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### EDUCATION

2007 Ph.D. Justice, Law & Criminology, School of Public Affairs, American University  
2000 M.S. Justice, Law & Criminology, School of Public Affairs, American University  
1997 B.A. Criminal Justice, Saint Edward's University

### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant Professor, American University, Department of Justice, Law & Criminology, School of Public Affairs, Washington, DC (2025-current)

Co-Director of Research, The Sentencing Project, Washington, D.C. (2023-2025)

Senior Research Analyst, The Sentencing Project, Washington, D.C. (2008-2022)

### CURRENT SERVICE POSITIONS

- Research Fellow, [University of Cincinnati Center for Justice and Communities](#)
- Advisory Board Member, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs, Arnold Ventures-funded 2-year [research grant](#) to study current and former population of juveniles serving life without parole (LWOP) sentences nationwide.
- Advisory Board Member, National Institute of Justice 4-year [research grant](#) to examine racial and ethnic disparity in the Arizona justice system.
- Editorial Board Member, American Society of Criminology Division on Sentencing and Corrections (DSC) Editorial Board
- Peer Reviewer, Journal of Crime and Delinquency, The Journal of Criminal Justice

### EXPERT TESTIMONY & REPORTS

Expert report provided in support of commutation of Nicholas DeMatteo, provided to Innocence Project of Pennsylvania on July 2, 2025.

Expert report and in-person testimony provided at resentencing hearing in the matter of resentencing Daniel Randall following the *Mattis* ruling (2024) from LWOP to 30 years. Commonwealth v. Daniel Randall, Bristol Superior Court [2025].

Expert report and in-person testimony provided in United States of America v. Calvin Smith, U.S. Court of Appeals, Case Number 24-3098. [2024].

Expert report and in-person testimony provided in State of Maryland v. Deon Campbell, No. C-03-CR-22-001477 (Circuit Court for Baltimore County, Maryland). [2024].

Expert report and in-person testimony provided in State of Alabama v. Gregory Wynn, No. CC-98-934 (Circuit Court of Calhoun County, Alabama). [2024].

Expert report and in-person testimony provided in Commonwealth of Massachusetts v. Robert Pacheco, Nos. 7673CR54352, 7673CR54353, 7673CR54354 (Bristol Superior Court). [2022].

Expert report provided in State of Wisconsin v. Jason Randhawa, Appellate Case No. 2021AP1818-CR (Wisconsin Court of Appeals). [2021].

Expert report provided in State v. Purcell, No. 1 CA-CR-13-0614 PRPC, at 1 [Ariz. App. Feb. 16, 2018].

Expert report provided in Jacob Davis v. Tennessee Department of Correction et al. M2017-02301-COA-R3-CV [2018].

Expert report provided in State of Arizona v. Felipe Petrone Cabanas No. 1 CA-CR 15-06600 PRPC [2017].

## **AMICUS SUPPORT**

State of New Jersey v. Sean Jones Docket No. A-3911-21T5, July 11, 2024. [[Scholars Brief](#)].

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania v. Derek Lee, Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, 180 WAL 2023 (Pa Feb. 16, 2024). [[Brief of Criminologists and Law Professors](#)].

People v. Tony Hardin, Supreme Court of the State of California, Case No. S277487, December 2023). [[Brief of Criminologists](#)].

In Re William M. Palmer, Amicus Brief of The Sentencing Project in Support of Petitioner. [2019].

Ahmad Bright v. Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Brief of The Sentencing Project as Amicus Curiae in Support of Petitioner. [2018].

## **TEACHING EXPERIENCE**

Adjunct Professor, American University, Department of Justice, Law & Criminology, School of Public Affairs, Washington, DC (2024-2025)

Adjunct Professor, Virginia Commonwealth University, Wilder School of Government, Richmond, VA (2025)

Adjunct Professor, George Washington, University, School of Social Work, Washington, DC (2017-2018)

University of Maryland, College Park (2008-2009)

## **SELECT PUBLICATIONS**

### **Books**

Mauer, M. & Nellis, A. (2018). The Meaning of Life: The Case for Abolishing Life Sentences. The New Press.

Nellis, A. (2015). A Return to Justice: Rethinking Our Approach to Juveniles in the System. Rowman and Littlefield.

### **Book Chapters**

Nellis, A. (2023). "Life Imprisonment as a Hallmark of Mass Incarceration." In A. Conyers, V. Lynn, & M. Leigey (Eds.) Mass Incarceration in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Realities and Reflections. Routledge.

Nellis, A. (2023). "Mass Incarceration's Lifetime Guarantee." In K. Budd, D. Lane, G. Muschert, & J. Smith (Eds.) Beyond Bars: A Path Forward from 50 Years of Mass Incarceration. Policy Press.

