

CRIMINOLOGY



AN INTEGRATIVE INTRODUCTION

Tenth Edition



FRANK SCHMALLEGER

Tenth Edition

Criminology TODAY

AN INTEGRATIVE INTRODUCTION

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Distinguished Professor Emeritus,
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For my daughter Nicole.

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Major Theoretical Developments

Classical School

Classical Criminology

- 1764** **Cesare Beccaria** Deterrence through punishment, free will, social contract
- 1789** **Jeremy Bentham** Hedonistic calculus, utilitarianism

Neoclassical Criminology

- 1974** **Robert Martinson** Nothing-works doctrine
- 1975** **James Q. Wilson** Thinking about crime
- 1986** **Clarke & Cornish** Rational choice
- 1988** **Jack Katz** Seductions of crime, emotions and crime
- 1992** **Clarke & Cornish** Situational choice, situational crime prevention

Biological and Biosocial Theories

Early Positivism

- 1810** **Franz Joseph Gall** Phrenology, scientific understanding of crime
- 1830s** **Johann Gaspar Spurzheim** Brought phrenology to America

Criminal Anthropology

- 1863** **Cesare Lombroso** Atavism, born criminals, criminaloids, Italian School
- 1913** **Charles Buckman Goring** Challenged Lombroso's theory
- 1939** **Ernest Hooton** Environment + low-grade human = crime

Criminal Families

- 1877** **Richard Dugdale** The Juke family
- 1912** **Henry Goddard** The Kallikak family
- 1915** **Arthur Estabrook**

Constitutional Theories

- 1925** **Ernst Kretschmer** Somatotyping

Hormones and Enzymes

- 1940** **Alan Booth, D. Wayne Osgood, Paul C. Bernhardt, Kevin Beaver, Anthony Walsh, Lee Ellis** testosterone, evolutionary perspective, evolutionary neuroandrogenic theory (ENA), serotonin, premenstrual syndrome (PMS), hormones (testosterone, cortisol, norepinephrine), neurotransmitters (dopamine), monoamine oxidase A (MAO-A)
- 1949** **William Sheldon** Body types, behavioral genetics/twins, heritability, human genome

Genetics and Heritability

- 1940** **Johannes Lange** Twin Studies
- 1968** **Karl Christiansen and Sarnoff Mednick** Twin studies, heredity, genetic determinism
- 2011** **Nathalie Fontaine and Richard E. Tremblay** heritability, GxE, epigenetics, gene expression

Sociobiology

- 1975** **Edward O. Wilson** Altruism, territoriality, tribalism, survival of gene pool

Biosocial Criminology

- 1980** **Darrell J. Steffensmeier**
- 1994** **Adrian Raine** prefrontal cortex dysfunction, neurocriminology, frontal brain hypothesis, neuroplasticity, PET scans
- 1997** **Anthony Walsh** Environmental mediation of genetic influences
- 1990s** **Adrian Raine** Brain dysfunction
- 2003** **Kevin M. Beaver and Anthony Walsh** Biosocial criminology
- 2010** **Thomas Bernard** Gender-ratio problem
- 2010** **Kevin M. Beaver, John P. Wright, and Anthony Walsh** Evolutionary theory

Psychological/ Psychiatric Theories

Modeling Theory

- 1890** **Gabriel Tarde** Imitation
- 1973** **Albert Bandura** Aggression is learned, aggression is rewarded, disengagement, social cognition theory, modeling

Psychoanalytic Criminology

- 1920s–** **Sigmund Freud** Psychoanalysis,
- 1930s** Id, ego, superego, sublimation
- 1930s** **August Aichorn** Damaged egos

Personality Theory

- 1941** **Hervey Cleckley** Psychopathology, psychopath, sociopath
- 1964** **Hans Eysenck** Traits, supertraits
- 1968** **DSM-II** Antisocial personality disorder

Behavior Theory

- 1900** **Ian Pavlov** classical conditioning
- 1950s–** **B. F. Skinner** Operant
- 1970s** Conditioning, operant behavior, rewards/punishments, stimulus-response

Frustration–Aggression Theory

- 1939** **J. Dollard** Displacement, catharsis

Cognitive Theory

- 1955** **Jean Piaget** Stages of human intellectual development
- 1957** **Leon Festinger** Cognitive dissonance
- 1969** **Lawrence Kohlberg** Stages of moral development
- 1970** **Stanton Samenow and Samuel Yochelson** The criminal mindset
- 1979** **Roger Shank and Robert Abelson** Script theory

Crime as Adaptation

- 1950s** **John Bowlby** Secure attachment, anxious resistant attachment, anxious avoidance attachment
- 1971** **S. M. Halleck** Alloplastic adaptation, autoplasic adaptation
- 1995** **Linksy, Bachman, Straus** Societal stress, aggression
- 1998** **Donald Andrews and James Bonta** Criminogenic needs, criminogenic domains

In Criminology

Social Structure Approaches

Social Disorganization

- 1920** **Thomas & Znaniecki** Displaced immigrants
- 1920s** **Park & Burgess** Social ecology
- 1930s** Social pathology, concentric zones (Chicago School)
- 1929** **Shaw & McKay** Cultural transmission (Chicago School)
- 1973** **Oscar Newman** Defensible space
- 1982** **James Q. Wilson & George L. Kelling** Broken windows, criminology of place
- 1987** **Rodney Stark** Theory of deviant neighborhoods

Culture Conflict

- 1927** **Frederic Thrasher** Gangs and gang typologies
- 1938** **Thorsten Sellin** Conduct norms, primary conflict, secondary conflict
- 1943** **William F. Whyte** Subcultures
- 1955** **Albert Cohen** Gangs, reaction formation
- 1957** **Sykes & Matza** Techniques of neutralization
- 1958** **Walter B. Miller** Focal concerns
- 1960s** **Cloward & Ohlin** Illegitimate opportunity structure, delinquent subcultures
- 1967** **Ferracuti & Wolfgang** Violent subcultures

Strain Theory

- 1938** **Robert Merton** Anomie, conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism, rebellion
- 1982** **Blau & Blau** Relative deprivation, frustration, distributive justice
- 1992** **Robert Agnew** General strain theory
- 1994** **Messner & Rosenfeld** American Dream

Social Process & Social Development Theories

Social Learning Theory

- 1939** **Edwin Sutherland** Differential association
- 1960** **Daniel Glaser** Differential identification theory
- 1966** **Burgess & Akers** Differential association-reinforcement

Social Control Theory

- 1950s** **Walter Reckless** Containment theory, inner and outer containment
- 1969** **Travis Hirschi** Social bond and self-control: attachment, commitment, belief, involvement
- 1970s** **Howard Kaplan** Self-degradation
- 1990** **Hirschi & Gottfredson** Social bonds and self-control, general theory of crime
- 1995** **Charles Tittle** Control-balance, control surplus, control deficit
- 1995** **Per-Olof H. Wikström** Situational action theory

Labeling Theory

- 1938** **Frank Tannenbaum** Tagging, dramatization of evil
- 1951** **Edwin Lemert** Primary deviance, secondary deviance
- 1963** **Howard Becker** Outsiders, moral enterprise
- 1997** **John Braithwaite** Reintegrative shaming, stigmatic shaming

Dramaturgy

- 1960s** **Erving Goffman** Dramaturgy, impression management, discrediting information, total institutions, disculturation

Social Development

- 1920s** **Sheldon & Eleanor Glueck** Family dynamics and delinquent careers
- 1960s** **Marvin Wolfgang** Chronic offending
- 1980s** **David P. Farrington** Delinquent development theory
- 1987** **Terrence Thornberry** Intereactional theory
- 1988** **Lawrence E. Cohen and Richard Machalek** Evolutionary ecology
- 1993** **Robert J. Sampson and John H. Laub** Life course criminology
- 1993** **Terrie Moffitt** Life course persists, adolescence-limited offenders

Social Conflict Theories

Conflict Theories

- 1848** **Karl Marx** *The Communist Manifesto*
- 1916** **Willem Bonger** Class struggle
- 1938** **Thorsten Sellin** Culture conflict

Radical Criminology

- 1958** **George Vold** Political conflict between groups, conflict is normal
- 1959** **Ralf Dahrendorf** Conflict is normal, destructive change
- 1969** **Austin Turk** Social order = pattern of conflict, laws serve to control
- 1970s** **William Chambliss** Power gaps, crime reduces surplus labor
- 1974** **Richard Quinney** Contradictions of capitalism, socialist principles

Left-realist Criminology

- 1991** **Jock Young & Walter DeKeseredy** The new criminology

Feminist Criminology

- 1975** **Adler & Simon** Gender socialization
- 1977** **Carol Smart** Gender bias in criminology
- 1988** **Daly & Chesney-Lind** Androcentricity, crime may not be normal
- 1989** **John Hagan** Power-control theory

Peacemaking Criminology

- 1986** **Pepinsky & Quinney** Restorative justice, participatory justice
- 1989** **Lozoff & Braswell** New Age principles

Cultural Criminology

- 1995** **Jeff Ferrel, Mark S. Hamm, Jock Young, Mike Presdee, Keith J. Hayward** Crime and crime control are cultural products; edgework; media loops and spirals, liquid ethnography

Convict Criminology

- 2001** **John Irwin, Ian Ross, K. C. Carceral, Thomas J. Bernard, Stephen Richards** Insights from convicted offenders

Theories of Victimology

Victim Precipitation Theory

- 1947** **Benjamin Mendelssohn** Coined the term "victimology"
- 1948** **Hans von Hentig** The criminal and his victim
- 1958** **Marvin Wolfgang** Some victims are positive precipitators in crime
- 1968** **Stephen Schafer** The victim and his criminal
- 1970** **Menachem Amir** Victim contribution to victimization

Lifestyle Theory

- 1970** **Michael J. Hindelang & Michael R. Gottfredson James Garofalo** Demographic variables influence lifestyles and determine victimization risk

Routine Activities Theory (RAT)

- 1970** **Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson** Motivated offenders combine with suitable targets in the absence of a capable guardian

Cyberlifestyle-Routine Activities Theory

- 2000s** **Bradford Reynes, Billy Henson, Bonnie Fisher** Merged elements of routine activities theory and lifestyle theory to explain victimizations that occur in cyberspace

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New to This Edition

The tenth edition of *Criminology Today: An Integrative Introduction* continues to offer students a clear, contemporary, and comprehensive introduction to criminology that encourages critical thinking about the causes of crime and crime-prevention strategies. The text's hallmark thematic approach of social problems versus individual responsibility (Is crime a matter of individual responsibility or a symptom of a dysfunctional society?) prompts students to think critically about the causes of crime and helps them see the link between crime theories and crime policies.

New Chapter Content in the Tenth Edition

Chapter 1: What Is Criminology?

A discussion of undocumented residents and federal immigration policy is now discussed.

A discussion of sanctuary cities is used to illustrate varying perspectives on crime and deviance.

Marijuana laws are also offered as an example of varying perspectives on crime and deviance, and updates are provided on the legal status of marijuana in various jurisdictions.

The discussion on the interdisciplinary nature of criminology has been updated, and the section on individual responsibility and the law has been expanded.

Chapter 2: Where Do Theories Come From?

Swiss experimentation in the treatment of heroin abusers to reduce crime commission has been added to the chapter.

Chapter 3: Classical and Neoclassical Thought

The discussion of neuroscience has been expanded to include more information on free will.

Chapter 4: Early Biological Perspectives on Criminal Behavior

The Positivist School has been more clearly defined, and the term has become a key term.

Chapter 5: Biosocial and Other Contemporary Perspectives

Brain injury and its possible relationship to criminal behavior is now discussed.

The discussion of the MAO-A gene and its relationship to criminal behavior has been expanded.

A discussion of circadian rhythms and their possible relationship to criminal behavior has been added.

Chapter 6: Psychological and Psychiatric Foundations of Criminal Behavior

New key terms now include postpartum depression and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

“Cognitive dissonance” has been added to the chapter as a new key term; and the work of Leon Festinger is now discussed.

The link between serious mental illness and violence is further explored.

Chapter 7: Social Structure Theories

The American Society of Criminology's Division of Communities and Place is now discussed.

A “Crime and the Economy” heading has been added to the chapter.

Discussion of a new theory that claims that negative economic conditions and declining business cycles can increase social strain, resulting in heightened rates for certain kinds of crimes, has been added to the chapter.

Discussion has been added of Richard Rosenfeld's 2018 comprehensive study of crime trends.

A new section on criminal street gangs has been added, and the term “criminal street gangs” has been made a key term.

Delinquency theorists Frederic M. Thrasher and William F. Whyte have been added to the chapter.

New key names have been added to the chapter, to include Irving Spergele, Elijah Anderson, Frederick M. Thrasher, William F. Whyte, and Malcolm Klein.

Chapter 8: Theories of Social Process and Social Development

Discussion of the 2017 study by John H. Bowman and Thomas J. Mowen, which sought to compare the influence that criminal peers or family members have on the future behavior of former offenders, has been added.

The “Ban the Box” movement is discussed as it relates to labeling theory.

Identity transformation, as necessary to facilitate movement away from criminal behavior, is now discussed.

Discussion of a new study of parenthood as a potential turning point in the life course of gang members has been added.

Chapter 9: Social Conflict Theories

Cultural criminology is now discussed in this chapter, and “cultural criminology” has been made a key term.

The work of Jeff Ferrel, Mark S. Hamm, Jock Young, D. Milovanovic, Mike Presdee, and Keith J. Hayward in the area of cultural criminology is now discussed.

The concept of “moral time” has been further clarified.

New key terms, such as liquid ethnography, *verstehen*, edge-work, carnival of crime, media loops and spirals, and narrative criminology have been added to the chapter.

Chapter 10: Criminal Victimization

This chapter has been thoroughly revised, with changes too numerous to list.

Chapter 11: Crimes against Persons

A new story now opens this chapter.

The 2018 United Nations report on violence is discussed.

The 2017 Las Vegas mass shooting incident is now discussed.

Discussion of the FBI’s 2018 report on active shooters has been added to the chapter.

The distinction between situational child molesters and preferential child molesters is presented.

Chapter 12: Crimes against Property

A new story now opens this chapter, and discussion of the case of Colton Harris-Moore has been updated.

Chapter 13: White-Collar and Organized Crime

The environmental crimes of the automobile manufacturer Volkswagen are now discussed.

Mention is made of the fact that the concept of white-collar crime has undergone refinement as focus has shifted to the nature of the crime instead of the persons or occupations involved.

Chapter 14: Drug and Sex Crimes

The opioid crisis that now faces America is discussed.

Drug use statistics have been thoroughly updated.

A study showing how drugs and prostitution contribute to the national economy in the United Kingdom is included.

The recreational and medical status of marijuana in the United States has been updated.

Discussion of the federal government’s Heroin Signature Program has been substantially updated.

The concept of “sex work” is introduced and explained.

Chapter 15: Technology and Crime

A new report by the U.S. Department of Justice, describing a typology of cybercrimes has been added to the chapter.

Discussion of the 2018 Clarifying Lawful Overseas Use of Data (CLOUD) Act has been added to the chapter.

“Social engineering” has been made a key term, and is now defined.

Chapter 16: Globalization and Terrorism

The discussion of human trafficking has been substantially updated, including the presentation of new data.

A new study of persons convicted under federal human trafficking laws is discussed, offering insight into perpetrators.

The list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations has been updated.

A new section on “Explaining Violent Political Extremism” has been added.

Preface

The opening decade of the twenty-first century was filled with momentous events in the United States, including the destruction of the World Trade Center and an attack on the Pentagon by Islamic terrorists, a fearsome recession, and corporate scandals that cost Americans billions of dollars in lost investments. The second decade saw the advent of a relatively large number of homegrown terrorist efforts to attack American population centers and landmarks, but only the Boston Marathon bombings of 2013 were carried out successfully. The crimes committed by terrorists set a tone for the start of the new century unlike any in living memory. Homeland security became an important buzzword at all levels of American government, while pundits questioned just how much freedom people would be willing to sacrifice to enhance security. Americans felt both physically and economically threatened as stock market losses were traced to the unethical actions of a surprising cadre of corporate executives who had previously been held in high regard in the business world and in the communities where they lived. Soon the media were busily showing a parade of business leaders being led away in handcuffs to face trial on charges of crooked accounting.

Added to the mix by the beginning of 2020 were shocking acts of criminality that emanated from all corners of the world, including mass shootings in the United States; terror attacks in Paris, France; depravities of sex tourism involving human trafficking; sex acts with minors streaming across the Internet in real time; Websites like Silk Road selling drugs, hits for hire, sexual services, weapons, and just about anything else; massive copyright-infringement activities like those of New Zealand-based Megaupload; and the theft of hundreds of thousands of personal identities. All of this led to an increasingly complex economic, educational, online, and social world.

Criminologists found themselves wondering what new laws might be enacted to add additional controls to handgun sales and ownership; and they also focused on the potential harm that the criminal mis-use of social media can cause. This last issue constitutes a very intimate crime that can literally cause a person to face the loss of his or her social self in our complex and highly technological culture. Focus also shifted to expanding computer capabilities and biotechnologies that, while seeming to hold amazing promise to cure disease and reshape humanity's future, threaten the social fabric in a way not seen since the birth of the atomic bomb or the harnessing of electricity. Similarly, climate changes, violent storms such as damaging hurricanes, the Gulf oil spill, our nation's desperate need for alternative and additional energy sources, and the instability in the Middle East contribute to a growing awareness that the challenges facing

criminologists in the twenty-first century are unlike any they have previously faced.

It was against this backdrop that the need for a comprehensive revision of *Criminology Today* emerged. This new edition addresses the poignant question of how security and freedom interface in an age of increasing globalism. Chapter 16, in particular, provides substantially enlarged coverage of terrorism and cyberterrorism, including an overview of many types of terrorist groups, such as nationalist, religious, state-sponsored, left-wing, right-wing, and anarchist groups. The findings and recommendations of special committees and government bodies that have focused on terrorism in recent years are also discussed, and on-line links to the full text of their reports are provided.

The tenth edition, which is now available in a variety of print and electronic formats, presents historical and modern criminological approaches with the aid of real-life stories, up-to-date examples and issues, and interactive media. Key features include



Who's to Blame boxes in each chapter highlight the book's ever-evolving theme of social problems versus social responsibility, a hallmark feature of this text. In each chapter, Who's to Blame boxes build on this theme by illustrating some of the issues that challenge criminologists and policy makers today. Each box includes a case study followed by critical thinking questions that ask readers to ponder to what extent the individual or society is responsible for a given crime.

THEORY | versus REALITY

Ethnographic Research on Active Burglars

Ethnographic research involving active burglars attempts to understand a burglar's way of life and hence offers a depth of insight rarely achieved in survey research or research using official data. However, ethnographic research is often dangerous, costly, and time-consuming. The most benefit that comes from studying active burglars is related to an essential methodological issue common to all research endeavoring to study the lives of individuals before they know they are being studied. In the case of studying burglars who are active versus those who are incarcerated, Richard T. Wright and Scott H. Decker note that individuals before they know they are being studied are more likely to be honest and forthcoming than those who are incarcerated. Richard T. Wright and Scott H. Decker note that individuals before they know they are being studied are more likely to be honest and forthcoming than those who are incarcerated.

in residential burglars by other offenders to identify. Research subjects were identified by the field workers whom Wright and Decker employed, none of whom were ex-offenders. The interviews with the subjects were all conducted in the field. Building on previous research on active offenders who are currently incarcerated, Wright and Decker provide insight into various facets of the offending of burglars, including the search for valuable goods, and disposal of goods. In addition to answering questions, the offenders were asked to reconstruct their most recent residential burglary offense.

Defining the eligibility of subjects for research and using field workers are common practices in ethnographic research. Similar strategies were followed in other ethnographic research projects discussed in this chapter. They include research on 30 active burglars in an urban setting by Paul F. Conwell and his colleagues, and research on the professional thief by David J. Sutherland. As you read through the ethnographic research in this chapter, keep in mind the strengths of ethnographic research and the insights to be gained by studying criminal offenders within their native social and cultural contexts.

