

# THOMAS P. ABT

## EXPERIENCE

### **CENTER FOR THE STUDY AND PRACTICE OF VIOLENCE REDUCTION**

College Park, MD

*Founding Director*

*November 2022 -present*

Established and lead center at the University of Maryland dedicated to translating sound science into practical anti-violence policy. Emphasizing community violence perpetrated with firearms, the center gathers rigorous research, synthesizes it, and makes it freely available to policymakers, practitioners, and the public. The center also provides practical instruction to local, state, and federal leaders on how to choose, apply, and align anti-violence strategies in their jurisdiction.

### **UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND**

College Park, MD

*Associate Research Professor, Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice*

*November 2022 -present*

Teach, study, publish, and advise on the use of evidence-informed approaches for reducing community violence and other public safety challenges.

### **COUNCIL ON CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

Washington, DC

*Senior Fellow*

*January 2020-present*

Lead major projects and provide strategic guidance to the Council, in addition to writing and speaking about the proper use of evidence and data to inform criminal justice policy. Chaired the Violent Crime Working Group, a multi-disciplinary expert body charged with identifying the causes of rising violence and facilitating the translation of anti-violence research into policy and practice. Directed the National Commission on COVID-19 and Criminal Justice, a nonpartisan effort that assessed the impact of COVID-19 on the justice system and produced a priority agenda of systemic changes to better balance public health and safety.

### **HARVARD UNIVERSITY**

Cambridge, MA

*Senior Research Fellow, John F. Kennedy School of Government*

*October 2014-December 2019*

*Senior Fellow, Harvard Law School*

*January 2017-May 2018*

Published, lectured, and consulted on a variety of topics within the criminal justice field including community gun violence in the United States and abroad; policing and prosecutorial reform; local, state, and federal strategies to reduce mass incarceration; and the development and implementation of evidence-informed approaches. Wrote *Bleeding Out: The Devastating Consequences of Urban Violence – And a Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets*, published by Basic Books in June 2019.

### **EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, STATE OF NEW YORK**

Albany, NY

*Deputy Secretary for Public Safety*

*September 2013-August 2014*

Served as principal public safety advisor to Governor Andrew Cuomo. Managed all state criminal justice and homeland security agencies, including the Divisions of Criminal Justice Services, Corrections and Community Supervision, Homeland Security and Emergency Services, Military and Naval Affairs, and the State Police. Responsible for establishing, among other initiatives, the GIVE (Gun-Involved Violence Elimination) Initiative, which employs evidence-based, data-driven approaches to reduce gun violence in the seventeen most violent jurisdictions outside New York City. Awarded Federal Bureau of Investigation Top Secret security clearance.

### **OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

Washington, DC

*Chief of Staff*

*June 2010-June 2013*

*Counselor to the Assistant Attorney General*

*June 2009-May 2010*

Performed management and strategic functions for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP). Coordinated senior policy staff, supervised budget processes and personnel, and managed communications personnel reviewing press advisories, legislative comments, and congressional testimony. Serve as OJP's liaison, managing relationships within the Department of the Justice and with the White House, other federal agencies, and Congress in order to ensure policy and programmatic alignment. Led the development and management of the Obama Administration's National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention and the Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, which was recognized by the Harvard Kennedy School as one of the Top 25 Innovations in Government for 2013.

**BARACK OBAMA CAMPAIGN FOR CHANGE**

*Voter Protection Director  
Volunteer Attorney*

Des Moines, IA  
August-November 2008  
March-July 2008

Established and implemented voter protection program for the state of Iowa. Served as liaison to state and local election officials, including Iowa’s Attorney General and Secretary of State. Advised senior campaign staff concerning election law and prepared relevant legal pleadings. Devised and implemented legal plan for early voting across the state.

**PAUL WEISS RIFKIND WHARTON & GARRISON**

*Litigation Associate*

New York, NY  
May 2004-July 2008

Areas of practice included criminal and regulatory defense, internal investigations, election law, antitrust, employment and securities litigation. Served as chief trial counsel for labor unions AFL-CIO, AFSME and SEIU in constitutional challenge to Florida voter registration laws. Successfully defended John Kerry, John Edwards, and others in dispute related to the 2004 Presidential election.

