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## Using Google Alerts to Study Police Crime

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# Using Google Alerts to Study Police Crime

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**October 18, 2021**

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# Background

- The federal government does not collect, analyze, nor disseminate data concerning crimes perpetrated by the police.
  - **George Floyd Justice in Policing Act** – “This bill addresses a wide range of policies and issues regarding policing practices and law enforcement accountability. It increases accountability for law enforcement misconduct, restricts the use of certain policing practices, **enhances transparency and data collection**, and establishes best practices and training requirements” (H.R. 7120).
    - The legislation stalled in the Senate – No immediate plans of data collection by federal government
- Previous research is heavily reliant on special commissions, observational data, and is often limited to one jurisdiction or city.
- The public’s understanding is conditional on investigative journalism and sensationalized cases. The true breadth and depth of police crime may be misunderstood.
- Other independent entities such as Mapping Police Violence, Fatal Encounters, and the Washington Post collect and disseminate data about police encounters but these measures do not necessarily capture police *crime*.

# Purpose

- **The Henry A. Wallace Police Crime Database** is a research project of Philip Stinson and the Police Integrity Research Group at Bowling Green State University.
- The purpose of the Henry A. Wallace Police Crime Database is to **improve policing** and **inform the public** about crimes committed by nonfederal sworn law enforcement officers across the United States.

## The Henry A. Wallace Police Crime Database

### Police Integrity Research for the Public Good

The Police Crime Database includes summary information on 13,214 criminal arrest cases from the years 2005-2016 involving 10,901 individual nonfederal sworn law enforcement officers, each of whom were charged with one or more crimes. The arrested officers were employed by 4,104 state, local, and special law enforcement agencies located in 1,648 counties and independent cities in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Search by Location



Search by Crime



Search by Victim



# Inclusion Criteria

- We aim to capture criminal arrest cases of nonfederal sworn law enforcement officers within the United States since 2005.
  - Although we never claim to capture all cases, we do believe our methods capture the overall phenomenon of police crime.
- Inclusion Criteria:
  - Individual must be a sworn nonfederal law enforcement officer with general powers of arrest
  - Individual must be an officer at the time of arrest and/or the commission of the crime
  - Arrest must occur on or after January 1, 2005
    - “Arrest” includes arrests, indictments, charge by criminal information, charge by summons, etc. for *criminal* offenses.
- Primary Unit of Analysis: Criminal Arrest Case

# Identifying a Case

- Google Alerts and Google News Search Engine are utilized to identify a criminal arrest cases.
- News articles are printed and checked against our inclusion criteria for relevancy.
- This starts the beginning process of coding variables such as full name, officer's employing agency, city, county, state, and date of arrest.
- Once approved by a supervisor, our research assistants will enter this criminal arrest case into our internal object-relational database system.
- Additional Google Alerts are created to track that specific officer and criminal arrest case.

Offender Name (Last, First) _____	
Offender's Employer / Agency _____	
City (County) & State _____ COUNTY FIPS: _____	
Case # _____	NEW CASE LOGGED IN BY: _____
Case Ref: _____ (i.e., Victim #, Arrest #)	TODAY'S DATE: _____
Date of Arrest _____ (mm/dd/yyyy)	APPROVED BY: _____
N-Number _____	DATA ENTERED INTO ONBASE BY: _____
	CASE FILES SCANNED INTO ONBASE BY: _____

**NEW CASE LOG-IN SHEET**

\_\_\_\_\_ MEETS CASE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA (SEE BELOW CRITERIA)

\_\_\_\_\_ CHECKED NAME/ARREST AGAINST EXISTING BOOKING SHEET DATABASE

\_\_\_\_\_ *THIS IS A "NEW" OFFICER NOT FOUND IN OUR DATABASE OR*  
\_\_\_\_\_ *THIS IS AN OFFICER WHO IS ALREADY IN OUR DATASET FOR A DIFFERENT ARREST/CASE AND HIS/HER EXISTING N-NUMBER IS INDICATED IN THE BOX ABOVE*

\_\_\_\_\_ VERIFIED AGENCY, COUNTY, STATE & FIPS ON CSLLEA 2008 DATA SET

Case Eligibility Criteria:

(1) The person was employed as a sworn nonfederal law enforcement officer:  
 a. at the time of their arrest and/or  
 b. at the time of commission of the crime(s) for which they were arrested.