Discussion Questions

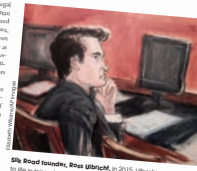
1. What is ethnographic research? How does it differ from other types of research in the field of criminology?
2. Can criminologists learn anything special about burglary by focusing on active burglars who are not currently incarcerated—rather than on burglars who are imprisoned?

Notes
1. Edwin Sutherland and Donald Cressey, *Criminology*, 8th ed. (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1970), p. 68; cited in Richard T. Wright and Scott H. Decker, *Burglars on the Loose: A Study of Their Work and Ways of Thinking* (Berkeley: University Press, 1992), p. 5.
2. Paul F. Conwell, Jennifer M. Allen, and D. Alan Waller, *Active Burglary: A Phenomenological Analysis of Burglary Decision Making*, CA: Sage, 1993.
3. David J. Sutherland, *The Career of a Professional Thief* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 1988).

CRIMINAL PROFILES

Ross Ulbricht—The New Face of Crime?

In 2013, 31-year-old Ross Ulbricht, the man behind the Silk Road marketplace known as Silk Road, was arrested in Manhattan. He was charged with conspiring to defraud \$150,000,000 in illegal profits. Silk Road, which offered an online marketplace for drugs, pornography, weapons, and more, was created in 2011 and operated on what's known as the dark web. Participants and suppliers used encrypted Web browser software to communicate and conduct transactions. Ulbricht was arrested in 2013 after a Canadian man who had been the two faces of the marketplace was arrested. Ulbricht was arrested in 2013 after a Canadian man who had been the two faces of the marketplace was arrested. Ulbricht was arrested in 2013 after a Canadian man who had been the two faces of the marketplace was arrested.



Silk Road founder, Ross Ulbricht, in 2015, Ulbricht was arrested in 2013 for creating the online goods market site.

The case of Ross Ulbricht raises a number of interesting questions. Among them are the following:

1. What does the conviction of Ross Ulbricht have to say about the state of crime in America today?
2. Why did Ulbricht accept such a high price for the sale of a second arrest by Ulbricht, or a presidential pardon of Ulbricht by Donald Trump before mid-2016?

Notes
1. Ross Ulbricht, "Silk Road: A New Marketplace for Drugs, Pornography, and More," *Wired*, March 2013, http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/21.03/silk_road.html.
2. Ross Ulbricht, "Silk Road: A New Marketplace for Drugs, Pornography, and More," *Wired*, March 2013, http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/21.03/silk_road.html.
3. Ross Ulbricht, "Silk Road: A New Marketplace for Drugs, Pornography, and More," *Wired*, March 2013, http://www.wired.com/wired/archive/21.03/silk_road.html.

Theory versus Reality boxes throughout the text showcase selected issues and theories in the field of criminology and invite discussion through thought-provoking questions for consideration.

Criminal Profiles boxes throughout the text offer insights into the lives and criminal motivations of notorious offenders, such as Ross Ulbricht (founder of Silk Road, the underground Website); Omar Mateen (the Pulse Nightclub shooter); Jodi Arias, Colton Harris-Moore (the Barefoot Bandit), and Bernie Madoff.

CRIME | in the NEWS

Why Mass Shootings Won't Go Away

Mass shootings by lone gunmen seem to be a uniquely American phenomenon. To date, the 2017 shooting of nearly 600 people (of whom 58 died) in Las Vegas by 64-year-old Stephen Paddock is the deadliest such attack. Paddock fired from a guest room on the 32nd floor of a nearby hotel onto a music festival crowd of more than 30,000 people. In 2016, Omar Mateen (who is featured in a Criminal Profile box elsewhere in this text) shot over 100 people at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando. Forty-nine of them died. Mateen, who was 29 years old at the time of the attack, was killed after a police SWAT team forced its way into the building.



A memorial to the victims of the October 1, 2017, Las Vegas mass shooting, which claimed the lives of 58 people, and injured 546 others. The shooter, 64-year-old Stephen Paddock, fired thousands of rounds from the 32nd floor of the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino into a nearby music festival crowd of over 30,000. How can mass killings be prevented?

In 2012, 20-year-old Adam Lanza, a mentally troubled young man, killed 25 people at an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut, one of them children. Mass shootings show no signs of declining, despite an overall drop in the U.S. homicide rate. "The frequency of gun violence does not fluctuate much year to year," said James Alan Fox, a criminology professor at Northeastern University. Looking back 35 years, Fox counted 19 such shootings in 1976 and 18 in 2016, with a range of 7 in 1985 to 30 in 2003. A study of past incidents reveals a portrait of the mass shooter. He tends to be a young man without a high body count. Sometimes he copies another mass shooter or a figure from the movies. At Colorado shooter James Holmes did when instituting the Joker. Holmes's movie mania. Although many mass shooters are depressed, they rarely suffer psychosis, according to James L. Knapp, a psychiatrist at SUNY Upstate Medical Center.

Little in this portrait, however, can help predict future mass crimes. But many of them do undergo a personality change just before the crime, as evidenced by Holmes dying by his own gun just before the professor at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania. Others people should notice these changes and report them to authorities.

Other ways to address mass shooting might be to ban assault rifles, which could reduce the carnage, and the imposition of steeper background checks for gun purchases. But a mass shooter, like Paddock, without a criminal record might not be identified and prevented from shooting.

Discussion Questions

1. Why have random mass shootings become relatively commonplace in American society?
2. What can be done to prevent future incidents of random mass shootings?

Source: Seth Cline, "Are Mass Shootings a Fact of Life in America?" *US News & World Report*, August 28, 2012, <http://www.usnews.com/story/2012/08/28/mass-shootings-a-fact-of-life-in-america>.
2. James Alan Fox, "The Frequency of Gun Violence Does Not Fluctuate Much Year to Year," <https://www.mtrnews.com/2016/03/28/the-frequency-of-gun-violence-does-not-fluctuate-much-year-to-year/>.
3. James Alan Fox, "The Frequency of Gun Violence Does Not Fluctuate Much Year to Year," <https://www.mtrnews.com/2016/03/28/the-frequency-of-gun-violence-does-not-fluctuate-much-year-to-year/>.
4. James Alan Fox, "The Frequency of Gun Violence Does Not Fluctuate Much Year to Year," <https://www.mtrnews.com/2016/03/28/the-frequency-of-gun-violence-does-not-fluctuate-much-year-to-year/>.

THEORY | in PERSPECTIVE

Types of Psychological and Psychiatric Theories

Psychological and psychiatric theories of criminology are derived from the behavioral sciences and focus on the individual as the unit of analysis. This chapter breaks their discussion down into a number of areas as shown in this box.

Modeling Theory

This theory states that people learn how to behave by modeling themselves after others when they have the opportunity to observe.

Period: 1890s–present

Theorists: Gabriel Tarde, Albert Bandura, others

Concepts: imitation, interpersonal aggression, social cognition theory, modeling, desensitization

Psychoanalytic Criminology

This psychiatric approach, developed by Austrian psychiatrist Sigmund Freud, emphasizes the role of personality in human behavior and sees deviant behavior as the result of dysfunctional personalities or maladjustment to the social environment.

Period: 1920s–present

Theorists: Sigmund Freud, August Aichson, others

Concepts: psychoanalysis, criminology, id, ego, superego, sublimation, psychopathology, neurosis, psychosis, paranoia, schizophrenia

Personality Theory

This approach envisions a complex set of drives and motives operating from recesses deep within the personality to determine behavior.

Period: 1940s–present

Theorists: Hervey M. Cleckley, Hans J. Eysenck, many others

Concepts: personality, psychopathology, sociopathy, antisocial personality, personality traits, Five Factor Model, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), postprison depression

Behavior Theory

From a psychological perspective, behavior theory posits that individual behavior that is rewarded will increase in frequency and behavior that is punished will decrease in frequency.

Source: *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, 1970, and *Behavioral Research in Criminology*, 1970, by Albert Bandura, Inc., Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07075.

Period: 1900s–present
Theorists: B. F. Skinner, others
Concepts: operant behavior, operant conditioning, classical conditioning, stimulus-response, reward, punishment

Frustration-Aggression Theory
Frustration is a natural consequence of living and a root cause of crime in this theory, where criminal behavior can be a form of adaptation when it results from stress reduction.

Period: 1940s–present
Theorists: J. Dollard, Albert Bandura, Richard H. Walters
Concepts: frustration, aggression, displacement

Cognitive Theory
Cognitive theory, also known as mental development theory, holds that individuals become criminal when they have not successfully completed their intellectual development from child to adulthood.

Period: 1950s–present
Theorists: Jean Piaget, Lawrence Kohlberg, Roger C. Schank, Robert F. Abelson, Norman E. Sussman, Samuel Yochelson
Concepts: moral development, cognitive-information processing, scripts, cognitive dissonance, criminal mind-set

Crime as Adaptation
Criminal activity facilitates individual adaptation to the environment by reducing life stresses and by producing environmental changes.

Period: 1950s–present
Theorists: Seymour L. Halleck, Donald A. Andrews, James Bonta, John Buxby Arnold S. Lasky, Robert Bichman, Murray A. Straus
Concepts: adaptive and maladaptive adaptations, criminogenic needs, criminogenic domains, attachment theory

Crime in the News boxes in each chapter present case examples and pose analytical discussion questions about connections between examples and the chapter topics.

Theory in Perspective summary boxes in Parts 2 and 3 outline the main points of various theories for easy reference and study.

In the past few years, crime and criminals have changed in ways that few people had previously imagined would occur, and these changes hold considerable significance for each one of us and for our nation as a whole. It is my hope that this new edition, which is available in a number of formats, will help today's students both to understand the nature of these changes and to find a meaningful place in the social world that is to come.

FRANK SCHMALLEGER, Ph.D.

Distinguished Professor Emeritus

The University of North Carolina at Pembroke

Supplements

Instructor Supplements

Instructor's Manual with Test Bank. Includes content outlines for classroom discussion, teaching suggestions, and answers to selected end-of-chapter questions from the text. This also contains a Word document version of the test bank.

TestGen. This computerized test generation system gives you maximum flexibility in creating and administering tests on paper, electronically, or online. It provides state-of-the-art features for viewing and editing test bank questions, dragging a selected question into a test you are creating, and printing sleek, formatted tests in a variety of layouts. Select test items from test banks included with TestGen for quick test creation, or write your own questions from scratch. Test Gen's random generator provides the option to display different text or calculated number values each time questions are used.

PowerPoint Presentations. Our presentations offer clear, straightforward outlines and notes to use for class lectures or study materials. Photos, illustrations, charts, and tables from the book are included in the presentations when applicable.

To access supplementary materials online, instructors need to request a free instructor access code. Go to www.pearsonhighered.com/irc, where you can register for an instructor access code. Within 48 hours after registering, you will receive a confirming e-mail, including an instructor access code. Once you have received your code, go to the site and log on for full instructions on downloading the materials you wish to use.

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REVEL for Criminology Today, Tenth Edition by Frank Schmalleger

Designed for how you want to teach – and how your students want to learn

Revel is an interactive learning environment that engages students and helps them prepare for your class. Reimagining their content, our authors integrate media and assessment throughout the narrative so students can read, explore, and practice, all at the same time. Thanks to this dynamic reading experience, students come to class prepared to discuss, apply, and learn about criminal justice — from you and from each other.

Revel seamlessly combines the full content of Pearson's best-selling criminal justice titles with multimedia learning tools. You assign the topics your students cover. Author Explanatory Videos, application exercises, survey questions, interactive CJ data maps, and short quizzes engage students and enhance their understanding of core topics as they progress through the content. Through its engaging learning experience, Revel helps students better understand course material while preparing them to meaningfully participate in class.

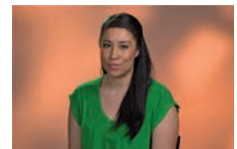
Author Explanatory Videos

Short 2-3 minute Author Explanatory Videos, embedded in the narrative, provide students with a verbal explanation of an important topic or concept and illuminating the concept with additional examples.



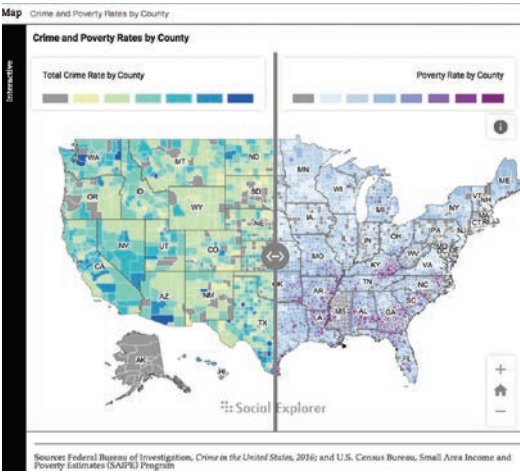
Point/CounterPoint Videos

Instead of simply reading about criminal justice, students are empowered to think critically about key topics through Point/Counterpoint videos that explore different views on controversial issues such as the effectiveness of the fourth amendment, privacy, search and seizure, Miranda, prisoner rights, death penalty and many other topics.



New Social Explorer Criminal Justice Data Maps

Social Explorer Maps integrated into the narrative ask students to examine crime and corrections data correlated with socio-economic and other criminal justice data. Maps also show differences in state statutes on major issues such as marijuana legalization, the death penalty, and the distribution of hate organizations across the US.



New Student Survey Questions

Student Survey Questions appear within the narrative asking students to respond to questions about controversial topics and important concepts. Students then see their response versus the responses of all other students who have answered the question in the form of a bar chart. We provide the instructor with a PowerPoint deck with links to each survey and map, making it easy to pull these items up in class for discussion.

Survey

Criminal Justice and Basic Fairness

Interactive

The American criminal justice system is generally fair and in most cases results in the appropriate handling and adjudication of cases.

☐ Strongly Agree

☐ Agree

☐ Neutral

☐ Disagree

☐ Strongly Disagree

PREVIOUS

PAGE 1 OF 1

SUBMIT

Track time-on-task throughout the course

The Performance Dashboard allows you to see how much time the class or individual students have spent reading a section or doing an assignment, as well as points earned per assignment. This data helps correlate study time with performance and provides a window into where students may be having difficulty with the material.

Learning Management System Integration

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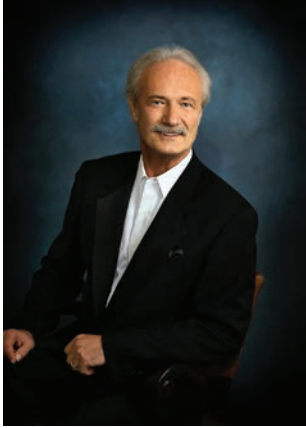
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About the Author



Frank Schmalleger, Ph.D., is Professor Emeritus at The University of North Carolina at Pembroke, where he also was recognized as Distinguished Professor. Dr. Schmalleger holds degrees from the University of Notre Dame and The Ohio State University; he earned both a master's (1970) and a doctorate (1974) in sociology, with a special emphasis in criminology, from The Ohio State University. From 1976 to

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Schmalleger is the author of numerous articles as well as many books: *Criminal Justice Today: An Introductory Text for the 21st Century* (Pearson, 2021), now in its 16th edition; *Juvenile Delinquency*, 9th edition (with Clemmens Bartollas; Pearson, 2014); *Criminal Justice: A Brief Introduction*, 12th edition (Pearson, 2019); *Criminal Law Today*, 6th edition (Pearson, 2016); *Corrections in the Twenty-First Century* (with John Smykla; McGraw-Hill, 2021); *Crime and the Justice System in America: An Encyclopedia* (Greenwood Publishing Group, 1997); *Trial of the Century: People of the State of California vs. Orenthal James Simpson* (Prentice Hall, 1996); *Career Paths: A Guide to Jobs in Federal Law Enforcement* (Regents/Prentice Hall, 1994); *Computers in Criminal Justice* (Wyndham Hall Press, 1991); *Criminal Justice Ethics* (Greenwood Press, 1991); *Finding Criminal Justice in the Library* (Wyndham Hall Press, 1991); *Ethics in Criminal Justice* (Wyndham Hall Press, 1990); *A History of Corrections* (Foundations Press of Notre Dame, 1983); and *The Social Basis of Criminal Justice* (University Press of America, 1981). He is also the founding editor of the journal *Criminal Justice Studies* (formerly *The Justice Professional*).

Schmalleger's philosophy of both teaching and writing can be summed up in these words: "In order to communicate knowledge we must first catch, then hold, a person's interest—be it student, colleague, or policy maker. Our writing, our speaking, and our teaching must be relevant to the problems facing people today, and they must—in some way—help solve those problems." Visit Schmalleger's Amazon author page at: <http://amazon.com/author/frankschmalleger>. Follow his tweets @schmalleger.



CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS CRIMINOLOGY

Understanding Crime and Criminals

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, you should be able to answer the following questions:

- 1.1 What is crime? What is the definition of crime that the author of this text has chosen to use?
- 1.2 What is deviance? How are crime and deviance similar? How do they differ?
- 1.3 Who decides what should be criminal? How are such decisions made?
- 1.4 What is criminology? What are its many roots?
- 1.5 What do criminologists do?
- 1.6 What is evidence-based criminology? How does it complement theoretical criminology?
- 1.7 How does criminology, and especially criminological research, influence social policy? What is translational criminology?
- 1.8 What is the theme of this text? Upon what two contrasting viewpoints does it build?
- 1.9 What is the social context of crime? What are crime's consequences?
- 1.10 What social science has traditionally provided a central theoretical basis for criminology? Why?

Introduction

According to social commentators, people are simultaneously attracted to and repulsed by crime—especially gruesome crimes involving extreme personal violence. The popularity of today’s TV crime shows, Hollywood-produced crime movies, true-crime books and magazines, and Web sites devoted exclusively to the coverage of crime supports that observation. The CBS TV megahit *NCIS*, for example, was recently named the number one TV drama and received an impressive three nominations for TV’s People’s Choice Award.¹ The show was also nominated as the “Favorite TV Crime Drama,” with individual episodes drawing more than 24 million viewers.² *NCIS* was in its 17th season as this book went to press. Earlier, *CSI: Miami*, which ran for 10 seasons until ending in 2012, garnered 50 million regular viewers in more than 55 countries. By its eighth season it had become the most popular television show in the world.³

Other widely followed TV crime series, both past and present, include shows such as *True Detective* (HBO), *American Crime* (ABC), *Backstrom* (Fox), *Battle Creek* (CBS), *Bosch* (Amazon Prime), *Fargo* (FX), *Bones* (Fox), *Grimm* (NBC), *Castle* (ABC), *Criminal Minds* (CBS), *Blue Bloods* (CBS), *Without a Trace* (CBS), *CSI: Cyber* (CBS), *Lucifer* (Fox), *Magic City* (HBO), *The Unit* (CBS), *The Killing* (AMC), *White Collar* (USA), *The District* (CBS), *Boardwalk Empire* (HBO), *The Shield* (FX), *The Wire* (HBO), *Cold Case* (CBS), *NCIS* (CBS), *Homeland* (Showtime), and *Law and Order* (NBC)—along with the *Law and Order* spin-offs, *Law and Order: Criminal Intent*, and *Law and Order: Special Victims Unit*. American TV viewers are hungry for crime-related entertainment and have a fascination with criminal motivation and detective work.

Most crimes cry out for explanation. Yet one of the things that fascinates people about crime—especially violent crime—is that much of it seems to be inexplicable. Some crimes are especially difficult to understand, but our natural tendency is to seek out some reason for the unreasonable. We search for explanations for the seemingly unexplainable. How, for example, can the behavior of child killers be understood, anticipated, and even prevented? Why don’t terrorists acknowledge the emotional and personal suffering they inflict? Why do some robbers or rapists kill and even torture, utterly disregarding human life and feelings?