Nellis, A. (2018). "Punished for Being Punished: Collateral Consequences of a Drug Conviction." In B. Huebner & N. Frost (Eds.) Handbook on the Consequences of Sentencing and Punishment Decisions. Routledge.

Nellis, A. (2017). The Worsening Problem of Racial Disparity in Juvenile Justice Systems. In Parsons Pollard, N., Ed. Disproportionate Minority Contact, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Carolina Academic Press.

Mauer, M. & Nellis, A. (2016). The Impact of Life Imprisonment on Prospects for Criminal Justice Reform in the U.S. In Dirk Van Zyl Smit and Catherine Appleton (Eds.) Life Imprisonment and Human Rights. Hart Publishing.

Nellis, A. (2011). "No Exit: The Expanding Use of Life Sentences in America." In Blind Goddess: A Reader on Race and Justice. In A. Papachristou (Ed.) pp. 159-170. The New Press.

Nellis, A. (2009). "Fear, Media, and Support for Anti-Terrorism Policies." In Kevin Borgeson and Robin Valeri, (Eds.) Domestic Terrorism in America. Jones and Bartlett Press.

Nellis, A., Greene, J., Allard, P., Krupat, T., & Frazer, A. (2009). "Criminal Justice: Race and Criminal Justice." In T. Johnson (Ed.), The Compact for Racial Justice: An Agenda for Fairness and Unity. Applied Research Center.

### **Journal Articles & Law Reviews**

Nellis, A. & Barry, C. (2025). A Matter of Time: The Scope and Impact of Life and Long-Term Imprisonment in the U.S. The Sentencing Project.

Nellis, A. (2023). [Review of Death by Prison: The Emergence of Life without Parole and Perpetual Confinement. By C. Seeds] Law and Society Review, 57(1), 124-125.

Vannier, M. & Nellis, A. (2023). The Severity of Life Imprisonment through the Lens of Old Age. Punishment and Society 0(0).

Nellis, A. (2021). Using Data to Achieve Justice Reform. Federal Sentencing Reporter, 33(4), 265-268.

Nellis, A. (2013). Tinkering with Life: A Look at the Inappropriateness of Life without Parole as an Alternative to the Death Penalty. University of Miami Law Review 67(2), 439-458.

Nellis, A. & Savage, J. (2012). Does Watching the News Affect Fear of Terrorism? The Importance of Media Exposure on Terrorism Fear. Crime and Delinquency 58(5), 748-768.

May, D., Herbert, J., Cline, K., & Nellis, A. (2011). Predictors of Fear and Risk of Terrorism in a Rural State. International Journal of Rural Criminology 1(1), 1-22.

Nellis, A. (October 2010). Throwing Away the Key: The Expansion of Life without Parole Sentences in the United States. Federal Sentencing Reporter 23(1) 27-32.

Nellis, A. & Richardson, B. (April 2010). Getting Beyond Failure: Promising Strategies to Reduce DMC. Youth Violence and Juvenile Justice 8(3): 266-276.

Nellis, A. (2009). Gender Differences in Fear of Terrorism. Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice 25(3): 322-340.

## National Reports

Nellis, A. & Barry, C. (2025). [A Matter of Life: The Scope and Impact of Life and Long Term Imprisonment in the United States](#). The Sentencing Project.

Nellis, A. & Brown, D. (2024). [Still Cruel and Unusual: Extreme Sentences for Youth and Emerging Adults](#). The Sentencing Project.

Komar, L. & Nellis, A. (2023). [The First Step Act: Ending Mass Incarceration in Federal Prisons](#). The Sentencing Project.

Nellis, A. (2023). [Left to Die: Young Adults Sentenced to Life without Parole](#). The Sentencing Project.

Nellis, A. (2022). [Nothing but Time: Elderly Americans Serving Life without Parole](#). The Sentencing Project.

Nellis, A. (2021). [In the Extreme: Women Serving Life without Parole and Death Sentences in the United States](#). The Sentencing Project.

Nellis, A. (2021). [A New Lease on Life](#). The Sentencing Project.

Nellis, A. (2021). [No End in Sight: America's Enduring Reliance on Life Imprisonment](#). The Sentencing Project.

Nellis, A. (2017). [Still Life: America's Increasing Use of Life and Long-Term Sentences](#). The Sentencing Project.

Nellis, A. (2016). [The Color of Justice: Racial and Ethnic Disparity in State Prisons](#). The Sentencing Project.

Schab, E. Annino, P. & Nellis, A.M., Miller [Resentencing Project Report: Florida Juveniles Sentenced to Mandatory Life Without Parole](#) (January 3, 2014). Florida State University College of Law, Public Law Research Paper No. 662.