**NEW YORK COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY’S OFFICE**

*Assistant District Attorney*

New York, NY  
September 2000-April 2004

Prosecuted hundreds of criminal cases, including charges of murder, gang assault, armed robbery, and domestic violence. Tried seventeen jury trials with fourteen convictions. Successfully briefed and argued appeal before the First Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court.

**EDUCATION**

**GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY LAW CENTER**

Juris Doctor, Cum Laude, May 2000

Honors: Deans List; 1999 National Civil Rights Moot Court Competition, Finalist and Best Brief

**UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN**

Bachelor of Arts in Economics, December 1994

**SELECTED PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS AND ACTIVITIES**

Member, Campbell Collaboration Crime and Justice Coordinating Group, 2017-present.

Member, Scientific Committee, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 5th International Conference on Governance, Crime and Justice Statistics, March-June 2021.

Co-Chair, 100 Day Subcommittee, Gun Violence Prevention Policy Committee, Biden-Harris Campaign, August-November 2020.

Member, Criminal Justice Reform Working Group, Boston Bar Association, 2017.

Member, Planning Committee for the Forum on Global Violence Prevention, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2016-2017.

Reviewer, National Academy of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Committees on National Statistics, Law and Justice, Modernizing National Crime Statistics, 2015-2017.

**COURSES AND SEMINARS**

Abt, T., *Bleeding Out: Causes, Consequences, and Cures for Urban Violence in the United States and Across the Globe*, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Spring 2019.

Abt, T. & Winship, C., *Policing, Crime, and Legitimacy in a Global Context*, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Fall 2018.

Abt, T. & Winship, C., *Policing, Crime, Legitimacy, and Evidence*, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Spring 2018.

Abt, T., *What Works & Why: Examining Effective Violence Reduction Strategies in the United States and Abroad*, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, Spring and Fall 2015.

## **SELECTED MEDIA APPEARANCES**

*U.S. cities struggle with increase in violent crime*, CBS News, April 14, 2022.

*NYC subway shooting fits a pattern of mass shootings, crime researcher says*, Morning Edition, National Public Radio, April 13, 2022.

*United States of Emergency: The Violent Crime Epidemic*, Dr. Phil, February 16, 2022.

*Violent Crime on the Rise across the U.S.*, CBS News, February 14, 2022.

*Thomas Abt on Rising Crime Rates*, C-SPAN | Washington Journal, February 6, 2022.

*What's behind rising violent crimes in the U.S., and how they can be reduced*, PBS NewsHour, January 27, 2022.

*Fueled by Gun Violence, Cities Across the US are Breaking All-Time Homicide Records This Year*, CNN, December 12, 2021.

*What's Behind a Recent Surge in U.S. Gun Violence – And How to Stop It*, PBS NewsHour, July 7, 2020.

*Gun Violence Surges in Major American Cities in the Midst of a Pandemic and a Policing Crisis*, CNN, July 1, 2020.

*This Man Says His Anti-Violence Plan Would Save 12,000 Lives – Why Aren't More Cities Using It?* The Atlantic, September 11, 2019.

*Walmart's Announcement and Other Signs of Hope in the Gun Crisis*, The New Yorker, September 5, 2019.

*Thomas Abt Talks New Book on Urban Violence, 'Bleeding Out'*, All Things Considered, National Public Radio, July 13, 2019.

*Researcher Lays Out Way to Stop Urban Violence*, Morning Joe, MSNBC, July 3, 2019.

*When Crime Data Becomes Politicized*, On the Media, WNYC, September 29, 2017.

*Harvard Scholar Highlights Unclear Causes Behind Rising Homicide Rates*, All Things Considered, National Public Radio, September 27, 2017.

## **SELECTED PUBLICATIONS**

Abt. T., *The U.S. Knows How to Reduce Crime*, The Wall Street Journal, November 25, 2022.

