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# Political Decisions on Police Expenditures: Examining the Potential Relationship Between Political Structure, Police Expenditures and the Volume of Crime Across US States

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Political Decisions on Police Expenditures: Examining the Potential Relationship Between  
Political Structure, Police Expenditures and the Volume of Crime Across US States

by

Xavier D. Burch

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
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## Abstract

The present study was designed to examine the variations in criminal justice expenditures across states in relation to crime, measures of political party membership, and several control variables that also attempt to explain both property and violent crime. The year, 2009, was chosen for the analysis. Data in the present study were collected by Olugbenga Ajilore (2016) for the year 2009 and supplemented with other state level data. The Ajilore dataset is one of the few datasets that has reliable criminal justice expenditure data across states, which is also disaggregated by type. Criminal justice expenditure data is actually quite difficult to collect across states and is not widely available across states particularly over consecutive years/time.

The dependent variables in the current study is the crime rate, which is separated into two categories; violent and non-violent crime. Both variables are important and essential in understanding the effects of police expenditures and political influences. The independent variables are correctional direct expenditures, judicial and legal direct expenditures, police protection expenditures, state legislative composition, state control, and governor's party. Each of these variables either measures the level of expenditures on crime control, or measures factors that may influence the level of expenditures on crime control. The control variables are imprisonment, population age, unemployment rate, poverty rate, education, and foreign born. These six control variables are utilized to accurately account for the other possible factors leading to the effect of police expenditures on crime.



An OLS regression of each criminal justice expenditure on crime was conducted in three models: expenditure/threat Hypothesis Models; expenditure/political party model, and reduced form models. Three equations were estimated for each model to help assess the effects of the independent and control variables on property and violent crime independently. The criminal justice expenditures were used in separate models due to collinearity. Models for total criminal justice expenditures were also estimated to address collinearity between individual criminal justice expenditure measures.

The study found that though Republican states increase criminal justice expenditures, this does not deter or decrease crime. The minority threat is also lightly supported in relation to politics and crime which lacks evidence to support the claim of Blalock's minority threat hypothesis. There is an economic threat that can be seen in the reduced crime models that may indicate that there is in fact a power threat with Republican states. These findings display evidence of social control through politicians, mostly Republicans as the reduced crime models show an increase in poverty and criminal justice expenditures as crime increases. Lastly, the deterrent theory was seen to fail in this study as this research revealed that there is a positive relationship between politics and crime through criminal justice expenditures, specifically police expenditures.

## Chapter I: Introduction

This research examines the potential relationship between political structure, police expenditures and the volume of crime across US states. Extant theories and some research suggest that crime can be deterred by criminal punishments, or by police enforcement, or the concentration of policing. It can be argued that decisions to direct criminal justice expenditures toward enhanced policing or the increased use of imprisonment are political decisions, and that these decisions may reflect attitudes toward what are assumed to be the “best” methods for controlling crime held by members of different political parties (i.e., democrats versus republicans). The current study addresses these issues by examining variations in criminal justice expenditures across states in relation to crime, measures of political party membership, and several control variables that also attempt to explain crime. To do so, this study utilizes data on police expenditures, minority threat, crime, and several control variables from Olugbenga Ajilore’s 2016 study which focused on police expenditures and crime in the year 2009. This research will employ data from 2009 for all 50 US states. The data will include measures of political representation, such as the number of republicans and democrats in the Senate and House of Representatives in each state, as well as the governor’s political party membership. The variable *Police Expenditures* will be the primary independent variable of interest, and the crime rate the dependent variable. The crimes that will be assessed will be drawn from the Uniform Crime Report. Control variables will examine other potentially relevant processes, such as,

racial composition, age structure, policing, unemployment rate, education, foreign born (immigration), prison, and poverty.

The relationship between the political structure, police expenditures, minority threat, and crime has not been widely examined in the criminological literature. Few criminological studies specifically examine whether police expenditures, for example, affect crime (see chapter 2). Some suggest that part of that effect may occur through what is called “minority threat,” or the minority threat hypothesis. It is widely recognized, for example, that the rate at which minorities are migrating into the United States is increasing. Despite research indicating otherwise, many politicians and citizens believe that immigration has a positive relationship with crime, meaning that as immigration increases, crime increases as well. Therefore, the minority threat becomes apparent on a Congressional level, which may lead to an increase in state police expenditures, depending on a state’s political representation or the political party membership of legislative officials across states. As a result of such myths about crime and its causes, some politicians may believe that the expanding police expenditures will have a negative effect on crime, therefore, controlling the minority threat.

The current research focuses on exploring state level hypotheses concerning whether police expenditures and political party membership across states affects crime rates. It is hypothesized the republican states spend more on criminal justice system expenditures, police expenditures specifically, on that democratic and split states, resulting in a decrease in crime. Theoretically, republicans are known to be more conservative and punitive than the democrats. For example, Beckett (1999) argued that in the US, Republicans politicized imprisonment, and used a “get tough on crime” approach in an effort to attract White voters who were concerned with crime away from the Democratic party. The different stances of the two parties toward

crime and its control offers different responses to crime that stress attitudes toward crime control policies, immigration, unemployment, and so on. Hence, the two parties may differ regarding the relationship between social control and crime. Many politicians agree that there needs to be social control – but at what level? How much social control is needed? What forms should it take? Should politicians’ direct expenditures toward the prevention of crime by enhancing policing? Or by efforts to deter crime or incapacitate criminals by expanding expenditures on imprisonment?

Making these kinds of decisions is not necessarily based on empirical evidence and is acknowledged to be affected by ideological assumptions about factors that cause and prevent crime that vary across political parties. Therefore, the current research will argue the social conflict theory and assumptions about deterrence theory help identify social control in relation to politically advised state police expenditures and crime. Three types of expenditures will be measured in this study to assess the relationships between social control expenditures and crime: corrections, judicial and legal, and police protection direct expenditures. Identifying three types of expenditures allows an assessment of whether one or all of these expenditure patterns appears to be related to the level of crime. Theoretically, it is assumed that increased expenditures enhance social control, which leads to a decline in crime. Part of the focus of this thesis is to assess whether there is evidence that this assumed relationship works in practice controlling for other explanations of crime.

To address these issues, Chapter 2 examines prior and similar literature related to the current study. The chapter examines the theoretical aspect as it focuses on the deterrence theory, social control theory, and introduces the relationship between economic and power threats with police expenditures. Chapter 2 also elaborates upon political actions (police expenditures,

political threat, political influences on society, etc.), supporting literature, current arguments, and a synthesis. Chapter 3 discusses the methods used in the current study. It acknowledges the variables used, the regression, sources, of variables, and detail of why the variables have been chosen to be implemented in this study. The chapter also obtains information of supporting and rivaling factors that support each variable as it elaborates and defines the expenditures and data being utilized.

Chapter 4 introduces the different models utilized in the current study: Threat Hypothesis Models; Political Models; and Reduced Form Crime Models. Analysis accounting for collinearity for both property and violent crime is also discussed. The results report the description of the findings from each model related to each hypothesis or theory being tested.

The current study assessed three primary hypotheses related to various theoretical arguments examined in a later chapter. These arguments test political explanations or arguments about the relationship between politics and crime that are often assumed to be true, but which have not been widely tested. For instance, deterrence theories argue that crime control efforts of various types that increase the likelihood of apprehending and punishing offenders can reduce crime. In prior studies, this has been tested by examining the relationship between crime and various kinds of criminal justice expenditures. As expenditures increase, crime should decrease. In political terms, it is often assumed that Republicans are tougher on crime than Democrats. It can be hypothesized that if this assumption is correct, one would expect crime to be lower in Republican controlled states. Politically, states are controlled by political parties at different levels – by having, for example, a Republican governor, or senators, or a majority of senators from one party. Thus, there are different ways to measure political party control to test a hypothesized relationship between politics and crime. Other studies suggest that the level of

crime reflect efforts to control threats to those in power. In other words, in this view, crime would be related to the presence of populations that provide threats to the powerful. These groups could be represented by low income, or racial or ethnic minorities. Arguments supporting each of these general hypotheses are reviewed in chapter 2. The data, variables and methods of research are discussed in chapter 3. The analysis of the various models are presented in chapter 4. Chapter 5 summarizes and makes sense of the findings.

## Chapter II: Review & Theory

This chapter will examine the prior literature and the theories related to the current research. The first area that will be addressed is the theoretical background concerning factors that cause or produce crime, with particular emphasis on theory relating social control to crime rates. There are two theories that are related to the study, which are deterrence theory and the social conflict theory. Deterrence theory will be connected to the general issues regarding the social control of crime to understand the increase or decrease in crime and social control amongst US states. Social conflict theory will be examined to understand and highlight the differences between the political parties' views and their methods for social control. This includes the examination of their response to the minority threat, conservative and liberal views, and the ongoing combat on the congressional level, as to who might have the power to expand the police expenditures. The theories' assumptions will be elaborated upon as a connection to social control and police expenditures.

The second area will address the prior literature. After each theory, a review of related research will be presented to provide a summary of the empirical findings. The findings will connect the assumptions of each theory to the study and provide a base for the current research.

