

Desistance and Legitimacy: The Impact of Offender Notification Meetings on Recidivism among High Risk Offenders

Danielle Wallace, Andrew V. Papachristos, Tracey Meares & Jeffrey Fagan

Wallace, D., Papachristos, A. V., Meares, T., & Fagan, J. (2016). Desistance and legitimacy: The impact of offender notification meetings on recidivism among high risk offenders. *Justice Quarterly*, 33(7), 1237-1264.

Focused Deterrence Strategies

Focused deterrence message aimed at informing high-risk offenders of the consequences of criminal activity.

What's the effectiveness of deterrence generally?

Compliance happens when individuals perceive the agents of the criminal justice system and the system itself as **fair** and **just**

PSN Chicago

- Goal to reduce **gun violence**
- **Enhance** the effects of the focused deterrence programs by embedded messages and environments of **procedural justice** and **legitimacy**.
- Procedural Justice
- Legitimacy

Offender Notification Forums

- Forums had traditional participants:
 - CJ actors
 - Community actors
 - Local social services
- Messaging and environment of the forum was different

Targeted Deterrence Message – Part 1

- **Common approach for content:**
 - **Pulling Levers**
 - **Severity of punishment extreme**
 - **Immediate crackdowns**

Targeted Deterrence Message – Part 2

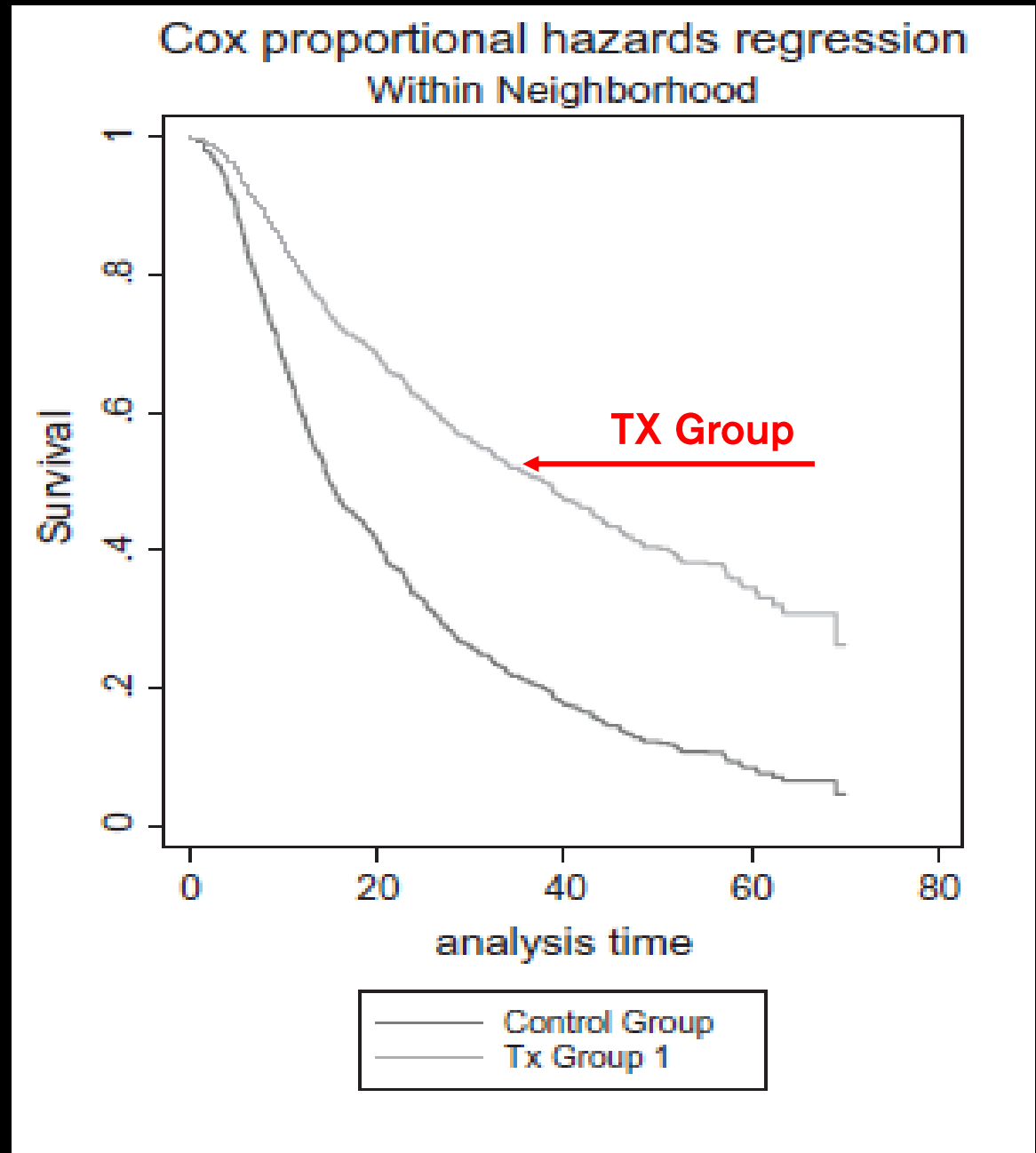
- Changing the **tone** and **quality** of interactions with CJ
 - Setting of the forum
 - Tone of the message, not just the message
- Procedural Justice – a precursor to **legitimacy**
- Treating former offenders like **adults**