Nellis, A. (2013). [Life Goes On: The Historic Rise in Life Sentences in America](#). The Sentencing Project.

Nellis, A. (2012). [The Lives of Juvenile Lifers: Findings from a National Survey](#). The Sentencing Project.

Nellis, A. (2011). [Collateral Consequences of a Juvenile Conviction](#). The Champion. National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers.

Nellis, A. & Hooks Wayman, R. (2009). [Back on Track: Supporting Youth Transitioning from Out-of-Home Placements to the Community](#). The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Coalition.

Nellis, A. & King, R. S. (2009). [No Exit: The Expanding Use of Life Sentences in America](#). The Sentencing Project.

Nellis, A. M., Greene, J., & Mauer, M. (2008). Reducing Racial Disparity: A Guide for Policymakers and Practitioners. The Sentencing Project.

Cohen, M., Feyerherm, W., Leiber, M., Nellis, A. M., Snyder, H., & Soler, M. (2009). [Disproportionate Minority Contact Technical Assistance Manual](#). Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

## SELECT EDITORIALS

Nellis, A. (July 27, 2023). [It's Time to End Perpetual Punishment for Young Adults](#). CommonWealth.

Nellis, A. (March 12, 2021) [Virginia's Move to End Capital Punishment Has a Major Flaw](#). Washington Post.

Nellis, A. (January 28, 2019). [Pennsylvania is Poised for Much-Needed Criminal Justice Reform, But Can We Abolish Life without Parole?](#) Philadelphia Inquirer.

Nellis, A. (September 20, 2017). [South Carolina Legislature Must Reform Life-Without-Parole Sentences](#). Charleston Post Courier.

Nellis, A. (August 2, 2017). [Life Sentences, Long Sentences Imposed on Youth Need 2<sup>nd</sup> Look](#). Juvenile Justice Information Exchange.

Nellis, A. & Henneke, K. (July 20, 2017). [Texas Should Stop Spending Billions to Incarcerate So Many People for Life](#). The Texas Tribune.

Nellis, A. (July 6, 2017). [Next Step for Louisiana Prison Reform is to Review Life Sentences: Opinion](#). The Times Picayune.

Nellis, A. & Mauer, M. (May 9, 2017). [Life without Redemption](#). U.S. News and World Report.

Nellis, A. & Mauer, M. (January 24, 2017). [What Can We Learn from the Amazing Drop in Juvenile Incarceration?](#) The Marshall Project.

## SELECT PRESENTATIONS

Nellis, A. "Lifer Census, 2024: Preliminary Figures of People Serving Life with Parole, Life Without Parole, and Virtual Life Sentences in America." American Society of Criminology. San Francisco, November 15, 2024.

Nellis, A. "Emerging Adults Sent to Die in Prison." American Society of Criminology. Atlanta, November 15, 2023.

Nellis, A. "Counting Down: Paths to a 20-Year Sentence." National Association of Sentencing Commissions, Reno, August 7, 2023.

Nellis, A. "Sentencing Young Adults to Die in Prison." Law and Society Annual Conference. Puerto Rico, June 3, 2023.

Nellis, A. "Presidential Thematic Session: Life Imprisonment as a Driver of Mass Incarceration." American Society of Criminology, San Francisco, November 15, 2019.

Nellis, A. "Life at the Local Level: A First Look at County-Level LWOP Sentences." American Society of Criminology, Atlanta, GA, November 20, 2018.

Nellis, A. "Lesser-Known Lifers: Juveniles Serving Life with the Possibility of Parole." American Society of Criminology, Philadelphia, PA, November 21, 2017.

Nellis, A. "Still Life: The Continued Expansion of Life Sentences in the U.S." American Society of Criminology, New Orleans, LA, November 19, 2016.

Nellis, A. "Life without Parole: U.S. and the World," American Society of Criminology, Washington, DC, November 18, 2015.

Mauer, M. and Nellis, A. "The Impact of Life Imprisonment on Prospects for Criminal Justice Reform," Life Sentences Worldwide International Conference, Onati, Spain, April 2015.

Nellis, A. "Examining Life Sentences in America." American Society of Criminology. Atlanta, GA, November 2013.

Nellis, A. "LWOP and the Death Penalty." University of Miami Law Review Symposium, Coral Gables, FL, February 2012.

Nellis, A. and Zafft, K. "The Lives of Juvenile Lifers." American Society of Criminology, Washington, DC, November 2011.

Zafft, K. and Nellis, A. "Communities that Create Violence: The Presence of Common Community Features among Juveniles Convicted of Homicide." American Society of Criminology. Washington, DC, November 2011.