People also wonder about “everyday” crimes such as burglary, robbery, assault, vandalism, and computer intrusion. Why, for example, do people fight? Does it matter to a robber that he may face prison time? How can people sacrifice love, money,



Cliff Lipson/CBS Photo Archive/CBS/Getty Images

A photo from the highly popular CBS TV show *NCIS*. Shown from left to right are Sean Murray, Brian Dietzen, and Pauley Perrette. Why do many people like to watch TV crime shows like *NCIS*?

careers, and even their lives for access to illegal drugs? What motivates terrorists to give up their own lives to take the lives of others? Why do gifted techno-savvy teens and preteens hack sites on the Internet thought to be secure? While this text may not answer each of these questions, it examines the causative factors in effect when a crime is committed and encourages an appreciation of the challenges of crafting effective crime-control policy.

What Is Crime?

As the word implies, *criminology* is clearly concerned with *crime*. As we begin our discussion of criminology, let’s consider just what the term *crime* means (Table 1-1). Like anything else, crime can be defined in several ways, and some scholars have suggested that at least four definitional perspectives can be found in contemporary criminology. These diverse perspectives see crime from (1) legalistic, (2) political, (3) sociological, and (4) psychological viewpoints. How we see any phenomenon is crucial because it determines the assumptions that we make about how that phenomenon should be studied. The perspective that we choose to employ when viewing crime determines the kinds of questions we ask, the nature of the research we

■ **crime** Human conduct in violation of the criminal laws of the federal government, a state, or a local jurisdiction that has the power to make such laws.

■ **criminalize** To make illegal.

TABLE 1-1 | What Is Crime?

Depending on how we look at it, “crime” can be understood in various ways. The four major perspectives useful in defining crime are:

The Legalistic

According to the legalistic perspective, crime is:

human conduct in violation of the criminal laws of a state, the federal government, or a local jurisdiction that has the power to make such laws. Seen this way, if there is no law against it, there can be no crime, no matter how deviant or socially repugnant the behavior in question may be.

The Political

According to the political perspective, crime is:

the result of criteria that have been built into the law by powerful groups which are then used to label selected undesirable forms of behavior as illegal. Seen this way, laws serve the interests of the politically powerful, and crimes are merely forms of behavior that are perceived by those in power as direct or indirect threats to their interests.

The Sociological (aka sociolegal)

According to the sociological (or sociolegal) perspective, crime is:

an antisocial act of such a nature that its repression is necessary for the preservation of the existing social order. From this viewpoint, crime is primarily an offense against human relationships, and secondarily a violation of the law.

The Psychological

According to the psychological point of view, crime is:

a form of social maladjustment, especially one which is against the law, that can be seen as a difficulty that an individual has in remaining in harmony with his or her social environment. Seen this way, crime is problem behavior for both the individual and society.

Source: Pearson Education, Inc.

conduct, and the type of answers that we expect to receive. Those answers, in turn, influence our conclusions about the kinds of crime-control policies that might be effective.

Without a law that circumscribes a particular form of behavior, there can be no crime....

no matter how deviant or socially repugnant the behavior in question may be.

The notion of crime as behavior⁴ that violates the law derives from earlier work by criminologists like Paul W. Tappan, who defined crime as “an intentional act in violation of the criminal law committed without defense or excuse, and

Seen from a legalistic perspective, **crime** is *human conduct in violation of the criminal laws of a state, the federal government, or a local jurisdiction that has the power to make such laws.*

Without a law that circumscribes a particular form of behavior, there can be no crime,

penalized by the state as a felony or misdemeanor.”⁵ Edwin Sutherland, regarded by many as a founding figure in American criminology, said of crime that its “essential characteristic is that it is behavior which is prohibited by the State as an injury to the State and against which the State may react by punishment.”⁶

For purposes of this text, we will employ a legalistic approach because it allows for relative ease of measurement of crimes committed. Official statistics on crime, such as those shown in Figure 1–1, report crime in terms of legislatively established categories, and the number of offenses shown reflect statutory definitions of crime categories.

A serious shortcoming of the legalistic approach to crime, however, is that it yields the moral high ground to powerful individuals who are able to influence the making of laws and the imposition of criminal definitions on lawbreakers. By making their own laws, powerful but immoral individuals can escape the label “criminal.” While we have chosen to adopt the legalistic approach to crime in this text, it is important to realize that

laws are social products, so crime is *socially relative* in the sense that it is created by legislative activity. Hence, sociologists are fond of saying that “crime is whatever a society says it is.” In Chapter 8, we will explore this issue further and will focus on the process of criminalization, which is the method used to **criminalize** some forms of behavior—or make them illegal—while other forms remain legitimate.

A second perspective on crime is the political one, where crime is the result of criteria that have been built into the law by powerful groups and are then used to label selected undesirable forms of behavior as illegal. Those who adhere to this point of view say that crime is a definition of human conduct created by authorized agents in a politically organized society. Seen this way, laws serve the interests of the politically powerful, and crimes are merely forms of behavior that are perceived by those in power as direct or indirect threats to their interests. Thus, the political perspective defines crime in terms of the power structures that exist in society and asserts that criminal laws do not

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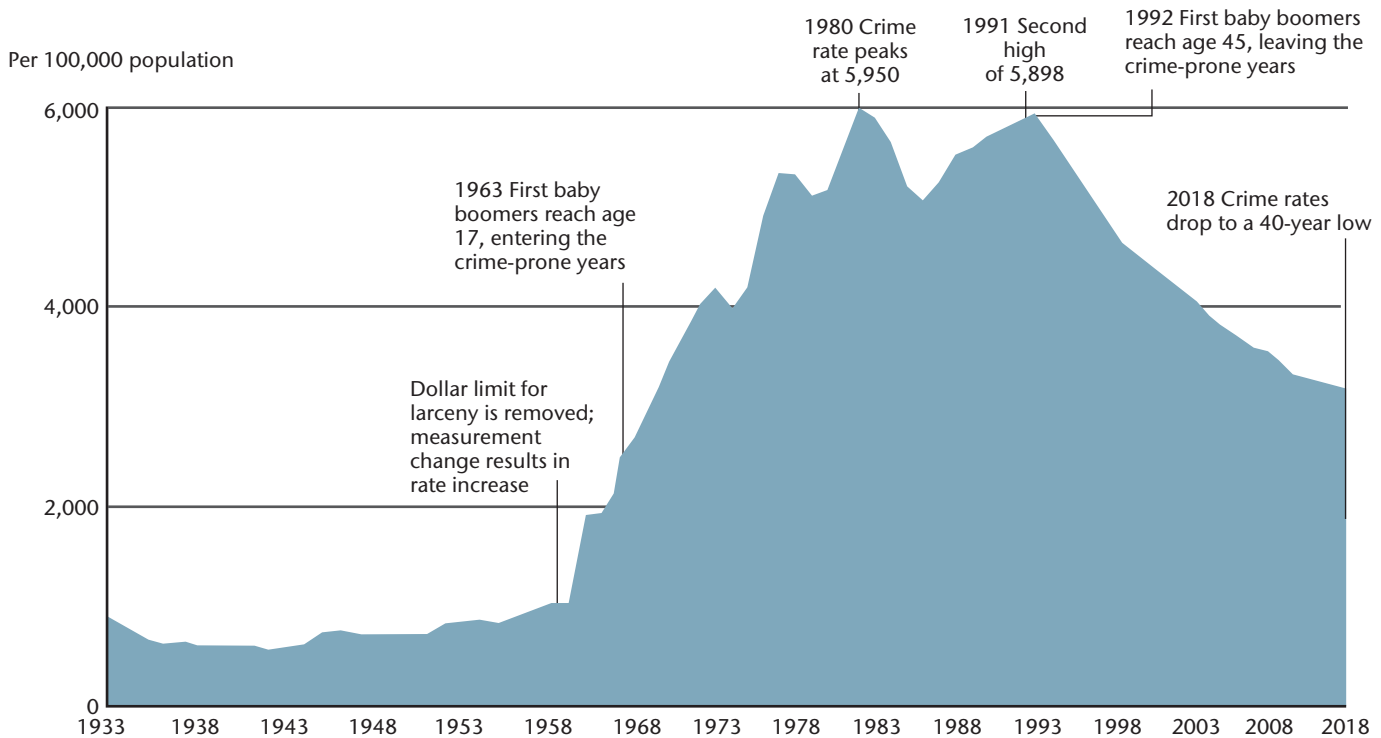


FIGURE 1-1 | Crime Rates in the United States, 1933–2018

Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reports, various years.

necessarily bear any inherent relationship to popular notions of right and wrong.

Even though political processes that create criminal definitions are sometimes easier to comprehend in totalitarian societies, the political perspective can also be meaningfully applied to American society. John F. Galliher, a contemporary criminologist, summarized the political perspective on crime when he wrote, “One can best understand crime in a class-structured society such as the United States as the end product of a chain of interactions involving powerful groups that use their power to establish criminal laws and sanctions against less powerful persons and groups that may pose a threat to the group in power.”⁷ Galliher points out that, because legal definitions of criminality are arrived at through a political process, the subject matter of criminality will be artificially limited if we insist on seeing crime solely as a violation of the criminal law.

Some criminologists insist that the field of criminology must include behaviors that go beyond those defined as crimes through the political process; not doing so, they say, restricts rather than encourages inquiry into relevant forms of human behavior.⁸

Adherents of the third perspective, the sociological (also called “sociolegal”) viewpoint, would likely agree with this statement, seeing crime as “an antisocial act of such a nature that its repression is necessary or is supposed to be necessary to the preservation of the existing system of society.”⁹ Some

criminologists have gone so far as to claim that any definition of crime must include all forms of antisocial behavior.¹⁰ Ron Claassen, a modern-day champion of restorative justice (discussed in more detail in Chapters 9 and 10), suggested, for example, that “crime is primarily an offense against human relationships, and secondarily a violation of a law—since laws are written to protect safety and fairness in human relationships.”¹¹

A more comprehensive sociological definition of crime was offered by Herman Schwendinger and Julia Schwendinger in 1975: Crime encompasses “any harmful acts,” including violations of “the fundamental prerequisites for well-being, [such as] food, shelter, clothing, medical services, challenging work and recreational experiences, as well as security from predatory individuals or repressive and imperialistic elites.”¹² The Schwendingers challenged criminologists to be less constrained in what they see as the subject matter of their field, saying that violations of human rights may be more relevant to criminological inquiry than many acts that have been politically or legally defined as crime. “Isn’t it time to raise serious questions about the assumptions underlying the definitions of the field of criminology,” asked the Schwendingers, “when a man who steals a paltry sum can be called a criminal while agents of the State can, with impunity, legally reward men who destroy food so that price levels can be maintained whilst a sizable portion of the population suffers from malnutrition?”¹³

Criminal behavior is typically associated with personal features such as impulsivity, risky decision making, antisocial demeanor, and aggression, as well as biological and social risk factors that are mediated by genes and by the social and physical environments.

the criminality involved in a holdup or a rape than in cost-cutting efforts made by a businessperson.

Finally, a psychological (or maladaptive) perspective says that “crime is a form of social maladjustment which can be designated as a more or less pronounced difficulty that the individual has in reacting to the stimuli of his environment.”¹⁵ Seen this way, crime is problem behavior, especially human activity that contravenes the criminal law and results in difficulties in living within a framework of generally acceptable social arrangements. According to criminologist Matthew B. Robinson, “[t]he maladaptive view of crime does not require any of the [traditional] elements in order for an act to be a crime: no actual harm to others; no prohibition by law before the act is committed; no arrest; and no conviction in a court of law. Any behavior which is maladaptive would be considered crime. If criminologists adopted this view of crime,” said Robinson, “the scope of criminology would be greatly expanded beyond its current state. All actually or even potentially harmful behaviors could be examined, analyzed, and documented for the purpose of gaining knowledge about potentially harmful behaviors and developing strategies to protect people from all harmful acts, not just those that are called ‘crime’ today.”¹⁶

Jeffrey H. Reiman, another contemporary criminologist, asked similar questions. “The fact is that the label ‘crime’ is not used in America to name all or the worst of the actions that cause misery and suffering to Americans,” said Reiman. “It is primarily reserved for the dangerous actions of the poor.” Writing about unhealthy and unsafe workplaces, Reiman asked, “Doesn’t a crime by any other name still cause misery and suffering? What’s in a name?”¹⁴ While a sociolegal approach to understanding crime is attractive to many, others claim that it suffers from wanting to criminalize activities that cause only indirect harm; that is, it is easier for most people to appreciate



Kaspars Grinvalds/Shutterstock

A young woman vaping marijuana. What is crime? Is her behavior against the law? Should it be?

As this discussion shows, a unified or simple definition of crime is difficult to achieve. The four points of view that we have discussed form a kind of continuum, bound on one end by strict, legalistic interpretations of crime and on the other by much more fluid, behavioral, and moralistic definitions.

No matter which definition we choose, it is important to recognize that most criminal behavior is typically associated with personal features such as impulsivity, risky decision making, antisocial demeanor, and aggression, as well as biological and social risk factors that are mediated by genes and by the social and physical environments.¹⁷ Hence, in seeking to understand crime and its causes, we must also examine the various kinds of behavior that are most likely to be associated with it. In other words, while aggression and risk taking are not necessarily against the law, they are also characteristic of many types of crime, and their understanding can provide insight into criminal motivation.

Crime and Deviance

Sociologically speaking, many crimes can be regarded as deviant forms of behavior—that is, as behaviors that are in some way abnormal. Piers Beirne and James Messerschmidt, two contemporary criminologists, defined deviance as “any social behavior or social characteristic that departs from the conventional norms and standards of a community or society and for which the deviant is sanctioned.”¹⁸ Their definition does not count as deviant, however, any sanctionable behavior that is not punished or punishable. Hence, we prefer another approach to defining

■ **deviant behavior** Human activity that violates social norms.

deviance. The definition of **deviant behavior** that we will use in this text is as follows: *Deviant behavior is human activity that violates social norms.*

Abnormality, deviance, and crime are concepts that do not always easily mesh. Some forms of deviance are not violations of the criminal law, and the reverse is equally true (see Figure 1–2). Deviant styles of dress, for example, although perhaps outlandish to the majority, are generally not circumscribed by criminal law unless (perhaps) decency statutes are violated by a lack of clothing. Even in such cases, laws are subject to interpretation and may be modified as social norms change over time.

Some years ago, for example, a judge in Palm Beach County, Florida, held that a city ordinance barring the wearing of baggy pants was unconstitutional.¹⁹ County Judge Laura Johnson ruled that no matter how “tacky or distasteful” baggy pants might be to others, they were merely a fashion statement and that wearing them, especially when no nudity is involved, is a freedom protected under the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The ordinance had been overwhelmingly approved by voters only two years earlier.

Some types of behavior, although quite common, are still against the law, even though those who engage in them might not think of them as deviant. Living and working in the United States as an undocumented alien, for example, although relatively common, is a violation of federal law, but most people who are long-established in such behavior probably don’t think of themselves as “deviant” or “criminal” (although they may still worry about getting “caught” and being deported). In 2019, for example, federal officials called for the arrest of democrat Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf after she held a press conference intended to alert undocumented aliens living in her city that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents were about to conduct a raid in Northern California. ICE officials claim that Schaaf violated federal law when she issued the alert, allowing close to 1,000 illegal aliens (many with criminal records) to flee in order to avoid apprehension. The Mayor, for her part, Tweeted “I do not regret sharing this information. It is Oakland’s legal right to be a sanctuary city and we have not broken any laws.”²⁰

■ **delinquency** A term often used in conjunction with crime and deviance, it refers to violations of the criminal law and other misbehavior committed by young people.



Oakland, California Mayor Libby Schaaf. In 2018, Schaaf alerted nearly 1,000 undocumented residents that federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents were about to conduct a raid in the sanctuary city—allowing many of them to escape apprehension. Do you agree with Schaaf’s actions?

Complicating matters still further is the fact that certain behaviors are illegal in some jurisdictions but not in others. For example, commercialized gambling, especially gambling involving slot machines and games of chance, is against the law in most parts of the United States but has been legitimized in Nevada, on some Indian reservations, on cruise ships operating outside U.S. territorial waters, on some Mississippi riverboats, and in some state-sponsored locales. Even state governments, seeking to enhance revenues, have gotten into the gambling business through state lotteries, which now operate in 44 states (plus the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands),²¹ and many states have laws specifically forbidding participation in online gambling, due largely to their interest in protecting their own lottery revenues. Similarly, prostitution, which is almost uniformly illegal in the United States, is an activity that is fully within the law in parts of Nevada as long as it occurs within licensed brothels and as long as those engaged in the activity meet state licensing requirements and abide by state laws that require condom use and weekly medical checkups. The criminal status of recreational marijuana use also varies between states—a situation discussed in more detail in a Crime in the News box in this chapter. Finally, “illegal” immigrants are protected in self-designated sanctuary cities, where local authorities are reluctant to cooperate with federal enforcement actions.

We should add that **delinquency**, a term often used in conjunction with crime and deviance, refers to violations of the criminal law and other misbehavior committed by young people. The laws of many states proclaim that “youth” ends at a person’s eighteenth birthday, although others specify the sixteenth or seventeenth birthday as meeting that

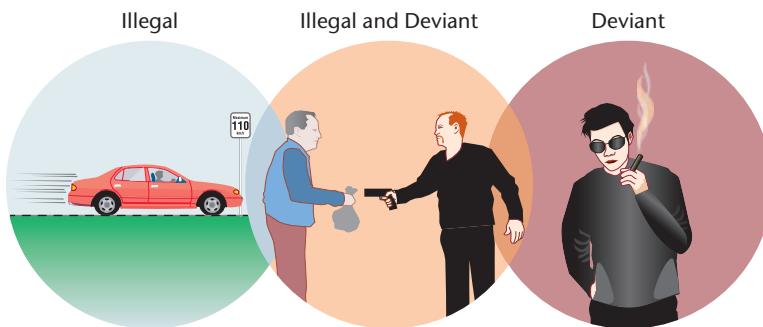


FIGURE 1-2 | The Overlap between Deviance and Crime

Source: Schmallegger, Frank, *Criminology*. Printed and Electronically reproduced by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.

■ **consensus perspective** A viewpoint that holds that laws should be enacted to criminalize given forms of behavior when members of society generally agree that such laws are necessary.

■ **pluralist perspective** A viewpoint that says that behaviors are typically criminalized through a political process only after debate over the appropriate course of action.

requirement. All states, however, specify certain offenses, like running away from home, being ungovernable, and drinking alcohol, as illegal for children but not for adults.

What Should Be Criminal?

By now, you have probably realized that the question “What is crime?” differs from the question “What should be criminal?”

The consensus viewpoint holds that laws should be enacted to criminalize given forms of behavior when members of society generally agree that such laws are necessary.

While the question “What should be criminal?” can be answered in many different ways, the social and intellectual processes by which an answer is reached can be found in two contrasting points of view: (1) the consensus perspective and (2) the pluralist perspective.

The **consensus perspective** holds that laws should be enacted to criminalize given forms of behavior when members of society generally agree that such laws are necessary. The consensus perspective (described in greater detail in Chapter 9) is most applicable to homogeneous societies, or those characterized by shared values, norms, and belief systems. In a multicultural and diverse society like the United States, however, a shared consensus may be difficult to achieve. In such a society, even relatively minor matters may lead to complex debates over the issues involved, and these debates show just how difficult it is to achieve a consensus over even relatively minor matters in a society as complex as our own.