### ***Deterrence Theory***

Deterrence theory was created in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Caesar Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham (Akers, 2013). The theory suggests that the more a punishment is certain, swift, and severe, the more it will deter crime. For example, if a person notices that almost everyone who

attempts to shoplift is arrested, charged, and sentenced to prison, the theory argues that it will deter the people who witnessed or knows about those incidents and outcomes. The extent to which people may be deterred is also related to their knowledge of and perceptions of the likelihood of being caught and punished, the severity of the sentences, as well as how swiftly offenders are prosecuted and sentenced, or processed through the criminal justice system.

Certainty relates to the probability of being caught and punished for the crime that one commits. If the probability (certainty) of one being caught is very high, this should increase deterrence. Celerity is the swiftness of punishment. Swift punishments are argued to increase the deterrent effect of punishment. Lastly, severity is the level of punishment in terms of harshness. To act as an effective deterrent, the punishment must be perceived to be greater than the rewards from the crime.

### Review of Literature

Paternoster (2010) simply explains deterrence as being the omission of crime due to the fear of punishments or sanctions. Paternoster examined the deterrence of crime through sanctions and the theoretical connections presumed by the deterrence process. Paternoster's discussion of the literature on deterrence suggests that punishment has a marginal deterrent effect. He goes on to note that the increase in the number of police has a deterrent effect on some crimes, and that there is some evidence that incarceration has some limited impact on some forms of crime as well. With respect to imprisonment, however, the majority of offenders who are incarcerated recidivate, indicating that the effect of incarceration on those sent to prison is minimal.

As Paternoster noted, deterrence theory suggests that an increase in the certainty and celerity of imprisonment is believed to reduce the level of crime. Paternoster's review of the



literature, however, suggests that findings from relevant studies did not provide evidence that either the length of prison sentencings or the celerity of punishment deterred individuals from committing crime.

Paternoster presents two arguments in relation to the reduction of crime by the increase of police. Several studies have been conducted to understand the effects of the increase of police officer's presence on crime in targeted areas. Part of the impetus for some of those studies arose after President Bill Clinton signed the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act in 1994 which focused on the increase of deterrence. The Act moved to increase the police force by 100,000 street officers and enforce harsher sentencing laws, and tougher gun restrictions, therefore, increasing certainty in targeted areas (Paternoster, 2010). The enforcements of the Act were presumed to increase deterrence by increasing the certainty of detection, as the presence of police officers made it more certain that criminals would be apprehended during or after the commission of a crime (i.e. burglaries, property theft, homicide, etc.).

James Q. Wilson and Barbara Boland (1978) were the first to conduct a study on police presence and its effect on crime. They found that crime did, in fact, decrease in cities where the police presence increased. Robert Sampson and Jacqueline Cohen (1988) found similar effects across cities. However, it was later found that while crime decreased in targeted areas, crime increased in neighboring areas where police presence was not enhanced (i.e., there was a crime displacement effect). This leads some researchers to believe that crime did not completely decrease as crime was displaced -- criminals just began to commit crimes in other locations (e.g., around the corner, in the next neighborhood) until the increase in police presence program was over.

A number of studies address the effect of what is called “hot spot” policing on crime (e.g., Sherman and Weisburd 1995; Braga 2001; Braga and Bond 2008). Braga, Papachristos and Hureau (2014) performed a metaanalysis of hot spots policing research. Their results suggest small impacts of hot spot policing on crime in local communities; that the use of problem oriented policing responses in crime hot spots had larger impacts than the traditional method of simply increasing police presence; and that communities near areas where policing was increased also showed declines in crime.

Based on his review of these studies, Paternoster (2010) argued that some researchers believe that the decrease in crime was not in relation to the increase in police presence but was also affected by the occurrence or perceptions of misconduct by police, and that police in experimental areas where perhaps also with-holding crime reports. Paternoster noted that the latter form of police misconduct was found after surveying several high-ranking officers and receiving statements that inferred that several departments withheld from reporting events to reduce the recorded crime. The lack of crime reporting may have helped to display a decrease in crime when, in fact, the recorded crime decline was a product of police crime reporting behavior. Other researchers argued that despite knowledge of under-reporting of crime by police, one can still not disprove that the certainty of detection was not partially responsible for the decrease in crime observed.

Because targeted policing has some effect on increasing detection and arrests, it might also increase convictions and the number of offenders being sent to prison. As a result, one might argue that targeted policing also enhanced the volume of punishment, or the level of incarceration. Regardless of whether enhanced policing increases punishment, there has been a long-term increase in the use of imprisonment in the US, beginning in 1973. That increase has

been rather large. In 1973, the incarceration rate was about 98/100,000. By the incarceration rate had doubled compared to 1973; by 1993, the incarceration rate was about 370/100,000, increased to about 480/100,000 by 2003, and in 2013, was again approximately 480/100,000 (US Bureau of Justice Statistic 2013). Thus, over this forty-year period, the rate of incarceration had increased by 4.9 times, and it has been argued that this increase in incarceration helped produce the crime drop that began in the early 1990s (Leavitt 2004; for criticisms of that argument see: Farrell 2013; Lynch 2007; Ouimet 2002). William Spelman (2000) and Steven D. Levitt (1998) found some support for the hypothesis that incarceration causes a decrease in crime. Spelman concluded that from 1990-2000, approximately 4% to 21% of the decrease in crime was explained by the increase in incarceration (severity). Levitt (1998) concluded during that same period, approximately one-third of the decrease in crime was in relation to the increase in incarceration. Thus, both researchers agree that the increase of incarceration (severity) played a small role in the decrease of crime. Paternoster (2010) argues that the effect of incarceration on crime varies by type of crime, and that the reduction in crime was mostly among less serious crimes, leading him to suggest that the severity and volume of punishment may not have had an effect on deterring one from crime, while certainty may have had an effect.

Lastly, when discussing the deterrence and the decrease of crime, one looks at celerity. Celerity, again, is noted as the swiftness of punishment. Unfortunately, little research has been conducted to fully understand the effects of celerity on crime rates. The swiftness in this research would relate to the processing in the criminal justice system (e.g. Apprehension, arraignment, trial, plea, sentencing, etc.). Though it is known that the criminal justice process does take time to sentence an individual, the effects amongst several cases are unknown. Therefore, celerity will be omitted in this particular review and current study.

In sum, deterrence theory suggests that increasing police presence, the type of policing employed, and the use and extent of incarceration may, through various mechanisms, lead to a reduction in crime. The results from criminological research, however, suggest that these effects are limited, and impact some kinds of crimes but not others. To some extent, what criminologists know about the limited impact of deterrence, however, does not necessarily translate into effective social control policies, and despite research which suggests that, for example, imprisonment fails to deter (Raaijmakers et al. 2017), there remains a belief in the utility of deterrence.

### ***Social Control Theory***

According to Clinard & Meier (2015) the purpose of social control is to insure or at least attempt to insure, conformity to norms and minimize adverse outcomes such as crime. One conforms to the norms of society by following laws, rules, and regulations. By conforming into a law-abiding citizen, crime is then minimized. This social control is looked upon by congressmen and women, law enforcement, as well as several citizens in the United States. Clinard and Meier continue, stating that there are two basic processes of social control, which are internalization of group norms and the social reaction through external pressures in the form of sanctions from others. Internalization of group norms are norms established within groups that may differ from the outside norms, such as police agencies have norms that are different than other agencies and civilian norms. Social reaction through external pressures in the form of sanctions from others is a societal reaction to laws and policies enforced by other groups.

In relation to the idea of general deterrence theory, social control theory also suggests that the expansion of police expenditures should increase police presence and surveillance,

thereby increasing the likelihood of apprehension, and leading to a decrease in crime. How much money should be or is expended on efforts to deter crime through policing is a political decision. It has been suggested in prior studies such as Caldeira and Cowart (1980) that decisions about police expenditures may be affected by political party membership of decision makers, suggesting that the political party affiliation of a state's senators, congressional representatives, or governor may affect whether those expenditures increase, decrease or remain constant. These expenditures may come as a proactive response to an increase in crime or may be a pre-active initiative to prevent more crime, and in both cases, may be affected by assumptions.

### Review of Literature

Researchers who argue that the expansion of police expenditures is a proactive response toward crime lean more towards a social threat and social control hypothesis. The threat hypothesis states that there are two types of threats, economic and power threat (Blalock, 1967). According to Ferrandino (2015) the economic branch is instrumental which deals with mobility in the midst of competition, while the power branch focuses more on the social aspects of attaining and retaining power in regard to racial and ethnic minorities. Both derive from competition that result from a growing minority population, mobilizing and seeking more resources to attain resources and power from the dominant group in society, which in America is the White Population. This becomes the minority threat – the root of the economic and power threats. The minority threat occurs as the dominant group(s) feels threatened by the rise of minority groups (Sela-Shayovitz, 2009). Sela-Shayovitz states that the minority threat is the result of racial and ethnic divisions and perceived threats, which ultimately lead to efforts to enhance social control to constrain the perceived minority threat.

The class and economic threat have a strong correlation with incarceration. Several studies found a positive correlation between economic conditions and punishment rates by revealing a trend that shows that during periods of economic equality, there is also an increase in prison rates (Chiricos and DeLone 1992; Jacobs and Helms 1996; Melossi 1998). Though many may argue against the economic threat and its relationship with incarceration, research has proven that societies with greater economic stratification lead to an increase in imprisonment rates, which help reproduce an unequal class-based social order (Garland 1990; Jacobs and Kleban 2003). In relation to class and race, the mass expansion of incarceration was an attempt to restore social control in the 1960s and 1970s which caused African Americans to currently make up approximately three-fourths of the prison population (Abu-Jamal & Fernández, 2014). This also caused expanded surveillance in low-income areas, resulting in a higher arrest rate in low-income areas (Beckett & Western, 2001).