(2) The term "officer" includes sworn law enforcement officers with general powers of arrest and includes officers, troopers, deputies, constables, etc. An "officer" includes all ranks (e.g., officers, detectives, investigators, corporals, sergeants, lieutenants, captains, majors, colonels, inspectors, deputy chiefs, chief deputies, chiefs, sheriffs, commissioners, etc.).

(3) The officer was arrested on or after January 1, 2005.

(4) The officer's employing nonfederal law enforcement agency must be located within the United States (limited to those areas within and/or inclusive of the fifty states and the District of Columbia).

(5) "Officer" includes those who are employed full-time and/or part-time, as well as officers who are auxiliary or reserve officers.

(6) "Arrests" include arrests, indictments, charge by criminal information, charge by summons, etc. for criminal offenses. Traffic tickets alone do not meet the criteria for inclusion as a "case" in this research study.

(7) Use FIPS code for the county where the arrested officer's employing agency is located. For officers employed by a state or multi-county agency, use the FIPS code for the county where the officer regularly works (not where the agency HQ is located).



# Continuously Tracking Cases

- After a case is identified, we track the case through the criminal courts process.
- Using Google Alerts, we gather Google News articles about the officer and criminal arrest cases and store these documents with our internal object-relational database.
- Court records and news videos are also obtained and stored.

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF LOUISIANA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

VERSUS

KENNETH BOWEN  
ROBERT GISEVIUS  
ROBERT FAULCON  
ANTHONY VILLAVASO  
ARTHUR KAUFMAN  
GERARD DUGUE

**Judge tentatively sets August trial for former Fort Worth officer charged with murder**

BY EMERSON CLARRIDGE

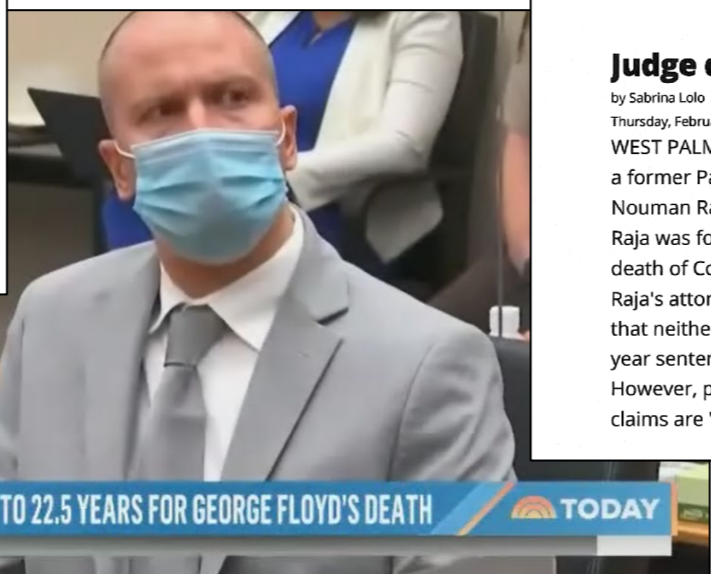
OCTOBER 27, 2020 03:49 PM, UPDATED OCTOBER 27, 2020 06:20 PM

A state district judge on Tuesday set a tentative window for the trial for a former Fort Worth police officer indicted on a murder charge in the death of a woman he shot as he and another officer handled an open structure call.

