

# Criminology: Foundations and Modern Applications



# CRIMINOLOGY: FOUNDATIONS AND MODERN APPLICATIONS

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# AUTHOR BIO

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**Eric R. Ramirez-Thompson, PhD, Chair | Professor of Criminal and Justice Studies, College of DuPage** <https://www.cod.edu/faculty/websites/thompsonsone/index.aspx>

As a Lincoln Fellow at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC), Dr. Ramirez-Thompson earned a doctorate in Criminology, Law and Justice. His most recent research involves the identification of variables that help explain the direct and/or indirect effects of technology on crime and deviance and how, over the past decade, computerization has changed the nature of the criminal justice profession. Prior to coming to Chicago, he earned both Master of Science and Bachelor of Science degrees in Criminal justice from California State University, Long Beach (CSLUB) while working with the Orange County Adult Drug Court. His contributions to OCADC multi-phase treatment program included alternative treatment modalities; most specifically, exercise. He is the author of peer-reviewed publications on intellectual property theft and drug court interventions and the role of physical fitness in programming of client treatment outcomes. In addition, he has served as a guest author for books on health and wellness for first responders. For the past eighteen years, Dr. Ramirez-Thompson has been a Criminal and Justice Studies (CJS) Professor and Chair at College of DuPage, the second largest undergraduate education providers in Illinois, where he incorporates his interest of wellness into his teaching and encourages aspiring criminal justice professionals to embrace the importance of physical and emotional health. As former competitive athlete, he incorporates the benefits of exercising wellness into his everyday life through what he calls demonstrative practice.

# HOW TO USE THIS MATERIAL

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This digital resource was developed as part of the College of DuPage's Criminal and Justice Studies program to support key objectives of the discipline. The open-educational resource (OER) initiative provides faculty and students with an alternative to exceedingly expensive textbooks, with the goal of establishing programs that offer students with a zero-cost for textbooks. Even more important than the cost savings, the development and adoption of an OER alternative, is the opportunity to enhance learning in a current and meaningful way. Students unquestionably benefit from reading current up-to-date reports and resources rather than increasingly obsolete information that is typically found within a mainstream textbook. In addition, faculty benefit from the opportunity to advance their own scholarship within their respective area of expertise.

## Read, Review, Watch, and Listen

Throughout this course, resources are categorized into four areas; that is, **readings** of scholarly articles or government reports; **reviewing** of websites, related resources, and supplements; **watching** of presentations and lectures; and **listening** to media or audio recordings.

**Read** – Readings provides students with an opportunity to visually engage with the material and improves their ability to achieve a higher-level of analysis and synthesis. The reading of academic scholarship, government reports, and professional literature is an indispensable part of the course and appeals to the visual learner who process information via text, tables, graphs, and illustrations.

**Review** – Students will review relevant resources throughout the term. The review of relevant material provides for a cursory examination of course-related terms and concepts. Reviewing news stories or pertinent articles is a way to enhance knowledge and comprehension.

**Watch** – Visual learners benefit from an opportunity to watch course-related material. The incorporation of media also contextualizes some of those more salient aspects of the course while strengthening interest and engagement.

**Listen** – Throughout the course, students will listen to chapter specific presentations. Audio presentations provide students who are auditory learners with an opportunity to understand information.

Although all module requirements are equally important, the amount of time needed to work through the material each week will vary. To that end, students should use the provided Weekly Checklists to manage their time and ensure that they have enough time to complete all activities and/or writing assignments before the end of the respective week.

# DESCRIPTION

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## **Course Description (as it appears in catalog)**

Criminology – Students are introduced to theoretical explanations of crime, criminality, and society’s response to antisocial and law violating behavior. Theories of crime causation are used to understand crime patterns, evaluate trends, and understand how social scientific inquiry impact research, theory, and public policy. (3 lecture hours)

### **By the end of this course, you should be able to:**

1. Review the social construction of crime, deviance, and delinquency [M1]
2. Interpret national crime facts and patterns [M3]
3. Summarize classical theory and its impact on public and criminal justice policy [M5]
4. Summarize positivist theory and its impact on public and criminal justice policy [M1]
5. Identify theories of crime causation [M5-M10]
6. Identify the principles and applications of modern biological theories [M1]
7. Explain principles of psychological and psychiatric theories [M6]
8. Describe the historical and empirical development of sociological theories [M1 & M2]
9. Illustrate how social structure theories have influenced social policy related to youth violence and poverty [M3]
10. Summarize the development of social process and development theories [M8]
11. Illustrate how social process and development theories have influenced public policy [M3]
12. Summarize the history of social conflict theory [M10]
13. Describe elements of peacemaking, feminist, convict, and postmodern criminology [M9]
14. Evaluate the goals, outcomes, and philosophical positions (liberal, conservative, and radical) associated with a modern criminal justice system [M4]
15. Explain how conflict theories have influenced shared consensus and a modern crime control model [M9]
16. Apply classical and positivist theory to an examination of violent, property, and white-collar crime [M11-M15]
17. Analyze how the social construction of crime, deviance, and delinquency are related to public order crime [M4]
18. Evaluate the need for new theory related to cybercrime and new innovations in offending [M11-M15]
19. Explain the role of comparative criminology in understanding terrorism and other newly emerging threats [M2]

## XII | DESCRIPTION

This open educational resource (OER) is designed to supplement and coincide with content populated within the College's learning management system (LMS); that is, Blackboard. Students must complete readings as they appear within a particular chapter/ and submit all related work via the LMS.

# COURSE OVERVIEW

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## **SECTION I – CRIMINOLOGY: FOUNDATIONS AND PARADIGMATIC SHIFTS**

Module 1: [Crime, Deviance, and Criminology as a Mainstream Discipline](#)

Module 2: [Criminology and the Public Policy Connection](#)

Module 3: [The Measurement of Crime](#)

Module 4: [The Social Construction of Crime](#)

## **SECTION II – THEORIES OF CRIME AND DEVIANCE**

Module 5: [Classical and Rational Choice Theories](#)

Module 6: [Psychology of Crime](#)

Module 7: [Social Structure and Crime](#)

Module 8: [Social Process and Crime](#)

Module 9: [Critical Approaches to Law and Crime](#)

Module 10: [Crime Over the Life-Course](#)

## **SECTION III – CORRELATES OF CRIME**

Module 11: [Age, Gender, and Crime](#)

Module 12: [Families and Crime](#)

Module 13: [Mental Illness and Crime](#)

Module 14: [Race/Ethnicity and Crime](#)

Module 15: [Social Class and Crime](#)



# INTRODUCTION

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This course provides students with an introductory review of the intellectual domain called criminology. Throughout the course, students learn about the origins and development of the discipline of criminology through a thorough review of the most notable social theory related to deviance and crime. In addition to a review of traditional criminological teachings, the course provides an opportunity to apply traditional theoretical frameworks within a modern context. That is, each chapter incorporates modern forms of crime, e.g., cybercrime, to promote a demonstrated and applied learning experience that is intended to strengthen the student's ability to understand crime within the twenty-first century while strengthening their understanding of theory, policy, and practice.

To date, scholarship involving crime is extensive and is available to academics, practitioners, policymakers, students, etc. In fact, some might describe the voluminous amount of information a bit overwhelming. There are enumerable government databases that warehouse reports, monographs, fact sheets, bulletins, applied research, data sets and more! Although these data sources are invaluable to understanding the nature and extent of crime, new students may find themselves a bit overwhelmed by agencies and their proprietary nomenclature. Therefore, theoretical criminology is often viewed as antiquated and less relevant than the modern version of applied criminology.

Criminologists with an understanding of those traditional academic foundations are uniquely positioned to contribute to research and policy that addresses those challenges and evolving dynamics in the field of crime and criminal justice. One notable change in the landscape of crime and deviance is the cybercrime. The digital age has brought new forms of criminal activity, such as cybercrime, identity theft, online harassment, and various types of fraud. Criminologists should study these emerging forms of crime, understand their causes and consequences, and develop effective strategies to prevent and combat them.

Social scientists should continue to explore the underlying factors that contribute to criminal behavior. This includes investigating individual, social, economic, and environmental influences that may lead to criminality. By understanding the root causes, policymakers and practitioners can develop evidence-based interventions and prevention strategies. In addition, the benefit and importance of evidence-based practices in the criminal justice system must be both documented and communicated throughout the public sphere. More succinctly, research should inform policy decisions, law enforcement practices, correctional interventions, and crime prevention efforts. Evaluating the effectiveness of various approaches and interventions is crucial for improving outcomes and reducing recidivism.

As a course of study, criminology should also pay increased attention to the experiences and needs of victims of crime. This involves studying the impact of victimization, improving support services, and developing strategies to prevent victimization in the first place. Restorative justice approaches and victim-offender

mediation can also be areas of focus. In addition, research and program evaluation within the criminal justice domain should examine the ways in which structural inequalities, systemic biases, and social injustices intersect with crime and the criminal justice system. This includes studying the disproportionate representation of marginalized communities in the criminal justice system and addressing issues of racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic disparities in law enforcement, sentencing, and rehabilitation.

Given the complex nature of crime and its causes, criminology should collaborate with other disciplines such as sociology, psychology, economics, public health, and computer science. Interdisciplinary criminological research can provide a more comprehensive understanding of crime and contribute to innovative solutions.

Because criminology is a social science and provides a basis from which we can develop a robust understanding of the criminal mind, the nature of crime, and the role of institutions of social control, e.g., the police and prisons, we remain committed to making this ever-growing body of empirical research and practical knowledge available to most anybody with an Internet connection. Having said that, once students get past the web of government agencies and resources, they require basic knowledge about the philosophical underpinnings to give attention to social justice issues and government control of society vis-à-vis police, courts, and corrections.



