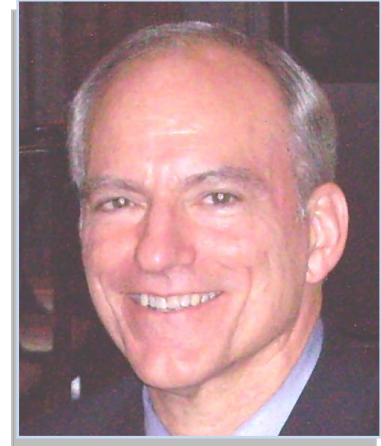**CSAR**

Cambridge Society for the Application of Research

Churchill College
Storeys Way
Cambridge
CB3 0DS

"Can Research Prevent Crime?"

Professor Lawrence Sherman
Director, Institute of Criminology
University of Cambridge

Monday 3rd February, 2014
Wolfson Hall Lecture Theatre, Churchill College
Storey's Way, Cambridge

The Lecture:

The contributions of research to increased longevity are well-known and widely accepted; the role of research in preventing crime is equally interesting, but generally unknown.

This lecture traces the benefits of two centuries of research on crime, concentrating on the last three decades—when measures of crime have dropped substantially in most advanced economies.

Research has led governments to do better at three key tasks: targeting, testing, and tracking taxpayers' investments in preventing crime.

TARGETING resources better has been a direct result of epidemiological research specifying the victims, places, social networks and situations featuring the greatest concentrations of harm from crime.

TESTING resources to specify what works—and what doesn't—to prevent crime has seen a rapid growth of randomized controlled trials of various practices and innovations in social services, policing, sentencing and corrections.

TRACKING resources to guide them more precisely has developed from research showing where discredited criminogenic practices are still being used, and where effective practices are not being used to the extent possible.
The lecture presents prominent examples of all three ways in which research has helped to prevent crime. It concludes by offering cautions on the cultural challenges of antipathy to research about a highly emotional topic, and the generally precarious fate of science-based policy in any democracy.

About the Speaker:

Professor Lawrence Sherman is the 7th Director of the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cambridge, which was founded in 1959 with the initiative of Home Secretary R.A. Butler. He is also a Fellow of Darwin College, Cambridge. He previously served as Chair of the Departments of Criminology at the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Maryland, as well as Director of Research for the Police Foundation in Washington DC. He has led 36 randomized field trials in crime prevention practices, and developed forecasting models for crime in space, time, and offender populations. With his colleagues at the Institute's Jerry Lee Centre of Experimental Criminology, he is currently testing the effects of better tracking systems on guiding resources to improve crime prevention.

Appointed by the Home Secretary in 2012 as one of three independent directors of the new College of Policing, he is Honorary President and co-founder of the 1,000-member Society of Evidence-Based Policing—consisting mostly of police officers who promote the use of research in policing.
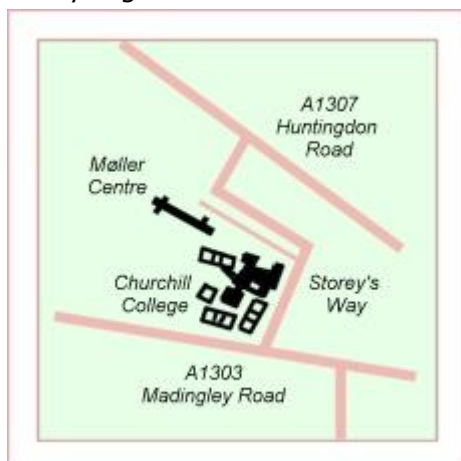
Sherman has been elected President of the American and International Societies of Criminology, the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences, and the Academy of Experimental Criminology. He holds a Life Fellowship of the RSA, which awarded him its Benjamin Franklin Medal in 2011. He holds other medals or awards from institutions in Sweden, Germany, the US and Australia.

The lecture draws heavily on his 2013 paper on *"The Rise of Evidence-Based Policing: Targeting, Testing and Tracking." CRIME AND JUSTICE 42. Chicago: University of Chicago Press*; it is available for free download at: http://www.crim.cam.ac.uk/people/academic_research/lawrence_sherman/recent_publications/rise_of_ebp.pdf

Practical Matters

Those attending the CSAR lecture may park in the Senior Car Park on Churchill Road, which is off Storey's Way. More parking is available further along Churchill Road, and in the Möller Centre at the far end.

CSAR lectures are open to all; CSAR members are admitted free. Pupils and students may register for free membership at the lecture reception desk.

Non-members are asked to make a nominal contribution of £3.00.

Coffee and biscuits are available in the Wolfson Foyer from around 7pm.

For further directions, see: www.chu.cam.ac.uk/about/visitors/directions.php