In the sense described above, social control is a form of political power, since it requires political decision-making for implementation, and at the same time distributes resources while also influencing how the legal right to use force is employed and disbursed. It is unclear whether political representatives are believed to act on their own perception of threat, represent what they believe are the public's perception of threat, or whether their political decisions represent an actual democratic process that represent some measurement of public consensus. Forty years ago, however, Jacobs and Britt (1979) argued that policing, one of the routine expressions of the state's monopoly on legitimate violence, was one of the ways in which the "control agents of the state" apply legitimate violence and force in ways that reinforce existing power relationships and the unequal distribution of power within society. Regardless of which of these processes occurs, Ferrandino (2015) suggests that the increase in social control represents the efforts of Whites to

maintain power by fracturing mobilization and consolidating resources. Ferrandino goes a step further to state that Whites even promote stereotypes of minorities by conveying and stressing negative and threatening characteristics of minority groups through a variety of media. In relation to the current study, Ferrandino (2015) argued that minority discrimination would increase this response by the dominant group, and a cycle emerges. As part of this cycle, stereotypes about the link between minorities and crime, which in the first place were created by unequal law enforcement and social control in minority communities, becomes widespread and more institutionalized. Through this process, the original premise that minorities represent a threat is reinforced and legitimized, and justifies police targeting policies of minorities and low-income areas. These statements are supported by the findings of Gove, Sullivan, and Wilson (1998) and Liska, Chamlin, and Reed (1985) found that in cities with higher percentages of minorities, particularly African-Americans, have higher arrest rates even when the crime rate is held constant. This also provides support of the Beckett & Western (2011) and Ferrandino (2015) studies which found that African Americans and low-class people are being targeted by politicians and authorities.

Researchers such as, Corzine, Creech, & Corzine (1983) supported Blalock's (1967) threat hypothesis. Blalock argues that nonlinear increases in minority concentration can lead to economic discrimination by Whites due to their perception of Black threats to White levels of resources (Parcel, 1979). This can occur on a micro and macro level with both economic threat and power threat, as Whites discriminate against African Americans through different responses (i.e. politics, law enforcement, media, etc.; Blalock, 1967). Blalock expresses his argument by first discussing competition and discrimination. This competition arises with the increase of minorities where it is then perceived by Whites that they may lose power, become challenged for

jobs, and challenged for land, the control and ownership of corporations, and so on. With the perception of competition, Whites feel as though a minority group can become more organized and change the social system that is structured to oppress minorities. This displays the structure of a system in which both race and class hierarchies intersect. Addressing this race-class intersection, Blalock argues that middle-class Whites should have a greater prejudice toward African Americans than lower-class Whites, since the threat to middle-class White's from Black advancement would be greater than the threat Black advancement poses to lower-class Whites. In other words, middle-class and high-class White have more to lose from the rise of minorities than low class Whites.

Furthermore, Blalock (1967) argues that an increase in the minority population should result in an increase in discrimination. For in terms of power, political discrimination (restriction of minority vote, voting behavior of dominant group, etc.), symbolic segregation (Jim Crow laws, sit-ins, separate facilities and utilities, etc.), and the threat-oriented ideologies (belief systems of dominant group pushed upon minority group(s), differing belief systems, differing traditions, etc.) come into play as Whites continue to maintain power in society. However, Blalock does recognize that even within the dominant group, there are differences that result in conflicts regarding the treatment of minority groups. The example given is the civil war and the treatment of African Americans in the North and the South of the U.S., with those differences being related to the more central role exploitation of slaves played in the maintenance of the South's economy and the economic and political power of the Southern elite.

Corzine, Creech and Corzine found evidence supporting the racial threat hypothesis in their study of lynchings in the southern US. They found that Blacks were more highly discriminated against and looked at as a threat in the South compared to other regions in the



United States. They examined lynchings and how Blacks were harshly treated and killed in relation to the threat of power that Blacks brought to the majority White race. Their findings suggest that in the South, there is more of a social threat and apparent need for social control for the majority race to hold their high-level positions. The majority race employs both formal and informal social control to maintain power. The researcher's findings of social control and social threat regarding power of the majority party is interesting to find and is noted to determine if the same threat of power lies within the reason of police expenditures in this current study.

However, researchers such as Eitle, D'Alessio, and Stolzenberg (2002) studied the political threat hypothesis, economic threat hypothesis, and the threat of Black hypothesis and did not find any empirical support for any of the related hypothesis. Utilizing county-level data from South Carolina (i.e., NIBRS data, race-specific voting data, and demographic data), they found support for the minority threat hypothesis related to Black crime rates, but not for the political or economic threat interpretations of the Black threat hypothesis.

Using data from Phoenix (1950-1988), Nalla, Lynch & Leiber (1997) assessed three competing theories of police growth: public choice, conflict, and organizational constraints. During the study period, Phoenix was the home to a large Hispanic population and a growing industrial base. However, evidence of Blalock's symbolic segregation argument was blatant amongst the city as Nalla et al. (1997) states that in some neighborhoods, there were three barbershops: one for Whites, one for African Americans, and one for Hispanics. There were also different seating arrangements in movie theaters as the Whites sat on the theater's main floor as opposed to African Americans and Hispanics who were to be seated in the balcony. From this display of separation, it would be assumed that a minority threat plays a role in the city.

The study assessed whether police expenditures were influenced by crime rates (public choice), racial, ethnic and class threats (conflict theory), and prior levels of funding (organizational constraints). Nalla et al. (1997) found a statistically significant relationship between race and police expenditures, as well as evidence of a class and an organizational effect.

### ***Politics and Criminal Justice***

The sections above describe studies that have attempted to identify factors that affect the expansion and funding of criminal justice processes. Regardless of the specific explanations found above, each omits a discussion of the last necessary link in this process – that politicians must translate those influences into actions by voting, for example, increased criminal justice expenditures as a crime control response. Because this is true, politicians and various aspects of the structure of politics can affect responses to crime.

It is widely recognized or assumed that Democrats and Republicans differ in their preferred reactions to crime, race, and policies. Republicans are known to be very conservative (Walker, 2014), and Democrats more liberal (Caldeira & Cowart, 1980). While there is some assumption that political parties and political party membership affects responses to crime, few studies have actually examined this important link in the crime-social control chain. Political party membership may, in other words, play a role in the kinds of crime-social control responses that emerge such as the level of funding for criminal justice agencies. It is also possible that political responses are toward crime-social control, because they are believed to be part of racial conflict and racial social control response due to perceived racial threats, which might be influenced by the racial composition of law-makers. This latter observation has rarely been examined in the criminal justice literature.

Multiple findings show that dominant groups often make successful demands to place additional law enforcement officers in cities with a high minority population (Jacobs 1979; Liska et al. 1981; Jackson, 1989). The additional officers are acquired through larger police expenditures. This was seen in 1990, when Former President Bill Clinton established a policy after promising to put 100,000 new police officers on the street to help reduce crime and increase safety and issuing a war on drugs (Marion, 1997). He proposed a budget in 1995 allocating for \$17.3 billion for crime control and related law and judicial activities. Within the \$17.3 billion proposed budget, \$680 million was designated to finance the hiring of 100,000 new police officers. Acts such as this resulted in many minorities being arrested and incarcerated as a number of studies have found a relationship between minority threats and incarceration (Eitle et al., 2002).

This relates back to Blalock's political discrimination argument as the officers were put in low-income minority neighborhoods. As Ferrandino (2015) stated, it becomes justified through the media as it repeatedly reports and depicts minorities in a negative light. Political mobilization, economic competition, and the threat of Black-on-White crime have each been posited as distinct manifestations of racial threat (Blalock 1967; Liska 1987; Liska & Chamlin 1984). The political behavior places more officers in minority neighborhoods while White officers are reportedly expected to use more force and make more arrest against minorities until White neighborhoods or cities become mostly minorities (Deslippe, 2004; B. W. Smith & Holmes, 2014; Stults & Baumer, 2007). With such a method that trickles down from the top of society, minorities face large barriers to move in order to gain a sense of power and economic equality.

## *Synthesis*

The sections above reviewed explanations and studies that have attempted to discover factors that are related to the level and social control of crime. Traditionally, it has been widely assumed that the social control efforts offered by the criminal justice system manage the level of crime in society by deterring criminal offenders. While a significant volume of research suggests that criminal justice processes provide little to no real deterrent impact, politicians and the general public often assumes that criminal justice social control indeed constrains criminal behavior. As a result, there has long been a tendency to believe that controlling crime requires expanding formal, criminal justice social control.

As noted, empirical evidence of a deterrent effect of criminal justice processes on crime has been limited. This leads researchers to explore alternatives to the deterrence argument which examine how perceptions of racial/ethnic and class threats influence expansion of the criminal justice system. These alternative arguments suggest that the expansion of crime control is not about controlling crime, but rather is a method for reinforcing existing class and race power relationships. These studies have also discovered other factors that influence crime such as – immigration, police expenditures, and education.

As pointed out above, missing from all of these explanations is a discussion that recognizes that regardless of which of these factors appear related to crime control, none can be implemented without the actions of political decision makers. Few studies have addressed this observation. While, for instance, prior research has found evidence of a power-threat hypothesis as proposed by Blalock, research has yet to explore whether the relationship between criminal justice control and power-threats are influenced by various dimensions of the political process

that affects the implementation of crime control, and whether those decisions relate to the level of crime. The relationship between politics and crime and the social control of crime can appear in a variety of ways.