## PART I

# SECTION I – CRIMINOLOGY: FOUNDATIONS AND

Section I includes four modules: (1) Crime, Deviance, and Criminology as a Mainstream Discipline, (2) Criminology and the Public Policy Connection, (3) The Measurement of Crime, and the (4) The Social Construction of Crime. Collectively, these four modules provide an opportunity to understand the social construction for deviance and crime, which is an essential part of learning criminology because crime is a diverse matter and as such requires a plurality of influences; that is, multi-disciplinarity. As a social science, criminology is multidisciplinary and as an intellectual domain is derived from a variety of academic disciplines that include, but are not limited to, psychology, biology, anthropology, law, political science, and most specifically sociology. Throughout the section, particular attention is given to understanding the connection between criminology and public policy as philosophical underpinnings are inextricably linked to social justice issues and governmental control of society vis vie police, courts, and corrections. Examples of social policy that are impacted by criminological scholarship include ways to improve crime prevention, interdiction, enforcement, rehabilitation strategies, etc. Criminological inquiry contributes to a substantial base of understanding that provides the basis for informing social policy, which is one of the most significant yet often underappreciated aspects of the collective effort.



# CRIME, DEVIANCE, AND CRIMINOLOGY AS A MAINSTREAM DISCIPLINE

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**Module 1** introduces criminology as an intellectual domain comprised of various academic disciplines; that is, psychology, biology, anthropology, law, and sociology. In addition, the module provides a historic overview of the development of the discipline and considers how its intellectual foundation has prepared it for the analysis of crime within the twenty-first century.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://cod.pressbooks.pub/criminology/?p=94#audio-94-1>*

## Learning Objectives

### **After completing this module, you should be able to:**

- define criminology.
- discuss the difference between criminal justice and criminology.
- describe the work of criminologists.
- summarize the history and evolution of criminology.
- recognize those contributions to the discipline made by Edwin Sutherland.
- Identify variables used during social science inquiry.
- define determinism.
- restate the tenets of rational choice theory.
- explain the difference between determinism and positivism.
- discuss the difference between applied and theoretical criminology

## Summary

Criminology is a field of study that focuses on understanding crime, criminals, and the criminal justice system. It involves the examination of various aspects of crime, including its causes, consequences, and prevention. Criminologists utilize theories, research methods, and data analysis to gain insights into criminal behavior and its societal impact.

The main objectives of criminology are to develop an understanding of why crimes occur, to identify patterns and trends in criminal behavior, and to find effective strategies for crime prevention and control. Criminologists study various factors that contribute to criminal behavior, including individual, social, economic, and environmental factors. By examining these factors, criminologists aim to explain why some individuals are more likely to engage in criminal activities than others.

Criminology draws upon multiple disciplines, including sociology, psychology, economics, and law. It incorporates a range of research methods, such as surveys, interviews, experiments, and statistical analysis, to collect and analyze data. These methods help criminologists to study crime rates, victimization patterns, offender profiles, and the effectiveness of different interventions.

The findings of criminological research can be applied to policy development and crime prevention strategies. Criminologists often work closely with law enforcement agencies, policymakers, and social organizations to develop evidence-based approaches to crime reduction. They may also contribute to the development of laws and policies that aim to promote social justice and reduce crime rates.

Some areas of specialization within criminology include:

- **Theoretical criminology** – Examining various theories that seek to explain why individuals commit crimes, such as strain theory, social learning theory, and rational choice theory.
- **Criminal profiling** – Analyzing offender characteristics, behaviors, and patterns of criminal activity to develop profiles that assist in the identification and apprehension of criminals.
- **Penology** – Studying the punishment and rehabilitation of offenders, including the effectiveness of correctional programs and the impact of imprisonment on recidivism.
- **Victimology** – Investigating the experiences and consequences of crime on victims, as well as the factors that contribute to victimization and ways to support and empower victims.
- **Comparative criminology** – Comparing crime rates, criminal justice systems, and crime prevention strategies across different countries or regions to understand the impact of social and cultural factors.

Overall, criminology aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of crime and contribute to the development of evidence-based policies and interventions to prevent and address criminal behavior in society.

Criminologists have developed several theoretical domains to explain why individuals engage in crime, including:

1. **Rational Choice Theory:** This theory suggests that individuals engage in crime because they believe it is a profitable and low-risk activity. In other words, they weigh the potential benefits of committing a crime against the potential risks of getting caught and punished.
2. **Social Structure Theory:** Social structure theory is a criminological perspective that examines how social structures and institutions in society contribute to criminal behavior. It suggests that the arrangement and organization of social institutions, such as the family, education, economy, and the community, play a significant role in shaping individual behavior and influencing the likelihood of criminal involvement.
3. **Social Learning Theory:** This theory argues that individuals learn to engage in crime through observing the behaviors of others, particularly those who are close to them. They may also be influenced by media portrayals of hackers as glamorous and successful.
4. **Strain Theory:** This theory posits that individuals engage in crime when they experience strain or pressure in their lives, such as economic hardship or social exclusion. Crime may provide a way for them to alleviate their stress or gain a sense of power and control.
5. **Routine Activities Theory:** This theory suggests that crime occurs when there is a convergence of three factors: a motivated offender, a suitable target (such as a vulnerable computer system), and the absence of capable guardians (such as effective cybersecurity measures).
6. **Self-Control Theory:** This theory proposes that individuals who engage in crime have low levels of self-control, which makes them more likely to act impulsively and make decisions without considering the consequences.

Overall, these criminological theories help us understand the various motives, opportunities, and situational factors that contribute to crime. By better understanding the underlying causes of this type of criminal behavior, we can develop more effective strategies for preventing and responding to cybercrime.

### Key Takeaways

- **Criminology is the study of crime as a social phenomenon.** It includes the processes of making, breaking, and reacting to laws, as well as the causes, nature, and consequences of crime.
- **Criminology has evolved from various intellectual influences and paradigms.** These include the classical school, positivism, determinism, social ecology, and subjectivism. Criminology also draws from multiple disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, biology, law,

and geography.

- **Criminology relies on theory and methods to establish scientific knowledge.** Criminologists use variable analysis, hypothesis testing, correlation, causation, and operationalization to explain and predict crime patterns and variations.
- **Criminology is becoming more interdisciplinary and policy oriented.** Criminologists are increasingly concerned with the real-world impact and implications of their theories and research for crime prevention, intervention, and social justice.
- **Criminology faces challenges and opportunities in the 21st century.** These include the emergence of new forms of crime, such as cybercrime, the globalization and diversification of crime, the advancement of technology and data sources, and the collaboration with other fields and practitioners.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Applied Criminology**

**Chicago School of Social Ecology**

**Classical School of Criminology**

**Comparative Criminology**

**Correlation**

**Criminal Justice**

**Criminologist**

**Determinism**

**Edwin Sutherland**

**Positivism**

**Rational Choice Theory**

**Theoretical Criminology**

**Theory**

**Variables**



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<https://cod.pressbooks.pub/criminology/?p=94#h5p-4>

## Modern Application


There is a growing need to understand internal and external factors that contribute to various forms of digital crime. Therefore, traditional aspects of criminology must embrace new paradigms that consider the digital context and its influence on human behavior. Applications of newly proposed cybercriminological frameworks will invariably prove beneficial for both private and public sectors.

Understanding what internal and external conditions contribute to the commission of cybercrime makes it possible to stop, respond to, and even disincentivize them. The Federal Bureau of Investigation's Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) is the Nation's central hub for reporting cyber crime.

- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) – [Cyber Crime news and press releases](#)

## Read, Review, Watch, and Listen

1. Read Chapter 1: [Criminology as Social Science: Paradigmatic Resiliency and Shift in the 21st Century](#) by J. Michell Miller, University of Texas at San Antonio (M. J. Miller, 2009)

- Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
- You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.


This chapter:

a. provides a comprehensive overview of criminology as a social science, tracing its historical development, theoretical and methodological foundations, and future directions.

b. concludes that criminology is a dynamic and evolving discipline that is influenced by multiple disciplines and perspectives, and that criminology has a vital role in informing social policy and criminal justice practice.

c. implies that criminology is a relevant and important field of study that can enhance our knowledge and understanding of crime as a social phenomenon, and that criminology can contribute to the prevention and reduction of crime and the promotion of justice and peace.

2. Read Chapter 2: [\*History and Evolution of Criminology\*](#), by Charles F. Wellford, University of Maryland (as cited in M.J. Miller, 2009)

- Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
- You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.

This chapter:

a. introduces criminology is the scientific study of the making, breaking, and reaction to lawbreaking.

b. explains that criminology has two main foundations: (1) the interdisciplinary explanation of crime and (2) the analysis of the fairness and effectiveness of the criminal justice system.

c. describes criminology as a separate field of study in the 1930s and 1940s, influenced by the works of Beccaria and Lombroso, among others.

provides an overview of the development of criminological theories of crime and describes various phases of theoretical development: (1) single-factor reductionism, (2) systemic reductionism, (3) multidisciplinary approaches, and (4) interdisciplinary theory.

d. describes the future of criminology and criminal Justice, which has become one of the most dynamic and fastest growing social sciences, with a commitment to scientific rigor, interdisciplinary theory, and improving the criminal justice system.

3. Review Florida State University's Department of Computer Science, [\*Why Major in Cyber Criminology\*](#)  
**Cybercriminology is important for several reasons in today's digital age:**

**Rising Cybercrime Rates** – With the increasing reliance on technology and the internet, cybercrime has become a significant threat. Cybercriminals engage in activities such as hacking, identity theft, phishing, ransomware attacks, and more. Understanding the motivations, methods, and trends of cybercriminals is crucial for developing effective countermeasures.