SECTION "N" (1)

**ORDER AND REASONS**

Before the Court is the Motion for New Trial (Rec. Doc. 963) originally urged by defendant Arthur Kaufman, and joined in by the other defendants in this matter who were tried and convicted in 2011 (hereinafter referred to as "Defendants" or "the defendants").<sup>1</sup> The government opposes this motion. (Rec. Doc. 1007.) The Court heard oral argument on the defendants' motion on June 13, 2012 (Rec. Doc. 1020). A detailed recounting of subsequent events is set forth in this Court's Order and Reasons dated November 26, 2012 (Rec. Doc. 1070). As an expected result of that Order, the



Judge denies Nouman Raja's sentence reconsideration | WPEC

<https://cbs12.com/news/local/judge-denies-nouman->

**Judge denies Nouman Raja's sentence reconsideration**

by Sabrina Lolo

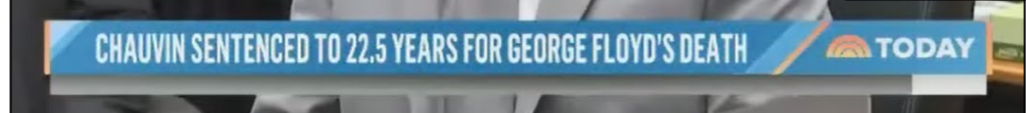
Thursday, February 27th 2020

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (CBS12) — A judge denied a sentence reconsideration request from a former Palm Beach Gardens police officer **convicted of killing a local church drummer**. Nouman Raja's request was denied Tuesday.

Raja was found guilty last year of attempted first-degree murder and manslaughter for the death of Corey Jones in 2015. He was **sentenced to 25 years** in prison.

Raja's attorneys had **filed a motion** back in January to correct "a sentencing error," claiming that neither the jury's verdict nor the evidence in the case were enough to support his 25-year sentence.

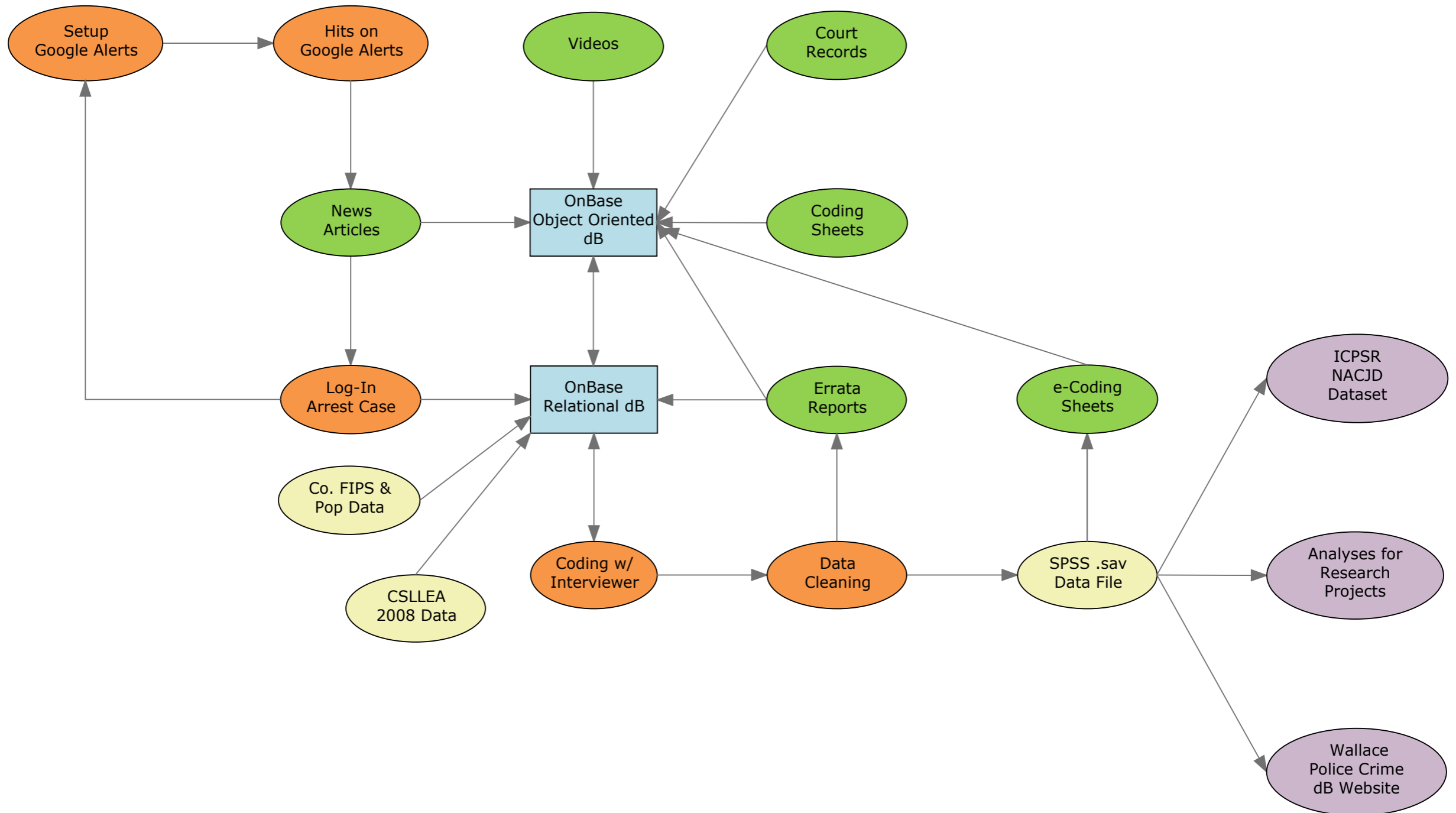
However, prosecutors said in a later court filing that Raja's request was "flawed" and the claims are "legally unsound."



