

Michael J. Hindelang was only 36 and at the height of an outstanding career as a criminologist when he died in 1982. He earned his b.a. in psychology in 1966 from Wayne State University and his master's degree in social psychology from the same institution in 1967. Only two years later, he completed his doctorate in criminology from the School of Criminology at the University of California, Berkeley. His first teaching jobs were at the California State University at Los Angeles and the University of Washington. In 1970, he joined the faculty at the School of Criminal Justice at The University at Albany where he was promoted to full professor in 1976. He remained at the School of Criminal Justice for the rest of his career.

Hindelang was an exceptional researcher and teacher, and took on a number of important professional duties during his life. His research interests including examining the validity of crime data from various sources, studying the correlates of delinquency, and testing theories of crime causation. Over a decade after his death, he was named one of the “four American criminologists [who] were particularly influential” in a study of the most significant criminologists in the English speaking world.¹ At that time his most cited publications were his book with Travis Hirschi and Joseph Weis, *Measuring Delinquency* (Sage, 1981) and his article “The correlates of delinquency: The illusion of discrepancy between self-report and official measures,” *American Sociological Review*, 44: 995-1014, also with Hirschi and Weis. His development of a life-style/opportunity perspective on victimization, in his 1978 book with Michael Gottfredson and James Garofalo (*Victims of Personal Crime: An Empirical Foundation for a Theory of Personal Victimization*, Ballinger, 1978), was another significant contribution. As Alfonso Serrano Maillo stated in dedicating his book (*Oportunidad y Delito*, Madrid: Dykinson, 2009) to Hindelang: “One of the main reasons for the central place occupied by opportunity at the moment is related to Hindelang’s seminal work and contributions. His relevance for contemporary criminology cannot be exaggerated.” Along with publishing dozens of journal articles and a number of book-length works, Hindelang also created and edited eight volumes of the *Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics*, which continues to be published out of the Michael J. Hindelang Criminal Justice Research Center at the School of Criminal Justice at Albany.

Students lucky enough to have been taught by Hindelang were inspired by his zeal and enthusiasm for criminal justice research. His dedication to teaching is commemorated by the Michael J. Hindelang Memorial Scholarship, an endowed award presented annually by The School of Criminal Justice at Albany.

Hindelang’s apparently boundless energy and commitment to advancing criminology extended to the profession more broadly. He was an associate editor of the *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* and the *American Sociological Review*, and served on the editorial boards of *Criminology*, *Law and Human Behavior*, and *Journal of Criminal Justice*.

An obituary published in the *Journal of Crime and Delinquency* shortly after Hindelang’s death in 1982 at age 36 concluded this way: “His broad influence on criminological thinking, as well as his direct effect on his students and his colleagues, will be long lasting.” In the decades since, this statement has proven to be accurate. In 2010, when asked about why he thought Michael Hindelang has been so important to the field, Travis Hirschi stated “Michael Hindelang believed that criminology could be advanced through reason and effort. That said it all. No one worked harder, and no one was more intent on providing a factual basis for the field, without concern for its political implications.”

¹ Cohn, Ellen G. and David P. Farrington. 1994. “Who are the most influential criminologists in the English-speaking world?” *British Journal of Criminology*, 34 (2): 204.