Q: Your book discusses criminal justices in terms of a cost benefit analysis and states that policy makers want to make the costs of doing crime greater than the benefits. Some policy makers believe that tough sentencing will stop crime, but some believe it doesn’t work at all. Which of these ideas do you think is correct? Why?

A:

To answer the question right off the bat, yes, I do believe that tough sentencing can help stop crime or at least, help decreasing the crime rates. Although, it is a tricky question to answer for a lot of reasons. The prison system or any other forms of conviction are supposed to function as punishment for criminal activity, a deterrent to future crimes, and an opportunity for rehabilitation. It's often possible to find people arguing that an existing system is already playing more than one of these roles, which raises questions about how well we understand a system that US society has committed to in a big way. If a criminal is not afraid of the consequences of their act, then there would be no stopping. At the same time, if the consequences are not severe enough or if it very easy to get away with a crime then the result will be the same and the crime rate might not decrease at all. As mentioned in this week’s reading, “... crime rates have been falling since 1993. Law enforcement officials frequently attribute the decline to the adoption of public policies designed to deter crime …” (Dye). The above statement supports my claims. A rational and strong policy towards crime would endeavor to make its costs far outweigh its wrong doers. Not only effective policies, but certain and swift punishment is also very important in successfully controlling the crime rate. A policy that confirms serious actions against the criminal or ensures the likelihood of going to jail can affect the criminal mindset and make the wrong doer think twice because of the harsh upshots. In a nutshell, I agree that tough sentencing might not stop the crime immediately, but I believe that it is the right step to take for the sake of a simple argument that people tend to do wrong things often and continuously if there are no serious repercussions.