**Economic Impact** – Cybercrimes can cause significant financial losses for individuals, businesses, and governments. These losses include expenses related to data breaches, theft of intellectual property, disruption of services, and costs associated with recovery and prevention. By studying cybercriminology, researchers and practitioners can work to mitigate these economic impacts.



**Technological Advancements** – As technology continues to evolve, so do the techniques and tools used by cybercriminals. By studying cybercriminology, experts can stay updated on the latest tactics employed by cybercriminals and develop strategies to defend against them.

**Privacy and Data Protection** – Cybercrimes often involve breaches of personal and sensitive information, leading to concerns about privacy and data protection. Studying cybercriminology helps to identify vulnerabilities in data systems, improve encryption methods, and develop effective security protocols to safeguard sensitive information.

**Global Reach** – Cybercrimes transcend geographical boundaries. A cybercriminal from one part of the world can easily target victims in another. This global reach makes it necessary to have a comprehensive understanding of cybercriminal behavior, legal frameworks, and international cooperation to combat cybercrime effectively.

**Legal and Regulatory Challenges** – Cybercrimes can be complex in terms of jurisdiction, making it challenging for law enforcement to apprehend and prosecute cybercriminals. Cybercriminology helps legal experts understand the intricacies of cybercrime and develop relevant laws and regulations to address these challenges.

**Public Awareness and Education** – Cybercriminology research can contribute to public awareness and education about online threats and how to protect oneself from cybercrime. Educating individuals and organizations about best practices for online safety can help reduce the risk of falling victim to cybercrimes.

**Cybersecurity Workforce Development** – As cybercrimes become more sophisticated, there's a growing need for skilled professionals in the field of cybersecurity. Studying cybercriminology can provide insights into the skill sets required to counter cyber threats and contribute to the development of a well-trained cybersecurity workforce.

**Policy Formulation** – Policymakers need accurate information to develop effective strategies to combat cybercrime. Cybercriminology research provides valuable insights into the motivations and behaviors of cybercriminals, helping policymakers make informed decisions about legislation, regulations, and international cooperation.

**Prevention and Detection** – Understanding the psychology and techniques of cybercriminals can help in early detection and prevention of cybercrimes. By analyzing patterns of cybercriminal behavior, experts can create better predictive models to identify potential threats before they escalate.

In essence, cybercriminology plays a critical role in enhancing our understanding of cybercriminal behavior, devising effective countermeasures, protecting sensitive information, and maintaining the overall security of digital systems and networks.

4. Watch the Center for Homeland Defense and Security's [\*Hypothesis 101 \(and other Social Science Concepts\)\*](#) [28:50] (also embedded below)

Hypothesis testing is a fundamental concept in statistics that is used to make informed decisions about a population based on a sample of data. It involves the formulation of hypotheses, statistical

analysis of sample data, and drawing conclusions about the population. Hypothesis testing helps researchers and analysts determine whether observed effects or differences in data are statistically significant or if they could have occurred by chance.

The process of hypothesis testing typically involves the following steps:

1. **Formulate Hypotheses** – A key step in the scientific method and is typically associated with experimental research. A hypothesis is a clear, testable statement or prediction about the relationship between two or more variables. It serves as a guide for designing and conducting an experiment to determine whether there is evidence to support or refute the proposed statement.
2. **Null Hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>)** – This is the default or initial assumption. It states that there is no significant difference, effect, or relationship between variables. It's often denoted as “H<sub>0</sub>: parameter = value” or “H<sub>0</sub>: parameter1 = parameter2.”
3. **Alternative Hypothesis (H<sub>a</sub> or H<sub>1</sub>)** – This hypothesis contradicts the null hypothesis and suggests that there is a significant difference, effect, or relationship in the population. It's what researchers are trying to provide evidence for. It can be one-sided (greater than, less than) or two-sided (not equal to).
4. **Select Significance Level ( $\alpha$ )** – The significance level, denoted by  $\alpha$  (alpha), is the probability of making a Type I error. It represents the threshold for considering evidence strong enough to reject the null hypothesis. Commonly used values are 0.05 or 0.01.
5. **Collect and Analyze Data** – Collect a sample of data from the population of interest. Apply appropriate statistical methods to analyze the data. This might involve calculating means, proportions, standard deviations, etc., depending on the nature of the data and the hypothesis being tested.
6. **Calculate Test Statistic** – The test statistic is a measure calculated from the sample data that quantifies the extent to which the observed data deviates from what would be expected under the null hypothesis.
7. **Determine the Critical Region** – Based on the significance level and the distribution of the test statistic under the null hypothesis, determine the critical region or critical values. This is the region in which, if the test statistic falls, you would reject the null hypothesis.
8. **Make a Decision** – Compare the calculated test statistic to the critical values or critical region. If the test statistic falls within the critical region, you reject the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative hypothesis. This suggests that the observed effect is statistically significant. If the test statistic does not fall within the critical region, you fail to reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that the observed effect could be due to random chance.
9. **Draw Conclusions** – If the null hypothesis is rejected, it implies that there is evidence to support the alternative hypothesis. However, it doesn't prove the alternative hypothesis true;

it simply indicates that the data provide enough evidence to suggest a difference or relationship. It's important to note that hypothesis testing provides a formal framework for making decisions based on data. However, it doesn't provide absolute certainty. There's always a possibility of making errors (Type I and Type II errors), and the conclusions drawn are subject to the quality of the data, the appropriateness of the statistical methods used, and the assumptions made. Hypothesis testing is widely used in various fields, including science, economics, medicine, social sciences (e.g., criminology), and more, to make informed decisions and draw conclusions based on empirical evidence.

5. Watch [Careers in criminology](#) (UniSC University of the Sunshine Coast, Aug. 30, 2021) [also embedded below]
6. Listen to the Module 1 [Crime, Deviance, and Criminology as a Social Science](#) summary (Ramirez-Thompson, E.R., 2023)

To access the PPT file, click [HERE](#). Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

Read, Review, Watch and Listen to all listed materials by the due date listed within the course LMS (i.e., Blackboard) site.

Contact the professor with any course-related questions

Click [HERE](#) to report any needed updates, e.g., broken links.



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://cod.pressbooks.pub/criminology/?p=94#oembed-1>



One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://cod.pressbooks.pub/criminology/?p=94#oembed-2>

## Discussion Questions

1. How would you define criminology and what are its main objectives?
2. What are some of the major paradigm shifts in criminology and what factors influenced them?
3. What are some of the advantages and disadvantages of different research methods in criminology and how do they relate to theory?
4. What are some of the current and emerging trends and challenges in criminology and how can they be addressed?
5. How can criminology be more interdisciplinary and policy relevant and what are some of the barriers and opportunities for doing so?

## Supplemental Resources

- Additional resources are added by the professor if/when they deem relevant to the module.

## References

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# CRIMINOLOGY AND THE PUBLIC POLICY CONNECTION

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**Module 2** provides an overview of the connection between criminology and public policy. An informed and effective social policy is the byproduct of empirical work undertaken by dedicated social scientists who seek to understand the nature and extent of crime within the context of existing criminal justice and social policy. This module explores those natural and yet inextricable links between criminology and public policy, which often dilutes the impact and influence that research findings might reveal. Particular attention is given to understanding the policy-relevant research that in many instances has little to no measurable effect on public policy.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://cod.pressbooks.pub/criminology/?p=98#audio-98-1>*

## Learning Objectives

### **After completing this module, you should be able to:**

- sequence the emergence of criminology as a theoretically oriented field of study.
- discuss the influence of criminal justice on the study of crime.
- describe the difference between criminology and criminal justice.
- examine arguments in favor of and against the participation of criminal justice in the study of crime.
- list ways that criminology informs public policy.
- define program evaluation as a method for assessing the process and impact of criminal justice programs.
- explain the significance of program evaluation as a method for assessing the process and

impact of criminal justice programs.

- identify important types and components of program evaluation.
- describe some important evaluation studies in criminology and criminal justice.
- list various methods of evaluation research.

## Summary

Criminology and public policy share a close and interconnected relationship. Criminology is the scientific study of crime, criminal behavior, and the criminal justice system. Public policy, on the other hand, refers to the actions and decisions made by governmental bodies to address societal issues and shape the overall functioning of society.

The link between criminology and public policy is multifaceted and revolves around the understanding, prevention, control, and response to crime. Criminological research and theories provide valuable insights into the causes and consequences of criminal behavior, which in turn inform the development and implementation of effective public policies.

Here are some key aspects of the link between criminology and public policy:

1. Informing policy development – Criminological research helps policymakers understand the underlying causes of crime, such as social, economic, and psychological factors. This knowledge can guide the formulation of evidence-based policies that address these root causes and reduce criminal behavior.
2. Crime prevention strategies – Criminologists study various crime prevention strategies and their effectiveness. These insights help policymakers design and implement targeted interventions to prevent crime, such as community policing initiatives, situational crime prevention measures, or rehabilitation programs for offenders.
3. Criminal justice system reform – Criminological research critically examines the functioning and outcomes of the criminal justice system. It identifies areas of improvement, such as reducing recidivism rates, addressing racial or socio-economic disparities, or improving the fairness and efficiency of the system. This information can guide policymakers in reforming laws, policies, and practices within the criminal justice system.
4. Evidence-based policy evaluation – Criminology plays a crucial role in evaluating the effectiveness of existing policies and programs aimed at crime reduction or offender rehabilitation. Through rigorous research methodologies, criminologists assess the impact of policies, helping policymakers make informed decisions about continuing, modifying, or discontinuing certain approaches.