It is widely assumed that Republicans are tougher on crime than Democrats. Thus, one might expect that there might be some relationship between political party membership and crime across US states. From a deterrence perspective, one could argue that states with a higher proportion of Republican legislators or which tend to have a Republican governor will be more likely to adopt a “get tough” on crime approach. That association has rarely been tested in the criminal justice literature. Moreover, if there is, as observed in prior studies, a perceived race-threat effect on crime, is that relationship related to the political composition or political structure across US states? Related to this political structure/process question is whether the racial composition of political leadership within a state is also a factor that is related to the level of crime across states. It can be hypothesized that African American politicians, who are more likely to be Democrats than Republicans, have different attitudes toward crime and crime control than White politicians. Thus, it is plausible that the percentage of African American politicians in a state might affect the rate of crime through the kinds of policies those politicians are more likely to support. These latter arguments about the effects of political parties and race and politics on crime have not been sufficiently addressed in the extant criminal justice literature.

### Chapter III: Methods

The purpose of the present study is to examine variations in criminal justice expenditures across states in relation to crime, measures of political party membership, and several control variables that also attempt to explain crime. This research aids the field of criminology in uncovering the possible causes and effects on crime. The different proactive policies and reactions by Democrats and Republicans may have a positive relationship with crime. Understanding the systematic effects, in relation to economic and power threats, will allow one to understand how politicians effect crime through the expansion of police expenditures. As politicians may began to feel threatened, they may increase the police expenditures to marginalize low-income and minority citizens, causing an increase of policing in low-income and minority neighborhoods.

The current study has three hypotheses. (1) Theoretically, criminologist have widely assumed that political parties respond differently to crime. Compared to Democrats, Republicans take a “get-tough” approach to crime, which may decrease crime through various programs that Republicans tend to prefer. As a result, it can be hypothesized that states with greater Republican representation in the legislature, senate, and governor’s office may have lower rates of crime due to these “get-tough” approaches.

(2) Numerous studies suggest that crime may be deterred through increased surveillance and punishment of criminal offenders. Increased surveillance and punishment may require increasing criminal justice expenditures. Therefore, it can be hypothesized that an increase in criminal justice expenditures will cause a decline in crime

(3) As reviewed in the prior chapter, previous studies suggest that the perception of threat has an effect on crime control strategies. Reflecting this argument, in the present study, minority threat is measured as the percent foreign born in each state, and it is hypothesized that as the percent foreign born increases, the threat they present increases, which leads to an increase in crime across states.

In particular, this study utilizes data on police expenditures, minority threat, crime, and several control variables from Olugbenga Ajilore's 2016 study which focuses on police expenditures and crime in the year 2009. In addition, gathered variables such as imprisonment, population age, unemployment, poverty, foreign born (immigration), education, registered voters, and the 2009 congressional composition (State legislative, Governor party, and state control) will be utilized to examine the relation to police expenditures and crime.

This research area is lightly studied as the combination of criminology and political science is scarcely utilized. The present study attempts to reveal a political party's influence on crime as Democrats and Republicans differ in perceptions, proactivity, and reactions to crime. In order to determine the effects, the present study will utilize the expenditures in 2009 across 50 states to understand political influences on crime. Several variables will be utilized based on the use in prior and similar research. The study will conduct an OLS regression to assess the different relationships on violent and property crime.

### ***Data***

The data for this study come from Olugbenga Ajilore's 2016 study which focused on police expenditures and crime in the year 2009 across 50 states. Additional data for other variables such as imprisonment, population age, unemployment, poverty, foreign born,

education, registered voters, and the 2009 congressional composition (State legislative, Governor party, and state control) were collected to assist in the examination of the relation of politics and crime through police expenditures. All 50 states present their own individual crime rate and police expenditures. To assess the influence of the politics, congressional data were gathered for each state for the year 2009 to understand which political party had power and influence in the state, if any.

### ***Procedure***

The processes of this study were to first find and gather data for the criminal justice system expenditures, threat and political variables. For the purposes of this study, after the data were collected from Olugbenga Ajilore's 2016 study and other data sources noted in Table 1.1, the variables *state legislative*, *state control*, and *governor* were dummy coded to represent political control (0 = Democratic; 1 = Mixed; 2 = Republican). Three models were then created to assess the effects of criminal justice expenditures on property and violent crime rates across states. The expenditure variables were as follows: corrections direct expenditures (CE); judicial and legal direct expenditures (JE), and police protection direct expenditures (PE).

Several different models were estimated. Preliminary modelling indicated collinearity between several variables, leading to the need to estimate a large number of models to assess which variables appeared to be related to crime rates across states. Models were estimate for property and violent crime rates separately in order to examine whether the results varied by the general form of crime.

In the analysis chapter, Models 2 through 4 (including related sub-models, e.g., 1.1, 3.1a, 3.1b, etc.), involved property crimes, while models 5 – 7 include the violent crime equations. For



both property and violent crime, there are separate models for: (1) the threat hypotheses (Model 2, property crime; Model 5 violent crime); and (2) criminal justice expenditures controlling for political party membership variables (Model 3, property crime; Model 5, violent crime). Reduced form models for property crime (Model 4) and violent crime (Model 6) are also presented. Additional models (8, 9, 10) examine total expenditure models as an alternative method of estimating the models while addressing collinearity between the various criminal justice expenditure variables.

Several separate expenditure models were estimated. These models were estimated after initial regression analysis indicated multicollinearity between the independent expenditure variables. In addition, the expenditure variables were also highly related to the variable *foreign born*. To account for this, the foreign born variable also has its own model.

After creating the equations, control variables were chosen by relevancy, therefore, the median age variable was chosen over the variable “Under 18” and “18-44” for a more accurate estimate. Individual crime rates were gathered, such as robbery, burglary, murder, rape, etc., but here only the aggregate property crime and violent crime rates were examined.

OLS regressions were conducted to analyze the models. Though most of the data were collected for 50 states, 49 were analyzed as Nebraska did not have information on the majority political party of the State House of Representatives (SHR), State Senate (SS), and the collective state control variables.

## *Variables*

### *Dependent Variable*

The dependent variable in this study is crime. Crime is measured using the FBI'S Uniform Crime Report data for the year, 2009. The data are reported as a rate per 100,000 population. The crime rate in this study is separated into two categories; violent and property (non-violent) crime. Both variables are important and essential in understanding the effects of police expenditures and political influences. Both variables may differ as there are more non-violent crime than violent crime. Additionally, there may be a different effect amongst both categories with respect to the police expenditures due to severity and frequency of crimes. Previous studies have shown that non-violent crime and violent crime may differ as one recalls that non-violent crime decreased as violent crime increased in the 1990s under the Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act and other laws that pertained to overcrowding (Paternoster, 2010). In the present study, non-violent crime is defined as burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft. Violent crime is defined as murder and non-negligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Each are examined at a rate of per 100,000.

### *Independent Variables*

The independent variables for this study are criminal justice social control expenditures, state legislative party membership, Governor's party, and state control. Each of these variables either measures the level of expenditures on crime control, or measures factors that may influence the level of expenditures on crime control.

### *Criminal Justice Expenditures.*

The criminal justice expenditures provide an understanding on how much the government invests into law enforcement agencies across the 50 US states. These expenditures are drawn from Olugbenga Ajilore's 2016 study. The expenditures are examined through the criminal justice system budget and are grouped into three categories. The three categories included police protection, judicial and legal, and correctional direct expenditures.

The police protection variable is the dollar amount, in 2009, that each state spent on police agencies and policing in the United States. The judicial and legal variable is the dollar amount each state spent into the courts and legal procedures in the year, 2009. Lastly, the corrections variable is the dollar amount, in 2009, that each state spent into the jails, institutions, and prison systems. Each expenditure category is measured in the dollar amount of money spent. In Ajilore's study, expenditures are measured in direct expenditures and inter-government expenditures. The direct expenditures are the pay of employees, wages, materials, supplies, equipment, land etc., while indirect expenditures are the expenses to fund projects, functions and facilities. The present research will be focusing on the direct expenditures.

### *State Legislative Party Membership*

It has been argued that crime control strategies and expenditures on crime control may be affected by political forces, and therefore there is some need to control for the effect of political party membership across states to assess whether this effect is related to the level of crime across states. Three different political measures are used in this study: political party composition of the House of Representatives and political party affiliation of state senators in each state; the political party affiliation of each state's governor; and the political party composition of the

House of Representatives, state senators, and the political party affiliation of the governor in each state, combined.

The state legislative variable is coded 0, 1, 2. For example, if the Republican party is the majority party in both the SHR and SS, the legislative control will be noted as *Republican*. This will be the same if the Democratic party was the majority party in both SHR and SS and noted is *Democrat*. However, if the Republican party is the majority in the SS and the Democratic party is the majority party in the SHR, it will be noted that the legislative control is *Split*. The variables will be labeled as; all Democrats (D=0), split (S=1), or all Republicans (R=2). Nebraska is the only state without recorded data for the SHR and SS in 2009.