Abt. T., *The Sacramento Shooting Escalated American Violence - We Know How To Shut It Down Again*, Los Angeles Times, May 17, 2022.

Abt. T., *Catching Criminals and Connecting Communities: The Balanced Biden-Adams Anti-Violence Push is Rooted in Good Evidence*, New York Daily News, February 6, 2022.

Abt. T., Bocanegra, E., & Tingirides, E., *Violent Crime in the U.S. Is Surging. But We Know What to Do About It*, TIME, January 12, 2022.

Abt. T., *Necessary but Not Sufficient: The Police Role in Reducing Violence*, Police Chief Magazine, November 2021.

Abt. T., *To stop the spike in urban violence, engage those most at risk*, The Washington Post, March 16, 2021.

Abt, T. & Rosenfeld, R., *Murders spiked in 2020 - that's exactly why we need policing reforms*, Houston Chronicle, February 26, 2021.

Rosenfeld, R., Abt. T., & Lopez, E., *Pandemic, Social Unrest, and Crime in U.S. Cities: 2020 Year-End Update*, Council on Criminal Justice, January 2021.

Abt, T. & Rosenfeld, R., *Prepare for more homicide – COVID-19 caused violent crime to fall, but it won't stay like that*, Houston Chronicle, July 29, 2020.

Muggah, R. & Abt. T., *Calls for Police Reform Are Getting Louder – Here Is How to Do It*, Foreign Policy, June 22, 2020.

Abt. T., Rosenfeld, R., & Lopez, E., *COVID-19 and Homicide: Final Report*, Arnold Ventures, June 2020.

Abt. T., *My eight-year plan to dramatically reduce urban gun violence*, The Guardian, December 10, 2019.

Abt. T., *Democrats are skipping out on the most important gun fight of all*, The Boston Globe, July 19, 2019.

Abt. T., *To Cut Urban Bloodshed, Focus on Violent Hot Spots*, The Wall Street Journal, July 3, 2019.

Abt. T., *Bleeding Out: The Devastating Consequences of Urban Violence – and a Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets*. Basic Books, June 2019.

Abt. T., *The Real Killer: Fighting the Scourge of Everyday Violence*, Foreign Affairs, May/June 2019.

Abt. T., *How Not to Respond to the Rising Murder Rate*, The New York Times, September 26, 2017.

Abt. T. *Towards a Framework for Preventing Community Violence Among Youth*. Psychology, Health & Medicine, 22(sup1), 266-285, 2017.

Abt. T., *Here's How to Combat Violence in the U.S.*, Vox, September 30, 2016.

Abt. T. & Winship, C., *“What Works” in Reducing Community Violence: A Meta-Review and Field Study for the Northern Triangle*. United States Agency for International Development, 2016.

Robinson, L. & Abt, T., *Evidence-Informed Criminal Justice Policy: Looking Back, Moving Forward*, in Blomberg, T.G. & Mestre, J. (Eds.), *Advancing Criminology and Criminal Justice Policy*, New York: Routledge, 2016.

Abt, T., *Integrating and Implementing the Evidence to Stop Shootings: New York's GIVE (Gun-Involved Violence Elimination) Initiative*, Translational Criminology, Fall 2014.

M.L. Leary & Abt, T., *The Federal Role in Promoting Evidence-Based Violence Prevention Practices*, IOM (Institute of Medicine) and NRC (National Research Council). The evidence for violence prevention across the lifespan and around the world: workshop summary. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2014.

## **SELECTED TESTIMONY**

*Reimagining Public Safety in the COVID-19 Era*, U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on the Judiciary, Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, and Homeland Security, March 8, 2022.

*Gun Violence as a Public Health Crisis*, Baltimore City Council, Health Committee, October 30, 2019.

*Hearing to Review All Grants and City Funds Available for Violence Reduction*, Boston City Council, Committee on Public Safety and Criminal Justice, August 8, 2019.

## **SELECTED PRESENTATIONS**

Moderator, *Protecting Public Safety*, Washington Post Live, June 28, 2022.

Speaker, *Solving America's One-of-a-Kind Murder Problem*, Democracy, Conflict, and Governance Program, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, May 17, 2022.