The second perspective, the **pluralist perspective** of crime (also described in more detail in Chapter 9) recognizes the importance of diversity in societies like ours. It says that behaviors are typically criminalized through a political process only after debate over the appropriate course of action. The political process often takes the form of legislation and may involve appellate court action (by those who don’t agree with the legislation). In 2017, for example, President Donald Trump tweeted that “Nobody should be allowed to burn the American Flag.”²² The president threatened loss



Janine Wiedel Photolibrary/Alamy Stock Photo

Protesters burning an American flag. President Trump sought to make flag-burning a crime, while the U.S. Supreme Court has held that it is a form of protected free speech. Which is it? Which should it be?

of citizenship or jail for anyone who burned a U.S. flag. Years earlier, however, the U.S. Supreme Court held that flag burnings are protected under the constitution as a form of free speech. Similarly, legislatures at both the state and federal levels continue to reexamine gun laws to see if new laws are needed to keep guns out of the hands of potential mass killers. Given the diversity of perspectives that characterize our society, however, agreement over gun laws is not easy to reach. Learn more about both sides of the gun-control debate via <https://www.bradycampaign.org> and <https://home.nra.org>.

CRIME | in the NEWS

What Should Be Criminal?

Most people agree that certain forms of behavior, such as murder, rape, burglary, and theft, should be against the law, but there is far less agreement about the appropriate legal status of things like abortion, gay marriage, gambling, gun ownership, drug use, flag burning, undocumented immigration, and other controversial forms of behavior.

One issue that has been trending both in the political arena and on social media is the legalization of marijuana. While drug use and abuse will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 14, the present wave of legislation and voter initiatives to legalize marijuana for both medical and recreational purposes (Figure 1–3) provides a good example of the difficulty in deciding what should or should not be considered criminal.

While existing federal law provides strict penalties for marijuana possession, production, sale, or use, a number of U.S. jurisdictions have recently modified their laws to legalize the possession of small amounts of marijuana for personal use. Most of these new laws, while they permit either recreational or medical marijuana use, prohibit the substance from being consumed in public and limit the amount

(and sometimes the form) allowed. As with other substances that may affect reaction time and judgment, jurisdictions that have expanded the legal availability of marijuana prohibit operating a motor vehicle while under the influence and do not permit marijuana intoxication to be used as a defense against criminal charges.

Although many observers expect marijuana legalization to soon expand to additional states, disparities between federal and state laws, and battles between opposing sides in state and federal courts, may yet lead to a rolling back of the movement toward marijuana legalization. See Chapter 14 for more details on both the historical and current issues involved in marijuana legalization.

Discussion Questions

1. How do you feel about the legalization of marijuana for personal recreational use?
2. Would you want to live in a state in which marijuana is legal? Why or why not?

Source: NORML, "Marijuana Law Reform," January 4, 2019, <https://blog.norml.org/> (accessed February 10, 2019). Inverse, "Marijuana Legalization 2018: A State-by-State Guide to Legal Weed," December 5, 2018, <https://www.inverse.com/article/43850-marijuana-legal-weed-states-in-2018> (accessed May 20, 2019).

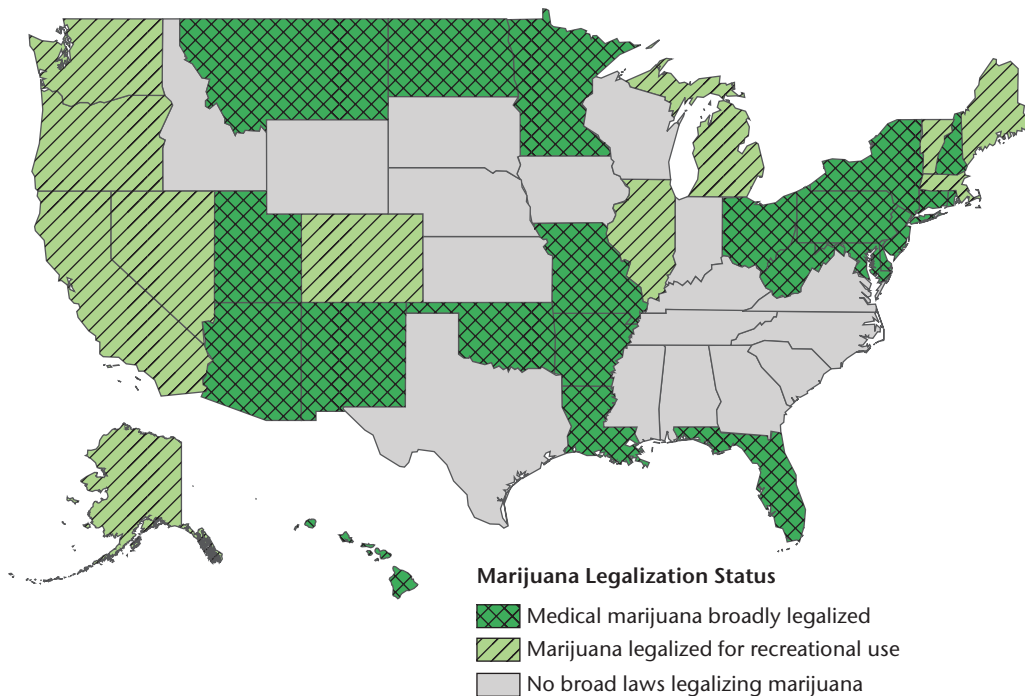


FIGURE 1-3 | Legal Status of Medical and Recreational Marijuana Use in the United States

Sources: Governing, "State Marijuana Laws in 2019 Map," <https://www.governing.com/gov-data/safety-justice/state-marijuana-laws-map-medical-recreational.html> (accessed June 25, 2019).

■ **social policy** A government initiative, program, or plan intended to address problems in society. The war on crime, for example, is a kind of generic (large-scale) social policy—one consisting of many smaller programs.

■ **criminology** An interdisciplinary profession built around the scientific study of crime and criminal behavior, including their forms, causes, legal aspects, and control.

■ **criminality** A behavioral predisposition that disproportionately favors criminal activity.

■ **criminal behavior** Human activity, both intentional and negligent, that violates the criminal law. It may include a failure to act when there is a legal obligation to do so.

What Is Criminology?

The attempt to understand crime and deviance predates written history. Prehistoric evidence, including skeletal remains showing signs of primitive cranial surgery, seems to indicate that preliterate people explained deviant behavior by reference to spirit possession. Primitive surgery was an attempt to release unwanted spiritual influences. In the thousands of years since, many other theoretical perspectives on crime have been advanced. This text describes various criminological theories and covers some of the more popular ones in detail.

Defining “Criminology”

Before beginning any earnest discussion, however, it is necessary to define the term *criminology*. As our earlier discussion of the nature of crime and deviance indicates, not only must criminologists deal with a complex subject matter—consisting of a broad range of illegal behaviors committed by frequently unknown or uncooperative individuals—but they also must manage their work under changing conditions mandated by ongoing revisions of the law and fluctuating **social policy**. In addition, as we have already seen, a wide variety of perspectives on the nature of crime abound and new ones are entering the literature all the time. All this leads to considerable difficulties in defining the subject matter under study.

There is some evidence that the term *criminology* was coined by a Frenchman, Paul Topinard, in 1889....

There is some evidence that the term *criminology* was coined by a Frenchman, Paul Topinard, in 1889;²³ he used it to differentiate the study of criminal body types within the field of anthropology

from other biometric pursuits.²⁴ While he may have coined the term, Topinard did little to help define it. As with the concept of crime, various definitions of criminology can be found in the literature today. About two decades ago, criminologist Joseph F. Sheley wrote, “There seem to be nearly as many definitions of *contemporary criminology* as there are criminologists.”²⁵

One straightforward definition can be had from a linguistic analysis of the word *criminology*. As most people know,

–ology means “the study of something,” and the word *crimen* comes from the Latin, meaning “accusation,” “charge,” or “guilt.” Hence, linguistically speaking, the term *criminology* literally means “the study of criminal accusations,” that is, “the study of crime.” Some of the earliest criminologists of the past century, including Edwin H. Sutherland, who is often referred to as the “dean of American criminology,” offered definitions of the field that emphasized crime as a social problem. Sutherland, for example, wrote in the first edition of his textbook *Criminology* in 1924, “Criminology is the body of knowledge regarding the social problem of crime.”²⁶ Sutherland’s text was to set the stage for much of American criminology throughout the rest of the twentieth century. Reprinted in 1934 with the title *Principles of Criminology*,²⁷ it was to become the most influential textbook ever written in the field of criminology.²⁸

For our purposes, we will use a definition of criminology that brings together the works of previous writers and also recognizes the increasingly professional status of the criminological enterprise. Throughout this text, then, we will say that **criminology** is an interdisciplinary profession built around the scientific study of crime and criminal behavior, including their forms, causes, legal aspects, and control. As this definition indicates, criminology includes consideration of possible solutions to the problem of crime. Hence, this text (in later chapters) describes treatment strategies and social policy initiatives that have grown out of the existing array of theoretical explanations for crime.

It is important to note that our definition encompasses a number of different terms that are sometimes easily confused. Criminology, **criminality**, crime, deviance, and **criminal behavior** are five concepts used in this chapter and throughout this text, and learning the definition of each provides a good start for anyone studying in this field.

The Interdisciplinary Nature of Criminology

As a field of study, criminology in its present form is primarily a social scientific discipline. Contemporary criminologists generally recognize, however, that their field is *interdisciplinary*—that is, it draws upon other disciplines to provide an integrated approach to understanding the problem of crime in contemporary society and to advance solutions to the problems crime

■ **criminal justice** The scientific study of crime, the criminal law, and components of the criminal justice system, including the police, courts, and corrections.

■ **criminologist** One who is trained in the field of criminology; also, one who studies crime, criminals, and criminal behavior.

creates. Hence, anthropology (especially cultural anthropology or ethnology), biology, sociology, political science, psychology, psychiatry, economics, ethology (the study of character), medicine, law, philosophy, ethics, and numerous other fields all have something to offer the student of criminology, as do the tools provided by statistics, computer science, and other forms of scientific and data analysis (see Figure 1–4).

The interdisciplinary nature of criminology was well stated by Jim Short, past president of the American Society of Criminology (ASC), who said, “The organization of knowledge by traditional disciplines has become increasingly anachronistic, as the generation of knowledge has become more interdisciplinary. From its earliest beginnings, when philosophers grappled with relationships between human nature and behavior and biologists sought to relate human physiology to behavior, criminology’s concerns have reached across virtually all disciplines that focus on the human condition. Additionally, much of the impetus for criminology has come from concerns that crime be controlled. Criminology thus cuts across professions as well as disciplines.”²⁹

It is important to note that, although criminology may be interdisciplinary as well as cross-professional, few existing

explanations for criminal behavior have been successfully or fully integrated. Just as physicists today are seeking a unified field theory to explain the wide variety of observable forms of matter and energy, criminologists have yet to develop a generally accepted integrated approach to crime and criminal behavior that can explain the many diverse forms of criminality while also leading to effective social policies in the area of crime control. The attempt to construct criminological theories that are relevant to the problems of today is made all the more difficult because, as discussed earlier, the phenomenon under study—crime—is very wide-ranging and is subject to arbitrary and sometimes unpredictable legalistic and definitional changes.

A successfully integrated field of criminology must bring together the contributions of various theoretical perspectives and disciplines, but it must also—if it is to have any relevance—blend the practical requirements of our nation’s judicial system with emotional and rational calls for morality and justice. Is the death penalty, for example, justified? If so, on what basis? Is it because it is a type of vengeance and therefore deserved? Can we say that it is unjustified because many sociological studies have shown that it does little to reduce the rate of serious crime such as murder? Just what do we mean by “justice,” and what can criminological studies tell us—if anything—about what is just and what is unjust?

Notably, criminology also contributes to the discipline of **criminal justice**, which emphasizes application of the criminal law and study of the components of the justice system, especially the police, courts, and corrections. As one author stated, “Criminology gives prominence to questions about the *causes of criminality*, while the *control of lawbreaking* is at the heart of criminal justice.”³⁰ Learn more about the interdisciplinary nature of criminology via <https://www.csudh.edu/dearhabermas/osgood.htm>.

What Do Criminologists Do?

A typical dictionary definition of a **criminologist** is “one who studies crime, criminals, and criminal behavior.”³¹ Occasionally, the term *criminologist* is used broadly to describe almost anyone who works in the criminal justice field, regardless of formal training. There is a growing tendency, however, to reserve application of the term *criminologist* to academics, researchers, and policy analysts with advanced degrees who are involved in the study of crime and crime trends and in the analysis of societal reactions to crime. Hence, it is more appropriate today to describe specially skilled investigators, crime-laboratory technicians, fingerprint experts, crime-scene photographers, ballistics

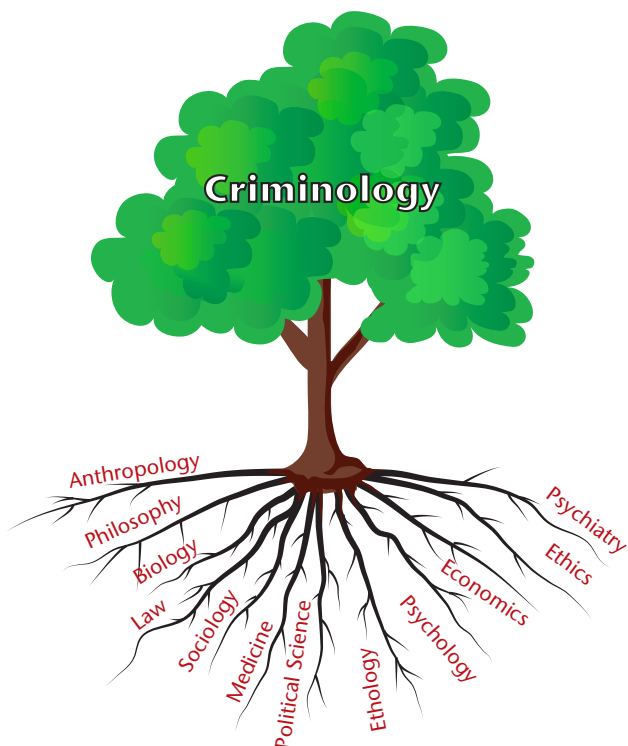


FIGURE 1-4 | **Criminology’s Many Roots**

Source: Printed and Electronically reproduced by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.

■ **criminalist** A specialist in the collection and examination of the physical evidence of crime.



Peter Kim/Shutterstock

A criminalist at work. Crime-scene investigators, like the person shown here, can provide crucial clues needed to solve crimes. How does the work of a criminologist differ from that of a criminalist? Would you like either kind of work?

experts, and others who work to solve particular crimes as criminalists. A **criminalist** is “a specialist in the collection and examination of the physical evidence of crime.”³² Police officers, corrections professionals, probation and parole officers, judges, district attorneys, criminal defense attorneys, and others who do the day-to-day work of the criminal justice system are best referred to as criminal justice professionals.

Academic criminologists and research criminologists generally hold doctoral degrees (PhDs) in the field of criminology or criminal justice from an accredited university. Some criminologists hold degrees in related fields like sociology and political

science but have specialized in the study and control of crime and deviance. Most PhD criminologists teach either criminology or criminology-related subjects in institutions of higher learning, including universities and two- and four-year colleges. Nearly all criminology professors are involved in research or writing projects by which they strive to advance criminological knowledge. Some PhD criminologists are strictly researchers and work for federal agencies like the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), and the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS) or for private (albeit often government-funded) organizations with names such as RAND and the Search Group, Inc.

The results of criminological research in the United States are generally published in journals like *Criminology* (the official publication of the American Society of Criminology [ASC]), *Theoretical Criminology*, *Justice Quarterly* (the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences), *Crime and Delinquency*, the *American Journal of Criminal Justice* (the Southern Criminal Justice Association), the *Journal of Qualitative Criminology*, *Social Problems*, and *Victimology*.³³ International English-language journals are numerous and include the *Canadian Journal of Criminology*, the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*, and the *British Journal of Criminology*. The journal, *Crime Science*, a Springer Open Journal, is Web-available at <https://crimesciencejournal.biomedcentral.com>.

Private security provides another career track for individuals interested in criminology and criminal justice.

People who have earned master's and bachelor's degrees in the field of criminology often find easy entrance into police investigative or support work, probation and parole agen-

cies, court-support activities, and correctional (prison) work. Criminologists also work for government agencies interested in the development of effective social policies intended to deter or combat crime. Many criminologists with master's degrees also teach at two- and four-year colleges and schools.

Private security provides another career track for individuals interested in criminology and criminal justice. The number of personnel employed by private security agencies today is twice that of public law enforcement agencies, and the gap is widening. Many upper- and mid-level private managers working for private security firms hold criminology or criminal justice degrees. The same may soon be true for the majority of law enforcement personnel, especially those in managerial positions.

Anyone trained in criminology has many alternatives (see Table 1–2). Some people with undergraduate degrees in criminology or criminal justice decide to go on to law school. Some teach high school, whereas others become private investigators. Many criminologists provide civic organizations (such as victims' assistance and justice advocacy groups) with much-needed



Peter Casolino/Alamy stock photo

A police officer speaks to a group of young people.

Criminology examines the causes of crime and seeks ways to prevent or control it. Criminal justice examines the criminal justice system, including police, courts, and corrections. How do the two disciplines complement one another?

■ **theoretical criminology** A subfield of general criminology, it posits explanations for criminal behavior.

- **theory** A series of interrelated propositions that attempts to describe, explain, predict, and ultimately control some class of events. A theory gains explanatory power from inherent logical consistency and is tested by how well it describes and predicts reality.
- **general theory** A theory that attempts to explain all (or at least most) forms of criminal conduct through a single overarching approach.
- **unicausal** Having one cause. Unicausal theories posit only one source for all that they attempt to explain.

TABLE 1-2 | What Do Criminologists Do?

The term *criminologist* is usually applied to credentialed individuals, such as those holding advanced degrees in the field, who engage in the study of crime, criminal behavior, and crime trends. The word *criminalist* is used to describe people who specialize in the collection and examination of the physical evidence associated with specific crimes. Others working in the criminal justice system are called *criminal justice professionals*. This table and Figures 1–6 and 1–7 illustrate these differences.

Activities of Criminologists	
Data gathering	Public service
Data analysis	Analysis of crime patterns and trends
Theory construction	Scholarly presentations and publications
Hypothesis testing	Education and training
Social policy creation	Threat assessment and risk analysis
Public advocacy	Service as an expert witness at trial or in other court proceedings
Teaching	Public speaking
Jobs in the Field of Criminalistics	
Forensics examiner	Crime-scene photographer
Crime-laboratory technician	Polygraph operator
Ballistics expert	Fingerprint examiner
Crime-scene investigator	
Jobs in the Field of Criminal Justice	
Law enforcement officer	Judge
Probation or parole officer	Defense attorney
Correctional officer	Prosecutor
Prison program director	Jailer
Cybercrime investigator	Private security officer and supervisor
Juvenile justice worker	Victims' advocate

Source: Pearson Education, Inc.

expertise, a few work for politicians and legislative bodies, and some appear on talk shows to debate the pros and cons of various kinds of social policies designed to fight crime. Some criminologists become police officers, investigate crimes and arrest fugitives (Figure 1–5), and some even write texts like this one!

Theoretical Criminology

Theoretical criminology, a subfield of general criminology, is the type of criminology most often found in colleges and

universities. Theoretical criminology, rather than simply describing crime and its occurrence, posits explanations for criminal behavior. As Sutherland stated, “The problem in criminology is to explain the criminality of behavior. However, an explanation of criminal behavior should be a specific part of [a] general theory of behavior and its task should be to differentiate criminal from noncriminal behavior.”³⁴

To explain and understand crime, criminologists have developed many theories. As we shall see in Chapter 2, a **theory**, at least in its ideal form, is made up of clearly stated propositions that posit relationships, often of a causal sort, between events and things under study. An old Roman theory, for example, proposed that insanity was caused by the influence of the moon and may even follow its cycles—hence the term *lunacy*.