5. Public safety and risk assessment – Criminologists contribute to public policy by studying the risks and threats to public safety, such as terrorism, organized crime, or cybercrime. Their findings aid policymakers in developing strategies to mitigate these risks, enhance public safety, and allocate resources effectively.
6. Shaping public opinion and discourse – Criminology, through its research findings, can shape public opinion and public discourse on crime-related issues. This influence can guide public policy by creating awareness, mobilizing public support for specific policies or reforms, and facilitating public engagement in decision-making processes.

It is important to recognize that the link between criminology and public policy is a dynamic and ongoing process. Criminologists and policymakers need to collaborate, share knowledge, and engage in an iterative dialogue to develop effective policies that promote public safety, crime prevention, and justice.

### Key Takeaways

**The relationship between criminology and public policy** – Criminology as a field of study, has influenced or been influenced by public policy on crime and justice issues. It also examines the arguments for and against criminological participation in the policy arena.

**The emergence of criminology and criminal justice** – The historical development of criminology as a theoretically oriented discipline and criminal justice as a more policy-oriented field. It discusses how the rise of crime rates, the politicization of crime policy, and the growth of the criminal justice system have shaped the academic fields of criminology and criminal justice.

**The what-works movement and evidence-based criminology** – The effort of some criminologists to provide policy-relevant research that evaluates the effectiveness of various crime prevention and intervention programs. It also reviews the debates over what constitutes valid and reliable evidence and how high the standards for evidence should be.

**Four ways that individual criminologists can engage in the policy process:** (1) addressing policy implications of their research, (2) working with policy-involved organizations, (3) directly inserting themselves in the legislative process, and (4) engaging the media. It also suggests some levels of organizational participation for criminological associations, such as advocating for quality data and research funding, commissioning white papers, supporting expert testimony, and taking formal positions on policy issues.



**The state of criminology as a field related to public policy** is changing and that there are both difficulties and benefits of criminological involvement in the policy arena. It calls for a more proactive and interactive approach to inform policy with the best available evidence.

## Overview of the Evidence-Based Approach

The evidence-based approach can be applied to policymaking in various fields. The first step is to identify the problem. That is, clearly define the problem that needs to be addressed. This could be a societal issue, a health concern, an educational gap, etc.

Second, conduct rigorous research to gather data and evidence about the problem. This could involve reviewing existing literature, conducting new studies, or analyzing data.

Third, conduct an analysis of the data, which requires the use of statistical methods to analyze the data and draw conclusions. The goal is to understand the causes and effects of the problem, and to identify potential solutions.

Fourth, based on the evidence derived from the statistical analysis, develop policy proposals that are likely to address the problem effectively. These proposals should be grounded in the evidence, not just in theory or ideology.

The fifth step involves the implementation of the policy. That is, put the policy into action. This could involve passing legislation, launching programs, allocating resources, etc.

Sixth and arguably one of the most important steps involves evaluation. Meaning, after the policy has been implemented, conduct further research to evaluate its effectiveness. This could involve collecting new data, conducting surveys, etc.

Finally, results derived from the evaluation must contribute to the refining of the policy as needed. This could involve adjusting, scaling up successful initiatives, or trying new approaches.

This process ensures that policies are not just based on theory or ideology but are grounded in evidence about what works. It promotes accountability, transparency, and effectiveness in policymaking. It's important to note that this is an iterative process – policies should be continually monitored, evaluated, and refined based on new evidence. This approach can be applied to any field, from healthcare and education to environmental policy and criminal justice. It requires a commitment to rigorous research, open-mindedness to the evidence, and a willingness to make policy decisions based on what the evidence shows, rather than what one might intuitively believe or prefer.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS)**

**Agency Practice**

**American Society of Criminology (ASC)**

**Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.®)**

**Efficiency Analysis**

**Evaluation Research**

**Evidence-Based Criminology**

**Expert Testimony**

**Formative Evaluations**

**Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.®)**

**Impact Evaluation**

**Intensive Supervision Programs (ISP)**

**Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment**

**Legislative Process**

**Needs Assessment**

**Peer Review**

**Process Evaluation**

**Public Policy**

**Summative Evaluations**

**White Papers**

### Modern Application



Cybercriminology – combines coursework within the behavioral sciences and Computer Science to study the growing problem of computer crime.

- Watch TEDx Talk [Cyber Crime Isn't About Computers: It's About Behavior](#) (Anderson, 2017) [also embedded below]
- Listen to *Ransomware and Other Cyberattacks on K-12 Schools*.



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## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 3: [Criminology and Public Policy](#) by Todd R. Clear, John Jay College of Criminal Justice and Natasha A. Frost, Northeastern University (Clear & Frost, 2009)
  - Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
  - You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.
  
2. Read Chapter 50: [Program Evaluation](#), by Jodi Lane, University of Florida (Lane, 2009)
  - Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
  - You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.
  
3. Review Department of Justice's [What is G.R.E.A.T.](#) (accessed, January 2024)
  4. Watch United States Department of Justice (DOJ). Office of Justice Programs (OJP). National Institute of Justice (NIJ). [Strengthen Science. Advance Justice.](#)
  5. Watch the National Institute of Justice's [Desistance From Crime: Implications for Research, Policy, and Practice](#) (Start @ 6:33 – Stop @ 1:36:57) [NIJ, November 29, 2021]
  6. Watch York County Virginia U.S. [YPSO DARE Program 2023](#) [located below]
  7. Watch [G.R.E.A.T. Summer Program](#)

*The Chicago Police Department is helping kids have a G.R.E.A.T. summer! The Gang Resistance Education And Training program is a gang violence prevention initiative. Dozens of 3rd-8th graders from across the city are taking part in a summer program focusing on life skills, self-esteem building and sports. It's all to help keep kids safe and active, and plant seeds of positive interaction with the police.*

8. Listen to PBS WHYY: [The police experiment that changed what we know about foot patrol](#) (by Liz Tung, November 15, 2019) [last accessed, August 2023] [click on “Listen” link within the webpage]
9. Listen to the National Institute of Justice’s (NIJ) Justice Today Podcast: [Progressing from Evidence to Action](#) (21.27). Scroll down to the featured item from within the podcast list.

To access the PPT file, click **HERE**. Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

Read, Review, Watch and Listen to all listed materials by the due date listed within the course LMS (i.e., Blackboard) site.

Contact the professor with any course-related questions

Click **HERE** to report any needed updates, e.g., broken links.



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One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://cod.pressbooks.pub/criminology/?p=98#oembed-2>

## Discussion Questions

1. How do you evaluate the arguments for and against criminologists’ participation in public policy? Which position do you find more convincing and why?
2. What are the advantages and challenges of using random assignment in program evaluation?
3. How can program evaluators balance the needs and expectations of different stakeholders?
4. What are some of the challenges and opportunities for criminologists to engage with the media and

influence public opinion on crime and justice issues?

5. What are some examples of unintended consequences of programs and how can they be measured and reported?
6. What are some of the ethical and professional implications of taking formal organizational positions on controversial or contentious criminological debates? How should criminological associations balance the need for scientific rigor and policy relevance?

## Supplemental Resources

- Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences ([ACJS](#))
- American Society of Criminology ([ASC](#))
- [Campbell Collaboration](#)
- [Chicago Data Portal](#)
- Chicago Police Department [CLEARMap](#)
- National Institute of Justice ([NIJ](#))
- [UCI Center for Evidence-Based Corrections](#)
- Consortium of Social Science Associations ([COSSA](#))

### Module 2 Activity Information

Note to students – Refer to the course learning management system; that is, Blackboard for assigned activity information. In addition, refer to the course syllabus for a detailed week-to-week activity schedule.

Note to faculty – Contact the Dr. Ramirez-Thompson ([thomspsne@cod.edu](mailto:thomspsne@cod.edu)) for a shared folder containing course activities.

## References

1. Clear, T. R., & Frost, N. A. (2009). Criminology and Public Policy. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference Series. 21st Century Criminology: A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 18-26). SAGE Reference. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600012/GVRL?u=cod\\_Irc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=abc720f9](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600012/GVRL?u=cod_Irc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=abc720f9)
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8. PBS WHY? *The police experiment that changed what we know about foot patrol* (Liz Tung, Nov. 19, 2019). Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.
9. National Institute of Justice (NIJ). *Progressing from evidence to action*. [21:27 mins]. Accessed 9 Jan. 2024.

# THE MEASUREMENT OF CRIME

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**Module 3** explores the importance of measuring crime and examines some of those most notable crime reports and statistics, e.g., National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS), Uniform Crime Report (UCR), National Crime Victims Survey (NCVS), and self-report surveys. The module provides an opportunity to explore how the measurement of crime involves various methods and indicators to quantify and analyze criminal activity and victimization. For example, crime rates are some commonly used measurements of crime. Crime rates express the number of reported crimes per population or a specific unit of measurement (e.g., per 10,000 or 100,000 people). Crime rates allow for comparisons between different areas or time periods and help assess the relative prevalence of crime within each population. However, absent incident-level data, it becomes difficult if not impossible to contextualize victimization; that is, location, relationship, etc. In addition, the module provides a cursory review of crime mapping as an effective way to analyze where crime occurs. Finally, the module will consider how crime data helps authorities, researchers, and policymakers understand the nature and extent of crime, identify high-risk areas, evaluate the effectiveness of crime prevention strategies, and make informed decisions to enhance public safety.



