P. Farrington	
<b>2</b>	<b>The Pittsburgh Youth Study.....</b>	<b>19</b>
	Rolf Loeber, David P. Farrington, and Rebecca Stallings	
<b>3</b>	<b>Homicide Offenders and Victims in the USA, Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh, and the Pittsburgh Youth Study .....</b>	<b>37</b>
	Rolf Loeber, Erin Dalton, and David P. Farrington	
<b>4</b>	<b>Early Risk Factors for Convicted Homicide Offenders and Homicide Arrestees .....</b>	<b>57</b>
	David P. Farrington and Rolf Loeber	
<b>5</b>	<b>Prediction of Homicide Offenders Out of Violent Boys .....</b>	<b>79</b>
	David P. Farrington and Rolf Loeber	
<b>6</b>	<b>Early Risk Factors for Homicide Victims and Shooting Victims .....</b>	<b>95</b>
	David P. Farrington and Rolf Loeber	
<b>7</b>	<b>Homicide Offenders Speak.....</b>	<b>115</b>
	Darrick Jolliffe, Rolf Loeber, David P. Farrington, and Robert B. Cotter	
<b>8</b>	<b>Modeling the Impact of Preventive Interventions on the National Homicide Rate.....</b>	<b>123</b>
	Beth E. Ebel, Frederick P. Rivara, Rolf Loeber, and Dustin A. Pardini	

<b>9 Modeling the Impact of Interventions on Local Indicators of Offending, Victimization, and Incarceration .....</b>	<b>137</b>
Rolf Loeber and Rebecca Stallings	
<b>10 Conclusions and Implications .....</b>	<b>153</b>
Rolf Loeber and David P. Farrington	
<b>References .....</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Index .....</b>	<b>197</b>

## About the Authors

**Rolf Loeber** is Professor of Psychiatry, Psychology, and Epidemiology at the Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, School of Medicine, University of Pittsburgh, and Professor of Juvenile Delinquency and Social Development, Free University, Amsterdam, Netherlands. He is co-chair of the U.S. National Institute of Justice Study Group on Transitions from Juvenile Delinquency to Adult Crime and co-chair of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control Expert Panel on Protective Factors against Youth Violence. He is Co-director of the Life History Program and is principal investigator of three longitudinal studies, the Pittsburgh Youth Study, the Developmental Trends Study, and the Pittsburgh Girls Study. He has published widely in the fields of juvenile antisocial behavior and delinquency, substance use, and mental health problems (more than 215 peer-reviewed papers, 114 book chapters and other papers, and 9 books).

**David P. Farrington, O.B.E.,** is Professor of Psychological Criminology at the Institute of Criminology, Cambridge University, and Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry at Western Psychiatric Institute and Clinic, University of Pittsburgh. He is co-chair of the U.S. National Institute of Justice Study Group on Transitions from Juvenile Delinquency to Adult Crime and co-chair of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control Expert Panel on Protective Factors against Youth Violence. His major research interest is in developmental criminology, and he is Director of the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development, which is a prospective longitudinal survey of over 400 London males from age 8 to age 48. In addition to over 500 published journal articles and book chapters on criminological and psychological topics, he has published over 75 books, monographs and government publications.