

Todd S. Foglesong



Todd Foglesong is a Senior Research Fellow at the Kennedy School of Government and Coordinator of the Justice Systems Workshop at the Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management. His research focuses on the use of arrest and pretrial detention around the world and the alignment of government efforts to administer criminal justice.

Previously, Foglesong was a senior program associate at the Vera Institute of Justice in New York. With support from the Open Society Institute, he designed a regional resource center on organized crime in the Balkans. Before joining the Vera Institute, he taught political science at the University of Kansas and University of Utah, and published articles and books about judicial reform and criminal justice in Russia and Ukraine. He earned a Ph.D. and MA from the University of Toronto.

Foglesong's interests in policing are primarily in two areas: First, he wants to understand more about how leaders in police organizations today think about the future of policing as the system of criminal justice and network of essential public services in local government undergo great strain. Second, he is interested in learning more about how leaders of police organizations measure success and define value in policing. These two interests overlap because he wants to know: What do police leaders do when prosecutors, public defenders, sheriffs, judges, and prison wardens are not accomplishing their own or their agency's goals? How do police executives think about success for their organizations when developments and concerns beyond policing – in education, health concerns beyond policing – in education, health, housing, and in the economy – constrain their ability to achieve their hopes for safety and justice?

Most of his research on policing has taken place in foreign countries. His dissertation and early publications dealt with changes in crime and the response to crime in Russia and Ukraine. More recently, he wrote about police accountability systems in Mexico and the evolution of organized crime in Latin America. Foglesong is currently responsible for the field work and development of police management indicators with the Jamaican Constabulary Force, Sierra Leone Police Service, and Royal Papua New Guinea Constabulary. In all of these countries, he has been interested in a question that affects police leadership in the US: How do agency leaders manage situations in which the experiences of front-line officers do not match the expectations of public officials and community leaders?

Foglesong was responsible for the Program in Criminal Justice Policy and Management's field work and research on changes in policing in Los Angeles, which culminated in a report on "Policing Under a Consent Decree." He worked closely with then Mesa, Arizona, Police Chief George Gascon to understand the reasons for the rising costs of policing in many mid-sized cities in the US, which resulted in a jointly authored Kennedy School paper on "Managing Costs and Measuring Value in Policing." In both of these projects, he spent a lot of time watching police executives craft leadership roles for themselves as their organization was buffeted by forces well beyond their immediate control. How that happens in cities across the United States could teach us something about the character of public leadership in policing today.