Theories attempt to provide us with explanatory power and help us understand the phenomenon under study. The more applicable a theory is found to be, the more generalizable it is from one specific instance to others—in other words, the more it can be applied to other situations. A **general theory** of crime is one that attempts to explain all (or at least most) forms of criminal conduct

through a single overarching approach. Unfortunately, as Don M. Gottfredson, past president of the ASC, observed, “Theories in criminology tend to be unclear and lacking in justifiable generality.”³⁵ When we consider the wide range of behaviors regarded as criminal—from murder to drug use to white-collar crime to cybercrime—it seems difficult to imagine one theory that can explain them all or that might even explain the same type of behavior under varying circumstances. Still, many past theoretical approaches to crime causation were **unicausal** while attempting to be all-inclusive; that is, the approaches posited a single identifiable source for all serious deviant and criminal behavior.

■ **evidence-based criminology** A form of contemporary criminology that makes use of rigorous social scientific techniques, especially randomized controlled experiments, and the systematic review of research results; also called *knowledge-based criminology*.

■ **integrated theory** An explanatory perspective that merges (or attempts to merge) concepts drawn from different sources.

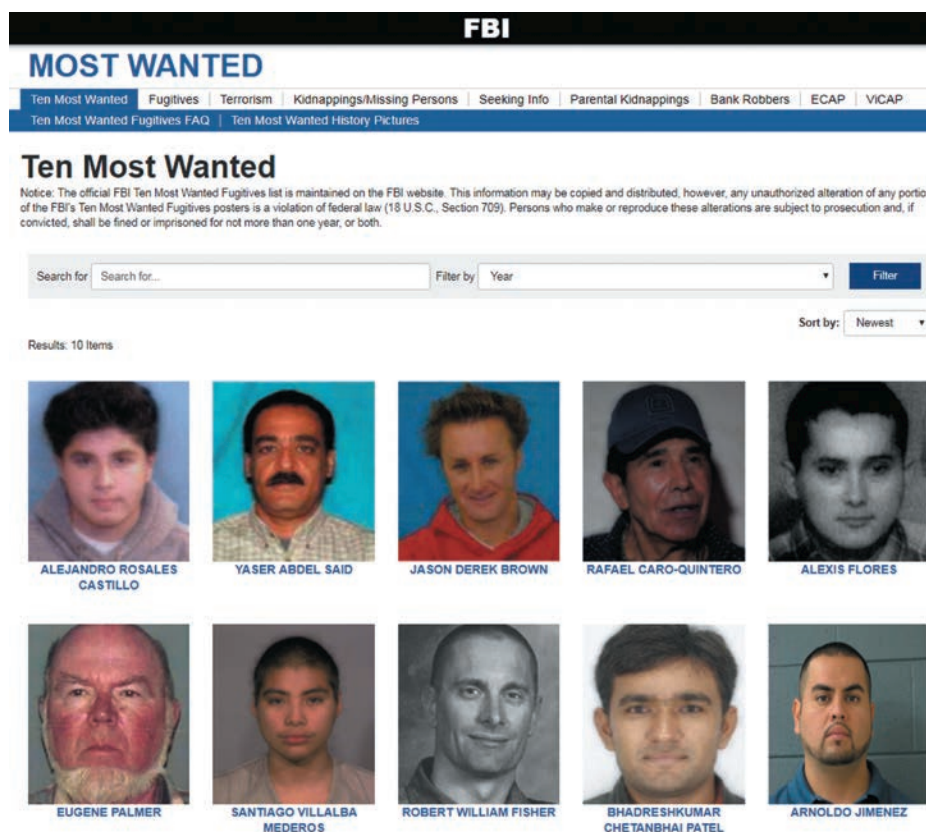


FIGURE 1-5 | The FBI's 10 Most Wanted Fugitives

An **integrated theory**, in contrast to a general theory, does not necessarily attempt to explain all criminality but is distinguishable by the fact that it merges (or attempts to merge) concepts drawn from different sources. As noted criminologist Gregg Barak stated, “An integrative criminology seeks to bring together the diverse bodies of knowledge that represent the full array of disciplines that study crime.”³⁶ Hence, integrated theories provide potentially wider explanatory power than narrower formulations. Don C. Gibbons, professor of sociology at Portland State University, noted, “The basic idea of theoretical integration is straightforward; it concerns the combinations of single theories or elements of those theories into a more comprehensive argument. At the same time, it would be well to note that in practice, integration is a matter of degree: some theorists have combined or integrated more concepts or theoretical elements than have others.”³⁷

Both the general applicability and the theoretical integration of criminological theories to a wide variety of law-violating behaviors are intuitively appealing concepts. Even far more limited attempts at criminological theorizing, however, often face daunting challenges. “As we shall see,” noted Gibbons, “criminologists have not managed to articulate a large collection of

relatively formalized arguments in a general or integrated form.”³⁸ So, although we will use the word *theory* in describing the many explanations for crime covered by this text, it should be recognized that the word will only loosely apply to many of the perspectives on crime causation that we will discuss.

As we shall learn in Chapter 2, many social scientists insist that, to be considered theories, explanations must consist of sets of clearly stated, logically interrelated, and measurable propositions. The fact that only a few of the theories described in this text rise above the level of organized conjecture—and those offer only limited generalizability and have rarely been integrated—is one of the greatest challenges facing criminology today.

Evidence-Based Criminology

Criminologists make use of contemporary social scientific research methods in the development of criminological theories. The use of rigorous social scientific techniques to develop knowledge in the field of criminology is referred to as **evidence-based criminology** (also called *knowledge-based criminology*). The research conducted by today's criminologists results in a body of scientific evidence applicable to the problems and realities of today's world.

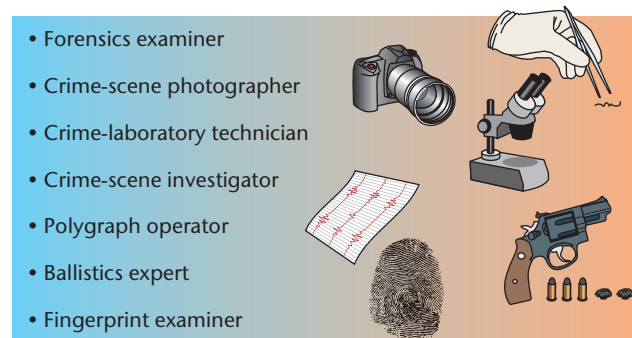


FIGURE 1-6 | Jobs in the Field of Criminalistics

Source: Schmallegger, Frank, *Criminology*. Printed and Electronically reproduced by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.

■ **translational criminology** A form of criminology whose purpose it is to translate the results of research into workable social policy.

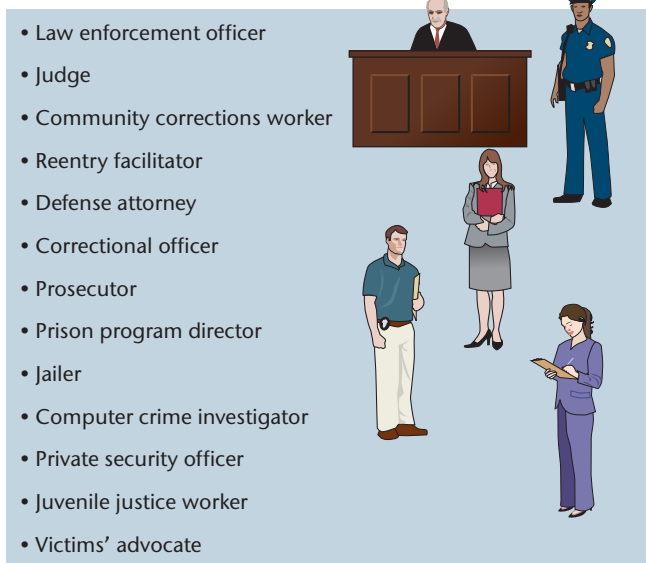


FIGURE 1-7 | Jobs in the Field of Criminal Justice

Source: Schmallegger, Frank, *Criminology*. Printed and Electronically reproduced by permission of Pearson Education, Inc., Upper Saddle River, New Jersey.

Because contemporary criminology is built on a social scientific approach to the subject matter of crime, the discipline has much to offer as we attempt to grapple with the problems of crime and crime control.

In 2009, in recognition of the growing significance of evidence-based criminology, the executive board of the American Society of Criminology (ASC) established a new division of experimental criminology; the division's purpose is "the promotion and improvement of experimental evidence and methods in the advancement of criminological theory and evidence-based crime policy."³⁹

Six years later, in 2015, ASC joined with the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) to establish the Crime and Justice Research Alliance (CJRA). The Alliance, based in Washington, D.C., works to promote the use of objective research on crime and justice-related issues. Visit the American Society of Criminology on the Web at <https://www.asc41.com>.

Today, evidence-based criminology is given added voice by the Academy of Experimental Criminology, which is based at the University of Pennsylvania, and by a number of important

new journals including the *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, which was the first journal in the field of criminology to focus directly on experimental methods.⁴⁰ Another evidence-based publication, the *Justice Evaluation Journal*, began publication in 2018. (See Chapter 2 for a further discussion of evidence-based criminology and of experimental methods in criminology.)

Criminology and Evidence-Based Social Policy

The ultimate outcome of successful criminological theorizing is a set of meaningful social policies based on scientific evidence that proves the theory's usefulness (see Chapter 2). Translating the results of research in the field of criminology into workable social policy is sometimes referred to as **translational criminology**. The National Institute of Justice (NIJ), an arm of the U.S. Department of Justice, explains it this way: "The idea of translational criminology is simple, yet powerful: If we want to prevent, reduce and manage crime, we must be able to translate scientific discoveries into policy and practice."⁴¹

It is not always easy to translate research into practice, however, even when solid evidence points to needed changes in policy. Some policy implications, such as those relating to the physical environment, for example, are relatively easy to implement. Not only do most criminologists agree that such changes, such as installing brighter lighting in crime-prone areas, can be effective at preventing crime, but they are also easy to implement.

Other policy innovations, especially those calling for cultural or social changes, can be difficult to implement, even when there is strong evidence for their likely success. In a recent example, an editorial in the highly regarded British magazine *New Scientist* asked this question: "Why are we so reluctant to accept that on-screen violence is bad for us?"⁴² The article entitled "In Denial" noted that "by the time the average U.S. schoolchild leaves elementary school, he or she will have witnessed more than 8,000 murders and 100,000 other acts of violence on television." For children who play computer games and watch cable TV, the numbers will be far higher. Scientific studies show the obvious detrimental effects of media violence, according to the article, "yet every time a study claims to have found a link between

aggression, violence, educational, or behavioral problems and TV programs or computer games, there are cries of incredulity. . . .”⁴³

A number of professional groups—including the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychological Association, and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry—agree that violence in television, music, video games, and movies leads to increased levels of violent behavior among children.⁴⁴ A joint statement issued by those organizations says that the effects of violence in the media “are measurable and long-lasting.” The groups reached the conclusion “based on over 30 years of research . . . that viewing entertainment violence can lead to increases in aggressive attitudes, values and behaviors, particularly in children.” Moreover, “prolonged viewing of media violence can lead to emotional desensitization toward violence in real life.” Similarly, some years ago the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) issued a report⁴⁵ on teenage violence that concluded that “Hollywood aggressively markets violent movies, music and electronic games to children even when they have been labeled as appropriate only for adults.”⁴⁶ The complete FTC report *Marketing Violent Entertainment to Children* is available at <https://www.justicestudies.com/pubs/ftcreport.pdf>.

Even after such findings, however, policy makers are reluctant to slow the production of violent media. For this reason, violence on TV and in video games is still prominent in the United States. *New Scientist* says media vendors dissuade “any criticism of a multibillion-dollar business” where they would lose profits resulting from any policies aimed at crime reduction.⁴⁷

Anyone interested in the creation of sound social policy must respect the well-researched findings of today’s criminologists. In the words of NIJ, “Successful dissemination of the results of criminological research requires that the evidence is implemented correctly. In other words, it is not just about finding evidence that something works; it is figuring out why it works and how to implement the evidence in real-world settings.”⁴⁸

Professional criminologists are acutely aware of the need to link sound social policy to the objective findings of well-conducted criminological research. A meeting of the ASC, for example, focused on the need to forge just such a link. At the meeting, ASC president Alfred Blumstein, of Carnegie Mellon University, told criminologists gathered there that “an important mission of the ASC and its members involves the generation of knowledge that is useful in dealing with crime and the operation of the criminal justice system, and then helping public officials to use that knowledge intelligently and effectively.”⁴⁹ Blumstein

■ **social problems perspective** The belief that crime is a manifestation of underlying social problems, such as poverty, discrimination, pervasive family violence, inadequate socialization practices, and the breakdown of traditional social institutions.

added, “So little is known about the causes of crime and about the effects of criminal justice policy on crime that new insights about the criminal justice system can often be extremely revealing and can eventually change the way people think about the crime problem or about the criminal justice system.”⁵⁰

The Theme of This Text

At the core of today’s thinking about crime exists a crucial distinction between those who believe that crime is a *manifestation of underlying social problems* beyond the control of individuals (the social problems perspective) and those who emphasize that crime is a matter of *individual responsibility* (the individual responsibility perspective).

Building upon this distinction, this text contrasts two perspectives now popular in U.S. society and in much of the rest of the world (see Figure 1–8). One point of view, termed the **social problems perspective**, holds that crime is a consequence of underlying social problems such as poverty, discrimination, inequality of opportunity, breakdown of traditional social institutions, low level of formal education among some disadvantaged groups, pervasive family violence experienced by some during the formative years, and inadequate socialization



FIGURE 1–8 | The Theme of This Text: Social Problems versus Individual Responsibility

■ **individual responsibility perspective** The belief that individuals are fundamentally responsible for their own behavior and that they choose crime over other, more law-abiding courses of action.

practices that leave too many young people without the fundamental values necessary to contribute meaningfully to the society in which they live. Advocates of the social problems perspective, while generally agreeing that crime and violence are serious social problems, advance solutions based on what is, in effect, a public-health model. Adherents of that model say that crime must be addressed in much the same way as public-health concerns like AIDS, herpes, or avian flu.

Proponents of the social problems perspective typically see solutions to the crime problem as coming in the form of large-scale government expenditures in support of social programs designed to address the issues that are perceived to lie at the root of crime. Government-funded initiatives, designed to enhance social, educational, occupational, and other opportunities, are perceived as offering programmatic solutions to ameliorate most causes of crime. The social problems approach to crime is characteristic of what social scientists term a *macro approach* because it portrays instances of individual behavior (crimes) as arising out of widespread and contributory social conditions that enmesh unwitting individuals in a causal nexus of uncontrollable social forces.

A contrasting perspective lays the cause of crime squarely at the feet of individual perpetrators. This point of view holds that individuals are fundamentally responsible for their own behavior and maintains that offenders choose crime over other, more law-abiding courses of action. Perpetrators may choose crime, advocates of this perspective say, because it is exciting, because it offers illicit pleasures and the companionship of like-minded thrill seekers, or because it is simply personally less demanding than conformity. This viewpoint, which we shall call the **individual responsibility perspective**, has a close affiliation with what is known in criminology as rational choice theory (discussed in detail in Chapter 3). It is also closely associated with a strongly held belief in the importance of free will, which is common to Western societies. The individual responsibility perspective stresses individual responsibility above all else.

Advocates of the individual responsibility perspective, with their emphasis on individual choice, tend to believe that social programs do little to solve the problem of crime because, they say, a certain number of crime-prone individuals, for a variety of personal reasons, will always make irresponsible choices. Hence, advocates of the individual responsibility approach suggest highly personalized crime-reduction strategies based on firm punishments, imprisonment, individualized rehabilitation, and increased security as well as a wider use of police powers. The individual responsibility perspective characteristically emphasizes a *micro approach* that tends to focus on individual offenders and their unique biology, psychology, background, and immediate life experiences.

A recent case from Napa, California, highlights the two perspectives found in this book. In 2019, Sara Lynn Krueger and boyfriend Ryan Scott Warner were both sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole after being convicted of the horrific torture and murder of Krueger's 3-year-old daughter, Kayleigh. Evidence in the case showed that Kayleigh,

whose small body was found partially frozen in her mother's apartment, had been repeatedly kicked, hit, and beaten before she was sent to bed, where she died. Investigators found 41 individual injuries all over her body, with the fatal one causing a rupture of her small intestines. It likely came from a blow to the stomach. Prosecutors pointed out how much the little girl must have suffered laying in bed with such injuries before she died.

Not long after Kayleigh died, surviving relatives sued the village of Napa and Napa County, claiming that the county's child welfare services and the town's police officers did not properly protect the girl. "If the police and social workers had done their jobs," Kayleigh's grandmother said, "Kayleigh would still be here." In fact, officers had been called to the apartment five times where Kayleigh lived before she died—and three of those calls occurred during the final two weeks of her life. For its part, Child Welfare Services argued that its employees had adhered to state law in all aspects of the case—but decided to end litigation, fearing huge financial losses should the case have gone to civil court. In the end, Kayleigh's father and grandparents were each paid \$2.5 million by the city and the county.⁵¹ Summing up the case, Julia Sherwin, an attorney for the grandparents said,

"It took a village to kill Kayleigh."

Advocates of the individual responsibility approach suggest crime-reduction strategies based on firm punishments, imprisonment, individualized rehabilitation, and increased security.

After reading this story, we might ask ourselves some questions: Who was responsible for Kayleigh's death? Was it the city? Was it her mother and her mother's boyfriend? Seen from a social problems perspective, the only missing piece seems to be background information on the mother and boyfriend. What kinds of experiences did they have growing up? Were they

beaten by their own parents? Did they play video games in which violence was not only accepted but also rewarded? Were they the victims of a drug culture that caused them to act out in such a violent way? If the answer to these questions are "yes," then some people might lay the blame for Kayleigh's demise on a society that cannot protect its young—and in which violence merely moves from one generation to the next.

Individual Responsibility and the Law

Seen historically, the individual responsibility perspective—and not the social responsibility perspective—has substantially

WHO'S TO BLAME—The Individual or Society?

Is Criminology Really Just a Form of Academic Excuse Making?



Three teenage boys were arrested in the small town of Hillsboro, Maine, and charged with beating a homeless man to death with a baseball bat in an underground parking garage on a cold January evening. A surveillance camera captured the beating, and the youngsters were identified by residents who watched the video clip on local TV news.

Because the boys were juveniles, a storm of controversy swarmed around a local judge's decision to charge them as adults and to bind them over for trial in criminal court—something that state law allows for serious crimes if the suspected offenders were over 14 years of age at the time of the alleged offense.

Soon opinions were being heard from many quarters, and the news media arranged to interview a criminology professor, Dr. Roy Humbolt, at a local college to see if he might be able to shed some light on the boys' behavior.



Cultural Creative/Alamy Stock photo

A news conference held to provide insight into a seemingly senseless killing. What value do criminological explanations hold for the understanding of criminal activity? How can we benefit from such explanations?

The first question came from a reporter holding a digital voice recorder toward Professor Humbolt. "What happened here? How do you explain this kind of senseless killing?"

"Well," Humbolt began, "it's not senseless. Crime is a social event, not just an isolated instance of individual activity. And in much youth crime we see patterns of co-offending."

Humbolt felt as though he was hitting his stride and started lecturing as though he was in the classroom with his undergraduates. "Criminal behavior is often attributable to social failings rather than to individual choice. Consider, for a moment, the backgrounds of these young men. Were they subjected to physical abuse while they were growing up? Did they learn violence at the hands of older siblings or parents? Were they, in this instance, involved in some adolescent rite of passage, maybe even an initiation into a gang? Did they feel forced to behave this way because of peer pressure? Was it something they saw on television or in video games that they might have played and then decided to reenact?"

"Dr. Humbolt," the reporter asked, bringing the professor back from his reverie, "even if you find that some of those things are true, isn't criminology just an exercise in excuse making for criminals?"

Think about it

1. What do you think of the explanations offered by Professor Humbolt for the boys' behavior? Which of his explanations, if any, makes the most sense? How can we know for sure if those explanations are accurate?
2. What do you think of the reporter's stinging criticism of the professor? Is the reporter right that criminology is "just an exercise in excuse making for criminals?" Explain your answer.
3. Generally speaking, does understanding absolve responsibility? In other words, if we can understand why someone does something, then should we hold him or her less responsible for doing it? Why or why not?