#### *Governor*

The governor variable is taken from the National Conference of State Legislature database to understand the political party of the Governor of each state. The governor may be a Republican or Democrat. The Governor party variable is a binary variable which indicates the Governor's political party, be it Democrat (D=0) or Republican (R=1). This variable will be combined with the *legislative control* variable to create the *state control* variable. For example, if the Governor's party variable is noted to be Republican and the *legislative control* variable, Republican, the *state control* variable will be Republican. However, if the Governor's party is Republican and the legislative variable is *Democrat* or *split*, the state control variable will be noted as, *Mixed*. The state control variable will be noted Democratic (D=0), a mixture of control (M=1), or Republican (R=2).

### Control Variables

There are six control variables for this research to accurately account for the other possible factors leading to the effect of police expenditures on crime. The control variables include imprisonment, population age, unemployment, poverty, foreign born, and education which are listed in Table 1 with description and sources.

*Imprisonment rate.* The variable, imprisonment, is the rate of inmates in state prisons per 100,000 population and is used to view a possible relationship between threats, police expenditures, and crime. This variable has been used in several previous studies by researchers such as Paternoster (2010), Garland (1990), Jacobs and Kleban (2003), and Abu-Jamal & Fernández, (2014).

*Age Structure of the Population.* It has been widely noted that crime and age are related. To control for the effect of age on crime, the present study uses median age of the population of each state.

*Unemployment.* The variable unemployment has been utilized in several studies and has been proven to have a relationship with crime by Melossi (1989) and Michalowski & Pearson (1990). Research indicates that this variable contributes to crime as unemployment rates have a positive relationship with crime rates and incarceration. Unemployment is the percentage of the population in each state that is unemployed.

*Poverty.* Prior research has indicated a relationship between poverty and crime (Ferrandino, 2015 and Chambliss, 1994). Understanding low-income areas and the targeting areas allows for one to understand a relationship with crime. The over saturation of police in low-income and high crime areas may present a positive correlation with police expenditures,

political parties, and crime rates. In the current study, the variable is measured as the percentage of those living below poverty level in each state.

*Foreign born (immigration).* Prior research has indicated a relationship between immigration and crime, although studies report conflicting results (Ousey and Kubrin, 2017). The threat hypothesis suggests that responses to crime and hence the level of crime may reflect perceptions of threats posed by immigrant groups. In the present study, immigration is measured as the percent of foreign born residents in each state.

*Education.* Prior research indicates a potential relationship between education and crime (Chambliss, 1994). As education increases, crime is expected to decline. In the current study, education is measured as the percent of state residents with a high school degree or greater in each state.

The sources for the control variables can be found in table 1.1.

**Table 1.1 The Descriptions and Sources of the Current Study's Control Variables**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Source</b>
<u>Imprisonment</u>	The rate of imprisonment is recorded by 100,000 of each state.	The Disaster Center Crime Page
<u>Population</u>	The population percentage is recorded by "under 18", "18-44", and median age in each state.	U.S. Census Bureau Age and Sex Composition: 2010
<u>Unemployment</u>	The unemployment rate is recorded by the annual average of each state.	Bureau of Labor Statistics U.S. Department of Labor
<u>Poverty</u>	The poverty variable is recorded as the percentage impoverished in each state.	U.S. Census Bureau Poverty: 2009 and 2010
<u>Foreign Born</u>	The total percent of foreign born is recorded by the thousands for all races, collectively.	U.S. Census Bureau Place of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population:2009
<u>Education</u>	The education variable consists of the percentage of High School education and more and Bachelor's Degree or more.	U.S. Census Bureau Educational Attainment in the United States: 2009

## Chapter IV: Results

The following tables are the product of equations for the threat hypothesis (Tables 2.1-2.4), political variables (Tables 3.1a-3.4b), and social control model (Tables 4.1-4.4).

An OLS regression was run to estimate the first threat hypothesis model for property crime, which included all of the control variables and all of the expenditure variables. A variation inflation factor (VIF) was then estimated to assess whether the high zero-order correlation coefficients between the independent variables was affecting the OLS estimates through multicollinearity. It was also noted that in the initial OLS equations, the direction of the zero-order relationship between some of the independent variables and the dependent variable had changed, also indicating the possibility of multicollinearity between independent variables. The VIFs were examined to determine which of the variables were generating multicollinearity. The results suggested that there was a large correlation between the expenditure variables, with the zero-order correlations in some cases exceeding  $r = 0.90$ .

Because the expenditures variables were of theoretical interest, a separate OLS model was run for each expenditure variable. These newly estimated equations for each separate expenditure variable still indicated multicollinearity and unstable regression coefficients. In the new models, the problem of multicollinearity occurred between each expenditure variable and the variable foreign born. Thus, the equations were re-estimated without foreign born. In addition, a set of separate equations using the foreign born variable were also estimated to



address the problem of multicollinearity and to address the portion of the threat hypothesis related to the prevalence of foreign born populations.

In short, in the analyses that follow, it was determined that separate models should be run for the threat hypothesis models and for each expenditure type (i.e., corrections, judicial and police). These models were estimated separately for property and violent crime.

### ***Property Crime Analysis and Models***

This section reviews OLS estimates predicting property crime rates across US states. These estimates are examined in Tables (also called Models) 2.1 through 4.4.

#### **Model 2: Threat Hypothesis Models**

Variants of Model 2 examine the effects of criminal justice expenditures and threat variables on the property crime rate.

Table 2.1 displays the corrections expenditures and control variables with property crime. The corrections expenditures have a positive correlation with crime, which implies that as correctional expenditures increase, property crime increases. Following deterrence theory arguments, this finding is not in the expected direction, and suggests that increased correctional expenditures does not deter crime across states, while controlling for possible threats.

The control/threat variables that were used in Model/Table 2.1-2.4 are: unemployment rate; median age; poverty; incarceration rate (prison); high school education and more (HS more); bachelor's degree and more (BS more), and state control. The unemployment rate was used as an indicator of a class-threat (i.e., economically marginal people might be more likely to be arrested when perceived threats increase). However, unemployment did not display any

statistically significant relationship with property crime. A second class-threat indicator was poverty. Poverty was also not significantly related to the outcome.

In addition, none of the remaining control variables (population age, education, imprisonment) were related to the property crime rate. Finally, the political variable, state control which measured the degree to which a state was democratic or republican, was unrelated to property crime. In short, Model 2.1 indicated a significant, but unexpected relationship between correctional expenditures and crime, and no effect for measured threat or political factors.

**Table 2.1 Effects of Corrections Direct Expenditures and Threat Variables on Property Crime**

Variable	b	se	$\beta$	P
Corrections D.E.	.124	.013	.786	**0.000
Unemployment	6357	8230	.057	0.444
Median Age	-8114	6560	-.089	0.223
Poverty	8702	8926	.125	0.336
Prison	80.01	137.3	.056	0.563
HS or More	-2620	7845	-.042	0.740
BS or More	3786	4531	.084	0.408
State Control	30234	22064	.101	0.178

Note.  $R^2 = .803$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

Model 2.2/Table 2.2 is essentially the same as Model 2.1, except that the correctional expenditures variable is replaced with judicial/legal expenditures. The findings in Table 2.2 are essentially the same as in Table 2.1 – the only significant effect is for the criminal justice expenditure variable. However, once again, the effect is in the unexpected direction, and rejects the deterrence hypothesis

**Table 2.2 Effects of Judicial and Legal Direct Expenditures and Threat Variables on Property Crime**

Variable	b	se	$\beta$	P
Judicial and Legal D.E.	.169	.036	.557	**0.000
Unemployment	17722	11757	.161	0.140
Median Age	-11610	9535	-.127	0.230
Poverty	5989	12977	.086	0.647
Prison	227.97	201.78	.159	0.265
HS or More	-7751	11652	-.123	0.510
BS or More	7660	6596	.170	0.252
State Control	49938	32001	.166	0.127

Note.  $R^2 = .583$  N = 49, \*\*p < .01, \*p < .05

Model 2.3/Table 2.3 displays the OLS regression for property crime employing threat variables and police expenditures as the expenditure variable. The results from Table 2.3 mirror those from the expenditure variables assessed in Table 2.1 and 2.2. Here, police expenditures are positively and significantly related to property crime controlling for various threat hypotheses and for political party control within a state. This result again contradicts the expectations of deterrence theory, as states with greater levels of police expenditures have higher levels of crime. None of the threat or political variables demonstrated a significant effect on property crime.

**Table 2.3 Effects of Police Protection Direct Expenditures and Threat Variables on Property Crime**

Variable	b	se	B	p
Police Protection D.E.	.576	.073	.745	**0.000
Unemployment	11277	9240	.103	0.229
Median Age	-12034	7368	-.131	0.110
Poverty	11260	10167	.161	0.275
Prison	122.47	155.70	.085	0.436
HS or More	555.64	9148	.008	0.952
BS or More	3916	5168	.087	0.453
State Control	38349.39	964954	.128	0.132

Note.  $R^2 = .727$ , N = 49, \*\*p < .01, \*p < .05

Table 2.4 displays the relationship of property crime and foreign born controlling for other threat variables. Foreign born is the only variable that is statistically significant in the model ( $p < 0.000$ ), and indicates that as state populations hold more immigrants, property crime increases. Prior research on the relationship between immigration and crime has been inconsistent. Ousey and Kubrin (2017) recently reviewed that literature, and tested that relationship using meta-analysis. They found a weak, negative immigration-crime association. Typically, the immigration-crime relationship has been assessed as a crime causation argument which suggests that increased immigration or the presence of immigrants either increases or decreases the prevalence of crime. Theoretically, this is different than the threat hypothesis argument posed here, which suggests that a positive association between immigrants and crime may indicate an increased perception of minority group threat which, in turn, would increase crime through an expanded number of arrests. Whether the positive association noted here is an indicator of an increased perception of threat or an increase in factors that promote crime cannot be determined.

