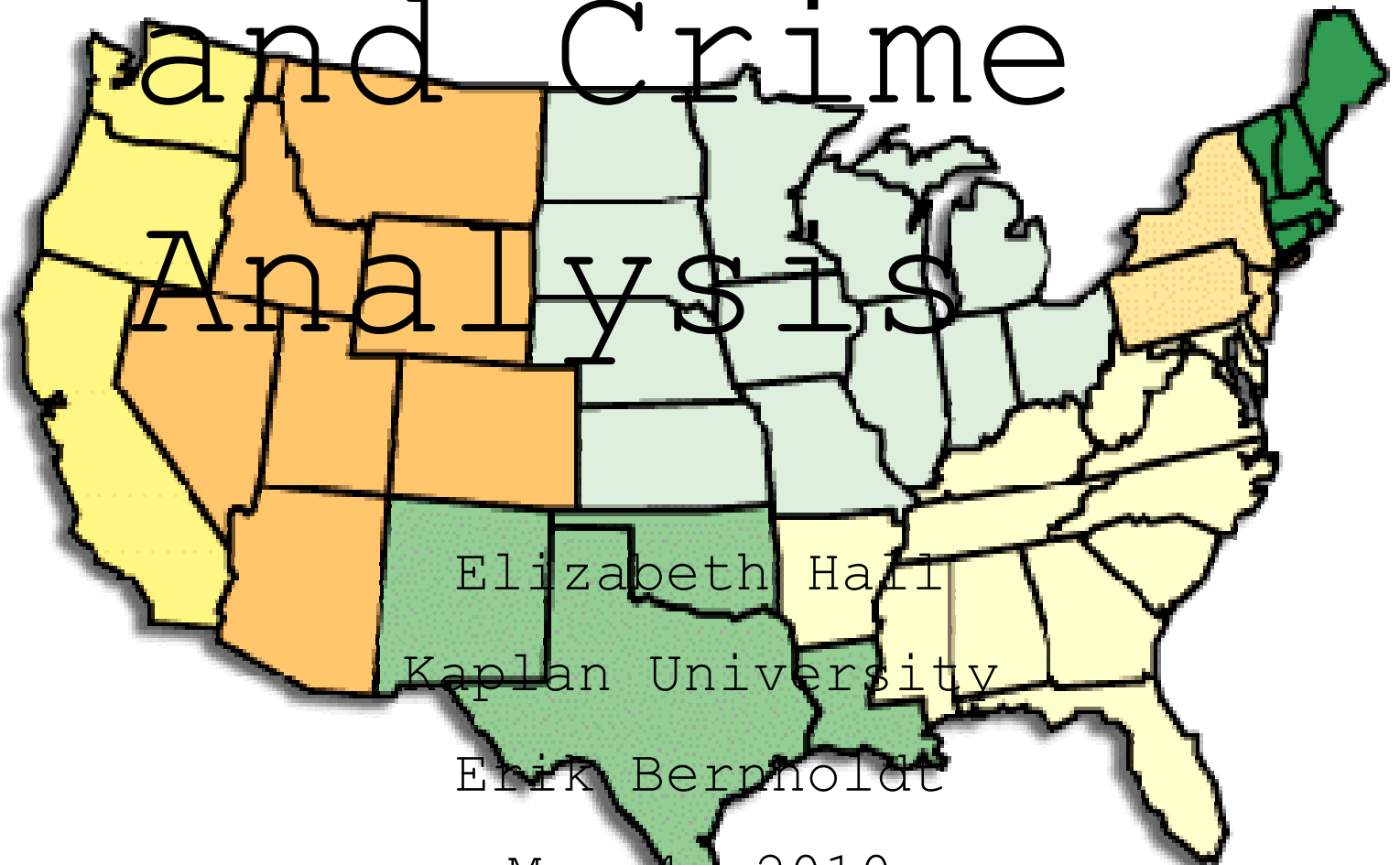# Technology and Crime Analysis

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Technology and Crime Analysis

Roush (2009) defines crime analysis as "the study of crime and disorder problems". Our current model being used is Community Oriented Policing (COP), and problem solving is a large part of the needs of the program. In order to understand trends, patterns, and future forecasts in crime, many departments are supplementing their teams with Crime Analysis Unit, to study the daily crime reports taken by members of the agency, analyze them, and provide reports of their findings along with possible solutions to the agency administration personnel. These reports help the administration personnel determine where to place extra officers, what areas have too many officers, and to come to effective solutions to prevent crime. These crime analysts study trends, and patterns in crime using modern software, hardware, and statistics. The smaller agencies have less equipment than the larger agencies, making the crime analyst's job of gathering data more complex. While the larger agencies The practice evolved from the early days in which law enforcement personnel, would use push pins to label maps in order to study a particular criminal or type of crime occurring in their jurisdiction, using mapping, spreadsheets, geographical information systems. The crime analyst position allows law enforcement personnel to focus on their main job, which is apprehending and arresting criminals. (Foster, 2000)

The Crime Analysis Unit provides support for multiple tasks in a police agency. Among these are patrol deployment, planning, research, tactical units, along with investigations, crime prevention, and special operations. (Wong, 2010) The analyst's job is to retrieve the data, analyze it, determine the mean, mode, and median to determine the scope of the problem, and provide solutions for the problem. One of the better problem solving techniques used by law

enforcement is the Scanning Analysis Response Assessment. They also use spreadsheets such as those created by Microsoft Excel, mapping software, and numerous databases. With this data, crime analysts are able to show the administration the relationships between crime and the causes of that crime, along with geographical (spatial) and time (temporal) relationships. (Foster, 2010)

While the larger agencies do have better equipment, the crime analyst can perform their tasks with minimal equipment. The basics needed consist of a desktop personal computer with a decent processor, hard drive capacity, and hard disk storage capabilities, a and high quality printer. (Foster, 2010)

A crime analyst can be either a sworn officer, or a civilian, and there are arguments for both sides pro and con. The job of a crime analyst is different from other scientific professions in the fact that for the majority of these professions, the scientists are the ones who know the systems and jargons of their chosen field of science. In the case of law enforcement, civilian crime analysts must know police jargon, procedures, and the basic flow of the communities in their jurisdictions. Sworn officers already know this information. The argument for civilian crime analysts is that it frees up sworn officers to fight crime in the streets. (Foster, 2010)

In conclusion, law enforcement is using crime analysts more and more at the local level to help them determine the nature of the problems, possible solutions to the problems, and any future trends that can be predicted. Their primary role is to use data to advise the administration on possible solutions to current problems, and to develop programs to prevent crime altogether. The process begins with crime mapping. They rely on data collected from databases, surveys, the uniform crime reports, and the United States Census among the many. The role of a crime analyst can be performed with

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minimal equipment, although the larger agencies with more funding usually have more

sophisticated equipment.

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