Note: Who's to Blame boxes provide critical-thinking opportunities based on actual cases.

influenced national crime-control policies in this country. Examples of conservatism in our nation's approach to criminals abound. The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act of 1994, for example (which is discussed in detail later in this text), expanded the number of capital crimes under federal law from a handful of offenses to 52.⁵² The law also made billions of dollars available to municipalities to put 100,000 new police officers on the streets and allocated billions for states to build and operate prisons and incarceration alternatives like "boot camps." Prison funding was intended to ensure that

additional prison cells would be available to put—and keep—violent offenders behind bars. A subchapter of the 1994 Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act created a federal three-strikes-and-you're-out law that mandated life imprisonment for criminals convicted of three violent federal felonies or drug offenses. Similarly, the law increased or created new penalties for over 70 federal criminal offenses, primarily covering violent crimes, drug trafficking, and gun crimes. The USA PATRIOT Act—enacted in 2001 and renewed with modifications in over the years since—targets terrorism and crimes

committed in support of terrorist activity. The PATRIOT Act has been criticized by many for going too far in limiting individual freedoms and restricting personal choice, although its supporters argue that its provisions are needed to fight the war on terrorism effectively. The PATRIOT Act and the crime of terrorism are discussed in more detail in Chapter 16.

We should note, however, that the implementation of any social policy can result in unforeseen consequences—such as the massive increase in American prison populations over the past 30 years that resulted from get-tough-on-crime policies. Today, states and the federal government are straining under the financial burden of incarcerating huge numbers of felons, many of whom have been convicted of nonviolent and drug crimes, and efforts are being made to reduce the number of people behind bars.

The Social Context of Crime

Crime does not occur in a vacuum. Every crime has a unique set of causes, consequences, and participants. Crime affects some people more than others, having a special impact on those who are direct participants in the act itself—offenders, victims, police officers, witnesses, and so on. Crime, in general, provokes reactions from its victims, from concerned groups of citizens, from the criminal justice system, and sometimes from society as a whole, which manifests its concerns via the creation of new social policy. Reactions to crime, from the everyday to the precedent-setting, may color the course of future criminal events.⁵³

In this text, we shall attempt to identify and examine some of the many social, psychological, economic, biological, and other causes of crime while expounding on the many differing perspectives that have been advanced to explain both crime and criminality. Popular conceptions of criminal motivation are typically shaped by media portrayals of offender motivation, which often fail to take into consideration the felt

experiences of the law violators. By identifying and studying this diversity of perspectives on criminality, we will discover the characteristic disjuncture among victims, offenders, the justice system, and society about the significance that each assigns to the behavior in question—and often to its motivation. It will not be unusual to find, for example, that sociological or psychological initiatives with which the offenders themselves do not identify are assigned to those offenders by theorists and others.

Making Sense of Crime: The Causes and Consequences of the Criminal Event

This text recognizes that criminal activity is diversely created and variously interpreted. In other words, this text depicts crime not as an isolated individual activity but as a *social event*.⁵⁴ Like other social events, crime is fundamentally a social construction.⁵⁵ To say that crime is a social construction is not to lessen the impact of the victimization experiences that all too many people undergo in our society every day, nor does such a statement trivialize the significance of crime-prevention efforts or the activities of members of the criminal justice system. Likewise, it does not underplay the costs of crime to individual victims and to society as a whole. It does recognize, however, that although a given instance of criminal behavior may have many causes, it also carries with it many different kinds of meanings—at least one for offenders, another (generally quite a different meaning, of course) for victims, and still another for agents of the criminal justice system. Similarly, a wide range of social interest groups, from victims' advocates to prisoner "rights" and gun-control organizations, all interpret the significance of law-breaking behavior from unique points of view, and each arrives at different conclusions about what should be done about the so-called crime problem.

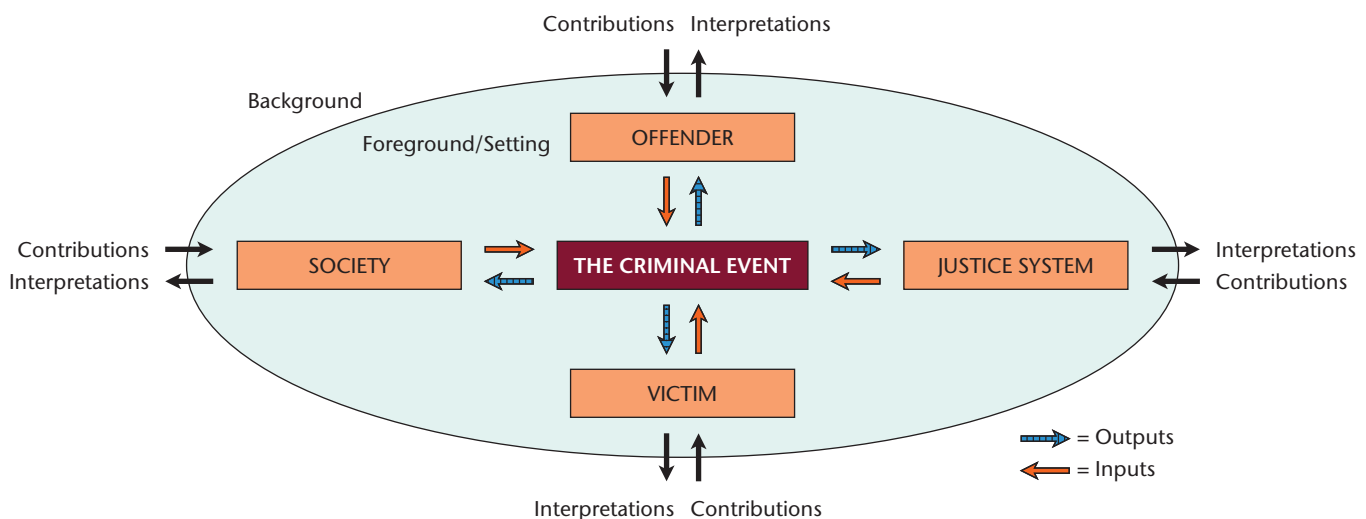


FIGURE 1-9 | Interpreting the Criminal Event

■ **criminal justice system** The various agencies of justice, especially the police, courts, and corrections, whose goal is to apprehend, convict, punish, and rehabilitate law violators.

■ **social relativity** The notion that social events are interpreted differently according to the cultural experiences and personal interests of the initiator, the observer, or the recipient of that behavior.

For these reasons, it is important to apply the concept of social relativity to the study of criminality.⁵⁶ **Social relativity** means that social events are interpreted differently according to the cultural experiences and personal interests of the initiator, the observer, or the recipient of that behavior. Hence, as a social phenomenon, crime means different things to the offender who commits it, to the criminologist who studies it, to the police officer who investigates it, and to the victim who experiences it firsthand.

Figure 1–9 illustrates both the causes and the consequences of crime in rudimentary diagrammatic form. In keeping with the theme of this text, it depicts crime as a social event. The figure consists of a foreground, or setting, which describes those features that immediately determine the nature of the criminal event (including responses to the event as it is transpiring), and a background, in which generic contributions to the crime can be seen along with interpretations of the event after it has taken place. We call the background causes of crime *contributions* and use the word *inputs* to signify the more immediate propensities and predispositions of the actors involved in the situation. Inputs also include the physical features of the setting in which a specific crime takes place. Both background contributions and immediate inputs contribute to and shape the criminal event.

The more or less immediate results or consequences of crime are termed *outputs*, whereas the term *interpretations* appears in the diagram to indicate that any crime has a lasting impact both on surviving participants and on society. As Figure 1–9 shows, although the criminal event may occur at a particular point in time and within a given setting, it is ultimately a result of the coming together of inputs provided by (1) the offender, (2) the criminal justice system, (3) the victim, and (4) society (including other individuals who do not fit in any of the first three categories).

Crime and the Offender

Offenders bring with them certain background features, such as personal life experiences, a peculiar biology and genetic inventory (insofar as they are unique organisms), a distinct personality, personal values and beliefs, and various kinds of skills and knowledge (some of which may be useful in the commission of crime). Background contributions to crime can be vitally important. Research, for example, tends to cement the existence of a link between child-rearing practices and criminality in later life. Joan McCord, reporting on a 30-year study of family relationships and crime, found that self-confident, nonpunitive, and affectionate

mothers tend to insulate their male children from delinquency and, consequently, later criminal activity.⁵⁷ Difficulties associated with the birthing process have also been linked to crime in adulthood.⁵⁸ Negative familial relationships and birth trauma are but two of the literally thousands of kinds of experiences individuals may have. Whether individuals who undergo trauma at birth and are deprived of positive maternal experiences will turn to crime depends on many other things, including their own mixture of other experiences and characteristics, the appearance of a suitable victim, the failure of the justice system to prevent crime, and the evolution of a social environment in which criminal behavior is somehow encouraged or valued.

Each of the parties identified in Figure 1–9 contributes immediate inputs to the criminal event. Foreground contributions by the offender may consist of a particular motivation, a specific intent (in many cases), or a drug-induced state of mind.

Crime and the Criminal Justice System

Like the offender, the **criminal justice system** (meaning the various agencies of justice such as the police, courts, and corrections) also contributes to the criminal event, albeit unwillingly, through its failure to (1) prevent criminal activity, (2) adequately identify and inhibit specific offenders prior to their involvement in crime, and (3) prevent the release of convicted criminals who later become repeat offenders. Such background contributions can be seen in prisons (a central component of the justice system) that serve as “schools for crime,” fostering anger against society and building a propensity for continued criminality in inmates who have been “turned out.” Similarly, the failure of system-sponsored crime-prevention programs—ranging from the patrol activities of local police departments to educational and diversionary programs intended to redirect budding offenders—helps set the stage for the criminal event.

On the other hand, proper system response may reduce crime. A study by Carol W. Kohfeld and John Sprague, for example, found that police response (especially arrest) can, under certain demographic conditions, dramatically reduce the incidence of criminal behavior.⁵⁹ Kohfeld and Sprague also found that arrest “constitutes communication to criminals in general,” further supporting the notion that inputs provided by the justice system have the power to either enhance or reduce the likelihood of criminal occurrences.

■ **socialization** The lifelong process of social experience whereby individuals acquire the cultural patterns of their society.

Immediate inputs provided by the justice system typically consist of features of the situation such as the presence or absence of police officers, the ready availability (or lack thereof) of official assistance, the willingness of police officers to intervene in precrime situations, and the response time required for officers to arrive at a crime scene.

Crime and the Victim

Sometimes victims actively contribute to their own victimization by making unwise choices.

Few crimes can occur without a victim. Sometimes the victim is a passive participant in the crime, such as an innocent person killed on the street outside his or her home by random gunfire from a drive-by shooting.

In such cases, the victim is simply in the proverbial wrong place at the wrong time. Even then, however, merely by being present the victim contributes his or her person to the event, thereby increasing the severity of the incident (i.e., the random shooting that injures no one may still be against the law but is a far less serious crime than a similar incident in which somebody is killed). Sometimes, however, victims more actively contribute to their own victimization by appearing defenseless (having characteristics such as old age, drunkenness, or disability), by failing to take appropriate defensive measures (leaving doors unlocked or forgetting to remove the key from a car's ignition), by unwisely displaying wealth (flashing large-denomination bills in a public place), or simply by making other unwise choices (walking down a dark alley off Times Square at 3 A.M.). In a study of Canadian victimization, Leslie W. Kennedy and David R. Forde found that violent personal victimization "is contingent on the exposure that comes from following certain lifestyles," which was especially true "for certain demographic groups, particularly young males."⁶⁰

Although lifestyles may provide the background that fosters victimization, a more active form of victimization characterizes "victims" who initiate criminal activity, such as the barroom brawler who picks a fight but ends up on the receiving end of the ensuing physical violence. Victim-precipitated offenses are those that involve active victim participation in the initial stages of a criminal event and that take place when the soon-to-be victim instigates the chain of events that ultimately results in the victimization. Victimization and victim-precipitation are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 10, *Criminal Victimization*.

Crime and Society

Finally, the general public (termed *society* in Figure 1–9) contributes to the criminal event both formally and informally. Society's formal contributions sometimes take the form of

legislation, whereby crime itself is defined. Hence, as we shall discuss in considerable detail in Chapter 15, society structures the criminal event in a most fundamental way by delineating (through legislation and via statute) which forms of activity are to be thought of as criminal.

Society's less formal contributions to crime arise out of generic social practices and conditions like poverty, poor and informal education, and various forms of discrimination by which pathways to success are blocked as well as **socialization** (the process whereby people acquire the cultural patterns of their society). Socialization has an especially important impact on crime causation because it provides the interpretative foundation used to define and understand the significance of particular situations in which we find ourselves, and it is upon those interpretations that we may (or may not) decide to act. Date rape, for example, can occur when a man concludes that his date "owes" him something for the money he has spent on her. That feeling, however inappropriate from the point of view of the victim and the justice system, probably has its roots in early learned experiences—including values communicated from television, the movies, and popular music—about gender-related roles under such circumstances. In other words, society, through the divergent values and expectations it places on people, property, and behavior under particular conditions, may provide the motivational basis for many offenses.

The contributions society makes to the backgrounds of both offender and victim and to the structure of the justice system and the influences each, in turn, has upon the general social order provide for a kind of "feedback loop" in our vision of crime (even though the loop is not shown in Figure 1–9 for fear of unnecessarily complicating it). Through socialization, for example, individuals learn about the dangers of criminal victimization, but when victimization occurs and is publicized, it reinforces the socialization process, leading to an increased wariness of others and so on. An example can be seen in the fact that fear of random violence is much higher today than it was decades ago. The idea of random violence entered cultural awareness following a number of horrendous and well-publicized mass shootings and is now a shared part of the socialization process in the United States.

The contributions made by society to crime are complex and far reaching. Some say that the content of the mass media (Web sites, television, movies, newspapers, popular music, etc.) can lead to crime by exposing young people to inappropriate role models and to the kinds of activity—violence and unbridled sexuality, for example—that encourage criminality.

Society's foreground contributions to crime largely emanate from the distribution of resources and the accessibility of services, which are often the direct result of economic conditions. In a study of the availability of medical resources (especially quality hospital emergency services), William G. Doerner found that serious assaults may "become" homicides when such resources are

lacking but that homicides can be prevented through the effective utilization of capable medical technology.⁶¹ Hence, societal decisions leading to the distribution and placement of advanced medical support equipment and personnel can effectively lower homicide rates in selected geographic areas, but homicide rates will be higher in areas where such equipment is not readily available. In Doerner's words, "[t]he causes of homicide transcend the mere social world of the combatants."⁶²

The moments that immediately precede any crime are ripe with possibilities. When all the inputs brought to the situation by all those present coalesce into activity that violates the criminal law, a crime occurs. Together, the elements, experiences, and propensities brought to the situation by the offender and the victim, and those that are contributed to the pending event by society and the justice system, precipitate and decide the nature, course, and eventual outcome of the criminal event. As one well-known criminologist explained, "An understanding of crime and criminality as constructed from the immediate interactions of criminals, control agents, victims, and others, and therefore as emerging from a tangled experiential web of situated dangers and situated pleasures, certainly refocuses theories of criminal causality on the criminal moment."⁶³ While certain circumstances contribute to the criminal event as it unfolds, it is also important to note that some of the inputs brought to the situation may be inhibiting; that is, they may tend to reduce the likelihood or severity of criminal behavior.

The Consequences of Crime

As mentioned earlier, the causes of crime, however well documented, tell only half the criminological story. Each and every crime has consequences. Although the immediate consequences of crime may be relatively obvious for those parties directly involved (e.g., the offender and the victim), crime also indirectly affects society and the justice system over the longer term. Figure 1–9 terms the immediate effects of crime *outputs*. As with the causes of crime, however, the real impact of such outputs is mediated by perceptual filters, resulting in what the figure terms *interpretations*. After a crime has taken place, each party to the event must make sense out of what has transpired. Such interpretations consist of cognitive, emotional, and (ultimately) behavioral reactions to the criminal event.

Interpretations are ongoing. They happen before, during, and after the criminal event and are undertaken by all those associated with it. In an interesting and detailed study of the interpretative activity of criminal justice system personnel, James F. Gilsinan documented what happens when callers reach the 9–1–1 operator on police emergency lines.⁶⁴ Because many prank calls and calls for information are made to 9–1–1 operators, the operators must judge the seriousness of every call that comes through. What the caller says was found to be only a small part of the informational cues that an operator seeks to interpret before assigning the call to a particular response (or nonresponse) category. Honest calls for help may go unanswered if the operator misinterprets the call. Hence, quite early in the criminal event, the potential exists for a crucial representative of the justice system to misinterpret important cues and to conclude that no crime is taking place.

Other interpretative activities may occur long after the crime has transpired, but they are at least as significant. The justice system, taken as a whole, must decide guilt or innocence and must attempt to deal effectively with convicted offenders. Victims must attempt to make sense of their victimization in a way that allows them to testify in court (if need be) and to pick up the pieces of their crime-shattered lives. Offenders must come to terms with themselves and decide whether to avoid prosecution (e.g., if escape is possible), accept blame, or deny responsibility. Whatever the outcome of these more narrowly focused interpretative activities, society—because of the cumulative impact of individual instances of criminal behavior—will also face tough decisions through its courts and law-making agencies. Society-level decision making may revolve around the implementation of policies designed to stem future instances of criminal behavior, the revision of criminal codes, or the elimination of unpopular laws.

Our perspective takes a three-dimensional integrative view of the social event termed *crime*. We will (1) attempt to identify and understand the multiple causes that give rise to criminal behavior, (2) highlight the processes involved in the criminal event as it unfolds, and (3) analyze the interpretation of the crime phenomenon, including societal responses to it. From



Corepics VOF/Shutterstock

A group of young people hanging out. The influence of groups can be strong on their members, explaining why sociological theories of crime causation have long been at the forefront of criminological thinking. What other kinds of explanations might help us understand crime?

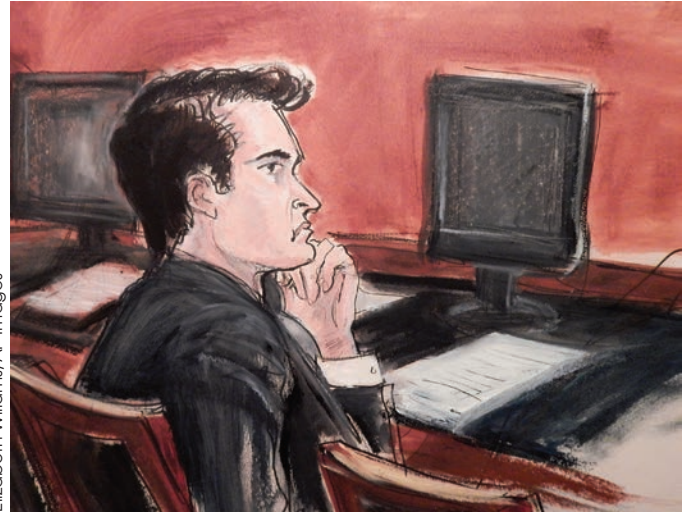
CRIMINAL | PROFILES

Ross Ulbricht—The New Face of Crime?

In 2015, 31-year-old Ross Ulbricht, the mastermind behind the illegal online marketplace known as Silk Road, was sentenced in Manhattan federal court to spend the rest of his life in prison. He was also ordered to forfeit \$183,961,921 in illegal profits. Silk Road, which offered sex, firearms, illegal drugs, pharmaceuticals, hacking services, and even killings-for-hire, was created in 2011 and operated on what's known as the dark Web. Participants used sophisticated and secretive Web browsers and conducted transactions in untraceable Bitcoins. Officials estimated that the site, before it was shut down, had nearly a million users and raked in over \$1.2 billion in sales through millions of transactions.