In sum, the models tested here indicated a relationship between three measures of criminal justice expenditures and property crime, as well as immigration and property crime. The criminal justice expenditures were opposite of the hypothesized effect derived from deterrence theory, while the immigration effect support a threat hypothesis.

In the section that follows, political models predicting property crime rates are estimated. Those models include criminal justice expenditures along with political variables that measure the degree of democrat/republican control within states measuring the political party membership of governors, state legislators and US Senators.

**Table 2.4 Effects of Foreign Born and Threat Variables on Property Crime**

Variable	b	Se	B	p
Foreign Born	102.17	11.95	.774	**0.000
Unemployment	13439	8779	.122	0.134
Median Age	-4707	7197	-.051	0.517
Poverty	11171	9698	.161	0.256
Prison	226.43	149.42	.158	0.138
HS or More	3087	8818	.049	0.728
BS or More	4445	4898	.099	0.370
State Control	24361	23939	.081	0.315

Note.  $R^2 = .769$   $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

### *Model 3: Political Models*

The results displayed in Tables 3.1a and 3.1b show a statistically significant relationship between property crime and correction expenditures ( $\beta = .887/.877$ ,  $p < .000$ ). As in the previously estimated corrections expenditure model, the effect is negative and rejects the hypothesis derived from deterrence theory.

Table 3.1a also shows a significant effect of state legislative political party composition on property crime ( $\beta = .175$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The effect is in the positive direction, indicating that the more republican a state's legislature, the higher the rate of property crime. Table 3.1b shows the effect for state political control which measures democrat/republican dominance across the governor's office, state legislature and US Senate on crime. The effect was positive, indicating a higher crime rate in state's with more republican control ( $\beta = .229$ ,  $p < .05$ ). An independent test for the political party affiliation of the governor found no statistical significant effects in either model.

**Table 3.1a. Effects of Corrections Direct Expenditures, State Legislative Composition, and Governor Party on Property Crime**

Variable	b	Se	B	P
Corrections D.E.	.139	.010	.887	**0.000
State Legislative Composition	42689	16274	.175	*0.012
Governor's Party	9595	288880	.022	0.741

Note.  $R^2 = .797$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 3.1b Effects of Correction Direct Expenditures, State Control, and Governor Party on Property Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	P
Corrections D.E.	.138	.010	.877	**0.000
State Control	68893	28562	.229	*0.020
Governor's Party	-45133	41071	-.105	0.278

Note.  $R^2 = .792$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

Tables 3.2a and 3.2b replicate the model in 3.1 a and b, substituting judicial expenditures for correctional expenditures and controlling for political party membership measures. As in the earlier models, judicial expenditures are found to be a significant predictor of property crime. The relationship, however, is in the unexpected direction, and reject deterrence theory arguments.

Table 3.2a reveals that the state legislative variable is statistically significant ( $\beta = .262$ ,  $p < .05$ ), while Table 3.2b shows a statistically significant effect for state political party control. These results replicate those found when controlling for correctional expenditures. Here again, the effect is opposite of the hypothesized relationship, and the greater republican control within a state, the higher the crime rate.

**Table 3.2a Effects of Judicial and Legal Direct Expenditures, State Legislative Composition, and Governor Party on Property Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	P
Judicial and Legal D.E.	.220	.031	.725	**0.000
State Legislative Composition	64020	25800	.262	*0.017
Governor's Party	23636	44906	.055	0.601

Note.  $R^2 = .507$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 3.2b Effects of Judicial and Legal Direct Expenditures, State Control, and Governor Party on Property Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	P
Judicial and Legal D.E.	.219	.031	.721	**0.000
State Control	117799	44281	.392	*0.011
Governor's Party	-73906	63322	-.171	0.249

Note.  $R^2 = .515$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

Tables 3.3a and b assess the effect of police expenditures on crime controlling for political party concentration measures. The results replicate the prior findings: police expenditures are positively related to the property crime rate, and political concentration measures indicate that the more republican a state, the higher the rate of property crime. These findings also reject the hypotheses these models were designed to test (related to deterrence theory and the effect of republican control on crime).

**Table 3.3a Effects of Police Protection Direct Expenditures, State Legislative Composition, and Governor Party on Property Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	P
Police Protection D.E.	.653	.059	.844	**0.000
State Legislative Composition	49491	19167	.203	*0.013
Governor's Party	32021	33776	.074	0.421

Note.  $R^2 = .720$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 3.3b Effects of Police Protection Direct Expenditures, State Control, and Governor Party on Property Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	P
Police Protection D.E.	.643	.060	.832	**0.000
State Control	79606	33562	.265	*0.022
Governor's Party	-31436	48160	-.073	0.517

Note.  $R^2 = .714$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

Tables 3.4 a and b assess the foreign-born threat hypothesis controlling for political party concentration. Confirming prior model estimates, foreign born was positively related to property crime rates supporting the threat hypothesis. Consistent with the results from model 3.1 a and b and 3.2 a and b, political party concentration was positively related to crime, indicating that the more republican a state, the higher the rate of crime.



**Table 3.4a Effects of Foreign Born, State Legislative Composition, and Governor Party on Property Crime**

Variable	b	Se	B	P
Foreign Born	114.16	9.80	.865	**0.000
State Legislative Composition	47344	18323	.194	*0.013
Governor's Party	-15681	32725	-.029	0.700

Note.  $R^2 = .743$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 3.4b Effects of Foreign Born, State Control, and Governor Party on Property Crime**

Variable	b	Se	B	P
Foreign Born	113.65	9.67	.861	**0.000
State Control	88276	31470	.293	**0.007
Governor's Party	-85829	45552	-.199	0.066

Note.  $R^2 = .749$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

#### Model 4: Reduced Form Property Crime Models

Based on the results from the prior property crime models, reduced form models for property crime fitted with only significant variables were estimated. As in the models above, there is a separate model for each criminal justice expenditure type, and one for foreign born. The other variables included in each model were poverty (measuring economic threat) and one of the political concentration measures for state legislature. The state legislature measures were employed because its effect was stronger than the overall political concentration measure in the models tested above.

The results of the reduced form estimates confirm the prior OLS estimates and present the most parsimonious model in each case. In each model, the criminal justice expenditure, poverty and the political control measure were significant and positively related to property

crime. As in previous models, the results rejected deterrence hypotheses, supported a class threat hypothesis, and rejected the hypothesis that crime would be lower in republican controlled states.

The efficiency of the models varied. The most efficient model was produced using correctional expenditures (adjusted  $R^2 = 81.8$ ), followed by the police expenditure model (74.9%) and then the judicial expenditure model (55.33%).

**Table 4.1 Effects of Corrections Direct Expenditures, Poverty, and State Legislative Composition on Property Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	p
Corrections D.E.	.137	.010	.875	**0.000
Poverty	10120	4387	.145	*0.026
State Legislative Composition	37019	15321	.152	*0.020

Note.  $R^2 = .818$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 4.2 Effects of Judicial and Legal Direct Expenditures, Poverty, and State Legislative Composition on Property Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	p
Judicial and Legal D.E.	.221	.030	.726	**0.000
Poverty	15307	6837	.220	*0.030
State Legislative Composition	56782	24350	.233	*0.024

Note.  $R^2 = .553$   $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 4.3 Effects of Police Protection Direct Expenditures, Poverty, and State Legislative Composition on Property Crime**

Variable	b	se	$\beta$	p
Police Protection D.E.	.648	.056	.837	**0.000
Poverty	12795	5136	.184	*0.016
State Legislative Composition	44747	18050	.184	*0.017

Note.  $R^2 = .7498$  N = 49, \*\*p < .01, \*p < .05

The final reduced form property crime equation is found in Table 4.4, which estimates the foreign born threat model controlling for the poverty threat hypothesis and the political control hypothesis. Here, all the variables were positively and significantly related to property crime. Those results suggest support for both the foreign born and poverty threat hypotheses but reject the political concentration hypothesis. Overall, the model is efficient, predicting 77.7% of the variation in property crime across states.

**Table 4.4 Effects of Foreign Born, Poverty, and State Legislative Composition on Property Crime**

Variable	B	se	$\beta$	p
Foreign Born	112.22	9.02	.850	**0.000
Poverty	12781	4838	.184	*0.011
State Legislative Composition	37127	16952	.152	*0.034

Note.  $R^2 = .777$  N = 49, \*\*p < .01, \*p < .05

### *Violent Crime Analysis and Models*

In this section, the models employed to predict property crime rates across states are re-estimated using violent crime rates as the outcome. Doing so allows the hypotheses described earlier to be assessed for similar/differential effects across major crime types. Given that the

hypotheses and general models examined here were reviewed in the property crime section, here minimal discussion will be presented to summarize the results and to note any differences between the property and violent crime model estimates.

Model 5: Threat Hypothesis Models

The results for the first violent crime model were the same as those for the first property crime model (2.1 – 2.3). Controlling for a variety of factors, the only significant predictors of violent crime across states were criminal justice expenditure variables. The effects were positive or unexpected, and rejected a deterrence hypothesis.