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## Learning Objectives

### **After completing this module, you should be able to:**

- define the elements of the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) and identify its strengths and weaknesses as a crime data source.
- describe methodological differences between the UCR and National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

- define the difference between aggregate and incident-level measurement.
- define the elements of the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) and identify its strengths and weaknesses as a crime data source.
- define the elements of the National Incident-Based Reporting System.
- understand what patterns are present in the UCR and the NCVS and what they reveal about crime.
- list advantages and disadvantages of the UCR and NCVS.
- summarize what data sources tell us about the criminal justice system.

## Summary

Crime reports play a crucial role in ensuring public safety. By documenting and reporting crimes, law enforcement agencies can identify patterns, trends, and hotspots, enabling them to allocate resources effectively and prevent future crimes. Timely and accurate crime reports help communities stay informed about potential dangers and take necessary precautions. They also provide essential information for criminal investigations. They contain details about the nature of the crime, the location, the time of occurrence, and any potential witnesses or suspects. This information helps law enforcement agencies initiate investigations, gather evidence, and identify and apprehend suspects. Crime reports also serve as valuable evidence during criminal trials, aiding in the prosecution of offenders.

By analyzing crime reports, law enforcement agencies can gain insights into crime patterns and trends. They can identify recurring criminal activities, modus operandi, and potential links between different incidents. This analysis allows them to develop effective strategies to combat crime, allocate resources efficiently, and implement preventive measures. In addition, they assist in determining resource allocation for law enforcement agencies. By understanding the types and frequency of crimes in different areas, agencies can deploy officers, patrol units, and investigative teams accordingly. Crime reports can also guide the allocation of financial resources for crime prevention initiatives, community outreach programs, and technology upgrades.

One of the more salient benefits of crime data is that it contribute to the formulation of crime prevention policies and strategies. When authorities have access to accurate data on crime rates and trends, they can make informed decisions regarding law enforcement strategies, legislation, and public safety initiatives. Such policies can be tailored to address specific types of crime prevalent in a particular area, leading to more effective crime prevention and reduction. In addition, they provide a basis for supporting and assisting victims of crimes. Law enforcement agencies can connect victims with support services, such as counseling, legal aid, and victim compensation programs. Accurate crime reports help ensure that victims' needs are addressed and that appropriate resources are allocated to assist them in their recovery.



Overall, crime reports are crucial for maintaining public safety, aiding investigations, understanding crime patterns, allocating resources effectively, developing crime prevention strategies, and supporting victims of crime. They form the foundation of a well-informed and proactive approach to law enforcement and community safety.

### Key Takeaways

- **Crime reports** and statistics are tools that convey information about the extent, nature, and characteristics of crime and how they change over time.
- **Two major sources of crime reports and statistics in the United States** are the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), both published by the Department of Justice.
- **UCR** collects data on crimes reported to law enforcement agencies, using two systems: the traditional summary system and the newer National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS).  
UCR data cover a wide range of offenses, but have limitations such as underreporting, manipulation, and lack of incident details.
- **NCVS** collects data on crimes experienced by individuals and households, regardless of whether they were reported to the police.
- **UCR and NCVS** have different purposes, methodologies, populations, crimes, and counting rules, which result in divergent estimates of crime rates and trends.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Benchmark**

**Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)**

**Clearance Rates**

**Crime Mapping**

**Disaggregate**

**Full-Participation Agency**

**Hotel Rule**

**Limited-Participation Agency**

**National Crime Victim Survey (NVCS)**

**National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS)**

**Self-Report Surveys**

**Uniform Crime Report**

**U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)**

**Victimization Rates**

Modern Application

## Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3)

The advent of personal computing machines that were available for public consumption in the late 1980s, produced unanticipated ways for would-be criminals to commit crime. Although most crimes were, “traditional crimes committed in a non-traditional way” (McQuade III, 2006), new crimes like hacking were also imagined. Despite the precipitous increase in digital crimes, there was no formal way to collect incident rate information. The private industry, e.g., Norton, Semantic, Internet Watch Foundation, etc., proactively began collecting data related to a variety of digital crimes.


In 2000, the Department of Justice’s Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), established the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3). The IC3 has received complaints crossing the spectrum of cyber crime matters, to include online fraud in its many forms including Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) matters, Computer Intrusions (hacking), Economic Espionage (Theft of Trade Secrets), Online Extortion, International Money Laundering, Identity Theft, and a growing list of Internet facilitated crimes. It has become increasingly evident that, regardless of the label placed on a cyber crime matter, the potential for it to overlap with another referred matter is substantial. Therefore, the IC3, formerly known as the Internet Fraud Complaint Center ( Internet Fraud Complaint Center ), was renamed in October 2003 to better reflect the broad character of such matters having an Internet, or cyber, nexus referred to the IC3, and to minimize the need for one to distinguish “Internet Fraud” from other potentially overlapping cyber crimes.

Visit the [IC3 webpage](#) and review *Annual Reports* and other data related to complaints of computer crime.

IC3: [Other Types of Crimes](#)

## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 44: [Crime Reports And Statistics](#) by Callie Marie Rennison, University of Missouri – St. Louis (Rennison, 2009)

- Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
- You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.

2. Review the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Incident-Based Reporting System ([NIBRS](#)) website

3. Review Chicago Data Portal: click [HERE](#)

4. Review Chicago Police Department's CLEARmap: click [HERE](#)

5. Review [NIBRS Participation Rates and Federal Crime Data Quality](#)

6. Watch the FBI's [NIBRS 101](#) resource: [also located below]

7. Watch the Bureau of Justice Statistics'(BJS) [Learn More about the NCVS](#): (also located below)

8. Listen to [There's A Continued Uptick in Violent Crime, According to Federal Survey](#) (NPR, September 11, 2019)

9. Listen to the National Institute of Justice's (NIJ) Justice Today's podcast [The Science of School Safety](#) [11:55 – #17 within the list of episodes]

To access the PPT file, click [HERE](#). Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

Read, Review, Watch and Listen to all listed materials by the due date listed within the course LMS (i.e., Blackboard) site.

Contact the professor with any course-related questions

Click [HERE](#) to report any needed updates, e.g., broken links.



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## Discussion Questions

1. What are the main purposes and functions of crime reports and statistics and how do they help us understand the nature and extent of crime in society?
2. What are the major differences between the UCR and the NCVS and how do they affect the measurement and comparison of crime over time?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the UCR and NVCS?
4. What are some of the recent developments and innovations in crime reporting systems and how do they address the gaps and problems of the existing systems?
5. How would you design your own crime reporting system? What types of crimes, victims, offenders, and incident characteristics would you include? What methods and tools would you use to collect and analyze the data?

## Supplemental Resources

- National Crime Victimization Survey ([NCVS](#))
- National Incident-Based Reporting System ([NIBRS](#))
- National Institute of Justice ([NIJ](#))

## Activity – Trends in Violent Crime

Students should review the course syllabus to determine the assignment of this activity. This is a copy of the module's activity that students find within Blackboard. For that reason, refer to the Activities page to submit your work for review.

### Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to explore the nature and extent of violent crime and better understand why some groups of people experience a greater or lower rate of violence.

### Instructions

1. Review Data Matters: The Story In Numbers – Trends In Violent Crime (see attached)
2. Review Forbes' [Infographic] article, [Major American Cities See Sharp Spike In Murders In 2020](#) (Aug. 4, 2020)
3. Review Statista's data on the [Number of violent crime victims in the United States from 2005 to 2021, by gender](#)
4. Review the National Crime Victim Survey's (NCVS) Summary findings (BJS, 2020) [[https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/cv20\\_sum.pdf](https://bjs.ojp.gov/sites/g/files/xyckuh236/files/media/document/cv20_sum.pdf)]

Answer the following questions:

- Why might some groups of people experience violence at a greater or lower rate? Explain.
- If a group of people have a higher rate of violent victimization, does that mean that the same group also has the highest number of victims? Be specific and use chapter specific details to formulate your response.
- How do rates and counts differ?
- How would you explain the significant decrease in property and nonfatal violent crime rates since the early 1990s.

Key Concepts & Chapter Related Facts

1. **Count** only really make sense if your denominator is fixed, or relatively so. For example, if as a probation officer, you see 1,000 clients each month, then a change in cases from Month X to Month X+1 is a genuine change in cases.
2. **Dark figure of crime** – Crimes that fail to come to the attention of the police, because they were unreported, it was unclear a crime occurred, or no one learned that a crime was committed.
3. **National Crime Victim Survey (NCVS)** – A nationally representative survey of victims of property, and personal violence in the United States.
4. **Rates** are the number of events that occur in a defined period, divided by the average population at risk of that event.
5. **Uniform Crime Report (UCR)** – This program, started by the International Association of Chiefs of Police and then moved under the umbrella of the FBI in 1929, is a compilation of crime data.

Refer to the course learning management system (LMS); that is Blackboard (BB), for the correct due date. In addition, submit your work via BB for grading.

## References

1. Rennison, C. M. (2009). Crime Reports and Statistics. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference Series. 21st Century Criminology. A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 383-390). SAGE Reference. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600056/GVRL?u=cod\\_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=3e3598e2](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600056/GVRL?u=cod_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=3e3598e2)
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6. *NIBRS 101*. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). United States Department of Justice (DOJ), 2018). Accessed 5 Feb. 2024.
7. United States Department of Justice (DOJ). *Learn More about the NCVS* (BJS, 2023). [https://youtu.be/AT3wFwLS2uo?si=BtUo\\_\\_uBjmOVITEg](https://youtu.be/AT3wFwLS2uo?si=BtUo__uBjmOVITEg). Accessed 5 Feb. 2024.
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9. United States Department of Justice (DOJ) Justice Today. *The Science of School Safety*. National Institute of Justice (NIJ). Accessed 5 Feb. 2024.

# SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF CRIME

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**Module 4** examines the social construction of crime as a theoretical perspective. Most specifically, the view suggests that what is considered criminal and how society responds to criminal behavior are not fixed or objective realities but are shaped by social, cultural, and historical factors. This perspective challenges the notion that crime is an inherent and absolute concept and highlights how various social forces contribute to defining, interpreting, and responding to deviant behavior. Moreover, crime and deviance are the inevitable result of central contradictions within societies very power infrastructure. The chapter reviews key aspects of the social construction of crime that include how we define crime, the implication of social norms and values, the impact of power and control, the influence of media and public perception, the social and economic context of crime and deviance, the artifact of labeling, and definitions of deviance from the position of social control.



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## Learning Objectives

### **After completing this module, you should be able to:**

- define the concept of social construction.
- describe the significance of classifying behavior as crime by individuals with power and authority.
- identify examples of moral panic.
- explain how symbolic interactionism helps us understand the origins of social meaning as it is created through interaction.
- identify the origins of labeling theory and its relevance within criminology.



- describe the historical and theoretical roots of social constructionist theory.
- illustrate the difference between social norms and value.
- describe how *constitutive theory* can lead to the process of *replacement discourse*.
- explain the fundamentals of nominalist philosophy.
- interpret reification within the context of social theory.

## Summary

The social construction of crime refers to the idea that crime is not an inherent or objective concept but rather a product of social processes and interactions. It suggests that society, through its institutions, norms, values, and laws, constructs the definition of what is considered criminal behavior and determines how it should be dealt with.

According to the social constructionist perspective, crime is not a fixed or universal category but varies across time, cultures, and societies. What is considered a crime in one society or historical period may not be considered as such in another. The definition and understanding of crime are shaped by social, cultural, and political factors, and they can change over time.

Social constructionists argue that crime is a product of social interactions, power dynamics, and social norms. They emphasize that crime is not solely a result of individual deviance or pathology but is influenced by broader social factors. Factors such as social inequality, economic conditions, political systems, cultural beliefs, and the actions of social institutions, including the criminal justice system, all contribute to the construction and interpretation of crime.

For example, the social constructionist perspective suggests that acts labeled as crimes are often determined by those in positions of power within society. The laws and regulations created by lawmakers and enforced by the criminal justice system reflect the interests and values of the dominant groups. This perspective also recognizes that certain groups or behaviors are disproportionately labeled as criminal due to social biases, prejudices, and systemic inequalities.

The definition of crime varies across societies and over time. Acts considered criminal in one culture or era may be acceptable or even celebrated in another. This highlights that criminality is not a universal or biologically determined concept but is influenced by social norms, values, and power structures.

Social norms play a significant role in defining what behaviors are acceptable and which ones are not. Norms are often shaped by cultural, religious, and historical influences. Acts that violate these norms are more likely to be labeled as criminal, even if the harm caused by the behavior is relatively minor.

The social construction of crime is also influenced by power dynamics within a society. Those in positions

of authority and influence can shape the legal system and define what actions will be considered criminal. This can lead to the criminalization of certain behaviors that challenge the status quo or threaten the interests of the powerful.

Media portrayal of crime and deviant behavior plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions of crime. Media outlets often focus on sensational or rare crimes, leading to the perception that certain types of crime are more prevalent or dangerous than they are. This influences public opinion and can lead to demands for stricter laws and harsher punishments.

Crime rates are often influenced by social and economic factors such as poverty, inequality, and unemployment. Socially disadvantaged groups may be more likely to engage in criminal behavior due to limited opportunities and structural barriers. The response to crime is also influenced by these factors, as law enforcement and criminal justice systems may disproportionately target and penalize certain communities.

Labeling theory is closely related to the social construction of crime. It suggests that the act of labeling an individual as a criminal can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, where the person internalizes the criminal identity and engages in further criminal behavior because of societal reactions.

The social construction of crime is intertwined with the broader concept of deviance. Deviance refers to any behavior that deviates from social norms, and what is considered deviant varies across cultures and societies. Social control mechanisms, such as laws and law enforcement, are used to maintain order and conformity to dominant norms, and they play a significant role in shaping the construction of crime.

Overall, the social construction of crime highlights that crime is not an objective reality, but a socially constructed concept shaped by various social, cultural, and political factors. It encourages a critical examination of the processes through which certain behaviors are labeled as criminal and the implications of these constructions for individuals and society.

### Key Takeaways

- **Social constructionism** is a theoretical perspective that argues that what counts as crime varies depending on who is defining it and how they interpret and classify certain behaviors and events.
- **Historical and theoretical roots** of social constructionism include phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, and labeling theory, which all emphasize the role of human agency, interaction, and meaning making in creating social reality.
- **Types of social constructionism** differ in the extent to which they accept or reject the existence of an objective reality independent of human perception and discourse. They can

be classified as radical, contextual, or postmodernist.

- **Crime and deviance as social constructions** are the products of claims-making processes by moral entrepreneurs, media, and criminal justice agencies, who create moral panics and label certain groups as deviant or criminal, regardless of the actual harm or prevalence of their behavior.
- **Evaluation of the social construction of crime** involves challenging the veracity and validity of the legal and dominant definitions of crime, exposing the power and interests behind them, and exploring the possibility of alternative and less harmful constructions.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Constitutive Theory**

**Contextual Constructionism:**

**Crime**

**Deviance**

**Edwin Lemert (1967)**

**Howard Becker (1963)**

**Labeling Theory**

**Mala In Se**

**Moral Crusader**

**Moral Panic**

**Nominalist Philosophy**

**Postmodernist Constructionism**

**Radical Constructionism**

**Reification**

**Replacement Theory**

**Social Construction**

**Social Constructionism**

**Symbolic Interactionism**

Modern Application

## AI and Criminal Justice

Artificial Intelligence (AI) as the potential to significantly influence the social construction of crime. For example, AI can be used in predictive policing, where algorithms analyze past crime data to predict where and when crimes are more likely to occur. This could potentially lead to a change in how society perceives crime-prone areas and individuals.

Another possible implication is the creation of AI-generated fake content, which can have broad societal impacts. This could lead to new forms of crime, such as deepfake-related fraud or misinformation campaigns, altering our understanding of what constitutes criminal behavior.

Because AI systems rely on algorithms trained on data, there is the potential for biased decision-making. In mathematics or software development, this affect is called garbage in, garbage out, or GIGO. Meaning, that in any system, the quality of output is determined by the quality of the input. If the data is biased, the resulting system can perpetuate that bias, affecting the social construction of crime by potentially reinforcing stereotypes and existing social inequalities.

AI can be used in various aspects of law enforcement, such as eDiscovery, forensic crime solving, facial recognition, and risk assessment in criminal cases for pretrial release and sentencing. This will likely change how crimes are detected and prosecuted, influencing societal perceptions of crime and justice.

As AI technology expands in capability and deployment, so do the risks of criminal exploitation. For example, this could lead to the emergence of novel forms of crime, requiring society to redefine its understanding of criminal behavior. It's important to note that while AI has the potential to greatly aid in crime prevention and detection, it also raises significant ethical and legal issues that society must address to ensure its fair and responsible use.




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Here are some related resources:

- [Artificial Intelligence and Robotics for Law Enforcement](#) (United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute, 2018)
- [USING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO ADDRESS CRIMINAL JUSTICE NEEDS](#) (Christopher

Rigano, Oct. 2018)

## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 34: [Social Construction of Crime](#) by Stuart Henry, San Diego State University (Henry, 2009)
  - Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
  - You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.
2. Review Grinnell College's [Subcultures and Sociological focus on Moral Panic](#)
3. Review [Moms, not cops, are the biggest roadblock to California's new drug reform law](#) (Lester Black, Alec Regimbal, SFGATE, July 17, 2003)
  - a. Moral panics can arise in response to various issues, such as youth subcultures, crime waves, immigration, or emerging technologies. They can have significant social and political implications, as they may influence public policy, shape public opinion, and impact the lives of the groups or individuals targeted by the panic. Over time, moral panics may subside as the initial fears and anxieties are disproven or mitigated, or they may evolve into new forms as society undergoes changes.
4. Review [Moral Panic and Folk Devils](#) (Simply Psychology, August 2023) [last accessed September 2023]
  - a. Stanley Cohen's "Folk Devils and Moral Panics" is a seminal sociological work published in 1972 that explores the concept of moral panics and how they contribute to the social construction of deviance. This book provides valuable insights into how society reacts to perceived threats and how the media and authorities play a significant role in amplifying and perpetuating these panics.
  - b. Cohen introduces the term "folk devils" to describe the individuals or groups who become the focal point of societal anxiety and moral outrage during a moral panic. Folk devils are often portrayed as threats to the values and norms of society. They are typically labeled as deviant and blamed for various social problems.
  - c. According to Cohen, moral panics can intensify and perpetuate themselves through an "amplification spiral." This occurs when the media, law enforcement, and other social institutions feed into the panic by sensationalizing the issue and exaggerating the threat posed by folk devils. As a result, public concern escalates, leading to increased social control measures and stigmatization of the targeted group.
  - d. Like other scholars within the discipline, Cohen emphasizes the media's role in shaping and

amplifying moral panics. He argues that the media often frames issues in ways that maximize their shock value and appeal to public emotions. This sensationalism can contribute to the rapid spread of moral panics.

e. Cohen also discusses the concept of “deviancy amplification.” This refers to the process by which societal reactions to deviant behavior worsen the behavior or create more deviance. When folk devils are singled out and persecuted, they may react by further embracing their deviant identity or engaging in more extreme behaviors. Moral panics can lead to increased social control measures, including the implementation of stricter laws and policies. This can have significant consequences for the individuals or groups labeled as folk devils, as they may face legal persecution, discrimination, and social exclusion.

f. Cohen’s work highlights the cyclical nature of moral panics and their role in reflecting and influencing societal norms and values. Moral panics often reveal underlying anxieties and tensions within a society and can contribute to social change, whether through the creation of new laws, shifts in public opinion, or changes in cultural norms.

g. Cohen’s work provides a valuable framework for understanding how societies react to perceived threats and how these reactions can lead to the construction of deviance and the amplification of social issues. It emphasizes the role of the media, the criminal justice system, and public discourse in shaping and perpetuating moral panics, and it continues to be a foundational text in the field of sociology and criminology.