# Coding a Case

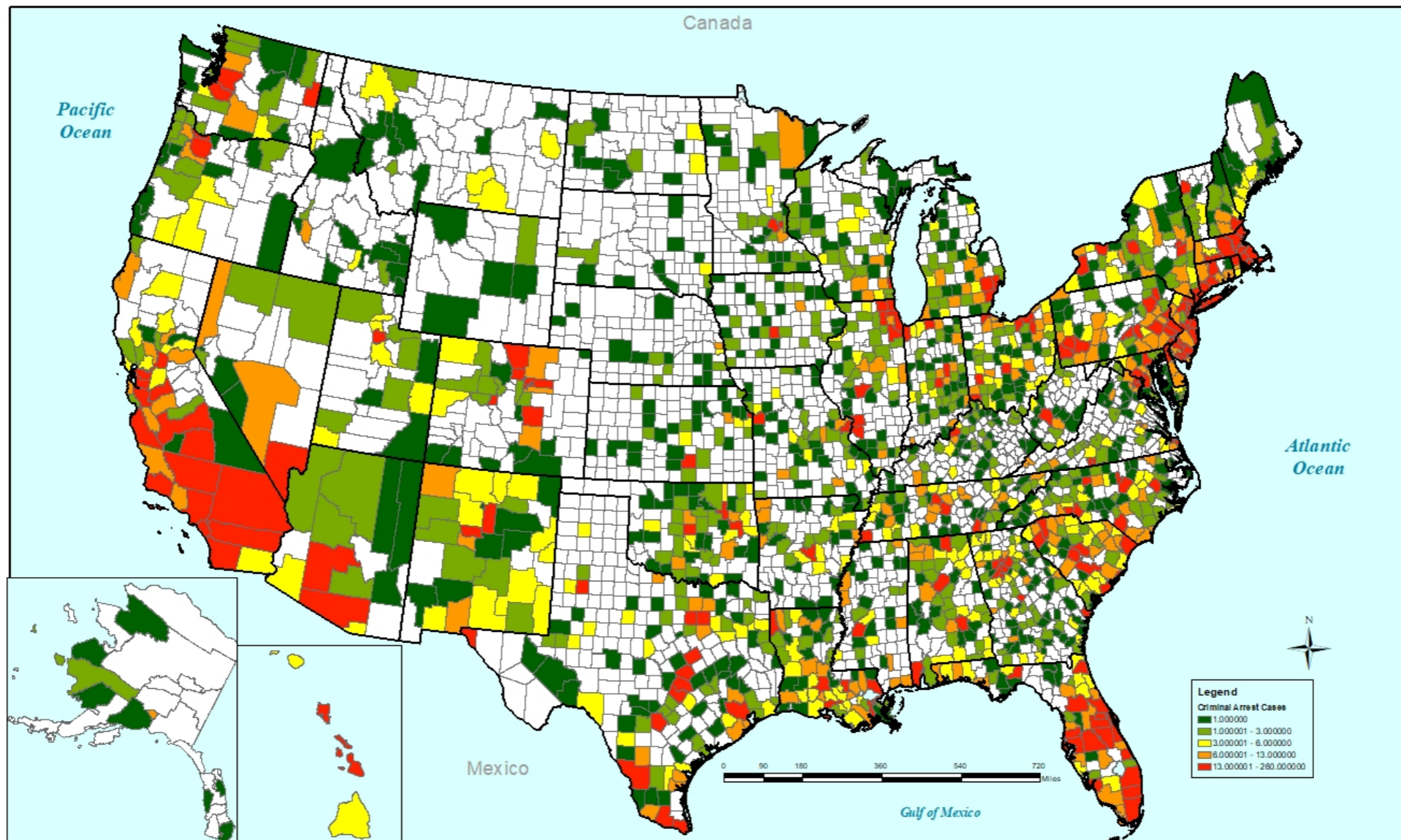
- Once sufficient time has passed for the majority of cases to be concluded, we code each case on over 270 variables.
  - Variables include but are not limited to:
    - Offense variables, types of crime, criminal case outcomes and sentencing, employment outcome, officer and victim demographic, and agency characteristics
- We utilize a data collection instrument (Unicom Intelligence Interviewer software) to code these cases. We have customized the survey instrument by building in logic and integrating it with our internal object-relational database system.
- Cases are coded by year of arrest. Once a full year is complete, inner-coder reliability and data cleaning processes are used to check for accuracy and consistency between coders.
- The year's worth of criminal arrest cases are then added to our master dataset and made publically available through the Henry A. Wallace Police Crime Database.
- Currently, information about 2005 through 2016 criminal arrest cases are publically available and we are working on coding 2017 criminal arrest cases.