Online, Ulbricht used the pseudonym Dread Pirate Roberts. Before his true identity was known, the media described him as a “virtual criminal mastermind” and an “online mob boss” who became the new face of organized crime. Ulbricht was said to have personally used his creation to fund a \$150,000 hit on a Canadian man who tried to extort him. Investigators said that he later followed up by ordering the killing of the blackmailer's four friends. Ulbricht, however, was ultimately held responsible for the crimes that others committed through the Silk Road portal. U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara says that “Ulbricht bears responsibility for the overdoses, addictions, and other foreseeable repercussions of the illegal drugs sold on Silk Road.” It doesn't matter, Bharara said, “that he did not personally handle those drugs; neither would a traditional kingpin.”

Silk Road was the first massive online marketplace for illegal goods and services, and it provided a blueprint for other criminals wanting to conduct business autonomously. At sentencing, federal Judge Katherine B. Forrest told Ulbricht that “as the first person” to create a virtual world in which any kind of illegal business could be conducted, he had to pay the price. Anyone who was thinking of following in Ulbricht's footsteps, said the judge, needs to know clearly “and without equivocation that if you break the law this way, there will be very serious consequences.” In a footnote to Ulbricht's trial and sentencing, the Web site bitbet.us took bets (only in Bitcoins, of course) favoring



Elizabeth Williams/AP Images

Silk Road founder, Ross Ulbricht. In 2015, Ulbricht was sentenced to life in prison for creating the anything-goes Internet site.

odds of a successful appeal by Ulbricht, or a presidential pardon of Ulbricht by Donald Trump before mid-2018.

The case of Ross Ulbricht raises a number of interesting questions. Among them are the following:

1. What does the conviction of Ross Ulbricht have to say about the nature of crime in America today?
2. Why did Ulbricht receive such a harsh sentence?

Notes

FBI Press Release, “Ross Ulbricht, AKA Dread Pirate Roberts, Sentenced in Manhattan Federal Court to Life in Prison,” May 29, 2015, <https://www.fbi.gov/newyork/press-releases/2015/ross-ulbricht-aka-dread-pirate-roberts-sentenced-in-manhattan-federal-court-to-life-in-prison>; and “Silk Road: How One Virtual ‘Mob Boss’ Became the New Face of Organized Crime,” News.com.au, July 14, 2015, <http://www.news.com.au/technology/online/silk-road-how-one-virtual-mob-boss-became-the-new-face-of-organised-crime/story-fnjwnj25-1227441204850>

this perspective, crime can be viewed along a temporal continuum as an emergent activity that (1) arises out of past complex causes; (2) assumes a course that builds on immediate interrelationships among the victim, offender, and others that exist at the time of the offense; and (3) elicits a formal response from the justice system, shapes public perceptions, and (possibly) gives rise to changes in social policy after it has occurred.

The advantages of an integrative perspective can be found in the completeness of the picture that it provides. The integrative point of view results in a comprehensive and inclusive view

of crime because it emphasizes the personal and social underpinnings as well as the consequences of crime. The chapters that follow employ the integrative perspective advocated here to analyze criminal events and to show how various theoretical approaches can be woven into a consistent perspective on crime. For a different point of view, one that describes crime in terms of the five dimensions of (1) law, (2) offender, (3) target and/or victim, (4) location, and (5) time of the incident, read <https://westerncriminology.org/documents/WCR/v03n2/verma/verma.html>.

The Primacy of Sociology?

This text recognizes the contributions made by numerous disciplines, including biology, economics, psychology, psychiatry, physiology, and political science, to the study of crime and crime causation. It is important to recognize, however, that the primary perspective from which many contemporary criminologists operate is a sociological one. Hence, a large number of today's theoretical explanations of criminal behavior are routinely couched in the language of social science and fall within the framework of sociological theory. The social problems versus individual responsibility theme, around which this text is built, is in keeping with such a tradition.

Many would disagree, however, with those who claim that the sociological perspective should be accorded heightened importance in today's criminological enterprise. Those who argue in favor of the primacy of sociology emphasize the fact that crime, as a subject of study, is a social phenomenon. Central to any study of crime, they say, must be the social context of the criminal event because it is the social context that brings victims and criminals together.⁶⁵ Much of contemporary criminology rests on a tradition of social scientific investigation into the nature of crime and criminal behavior that is rooted in European and American sociological traditions that are now well over 200 years old.⁶⁶

The primary significance of crime and of criminal behavior is fundamentally social in nature, and any control over crime must stem from effective social policy.

of controlling violent (as well as other forms of) crime. As Diana Fishbein, professor of criminology at the University of Baltimore, said, "Sociological factors play a role. But they have

One of sociology's problems, however, has been its apparent reluctance to accept the significance of findings from other fields as well as its frequent inability to integrate such findings into existing sociological understandings of crime. Another has been its seeming inability to demonstrate conclusively effective means

not been able to explain why one person becomes violent and another doesn't."⁶⁷

While sociological theories continue to develop, new and emerging perspectives ask to be recognized. The role of biology in explaining criminal tendencies, for example, appears to be gaining strength as investigations into the mapping of human DNA continue. Charles F. Wellford, past president of the ASC, explained the current state of affairs, saying, "I strongly believe that the future development of causal theory is dependent upon our movement toward integrated theories that involve biological, social, and cultural dimensions. Our failure to achieve much in the way of understanding the causal sequences of crime is in part a reflection of our slowness in moving toward multidisciplinary, integrated theoretical structures. The fact is that for two-thirds of the twentieth century, as criminology developed, we remained committed to a small number of sociological models for which there is extensive proof of their important but limited value. Fortunately in the last 20 years, this has begun to change. Today we see under way substantial research efforts that are based upon models of explanation that far exceed the traditional sociological approaches."⁶⁸ In recognition of such approaches, in 2017, the American Society of Criminology (ASC), established a new division—the Biopsychosocial Division. The establishment of the division was meant to recognize important emerging trends in American criminology. The first was a renewed emphasis on biological theories of crime causation—theories that had been relegated to the dustbin of history for nearly 100 years (see chapters 3 and 4). The second purpose of the establishment of the division was to recognize that not one discipline could explain everything about crime and its causation, and that an interactive perspective, recognizing the roles of biology, psychology, sociology, and other sciences, in the explanation of criminal behavior was critical.

Nonetheless, whatever new insights may develop over the coming years, it is likely that the sociological perspective will continue to dominate the field of criminology for some time to come. Such dominance is rooted in the fact that crime—regardless of all the causative nuances that may be identified in its development—occurs within the context of the social world. As such, the primary significance of crime and of criminal behavior is fundamentally social in nature, and any control over crime must stem from effective social policy.

SUMMARY

- At the start of this chapter, the term *crime* was defined as a violation of the criminal law. Near the end of this chapter, we recognized the complexity of crime, calling it an “emergent phenomenon.” In the process, crime was shown to be a law-breaking event whose significance arises out of an intricate social nexus involving a rather wide variety of participants.
- Deviance, or deviant behavior, refers to a violation of social norms. Some forms of behavior (such as murder, rape, and most serious crimes) are both criminal and deviant. Others may be deviant but not criminal (e.g., nudity under certain circumstances) or may be criminal but not regarded as deviant by many members of society (e.g., the use of marijuana).
- Decisions about what should be criminal are generally made by legislatures, at both the state and federal levels. Such decisions are made through a political process that involves input from social interest groups, including those in favor of criminalizing certain behaviors and those opposed to criminalizing them.
- *Criminology* is “an interdisciplinary profession built around the scientific study of crime and criminal behavior, including their forms, causes, legal aspects, and control.” Criminology has evolved from a long historical tradition and borrows features from psychology, economics, sociology, and other disciplines.
- The term *criminologist* is applied to credentialed individuals who engage in the study of crime, criminal behavior, and crime trends. *Criminalist* describes people who specialize in the collection and examination of the physical evidence associated with specific crimes. *Criminal justice professionals* include law enforcement officers, judges, criminal defense attorneys, prosecutors, cybercrime investigators, victims’ advocates, jailers, correctional officers, and so on.
- Evidence-based criminology refers to the use of rigorous social scientific research methods in the development and testing of criminological theories. Evidence-based criminology offers the promise of building a valuable collection of evidence-based knowledge that can be of service to policy makers and individuals concerned about the fight against crime.
- Criminologists are acutely aware of the need to link sound social policy to the objective findings of well-conducted criminological research. Unfortunately, political considerations and long-standing traditional solutions have formed the basis for much crime-control policy in the past, and the situation is only slowly changing.
- This text builds on a social policy theme by asking what the sources of crime and criminality are and what we can do to control crime. The theme contrasts two perspectives: The *individual responsibility perspective* holds that crime is a matter of individual choice; the *social problems perspective* holds that crime is a manifestation

of underlying social problems beyond the control of individuals.

- Crime is itself a social problem, and this text sees crime as a social event, not an isolated individual activity. A given instance of criminal behavior may have many causes and many different kinds of meanings. Social relativity holds that social events are interpreted differently according to the cultural experiences and personal interests of the initiator, the observer, and the recipient of that behavior.
- Theoretical criminology, a special area within criminology, offers explanations for criminal behavior. The discipline of sociology has had the most impact on theoretical understandings of crime and crime causation, so a large number of today’s theoretical explanations of criminal behavior are routinely couched in the language of social science and fall within the framework of sociological theory. Nonetheless, it is important to recognize the contributions made by numerous other disciplines (biology, economics, psychology, psychiatry, physiology, political science), making the study of crime and crime causation interdisciplinary.

KEY TERMS

consensus perspective, 7	general theory, 12
crime, 3	individual responsibility perspective, 16
criminal behavior, 9	integrated theory, 13
criminalist, 11	pluralist perspective, 7
criminality, 9	socialization, 20
criminalize, 3	social policy, 9
criminal justice, 10	social problems perspective, 15
criminal justice system, 19	social relativity, 19
criminologist, 10	theoretical criminology, 12
criminology, 9	theory, 12
delinquency, 6	translational criminology, 14
deviant behavior, 6	unicausal, 12
evidence-based criminology, 13	

QUESTIONS FOR REVIEW

1. What is crime? What is the definition of *crime* that the author of this text chose to use? How might the notion of crime change over time? What impact does the changing nature of crime have on criminology?
2. What is deviance? How are crime and deviance similar? How do they differ?
3. Who decides what should be criminal? How are such decisions made?
4. What is criminology? What are its many roots?
5. What do criminologists do? How does the work of a criminologist differ from that of a criminalist?

6. What is evidence-based criminology? How does it complement theoretical criminology?
7. How does criminology, and especially criminological research, influence social policy? What is translational criminology?
8. What is the theme of this text? On what two contrasting viewpoints does it build?
9. What is the social context of crime? What are crime's consequences?
10. What social science has traditionally provided a central theoretical basis for criminology? Why?
3. Are there any crimes today that you think should be legalized? If so, what are they? Why do you feel this way?
4. Can you think of any advances now occurring in the social or physical sciences that might soon have a significant impact on our understanding of crime and criminality? If so, what would those advances be? How might they affect our understanding of crime and criminal behavior?
5. How would you describe the various participants in a criminal event? How does each contribute to an understanding of the event?
6. In what way is contemporary criminology interdisciplinary? Why is the sociological perspective especially important in studying crime? What other perspectives might be relevant? Why?
7. How does contemporary criminology influence social policy? Do you think that policy makers should address crime as a matter of individual responsibility and accountability, or do you think that crime is truly a symptom of a dysfunctional society? Why?

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. This text emphasizes the theme of social problems versus individual responsibility. How would you describe both perspectives? How might social policy decisions based on these perspectives differ?
2. Do you think you might want to become a criminologist? Why or why not?



Adrian Weinbrecht/Cultura
Creative/Alamy Stock Photo

CHAPTER 2

WHERE DO THEORIES COME FROM?—

From Idea to Evidence

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, you should be able to answer the following questions:

- 2.1** What is the role of social scientific research methods in the development of criminological theories? How does the meaning of the word evidence in evidence-based criminology differ from the evidence found at a crime scene or the evidence used in criminal trials?
- 2.2** What is a theory? What purposes do theories serve? What role do research and experimentation play in theory building in criminology?
- 2.3** What is internal validity? External validity? How can threats to internal and external validity be addressed?
- 2.4** What are the differences between quantitative and qualitative methods in the social sciences? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each method?
- 2.5** What are some of the ethical considerations involved in conducting criminological research?
- 2.6** How do criminological research and experimental criminology affect social policy?
- 2.7** What sections might a typical research report contain?

■ Follow the author's tweets about the latest crime and justice news at @schmalleger.

Introduction

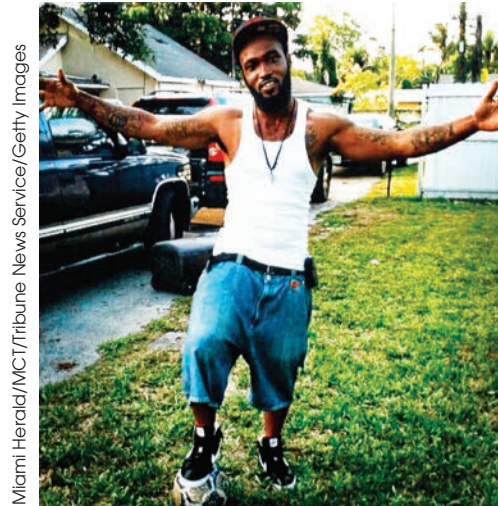
In 2012, 31-year-old Rudy Eugene was shot to death by Miami police officers on the McArthur Causeway after he attacked a homeless man under an overpass on the six-lane highway and ate the man's face.¹ A bicyclist who observed the frenzied attack alerted police, who intervened and ordered Eugene to the ground, but reports show that he growled at them and continued chewing on his victim. After an initial round into Eugene's torso failed to have any effect, officers shot him four more times, killing him. His victim, 65-year-old Ronald Poppo, who was critically injured, was taken to Miami's Jackson Memorial Hospital where physicians revealed that 80% of his face above his beard had been gnawed away. One of his eyes had been gouged out, and his other eye had been badly damaged, leaving him blind.²

Video taken by a surveillance camera on the nearby *Miami Herald* building captured the entire incident. It showed that Eugene, whom the press later dubbed the Miami Cannibal, had spent about 30 minutes before the attack walking around his car that had broken down. He then left the disabled vehicle, stripping clothing from his body as he walked. The last thing he discarded was a Bible that he'd been clutching. Eugene then came across a prone Poppo lying underneath an overpass and began to beat him. The video showed Eugene pulling off Poppo's pants and hitting and biting him in an attack that lasted for 18 minutes before police arrived.

Although no one knows what drove Eugene to attack Poppo, some experts speculated that he had consumed bath salts, designer drugs with an effect similar to amphetamine and cocaine, prior to the attack. Bath salts have been known to raise body temperature to dangerous levels and to cause the brain to overheat, resulting in intense hallucinations. Evidence gathered from Eugene's car, including numerous water bottles that he had apparently consumed before the incident, and his behavior in removing all of his clothing seemed to support the bath salts theory. Toxicology studies of Eugene's remains, however, did not reveal the presence of any exotic drugs in his system, although they showed that he had smoked marijuana.³

In an interview given some time after the incident, Eugene's girlfriend suggested that he might have been possessed by the devil or acting under a curse.⁴ Eugene, who was from Haiti, apparently believed in voodoo. "That wasn't him," his girlfriend told CBS news reporters. "That was his body but it wasn't his spirit." She said that Eugene had been studying the Bible and texting Bible verses to friends shortly before the attack. "Rudy was battling the devil," she concluded.

The remarks of Rudy Eugene's girlfriend reminded me of the first criminology class that I taught years ago at a small southern college in the heart of what was then referred to as



Miami Herald/MCT/Tribune News Service/Getty Images

Rudy Eugene, also known as the "Miami Cannibal," was killed by police in 2012 while apparently attempting to eat a homeless man alive. Can criminological theories explain his actions?

the Bible belt. Many of my students were devoutly religious and thoroughly churched in hallowed concepts such as good and evil, sin, salvation, and redemption. When the three-month course was nearly over and a detailed discussion of biological, psychological, and sociological theories of crime causation had ended, I decided to do some research. I wanted to see which of the theories we had discussed most appealed to the majority of my students. On the last day of class, I took a brief survey. After explaining what I was about to do, I started with the question "How many of you think that most criminal behavior can be explained by the biological theories of crime causation we've studied?" Only one or two students raised their hands. This was a very small number because the class, a popular one, held 131 students and was taught in a small auditorium. "How many of you," I continued, "think psychological theories explain most crime?" Again, only a handful of students responded. "Well, then, how many of you feel sociological theories offer the best explanation for crime?" I asked. A few more hands went up. Still, the majority of students had not voted one way or the other. Fearing that my teaching had been for naught and not knowing what else to ask, I blurted out, "How many of you believe that 'the devil made him do it' is the best explanation for crime that we can offer?" At that, almost all the students raised their hands.

I realized then that an entire semester spent trying to communicate the best thoughts of generations of criminologists had had little impact on most students in the class. They had listened to what I had to say, considered each of the perspectives I presented, and then dismissed all of them out of hand as so much

■ **evidence based** Built on scientific findings, especially practices and policies founded upon the results of randomized, controlled experiments.

idle conjecture—assigning them the status of ruminations sadly out of touch with the true character of human nature and lacking in appreciation for the true cosmic temper of human activity.

That class held a lesson for me greater than any that the students had learned: It taught me that contemporary criminological theory cannot be fully appreciated until and unless its fundamental assumptions are comprehended. Until students can be brought to see the value of scientific criminology and unless they can be shown why today's criminologists think and reason the way they do, it is impossible to convince them that the criminological enterprise is worthy of serious attention.

The lesson I learned that day was given voice by noted criminological researcher Lawrence W. Sherman, who, upon realizing that even the best scientific evidence the field has to offer is rarely accorded the significance that it deserves by policy makers, wrote, "The mythic power of subjective and unstructured wisdom holds back every field and keeps it from systematically discovering and implementing what works best."⁵

Today's Science-Based Criminology

In Chapter 1 we discussed how today's criminology is **evidence based**. This chapter describes how criminologists use contemporary social scientific research methods in the development of criminological theories, policies, and practices. It is my way of showing to those embarking upon the study of criminology why the modern-day science of criminology has both validity and purpose—that is, how it is applicable to the problems and realities of today's world. Were it not, the study of criminology would be pointless, and the criminological enterprise would become irrelevant.

Evidence-based criminology, a concept that was introduced in Chapter 1, is an increasingly popular form of contemporary criminology that is founded upon the experimental method. The method utilizes the techniques of the social sciences (especially randomized, controlled experiments) in theory testing. When used in this context, the word *evidence*

theory cannot be fully appreciated until and unless its fundamental assumptions are comprehended. Until students can be brought to see the value of scientific criminology and unless they can be shown why today's

refers to scientific findings, *not* to the kind of evidence gathered by the police or used in criminal trials.

Some authors credit David Farrington, Lloyd Ohlin, and James Q. Wilson with helping to popularize the use of randomized experiments in the field of criminology.⁶ In the mid-1980s, their influential book *Understanding and Controlling Crime* recommended the use of such experiments whenever possible to test assumptions in the justice field.⁷ Shortly afterward, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ), under then-Director James C. Stewart, funded more than two dozen criminology-related experiments.⁸ A decade later, Anthony Petrosino and his colleagues found that 267 criminological experiments had been conducted and published in English.⁹ Today, that number is in the thousands.

Learn more about the growing body of criminological evidence-based findings from the Division of Experimental Criminology, a part of the American Society of Criminology, at <https://expcrim.org>.

The Evolving Science of Criminology

In his seminal 2003 presidential address to the ASC, John H. Laub used the framework of life course theory (discussed in Chapter 7) to describe the history of criminological thought.¹⁰ Laub identified three eras that he says have characterized the field of criminology over the past 100 years. The first era, said Laub, covered the years 1900 to 1930 and can "be thought of as the 'Golden Age of Research.'"¹¹ It was a time when data on crime and criminal behavior were largely gathered and evaluated independent of any particular ideational framework.