**Table 5.1 Effects of Corrections Direct Expenditures and Threat Variables on Violent Crime**

Variable	B	Se	B	p
Corrections D.E.	.021	.002	.836	**0.000
Unemployment	1247	1058	.072	0.245
Median Age	-1080	843.45	-.075	0.208
Poverty	539.85	1147	.050	0.641
Prison	5.67	17.66	.025	0.750
HS or More	-715.23	1008.691	-.073	0.482
BS or More	291.37	582.73	.041	0.620
State Control	2927	2837	.062	0.308

Note.  $R^2 = .866$ ,  $N = 49$ ,  $**p < .01$ ,  $*p < .05$

**Table 5.2 Effects of Judicial and Legal Expenditures and Threat Variables on Violent Crime**

Variable	B	Se	B	p
Judicial and Legal D.E.	.033	.005	.685	**0.000
Unemployment	3010	1539	.175	0.058
Median Age	-1437	1248	-.100	0.257
Poverty	258.98	1699	.024	0.880
Prison	33.88	26.42	.151	0.207
HS or More	-957.83	1525	-.097	0.534
BS or More	669.25	863.69	.095	0.442
State Control	6301	162457	.134	0.140

Note.  $R^2 = .708$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 5.3 Effects of Police Protection Expenditures and Threat Variables on Violent Crime**

Variable	B	se	B	p
Police Protection D.E.	.098	.010	.808	**0.000
Unemployment	2027	1212	.118	0.102
Median Age	-1705	966.68	-.119	0.085
Poverty	1005	1333	.092	0.455
Prison	12.85	20.43	.057	0.533
HS or More	-78.75	1200	-.008	0.948
BS or More	265.63	678.09	.038	0.697
State Control	4251	3274	.090	0.202

Note.  $R^2 = .828$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

Model 5.4 assessed the effect of the foreign born threat hypothesis on violent crime, and similar to the property crime model, the results were the same, and indicated a foreign-born threat effect. Unlike the property crime model, in Table 5.4 an effect is also noted for unemployment as a threat indicator.

**Table 5.4 Effects of Foreign Born and Threat Variables on Violent Crime**

Variable	B	Se	B	p
Foreign Born	17.62	1.43	.854	**0.000
Unemployment	2370	1054	.138	*0.030
Median Age	-419.51	864.23	-.029	0.630
Poverty	1021	1164	.094	0.385
Prison	30.86	17.94	.138	0.093
HS or More	442.30	1058	-.045	0.678
BS or More	319.65	588.14	.045	0.590
State Control	1817	2874	.039	0.531

Note.  $R^2 = .864$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

### Model 6: Political Models

Models 6.1 (a/b), 6.2 (a/b), and 6.3 (a/b) assess the effect of criminal justice expenditure by type on violence crime controlling for political party measures, while 6.4 (a/b) estimates the violent crime rate assessing the foreign born threat hypothesis controlling for political party measures. These models correspond with the property crime models found in Tables 3.1 (a/b), 3.2 (a/b), 3.3 (a/b) and 3.4 (a/b). These results for the violent crime estimates are virtually identical to those for property crime, indicating that: (1) regardless of the specific measure of criminal justice expenditure employed, the deterrence hypothesis is rejected; (2) support for the foreign born threat hypothesis; and (3) rejection of the political party hypotheses which suggest an inverse relationship crime and republican control of political processes within a state.

There were two interesting differences between the violent and property crime models. For every model, the models fit the violent crime data better, with increases in the adjusted  $R^2$  between 6 to 20 percent. Compared to prior macro-level studies, this is somewhat unusual, and property crime rates are often more efficiently estimated at the macro-level. Second, in the foreign born threat model (6.4.b), an effect is found for the political party of the governor that

was not seen in any of the prior estimates. Here, governor is negatively related to violent crime, meaning that states with a democratic governor have a lower violent crime rate. It should be noted, however, that like the other statistically significant political party measure outcomes, this result rejects the hypothesis that crime is lower in states with more extensive republican control.

**Table 6.1a Effects of Corrections Direct Expenditures, State Legislative Composition, and Governor Party on Violent Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	P
Corrections D.E.	.023	.001	.929	**0.000
State Legislative Composition	5027	2087	.132	*0.020
Governor's Party	263.29	3704	.003	0.944

Note.  $R^2 = .863$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 6.1b Effects of Correction Direct Expenditures, State Control, and Governor Party on Violent Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	P
Corrections D.E.	.023	.001	.922	**0.000
State Control	7478	3687	.159	*0.049
Governor's Party	-5523	5302	-.082	0.303

Note.  $R^2 = .859$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 6.2a Effects of Judicial and Legal Direct Expenditures, State Legislative Composition, and Governor Party on Violent Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	P
Judicial and Legal D.E.	.039	.004	.824	**0.000
State Legislative Composition	9017	3407	.236	*0.011
Governor's Party	2209	5930	.033	0.711

Note.  $R^2 = .649$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 6.2b Effects of Judicial and Legal Direct Expenditures, State Control, and Governor Party on Violent Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	P
Judicial and Legal D.E.	.039	.004	.819	**0.000
State Control	16232	5863	.345	**0.008
Governor's Party	-11155	8384	-.165	0.190

Note.  $R^2 = .653$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 6.3a Effects of Police Protection Direct Expenditures, State Legislative Composition, and Governor Party on Violent Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	p
Police Protection D.E.	.109	.008	.897	**0.000
State Legislative Composition	6189	252	.162	0.018
Governor's Party	3903	4450	.058	0.385

Note.  $R^2 = .801$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 6.3b Effects of Police Protection Direct Expenditures, State Control, and Governor Party on Violent Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	p
Police Protection D.E.	.107	.008	.886	**0.000
State Control	9274	4451	.197	*0.043
Governor's Party	-3326	6387	-.049	0.605

Note.  $R^2 = .794$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$



**Table 6.4a Effects of Foreign Born, State Legislative Composition, and Governor Party on Violent Crime**

Variable	b	se	B	p
Foreign Born	19.15	1.19	.928	**0.000
State Legislative Composition	5860	2237	.154	*0.012
Governor's Party	-3622	3996	-.054	0.370

Note.  $R^2 = .844$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 6.4b Effects of Foreign Born, State Control, and Governor Party on Violent Crime**

Variable	b	se	B	p
Foreign Born	19.08	1.18	.924	**0.000
State Control	10746	3853	.229	**0.008
Governor's Party	-12487	557	-.185	*0.030

Note.  $R^2 = .846$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

*Model 7: Reduced Form Violent Crime Models*

The following reduced crime models (Tables 7.1-7.4) present very similar results to those derived from the property crime reduced form models. The main differences here are not substantive, but rather relate to the increased percentage of variation in violent crime across states predicted by these models compared to the property crime models. Essentially, these findings confirm the main prior results: (1) expenditures are positively associated with violent crime, rejecting the deterrence hypothesis; (2) Republican control is positively related to violent crime, rejecting the political party control hypothesis; and (3) evidence supporting a threat hypothesis related to foreign born and poverty are evident.

**Table 7.1** Effects of Corrections Direct Expenditures, Poverty, and State Legislative Composition on Violent Crime

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	p
Corrections D.E.	.023	.001	.920	**0.000
Poverty	1174	568.05	.108	*0.044
State Legislative Composition	4263	1983	.112	*0.069

Note.  $R^2 = .875$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 7.2** Effects of Judicial and Legal Direct Expenditures, Poverty, and State Legislative Composition on Violent Crime

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	p
Judicial and Legal D.E.	.039	.004	.824	**0.000
Poverty	2017	901.65	.185	*0.030
State Legislative Composition	7945	3211	.208	*0.017

Note.  $R^2 = .683$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 7.3** Effects of Police Protection Direct Expenditures, Poverty, and State Legislative Composition on Violent Crime

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	p
Police Protection D.E.	.108	.007	.891	**0.000
Poverty	1607	679.99	.148	*0.022
State Legislative Composition	5578	2389	.146	*0.024

Note.  $R^2 = .820$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

**Table 7.4 Effects of Foreign Born, Poverty, and State Legislative Composition on Violent Crime**

Variable	b	Se	$\beta$	p
Foreign Born	18.81	1.11	.911	**0.000
Poverty	1602	593.50	.147	**0.010
State Legislative Composition	4323	2079	.113	*0.43

Note.  $R^2 = .863$  N = 49, \*\*p < .01, \*p < .05

*Model 8: An Alternative Collinearity Model: Total Criminal Justice Direct Expenditures*

Due to collinearity in the initial models, above, criminal justice expenditures were estimated separately. The benefit of that approach is it allow assessment of the independent effect of each type of criminal justice expenditure on crime rates across states. An alternative to that approach is aggregating the types of criminal justice expenditures into total criminal justice expenditures. In this section, the results of regressions examining the total criminal justice expenditure measure are briefly reviewed to determine whether there is any substantial differences between a total expenditure and the specific expenditure models estimated and reviewed above. These models appear in Tables 8.1 through 10. In sum, these results are substantively similar to those obtained employing the individual criminal justice system expenditures, and the differences here related to overall model fit, which varies in these Tables depending on the criminal justice reference category from the prior tables employed for comparative purposes.