# Our Data

- The Henry A. Wallace Police Crime Database currently includes summary information on **13,214 criminal arrest cases** from the years **2005-2016** involving **10,901 individual nonfederal sworn law enforcement officers**, each of whom were charged with one or more crimes. The arrested officers were employed by **4,104 state, local, and special law enforcement agencies** located in **1,648 counties** and independent cities in all 50 states and the District of Columbia.



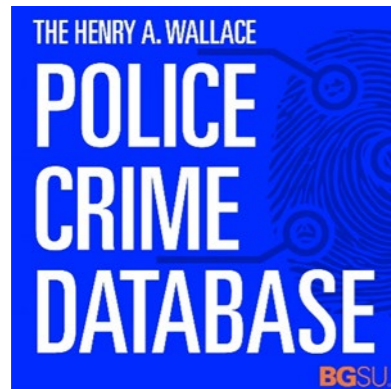
# Strengths and Limitations

- Limitations:

- Only captures criminal arrest cases – cases of police *misconduct* which do *not* result in a criminal charge are *not* included.
- Our knowledge of these cases are limited to *publically available* information, news articles, and court records.
- Using Google Alerts requires real-time data collection.

- Strengths:

- There are no other comprehensive, nationally representative datasets of police crime within the United States.
- Descriptive summary data which can inform the public of the breadth and depth of the problem.
- Our data lend itself well to more advanced quantitative data analysis techniques such as, logistic regression, CHAID and CART decision trees algorithms, and other predictive models.
- Using Google Alerts we have identified more cases than other more traditional methods.



## Henry A. Wallace Police Crime Database

<https://policecrime.bgsu.edu/>

## Police Integrity Research Group

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