5. Review *Revise Sociology’s overview of [The social construction of crime](#)* (last accessed November 2023)

a. The social construction of crime is a useful perspective for sociologists and criminologists to understand how crime is defined and dealt with in different societies and situations. It also challenges the assumption that crime is a fixed and objective reality that can be measured and controlled by the law and the criminal justice system. Instead, it shows that crime is a dynamic and contested phenomenon that reflects the values, interests, and power relations of different groups and actors in society.

6. Watch [Mod, Rockers, and Mora Panics](#) (Luxury Milk, October 2009) [last accessed September 2023] – also embedded below.

a. Moral Panic is a term used to describe a social phenomenon characterized by an exaggerated, widespread, and often irrational fear or concern over a perceived threat to societal values, norms, and moral order. It typically involves the amplification and sensationalization of a specific issue or group, often fueled by all forms of media, public opinion, and authorities.

7. Watch [Save The Boy? 4 Moral Thinkers Have Different Opinions](#) (Sprouts, 2023) – also embedded below.

a. Moral development theory holds that individuals become criminal when they have not successfully completed their intellectual development from child- to adulthood. An early theory was proposed by Jean Piaget, who posited four developmental stages. Lawrence Kohlberg offered an expanded theory of morality with a six-stage typology. In Kohlberg’s first stage, people only obey the law because they are afraid of being punished if they don’t. By the sixth stage, obedience to the law becomes an obligation

that is willingly assumed, and people chose not to violate the law because they value the principle of fairness and believe in interpersonal justice. Those who have evolved to higher stages of moral reasoning are unlikely to commit crimes because they appreciate not only their own needs, but the needs and interests of others as well.

8. Listen to [A 6-year-old shooter raises tough questions for the criminal justice system](#) (NPR, January 11, 2023)



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- a. Whether and to what extent the criminal law should reflect and enforce the morality of the society it represents is a classic debate in criminal law literature.
- b. While most people agree that actions that harm others should be controlled, not everyone sees consensual sex work as harmful.

To access the PPT file, click **HERE**. Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

Read, Review, Watch and Listen to all listed materials by the due date listed within the course LMS (i.e., Blackboard) site.

Contact the professor with any course-related questions

Click **HERE** to report any needed updates, e.g., broken links.



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## Discussion Questions

1. What are some examples of moral panics and claims-making about crime and deviance in your society?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using a social constructionist approach to study crime and deviance?
3. What are the different types of social constructionism, such as radical, contextual, and postmodernist? How do they differ in their assumptions about reality, knowledge, and power?
4. How do moral entrepreneurs, media, and other agents of social control construct crime and deviance through claims-making, moral panics, and labeling?
5. How can social constructionism be used to challenge and transform existing definitions and responses to crime and deviance?
6. What are some alternative ways of defining and addressing social problems and harms?

## Supplemental Resources

- Example of replacement theory in action – [\*Fringe conspiracy theory has now become mainstream\*](#) [last accessed, November 2023]
- [Bill O'Reilly: Do Violent Video Games Make You Violent?](#)
  - Violence and Video Games
    - Ever since the inception of video games in the 1970s, people have questioned what effects these games have on those that play them. The first major concern about the violence in video games came with the release of the 1976 game “Death Race” (Kent 2001). In “Death Race,” the objective is for players to run over as many “gremlins” with their car as possible, but the general public believed the game involved killing innocent pedestrians and promoted such behavior in real life, causing an outcry against the game (Ferguson et al. 2008). Similar concerns are still very apparent today. In particular, many concerned parents and lawmakers accuse the video game franchise “Grand Theft Auto” where players steal cars, rob banks, and flee the police of promoting this type of behavior in those that play the game, especially adolescents, because players start to lose sight of what is fake and what is reality.
  - Are Video Games Really Causing Violence?



- If the media seem to claim that violent video games cause real-life violent acts, where does empirical research stand on this issue? Some studies such as Anderson and Dill's (2000) research on the relationship between aggressive behavior and video games claims that exposure to such games had a negative impact on academic achievement and increased the frequency of aggressive thoughts and behavior. However, as Ferguson (2008) argues, such increases in aggressive behavior are so minor that they do not equate to an individual committing an actual crime. In addition, Ferguson (2008) suggests that because nearly all young males are exposed to violent video games, studying the video game-aggression link is a waste of time and resources and more time should be spent investigating the other factors that have a role in mass violence. In addition, although the popularity of violent video games is increasing, overall rates of violent crime are decreasing.
- [\*LGBTQ History Month: The early days of America's AIDS crisis\*](#) (NBC News, Oct. 2018) [last accessed, Feb. 2024]
- [\*AIDS: homophobic and moralistic images of 1980s still haunt our view of HIV – that must change\*](#) (The Conversation, Nov. 2018) [last accessed, Feb. 2024]
- [\*Crack Babies: A Tale From the Drug Wars\*](#) (New York Times, May 2013) [last accessed, Feb. 2024]

## Activity – Social Constructivism: What We Think We Know About Hackers

Students should review the course syllabus to determine the assignment of this activity.

This is a copy of the module's activity that students find within Blackboard. For that reason, refer to the Activities page to submit your work for review.

### Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to strengthen the student's understanding of social constructionism and its influence on definitions, interpretations, and classification of cybercrime; most specifically, hackers.

## Instructions

1. Review [Top Hacker Profile Types You Should Know](#).
2. Review [What Is a Hacker?](#) (US News, Jan. 25, 2022)
3. Watch TEDxHHL, [Profiling Hackers – The Psychology of Cybercrime](#) (Mark T. Hoffmann, June 28, 2021) [also embedded below]
4. Use the Image search feature within Google and search for the word “Hacker”. Scroll through the page and document three (3) to five (5) demographic features, e.g., male, young, etc.
5. Use [Bing AI Image Creator](#) and generate an image using the demographic information that you documented within step 5.
  - Start the prompt with, “**Realistic image of a hacker**, then ENTER YOUR 3-5 DESCRIPTIVES.”
    1. An AI Image Creator account is easily created using a personal Gail account.
  - Already have a favorite AI image generator account? You are welcome to use an alternative, as long as images are submitted with your work.
6. Save the AI generated image and submit that with your answers to the assignment’s questions.
  - Students enrolled in the in-person version of this course, should be prepared to share and discuss their AI generated image.



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## Answer the following questions:

- From a social constructivist perspective, explain how the media has generated moral panic and in turn influences societies’ reaction or labeling of hackers.
- Describe different forms of hacking and identify one or more with a potentially positive social impact.

- Identify a core feature or element of social constructionism that has influenced what we know about hackers (see *Social Construction of Crime*, S. Henry, pp. 299-300).
- Succinctly state whether your AI generated image matches your established version of a hacker.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Crime** – Refers to any behavior or action that is considered illegal, prohibited, or punishable by law. It involves the violation of societal norms, rules, and regulations established by the government or governing authorities. Criminal acts are generally harmful or detrimental to individuals, communities, or society as a whole and are subject to various legal consequences, such as fines, probation, imprisonment, or other forms of punishment.

**Labeling Theory** – Also known as Social Reaction Theory or the Interactionist Perspective, is a criminological and sociological theory that focuses on how social labels and societal reactions can influence an individual's self-identity and behavior. The theory suggests that when individuals are labeled as deviant or criminal by society, it can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, where they internalize and embrace the label, resulting in increased deviant or criminal behavior.

**Moral Panic** – A term used to describe a social phenomenon characterized by an exaggerated, widespread, and often irrational fear or concern over a perceived threat to societal values, norms, and moral order. It typically involves the amplification and sensationalization of a specific issue or group, often fueled by all forms of media, public opinion, and authorities.

**Social Constructivism** – A theoretical perspective that argues that what counts as reality is the outcome of social processes through which humans interactively create and negotiate meaning about the world.

## References

1. Henry, Stuart. "Social Construction of Crime." *21st Century Criminology. A Reference Handbook*, edited by J. Mitchell Miller, vol. 1, SAGE Reference, 2009, pp. 296-304. 21st

- Century Reference Series. *Gale eBooks*, link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600045/GVRL?u=cod\_Irc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=66815128. Accessed 7 Feb. 2024.
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  3. SFGATE. *Moms, not cops, are the biggest roadblock to California's new drug reform law* (Lester Black, Alec Regimbal, SFGATE, July 17, 2003). <https://www.sfgate.com/politics/article/moms-not-cops-biggest-roadblock-calif-drug-reform-18200005.php>. Accessed 12 Feb. 2024.
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  5. Revise Sociology. The social construction of crime (Nov. 2019). <https://revisesociology.com/2019/11/22/the-social-construction-of-crime/>. Accessed 12 Feb. 2024.
  6. Luxury Milk. *Mobs, Rockers and Moral Panics* (Oct. 2009). <https://youtu.be/r61ks18Bd7I?si=M-UkzxU34PzFAMHV>. Accessed 12 Feb. 2024.
  7. Sprouts. *Would You Save A Boy From Drowning?* (July 2023). <https://youtu.be/d8Y6A6Dg2Fk?si=72Vtcxt03KSg8cWw>. Accessed 12 Feb. 2024.
  8. NPR Morning Edition. A 6-year-old shooter raises tough questions for the criminal justice system (Rene Sandler, January 11, 2023). <https://www.npr.org/2023/01/11/1148333201/a-6-year-old-shooter-raises-tough-questions-for-the-criminal-justice-system>. Accessed 12 Feb. 2024.