Featured Speaker, *Bleeding Out: How to Save Lives Now*, Project on Municipal Innovation, Harvard Kennedy School of Government, March 25, 2022.

Panelist, *The Impact of Progressive Prosecution and Decarceration: Is the Landscape of Criminal Justice Reform Changing?* Fordham Law School, April 6, 2022.

Featured Speaker, *Responding to the Surge in Violent Crime*, Mayors-Only Session, U.S. Conference of Mayors, February 14, 2022.

Featured Speaker, *National Crime Trends: How to Talk about Them, What to Do about Them*, National Press Foundation, November 16, 2021.

Keynote Speaker, *Gun Crime, What's Causing It, and How to Save Lives by Stopping Violence*, Iowa Ideas Conference, October 15, 2021.

Moderator and Panelist, *Research and Statistics for Reducing Crime and Violence in Cities*, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 5th International Conference on Governance, Crime and Justice Statistics, June 16, 2021.

Plenary Panelist, *Addressing Risks and Challenges to City Safety, Security and Good Governance*, United Nations High-level Debate on Urban Safety, Security and Good Governance, April 21, 2021.

Panelist, *Policing at a Crossroads*, U.S. Conference of Mayors Leadership Meeting, February 18, 2021.

Featured Speaker, *Bleeding Out: The Devastating Consequences of Urban Violence – and a Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets*, Thursday Morning Talks for Mount Auburn Hospital, January 14, 2021.

Speaker, *COVID-19 and the US Criminal Justice System: Evidence for Public Health Measures to Reduce Risk*, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Webinar, October 15, 2020.

Keynote Speaker, *Urban Violence in the Wake of Coronavirus and Civil Unrest*, American Society of Evidence-Based Policing Annual Conference, June 1, 2020.

Speaker, *A Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets*, TEDMED 2020, March 2, 2020.

Keynote Speaker, *Bleeding Out: A Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets*, Clinton School of Public Service Speaker Series, February 13, 2020.

Author, *Author Meets Critics – Bleeding Out: The Devastating Consequences of Urban Violence – A Bold New Plan for Peace in the Streets*, American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting, November 13, 2019.

Keynote Speaker, *Bleeding Out: Strategies to Reduce Urban Violence*, Council on Criminal Justice Inaugural Event, July 31, 2019.

Invited Speaker, *Five Recommendations for a New Gun Violence Research Agenda*, Presentation to the Advisory Committee of the National Collaborative on Gun Violence Research, June 4, 2019.

Panelist, “*What Works*” in *Reducing Urban Violence*, Symposium on Violence Prevention at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, December 8, 2017.

Chair and Presenter, *Preventing Crime: Producing and Using Evidence*, What Works Global Summit (London, England), The Campbell Collaboration, September 27, 2016.

Presenter, *Knowing and Measuring Community Violence*, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Forum on Global Violence Prevention, May 13, 2016.

Keynote Speaker, *What Works in Reducing Community Violence: Spotlight on Central America and Mexico*, Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, February 22, 2016.

Featured Speaker, *A Conversation on Crime, Justice, and Legitimacy with Thomas Abt*, Harvard Law School, Criminal Justice Policy Program, February 17, 2016.

Plenary Panelist, *Bringing It All Together*, USAID/World Bank International Workshop-Conference (Antigua, Guatemala), November 6, 2014.

Panelist, *Integrating Evidence and Data to Advance Practice and Reduce Shootings: New York's GIVE (Gun-Involved Violence Elimination) Initiative*, Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy Annual Symposium on Challenges in Evidence-Based Crime Policy, June 23, 2014.

Plenary Speaker, *Governor Cuomo's Public Safety Priorities*, NYS District Attorneys Association Board of Directors Meeting, January 23, 2014.

Keynote Address, *The Practicalities of Partnership*, Robert F. Kennedy Children's Action Center Annual Meeting, January 24, 2013.

Plenary Speaker, *White House Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative*, United Neighborhood Centers of America Neighborhood Revitalization Conference, August 2, 2012.