**Table 8.1 Effects of Total Criminal Justice System Direct Expenditures and Threat Variables on Property Crime**

Variable	B	Se	$\beta$	p
Total Criminal Justice D.E.	.072	.009	.740	**0.000
Unemployment	9959	9238	.091	0.287
Median Age	-9120	7406	-.100	0.225
Poverty	9051	10099	.130	0.375
Prison	141.97	155.31	.099	0.366
HS or More	-1654	8999	-.026	0.855
BS or More	4191	5140	.093	0.420
State Control	37777	24883	.126	0.137

Note.  $R^2 = .748$  N = 49, \*\*p < .01, \*p < .05

**Table 9.1a Effects of Total Criminal Justice System Direct Expenditures, State Legislative Composition, and Governor Party on Property Crime**

Variable	B	Se	$\beta$	p
Total Criminal Justice D.E.	.083	.007	.853	**0.000
State Legislative Composition	52214	18798	.214	**0.008
Governor's Party	15467	33183	.036	0.643

Note.  $R^2 = .731$ , N = 49, \*\*p < .01, \*p < .05

**Table 9.1b Effects of Total Criminal Justice System Direct Expenditures, State Control, and Governor Party on Violent Crime**

Variable	B	Se	$\beta$	p
Total Criminal Justice D.E.	.082	.007	.842	**0.000
State Control	87723	32746	.292	**0.010
Governor's Party	-55184	2733	-.128	0.247

Note.  $R^2 = .728$ , N = 49, \*\*p < .01, \*p < .05

**Table 10.1** Effects of Total Criminal Justice System Expenditures, Poverty, and State Legislative Composition on Violent Crime

Variable	B	se	$\beta$	p
Total Criminal Justice D.E.	.014	.001	.920	**0.000
Poverty	1471	623.16	.108	*0.023
State Legislative Composition	5810	2189	.112	*0.011

Note.  $R^2 = .875$ ,  $N = 49$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \* $p < .05$

## Chapter V: Summary and Conclusion

It is often argued that criminals can be deterred, and crime reduced through the use of formal social control mechanisms such as the expansion of police presence or the size of the criminal justice system. It is often argued that political parties respond differently to crime, and it is often assumed but not empirically assessed that different political parties respond to crime using different approaches, and that republicans are tougher on crime. These latter assumptions would suggest that crime should be lower in locations where there is a greater political concentration of republican leaders. Finally, as noted early, others have argued that the control of crime is also a form of political-social control which responds to perceived threats presented, for example, by low-income groups or racial or ethnic minorities. The present study addressed these various arguments using cross-sectional crime, criminal justice expenditure and demographic across US states.

Criminal justice expenditures, the expansion of policing or the increased use of imprisonment involves political decision making. These decisions may reflect attitudes toward what are assumed to be the “best” methods for controlling crime held by members of different political parties (i.e., democrats versus republicans). It is assumed the republicans are more punitive and conservative than democrats, which may imply that republican oriented and controlled states should have lower crime rates than democratically controlled state. Decisions about funding and expanding the criminal justice process may be affected by other factors as well. Blalock’s minority and economic threat hypothesis argues that politicians use criminal

justice expenditures as a form of social control to reduce perceived threats to power. As noted, the current study examined these arguments by assessing the connection between criminal justice expenditures, political party concentrations and the presence of various populations perceived as presenting threats to the powerful and crime rates across states.

The present study was designed to examine the variations in criminal justice expenditures across states in relation to crime, measures of political party membership, and several control variables that also attempt to explain both property and violent crime. The year, 2009, was chosen for the analysis. Data in the present were collected by Olugbenga Ajilore (2016) for the year 2009 and supplemented with other state level data. The Ajilore dataset is one of the few datasets that has reliable criminal justice expenditure data across states, which is also disaggregated by type. Criminal justice expenditure data is actually quite difficult to collect across states and is not widely available across states particularly over consecutive years/time.

The independent and control variables were drawn from several different sources that are displayed in Table 1.1. The dependent variables in the current study are property crime and violent crime; the independent variables are correctional direct expenditures, judicial and legal direct expenditures, police protection expenditures, state legislative composition, state control, and governor's party. The control variables are imprisonment, population age, unemployment rate, poverty rate, education, and foreign born.

Several of the independent variables were found to be highly correlated. The variable, *foreign born* was highly correlated with the criminal justice expenditures, specifically the corrections direct expenditures. Moreover, the criminal justice expenditure measures for different segments of the criminal justice system were also highly correlated. To address this issue,

foreign born and the individual criminal justice expenditure variables were used in a separate model as independent variables to model variations in crime rates across states.

The type of regression used in the current study is an OLS regression of each criminal justice expenditure on crime in three models: expenditure/threat hypothesis models; expenditure/political party model, and reduced form models. Three equations were estimated for each model to help assess the effects of the independent and control variables on property and violent crime independently. The criminal justice expenditures were used in separate models due to collinearity. Models for total criminal justice expenditures were also estimated to address collinearity between individual criminal justice expenditure measures.

The findings across all models yielded very similar results for all the criminal justice expenditures in both the property crime and violent crime models. Findings indicate that all criminal justice expenditures had a positive, statistically significant relationship with both property and violent crime. The sign of the relationships, however, were in the unexpected direction, and rejected deterrence hypotheses.

The results also indicated that republican political party concentration was related to crime compared to democratic states. Contrary to expectations, republican controlled states had higher crime rates for both property and violent crime. This finding was consistent across all the models estimated in the present study.

Several threat hypothesis variables were assessed across the various models. A persistent threat effect was found between foreign born and crime; as the percent of foreign born increased, so too did crime, which could indicate that the volume of crime may be an effort to control the perceived threat posed by foreign born populations. Most of the remaining threat variables were



insignificant. In certain cases, an effect was found for poverty, and in a few cases, for unemployment, but these threat effects were not consistent across all models.

The political variable also showed similar results across all models, for both property and violent crimes estimates. With one exception, the relationship between political party measures and crime were positive, indicating that the more political control republicans had within a state, the higher the rate of crime. These findings fail to reject the hypothesis that politics have an effect on crime but rejected the hypothesis that Republican states have a negative relationship with crime.

Furthermore, the reduced crime models also shared similar findings across criminal justice expenditures and property and violent crime. The models indicate that state legislative and poverty is statistically significant in each model. Collectively, the results indicate that the more Republicans a state has in legislation, the more that social control is implicated through correction expenditures, increasing poverty as property and violent crime increases. This is consistent with other researches that find that poverty is a threat variable or possibly a result of social control by the majority race, translating to the majority party in the current research. The findings support and fail to reject the power hypothesis, economic hypothesis.

The results require further research to assess some of the outcomes in greater detail. For example, there was a persistent foreign born and republican effect on crime. In the presence study, the relationship between these variables was not specifically modeled. This raises question about whether, for example, republican states might attempt to control crime and perceived threats by increasing criminal justice expenditures.

It is widely recognized that the criminal justice process is affected by political decision making of various types. For example, legislators determine the penalties that attach to criminal behaviors, as well as which behaviors will be counted as crimes in the criminal law. Legislators also affect the funding of the criminal justice system. In the present study, I examined the independent effects of political party membership across states on levels of crime, and the independent effects of criminal justice expenditures on crime across states. However, it is likely that these two processes are related to one another, and measuring the relationship between political party composition, criminal justice expenditures, and crime requires the use of more complicated methods than apply in the present study. Those methods would require the use of time series data across states or other levels of analysis, such as the city level to model correctly. As a result, the preliminary findings from the study which suggest that republican states have more crime than democratic states may reflect voters transitioning to support republicans more over time when crime rates remain high. Again, testing this possibility requires the use of time series data that allows levels of crime and the changes in political party representation to be related to one another. There are several limitations of the present study which relate to the time and variables utilized. Due to only focusing on one year, the data may not fully represent how politics affect crime across years. As a result, the study's results may not be generalized across other segments of time.

This study also failed to utilize variables that measure other factors that impact rates of criminal offending, and variables which may also be important for a more complete understanding of the relationship between politics, crime, and the criminal justice system. For example, political variables that might be of utility of such studies will include registered voters, voting results, or African American legislators. The absence of these variables may cause the

study to be less accurate when analyzing the results of each model and relating them to prior research findings.

Lastly, future research should implement the variables previously mentioned as well as conduct a longitudinal study to reveal more accurate findings. However, it will be difficult as many states have missing information in prior years in relation to their political compositions, registered voters, and expenditures. The effects of politics may change or become more significant when the African American legislator variable is included. Also, the registered voter's variable may provide more information of the state populations that may have higher or lower crime rates. The findings of the study can be replicated and should be extended as the lack of research done in this area is an issue.

In conclusion, political party membership across states was shown to be related to the level of crime. It was found that controlling for the type and level of criminal justice expenditures, states with greater republican control had higher levels of crime. This finding suggests that the "get-tough" strategies preferred by Republicans and assumed to reduce crime may not work as advertised. It was also found that states with higher levels of criminal justice expenditures had higher levels of crime. Logically, this makes sense to the extent that controlling a larger volume of crime requires additional criminal justice expenditures. However, that finding suggests that expanding the criminal justice system does not necessarily lead to a reduction in crime, but further longitudinal test of this relationship need to be undertaken. Finally, the study also found evidence in support of the minority threat hypothesis, when that threat was measured by the percent of residents in a state that are foreign born. Other threats such as an economic threat which was measured in the present study through the use of poverty and unemployment indicators were not found to be related to crime. Overall, the findings from this study question

some traditional assumptions about factors that generate crime, such as the relationship between politics, “get-tough” approaches and crime, and assumptions about factors that deter criminal behavior.

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