This Study

- Examine how exposure to focused deterrence messaging that is imbued with **procedure justice** impacts **individual offending**
- **Data**
 - Illinois Department of Corrections: Recidivism data for Chicago
 - Rosters of who attended forums
- **Methods**
 - Traditional Hazard Models and Competing Risk Hazard Models

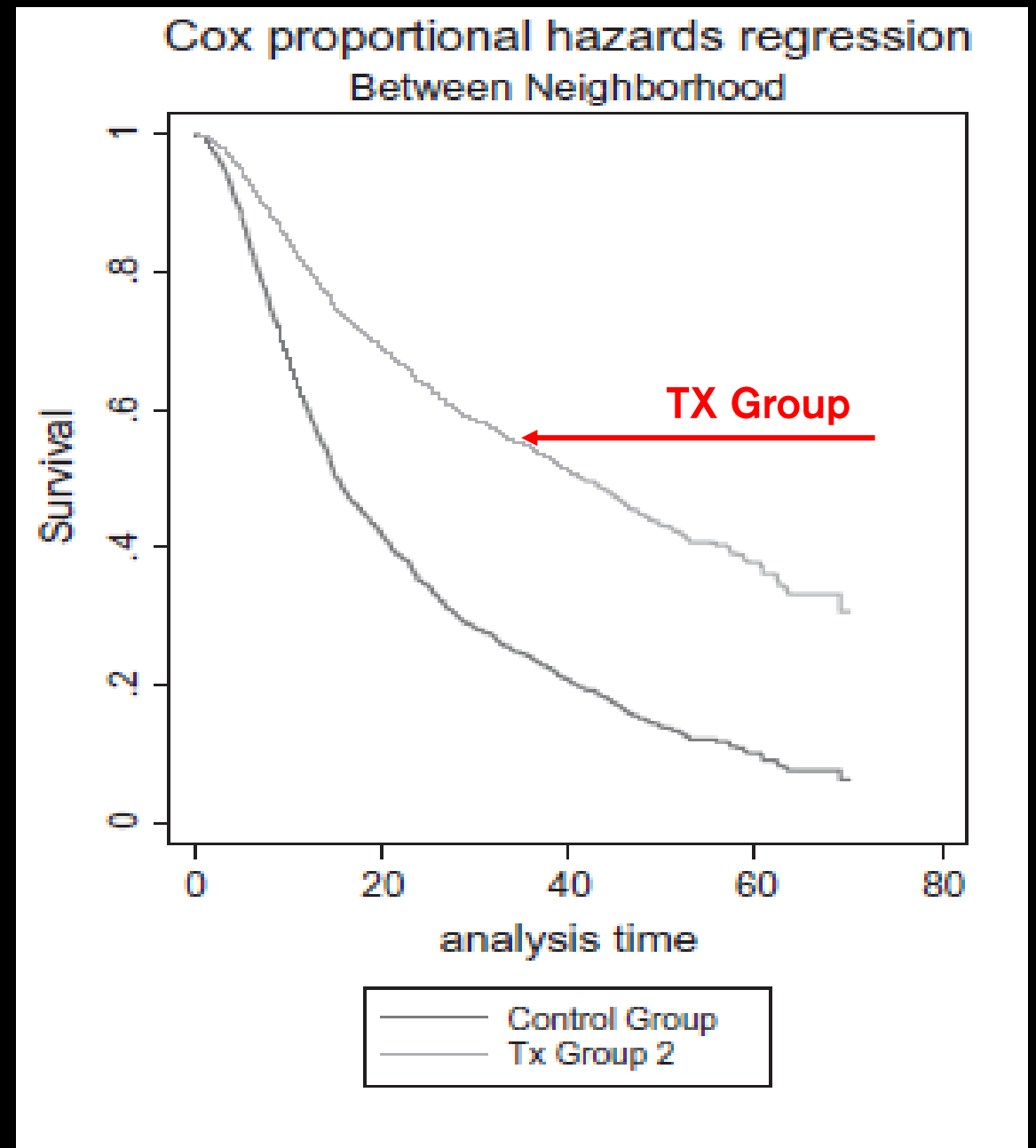
Survival Time Within One Treatment NHD

- Individuals who went to forums spent a longer time on the street before re-incarceration.
- At 36 months post-release, forum attendees had above a **50% chance of survival** v. the just over 20% chance of their counterparts



Survival Time Between Treatment Neighborhoods

- Individuals who went to forums spent a longer time on the street before re-incarceration.
- At 36 months post-release, forum attendees had above a **60% chance of survival** v. the just over 30% chance of their counterparts



Results

- Attending a forum reduces the risk of a **new** violation (controlling for the risk of a technical violation)
 - i.e., if attendees are going back to prison, they are not doing so for new criminal acts, but rather for violating parole.
- Forum attendees have lower risks of committing certain **types** of crimes
 - i.e., the PSN TX group has a 9% lower change of committing a **weapons** crime than the control group.

Summary

- Pairing focused deterrence messages procedural justice and legitimacy **works and in a variety of ways:**
 - Forum attendees remain out of prison longer
 - They are less likely to commit a new crime
 - They are less likely to commit targeted crimes, like weapons crime
- The individuals being targeted in FD strategies have long standing, **negative perceptions of CJ actors**
- Imbuing FD messaging with messages of procedural justice and legitimacy can **alter those perceptions** and increase desistance.