The second era, the period from 1930 to 1960, Laub called the "Golden Age of Theory" and described it as a time when intellectual theorizing "dominated the scene." Strangely, said Laub, during this second period, "there was no systematic attempt to link criminological research to theory."¹²

Era three extended from 1960 to 2000 and was "characterized by extensive theory testing of the dominant theories, using largely empirical methods." In other words, the third era identified by Laub was a time of scientific examination of the accuracy of criminological theories that had been advanced previously. Although he didn't address it directly, Laub indicated that the current era (i.e., twenty-first-century criminology, or fourth era) is heir to the first three eras and contains "all possible offspring" of what came before.

As Laub's remarks show, criminologists over the past half century have undertaken the task of building a scientific or evidence-based criminology, as distinguished from what had been the "armchair criminology" of earlier times. Armchair criminologists offered their ideas to one another as conjecture—fascinating "theories" that could be debated (and sometimes were) *ad nauseam*. Although the ruminations of armchair criminologists may have achieved a considerable degree of popular acclaim through (1) the involvement of distinguished lecturers, (2) the association of such ideas with celebrated bastions of higher learning, and (3) their publication in prestigious essays, they were rarely founded on anything other than mere speculation.

The ideas of armchair criminologists followed in the intellectual tradition of medieval Christian theologians, who sometimes busied themselves with debates over questions like how many angels could fit on the head of a pin or whether Noah had forgotten to take certain types of insects on board the ark. They were the kinds of things one could probably never know with certainty, no matter how much the ideas were debated, and the ideas being debated were rarely amenable to real-world tests. Under such circumstances, one person's theory was another's fact and still another's wishful thinking.¹³

Although it is easy to dispense with armchair criminology as the relaxed musings of carefree intellectuals undertaken almost as sport, it is far more difficult to agree on the criteria necessary to move any undertaking into the realm of serious scientific endeavor. Present-day criminology is decidedly more scientific, however, than its intellectual predecessor—which means that many of its theories and policy recommendations are amenable to objective scrutiny and systematic testing.

A variety of criteria have been advanced for declaring any endeavor "scientific." Among them are:¹⁴

- The systematic collection of related facts (as in the building of a database)
- An emphasis on the availability and application of the scientific method

- "The existence of general laws, a field for experiment or observation, and control of academic discourse by practical application"
- "The fact that it has been accepted into the scientific tradition"
- An "emphasis on a worthwhile subject in need of independent study even if adequate techniques of study are not yet available" (as in the investigation of paranormal phenomena)

Probably all the foregoing could be said of today's criminology. For one thing, criminologists do gather facts (Laub's "Golden Age of Research"). However, the mere gathering of facts, although it may lead to a descriptive criminology, falls short of offering satisfactory explanations for crime. Hence, most contemporary criminologists are concerned with identifying relationships among the facts they observe and with attempting to understand the many diverse causes of crime. This emphasis on unveiling causality moves criminology beyond the merely descriptive into the realm of conjecture and theory building. A further emphasis on measurement and objectivity gives contemporary criminology its scientific flavor.

Theory Building

Some years ago, Inspector Andy Parr, of the Sussex Police Department in England, reviewed crime statistics for the town of Brighton and found that violent crime was higher on nights when the moon was full.¹⁵ "I compared a graph of full moons and a graph of last year's violent crimes and there is a trend," Parr told the United Kingdom's *Telegraph* newspaper. "People tend to be more aggressive" when the moon is full, Parr concluded. His findings were supported, he said, by his patrol experience. "When you try to reason with people on a full moon they become more aggressive and less rational," he told reporters. "When you try to reason with them on a full moon they become more argumentative."

Ultimately, the goal of research in criminology is the construction of theories or models that allow for a better understanding of criminal behavior and that permit the development of strategies intended to address the problem of crime. Simply put, a theory consists of a set of interrelated propositions that provides a relatively complete form of understanding

■ **hypothesis** A tentative explanation accounting for a set of facts that can be tested by further investigation.

■ **theory** A series of interrelated propositions that attempts to describe, explain, predict, and ultimately control some class of events. A theory gains explanatory power from inherent logical consistency and is “tested” by how well it describes and predicts reality.

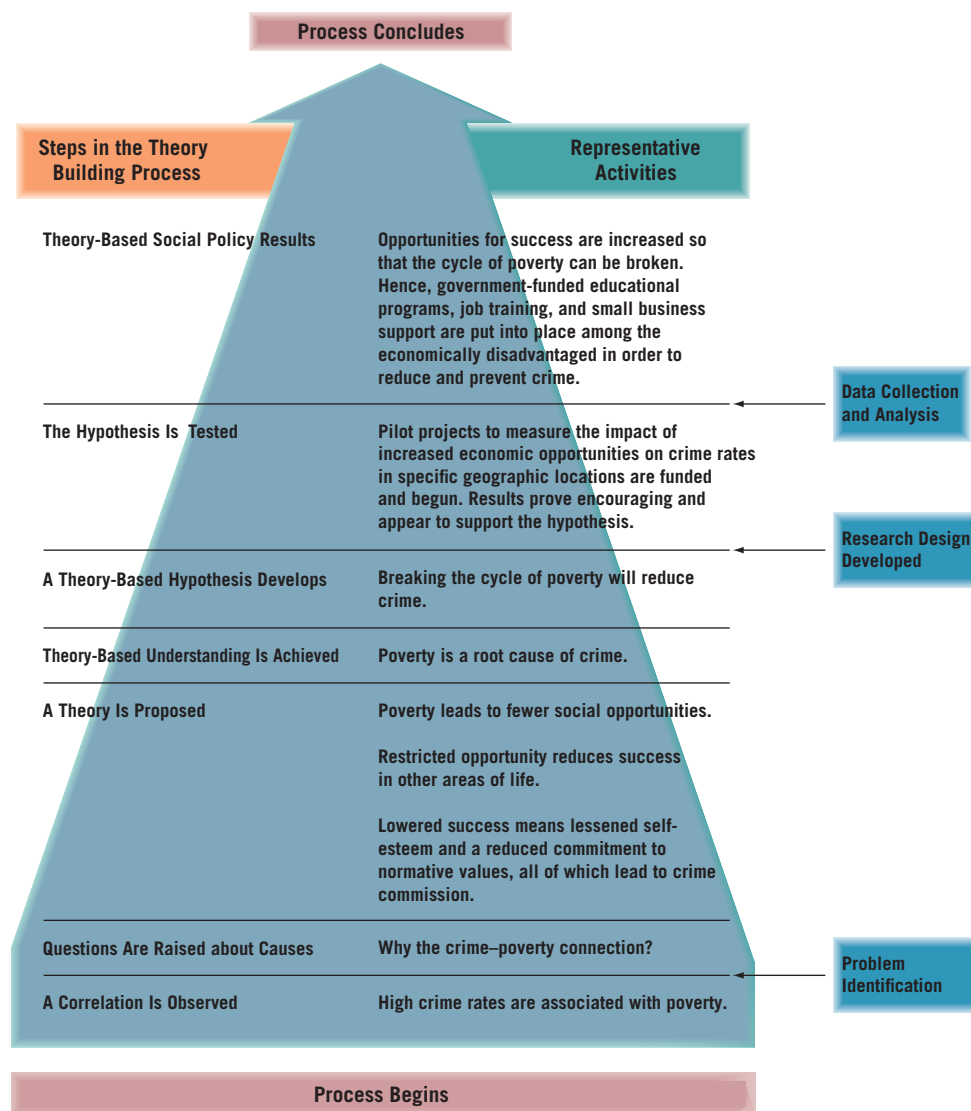


FIGURE 2-1 | The Theory Building Process

Source: Pearson Education, Inc.

(see Figure 2-1). Hence, even if we find that crime is higher when the moon is full, we must still ask why. Is it because the light from a full moon makes it possible for those who want to commit a crime to see better at night? If so, then we would expect crime to be higher in areas where there is no cloud cover than in areas with clouds. Likewise, lighted cities should show less of a rise in crime during a full moon than rural areas and small towns. In any event, a complete lunar theory of crime causation would contain specific propositions about the causal nature of the phenomena involved. Each proposition is essentially a **hypothesis**, or an explanation that accounts for a

set of facts and that can be tested by further investigation. For viewpoints on another issue, the influence of violent video games on adolescent's behavior, see the Crime in the News box in this chapter.

For our purposes a **theory** is a series of interrelated propositions that attempts to describe, explain, predict, and ultimately control some class of events. Theories gain explanatory power from inherent logical consistency and are “tested” by how well they describe and predict reality. In other words, a good theory provides relatively complete understanding, is supported by observations, and stands up to continued scrutiny.

Theories serve a number of purposes. For one thing, they give meaning to observations, explaining what we see in a particular setting by relating it to other things already understood. Hence, a theory of physics can explain the behavior of light by saying that light has properties of both waves and particles. Such a theory is immediately useful because we can easily grasp ideas like waves and particles, even if we have trouble conceptualizing light's essence.

Theories within criminology serve the same purpose as those within the physical sciences, but they are often more difficult to test. For example, few people can intuitively understand the motivation of “lust murderers” (a term developed by the Federal Bureau

of Investigation and popularized by the media to refer to men who sexually abuse and kill women, often sadistically). Some psychiatric theories (discussed in Chapter 5) suggest that lust murderers kill because of a deep-seated hatred of women. Hate is something that most minds can grasp, and a vision of lust murder as an extreme example of the age-old battle between the sexes provides an intellectual “handle” that at least some people can comprehend.

Learn more about the nature of modern social scientific thought and theory construction at https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4406164/pdf/13012_2015_Article_242.pdf.

CRIME | in the NEWS

Do Violent Video Games Make Kids Kill?

Mass shooters have been known to play violent video games before their sprees, killing people like so many icons on the screen. The two killers at Columbine High School in 1999 were addicted to *Mortal Kombat*, and Adam Lanza, the infamous 20-year-old Sandy Hook Elementary School shooter was described as “obsessed” with violent video games. Prior to the shooting, Lanza had racked up 83,000 online kills, including 22,000 violent ‘head shots.’

But did video games make these people violent? Ninety percent of teenage boys play video games—often violent ones like *Mortal Kombat* and *Grand Theft Auto*—and yet the juvenile arrest rate for violent crimes declined sharply from 1994 to 2003 and has remained relatively stable since then.

Even so, video games seem to be getting even more savage, with titles like *Manhunt 2*, *Bulletstorm: Full Clip Edition*, *Resident Evil 7: Biohazard*, *Splatterhouse*, and *Thrill Kill*. Manufacturers have set up a rating system to identify violent video games, but it has no teeth. Stores are expected to withhold violent games from younger kids voluntarily. Almost all violent games are in the Mature category, appropriate for ages 17 and up. The next level is an Adults Only (AO) rating, for ages 18 and over. Manufacturers consider an AO rating a sales killer, and very few violent games ever get it.

Some concerned parents have called for an outright ban on selling violent video games to minors, but that would mean removing free speech protections from video games, which courts refuse to do. In 2011, in what might well be the deathblow for the opposition, the U.S. Supreme Court completely struck down a California law that would have banned sales of violent video games to anyone under age 18. The Court rejected the argument that the interactive nature of video games has a stronger impact on young minds than, say, violent movies, which have free speech protections. Justice Antonin Scalia argued that even literature is interactive, writing: “*Grimm’s Fairy Tales*, for example, are grim indeed.”

Most Americans, however, did not agree with the ruling. A Rasmussen poll taken afterward found that 67% of the public thought states should have the right to prohibit sales of video games. In addition, several studies have concluded that violent video games cause higher rates of aggression in teenagers. A number of researchers have challenged those conclusions, however, arguing that other causes of aggression were not ruled out.



Thomas Frey/ImageBROKER/Glow Images

A young man plays a game in a video arcade. Some say that violent electronic games can make young people act out their violent fantasies. Other studies, however, seem to show that such is not the case. What do you think?

Meanwhile, two new studies show that multiplayer video games can actually reduce aggressiveness when the players work together. The studies found that college students who teamed up to play violent video games later showed more cooperative behavior than those who played the games competitively.

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think that violent video games can affect a player’s emotions and influence his or her view of the world? Might they also influence his or her real-life behavior? If so, how?
2. What kind of social scientific experiment might be devised to test the assertion that violent video games influence their players’ behavior in the real world?

Resources: “Year in Review: 14 Mass Murders Linked to Violent Video Games,” *Charisma News*, October 15, 2015, <https://www.charismanews.com/culture/52651-14-mass-murders-linked-to-violent-video-games> (accessed August 10, 2019); Keith Johnson, “Are Violent Video Games Turning Kids into Killers?” *American Free Press*, October 21, 2013, <http://americanfreepress.net/are-violent-video-games-turning-kids-into-killers/> (accessed August 10, 2019); James Cahill, “Top 10 Violent Crimes Tied to Video Games,” October 28, 2017, *ListVerse* (accessed August 10, 2019).

The Role of Research and Experimentation

The objective of criminology is the development of a body of general verified principles.

More important than the claims made by theories and by the theorists who create them are findings of fact that either support those claims or leave them without foundation. Hence, theories, once proposed, need to be tested against the real world

via a variety of research strategies, including experimentation and case studies. This is equally true whether the proposed theory is relatively simple or dauntingly complex.

In his 2009 presidential address to the ASC, incoming president Todd Clear told listeners that “if the evidence-based movement means anything, it means that we want to avoid undertaking programs based on stereotypes and cherished pet theories about crime.” Clear described the current state of criminology as focused on the “what works model,” and said that “the question ‘[W]hat works?’ might be rewritten as ‘How effective is a given program or intervention?’”¹⁶

■ **research** The use of standardized, systematic procedures in the search for knowledge.

■ **applied research** Research based on scientific inquiry that is designed and carried out with practical applications in mind.

■ **pure research** Research undertaken simply for the sake of advancing scientific knowledge.

Reliable determinations of program effectiveness are made through research. **Research** can be defined as the use of standardized, systematic procedures in the search for knowledge.¹⁷ Some researchers distinguish between applied research and nonapplied, or pure, research. **Applied research** “consists of scientific inquiry that is designed and carried out with practical application in mind.”¹⁸ In applied research, the researcher is working toward some more or less practical goal. It may be the reduction of crime, the efficient compensation of victims of crime, or an evaluation of the effectiveness of policies implemented to solve some specific aspect of the crime problem. **Pure research**, on the other hand, is undertaken simply for the sake of advancing scientific knowledge and “does not carry the promise or expectation of immediate, direct relevance.”¹⁹

Another type of research, secondary research or secondary analysis, can be distinguished from primary research.²⁰ **Primary research** “is characterized by original and direct investigation,”²¹ whereas **secondary research** consists of new evaluations of existing information that has already been collected by other researchers.

Scientific research generally proceeds in stages, which can be divided conceptually among (1) problem identification, (2) development of a research design, (3) choice of data-gathering techniques, and (4) review of findings (which often includes statistical analysis).

Problem Identification

Problem identification, the first step in any research, consists of naming a problem or choosing an issue to study. Topics may be selected for a variety of reasons. Larry S. Miller and John T. Whitehead, for example, said that “the choice of what criminologists study is influenced by political decisions,”²² meaning that the availability of government grant monies frequently determines the focus of much contemporary research in the area of crime. It may also be that private foundation monies have become available to support studies

■ **primary research** Research characterized by original and direct investigation.

■ **secondary research** Research based on new evaluations of existing information that has been collected by other researchers. Also referred to as secondary analysis.

■ **variable** A concept that can undergo measurable changes.

■ **operationalization** The process by which concepts are made measurable.

in a specific area. Perhaps the researcher has a personal interest in a particular issue and wants to learn more, or maybe a professor or teacher has assigned a research project as part of the requirements for a class. Whatever the reason for beginning research, however, the way in which a research problem is stated and conceptualized will help narrow the research focus and will serve as a guide to the formulation of data-gathering strategies.

Although some criminological research undertaken today is purely descriptive, the bulk of research in criminology is intended to explore issues of causality, especially the claims made by theories purporting to explain criminal behavior. As such, much contemporary research is involved with the testing of hypotheses. The Free Oxford English Dictionary defines the word hypothesis as follows:²³ “A supposition or proposed explanation made on the basis of limited evidence as a starting point for further investigation.”

Within the modern scientific tradition, a hypothesis is a possible explanation for an observed correlation that can be tested in the real world. Some criminologists, as mentioned earlier, have observed what appears to be a correlation, or relationship, between the phases of the moon and the rate of crime commission. Such observers may propose the following hypothesis: The moon causes crime. Although this is a useful starting hypothesis, it needs to be further refined before it can be tested. Specifically, the concepts contained within the hypothesis must be translated into measurable variables. A **variable** is simply a concept that can undergo measurable changes.

Scientific precedent holds that only measurable items can be satisfactorily tested. The process of turning a simple hypothesis into one that is testable is called **operationalization**. An operationalized hypothesis is one that is stated in such a way as to facilitate measurement, and it is specific in its terms and in the linkages it proposes. For example, we might move a step further toward both measurability and specificity in our hypothesis about the relationship between the moon and crime by restating it as follows: Rates of

■ **research design** The logic and structure inherent in an approach to data gathering.

murder, rape, robbery, and assault rise when the moon’s fullness increases and are highest when the moon is full. Now we have specified what we mean by crime (i.e., murder, rape, robbery, and assault), rates of which can be calculated. The degree of the moon’s fullness can also be measured. Once we have operationalized a hypothesis and made the concepts it contains measurable, those concepts have, in effect, become variables.

Once the concepts within our hypothesis are measurable, we can test the hypothesis itself; that is, we can observe what happens to crime rates as the moon approaches fullness, as well as what happens when the moon is full, and see whether our observations support our hypothesis. As our dictionary definition tells us, once a hypothesis has been operationalized, it is assumed to be true for purposes of testing. It is accepted, for study purposes, until observation proves it untrue, at which point it is said to be rejected. As two renowned research methodologists have stated, “The task of theory-testing is predominantly one of rejecting inadequate hypotheses.”²⁴

Development of a Research Design

Research designs structure the research process. They provide a kind of road map to the logic inherent in one’s approach to a research problem, and they also serve as guides to the systematic collection of data (see <https://tinyurl.com/y5umnsfw>).

Research designs consist of the logic and structure inherent in any particular approach to data gathering. A simple study, for example, might be designed to test the assertion

The central principle of experimentation is that we must accept the outcome whether or not it is to our liking.

that the consumption of refined white sugar promotes aggressive or violent tendencies. One could imagine researchers approaching prison officials with the proposal that inmate diets be altered to exclude all refined white sugar. Under the plan, cafeteria cooks would be instructed to prepare meals

without the use of sugar. Noncaloric sweeteners would be substituted for sugar in recipes calling for sugar, and sweetened beverages and carbonated drinks containing sugar would



Gary718/Shutterstock

The full moon over New York City. It is the job of researchers to determine the validity of claimed relationships—and of theorists to explain why such relationships hold. Are phases of the moon correlated with changes in the rate of occurrence of certain crimes? If so, why?

be banned. Likewise, the prison canteen would be prohibited from selling items containing sugar for the duration of the experiment.

To determine whether the forced reduction in sugar consumption actually affected inmates’ behavior, researchers might look at the recorded frequency of aggressive incidents (sometimes called “write-ups” in prison jargon) occurring within the confines of the prison before the experiment was initiated and compare such data with similar information on such incidents following the introduction of dietary changes. A research design employing this kind of logic can be diagrammed as follows:

$$O_1 \times O_2$$

Here O_1 (termed a *pretest*) refers to the information gathered on inmate aggressiveness prior to the introduction of dietary changes (which themselves are shown as X, also called the *experimental intervention*), and O_2 (termed the *posttest*) signifies a second set of observations—those occurring after dietary changes have been implemented. Researchers employing a strategy of this type, which is known as a “one-group pretest-posttest,” would likely examine differences between the two sets of observations, one made before introduction of the experimental intervention and the other after. The difference, they may assume, would show changes in behavior resulting