Introduction

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In recent years, journals in many different fields have shifted toward the use of a structured abstract rather than a narrative abstract format. After discussions involving editors and representatives from editorial boards of the *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, and *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, we agreed that this movement was a good one. We believe that this change would be a benefit to our authors, reviewers, and readers and particularly if we moved to this approach together. Structured abstracts have the advantage of providing more clearly delineated statements of an article's approach and contributions, and allow for a standardized presentation of such issues. We have developed a structured abstract drawing from examples in other fields but have adapted it to criminological research.

Having the three journals adopt a single format brings our journals in line with what we think is worthwhile change in academic journals. We thank our Associate Editors and Editorial Boards for their review of this approach and hope that our readers will agree that this is a good one for criminological journals.

Alex Piquero and Cathy Spatz Widom, Editors, *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*
Mike Maxfield, Editor, *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*
David Weisburd, Editor, *Journal of Experimental Criminology*

As of December 2011, the *Journal of Quantitative Criminology* requires a structured abstract of 250 words or less. We will not consider a manuscript unless it is accompanied by an abstract organized into the following four sections: objectives, methods, results, and conclusions.

Objectives Briefly state the purpose, objectives or principal research questions. For example: "Test Moffitt's theory of delinquency abstention by examining

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links between friendship networks and adolescent delinquency involvement” or “Test the impacts of intensive police patrol at high crime spots on the legitimacy evaluations of residents.” Avoid contextual statements, such as: “Prior research has identified a small group of adolescents who completely refrain from delinquent behavior.”

Methods Summarize the basic design of the study as applicable: design (e.g. block randomized experiment; prospective longitudinal, cross-sectional), participants (sample, size, age), key measures and variables, type of analysis.

Results Succinctly report the major findings. Information on effect size, where applicable, is preferred to simple statements of statistical significance.

Conclusions Summarize what has been learned from the research. Do not repeat results or findings. Limit conclusions to what is supported by data. Briefly note study limitations. As applicable, summarize implications for further research, theory, and practice.