## PART II

# SECTION II - THEORIES OF CRIME AND DEVIANCE

Section II includes six modules: (1) Classical and Rational Choice Theories, (2) Psychology of Crime, (3) Social Structure and Crime, (4) Social Process and Crime, (5) Critical Approaches to Law and Crime, and (6) Crime Over the Life-Course. Collectively, these six modules attempt to incite critical thinking about crime and deviance as theorized by various scholars with a focus on the work of sociologists and criminologists. Modules present several theories that attempt to explain the causes and patterns of criminal behavior and deviance in society. It's essential to recognize that these theories are not mutually exclusive, and criminal behavior and deviance often result from a combination of factors. Sociologists and criminologists continue to refine and expand these theories to gain a more comprehensive understanding of crime and deviance in society.



# CLASSICAL AND RATIONAL CHOICE THEORIES

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**Module 5** introduces classical and rational choice theory as two distinct yet related perspectives that lend to foundations of early criminological thought. Classical theory in criminology refers to a school of thought that emerged during the Enlightenment period in the 18th century. It represents a significant departure from the prevailing views on crime and punishment at the time, which were often characterized by harsh and arbitrary methods of dealing with criminal behavior. Classical criminology is associated with the works of prominent thinkers such as Cesare Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham. Their writings sought to establish a rational and systematic approach to understanding crime, punishment, and the functioning of the criminal justice system. Rational choice theory is a social science perspective that seeks to explain human behavior, including criminal behavior, based on the idea that individuals have agency. That is, humans are rational decision-makers who weigh the costs and benefits of their actions to maximize their self-interests. It is widely used in various fields, including economics, sociology, political science, and criminology.



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## Learning Objectives

### **After completing this module, you should be able to:**

- identify the major principles of the Classical School of criminology?
- name some forerunners of classical thought in criminology?
- list some important thinkers of the Classical School of criminology, and what was their legacy?
- describe neoclassical criminology, and how does it differ from the classical perspective? How

does it build on it?

- explain the role of punishment in neoclassical criminology?
- describe the policy implications of the Classical School and of neoclassical thought?
- recognize the social context of neoclassical theories and their rise to prominence in America during the 1970s.
- describe the central concepts in deterrence theory, including specific, general, marginal, and focused deterrence.
- recall what the various empirical tests indicate about the empirical status of deterrence theory.
- explain the central concepts in the routine activities and lifestyle approaches to criminal behavior.
- describe rational choice theory and its relationship to deterrence. Pg. 65
- understand policy implications of rational choice theory, including criminal justice policies and situational crime prevention.

## Summary

Classical and rational choice theories are two influential perspectives in criminology that attempt to explain criminal behavior based on rational decision-making processes. While they share some similarities, they also have distinct features and historical contexts.

Classical criminology emerged during the Enlightenment period in the 18th century and was popularized by thinkers like Cesare Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham. It marked a significant shift away from the prevailing views of crime and punishment at the time, which were often characterized by harsh and arbitrary penalties.

Classical theory assumes that individuals are rational beings who make decisions based on a cost-benefit analysis. Criminal behavior is seen as a calculated choice made by individuals who weigh the potential benefits of the crime against the perceived risks of getting caught and punished.

A central concept in classical theory is deterrence. The theory posits that punishment can deter individuals from engaging in criminal acts. This idea is based on the belief that if the punishment is swift, certain, and severe, potential offenders will be dissuaded from committing crimes.

Classical criminologists emphasized the need for a fair and just legal system. They advocated for the rule of law and argued that all individuals, regardless of their social status or wealth, should be treated equally before the law.

Classical theorists proposed that individuals enter into a social contract with the state or society,



surrendering certain freedoms in exchange for protection of their rights and property. Criminal acts were viewed as a breach of this social contract.

Rational choice theory builds upon the foundation of classical theory but takes a more individualistic and micro-level approach. It gained popularity in the late 20th century and is based on the principles of rational decision-making and utility maximization.

Rational choice theory focuses on the decision-making processes of individuals. It examines how individuals assess the costs and benefits of engaging in criminal behavior and how they seek to maximize their self-interest.

The theory emphasizes the importance of opportunity structures. It suggests that criminal acts are more likely to occur when there are suitable opportunities available for offenders to exploit. These opportunities might be influenced by factors such as the presence of capable guardianship, the attractiveness of potential targets, and the absence of effective deterrents.

Rational choice theory has practical applications in the field of crime prevention. By understanding the decision-making processes of potential offenders, situational crime prevention strategies aim to manipulate the factors that influence criminal opportunities, making crime less attractive or more difficult to commit.

Rational choice theory is closely related to routine activities theory, which was introduced by Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson. Routine activities theory suggests that crime occurs when three elements converge: motivated offenders, suitable targets, and the absence of capable guardianship.

Neoclassical theory in criminology is an extension and refinement of classical theory that emerged as a response to some of the limitations and criticisms of the classical perspective. While neoclassical theory shares many fundamental principles with classical theory, it introduces certain modifications and acknowledges additional factors that influence criminal behavior.

Neoclassical theory represents a more nuanced and flexible approach to understanding criminal behavior than classical theory. It seeks to strike a balance between acknowledging the role of rational choice and recognizing that human behavior can be influenced by various psychological, social, and situational factors. This perspective has contributed to ongoing discussions and reforms within the criminal justice system regarding the appropriate treatment of offenders based on individual circumstances and levels of responsibility.

While both classical and rational choice theories emphasize rational decision-making, rational choice theory takes a more nuanced approach by focusing on individual-level factors and situational contexts that influence criminal behavior. These theories have been influential in shaping modern criminological thought and have contributed to the development of crime prevention strategies and policies that aim to deter criminal activity by manipulating the cost-benefit calculations of potential offenders.

- **Classical criminology** is based on the idea that crime is a rational choice influenced by the costs and benefits of offending.
- **Deterrence theory** is a branch of rational choice theory that examines how the threat of formal and informal sanctions can prevent or reduce crime.
- **Empirical research** has provided mixed evidence for the effectiveness of deterrence theory, especially for the severity of formal sanctions, such as the death penalty.
- **Deterrence and rational choice theories** assume that people are rational and self-interested and that they weigh the costs and benefits of their actions before deciding whether to commit crime or not.
- **Policy implications of deterrence and rational choice theories** include increasing the cost of crime, increasing the benefits of non-crime, reducing the benefits of crime, and reducing the costs of non-crime.
- **Rational choice theory** is more general and broader than deterrence theory, as it considers not only the costs and benefits of crime, but also the costs and benefits of alternative, noncriminal courses of action.
- **Self-control theory** is another descendant of classical criminology that argues that low self-control, a stable personality trait, predisposes individuals to crime and other present-oriented activities.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Age of Reason (also known as the age of Enlightenment)**

**Cesare Beccaria (1738-1794)**

**Ronald Clarke and Derek Cornish**

**Classical Criminology**

**Daniel Nagin**

**Deterrence**

**Gary Becker (1968)**

***Homo Economicus***

**Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832)**

**Just Deserts**

**Natural Law**

**Neoclassical Criminology**

**Objective Deterrence**

**Perceptual Deterrence**

**Rational Choice Theory (RTC)**

**Routine Activities Theory**

**Self Control Theory**

**Situational Crime Control**

**Subjective Utility Model**

Modern Application

## Integrated Deterrence In Cyberspace

Integrated deterrence is a framework that combines all domains of warfare, all instruments of national power, and the coordinated capabilities of allies and partners to deter adversaries and defend national interests.

Because cyberspace is a contested and complex domain, it poses unique challenges and opportunities for integrated deterrence, such as the difficulty of attribution, the asymmetry of capabilities, the speed and scale of cyber operations, and the interdependence of public and private actors.

The U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) is implementing integrated deterrence in cyberspace by generating insights about the adversary's cyber operations and capabilities, enabling better cyber defenses for the U.S. government, industry, and international partners, and acting to deter or disrupt adversary cyber actors and halt malicious activities.



Understanding concepts of deterrence within the context of cyberspace is increasingly important as it will inform the authorities, identify domestic and international obligations, and aid in the assessment of risks of cyber operations.

- Jacquelyn Schneider, Hoover Fellow at the Hoover Institution, [Does cyber deterrence work? National security expert on cybersecurity and National Defense Strategy](#) (Government Matters, Jan. 2022) [also embedded below]



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## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 23: [Classical Perspective](#) by Andy Hochstetler, Iowa State University (Hochstetler, 2009)
  - Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
  - You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.
  
2. Read Chapter 27: [Deterrence and Rational Choice](#) by Raymond Paternoster, University of Maryland (Paternoster, 2009)
  - Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
  - You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.
  
3. Review [Twenty-Five Techniques of Situational Prevention](#) (ASU Center for Problem Oriented Policing, 2023)
  - a. Situational crime prevention is a key component of rational choice theory within the field of criminology. Rational choice theory is a theoretical framework that suggests that individuals make decisions to engage in criminal behavior based on a rational assessment of the potential costs and benefits of their actions. Situational crime prevention focuses on altering the immediate environment and situational factors to reduce the opportunities for crime and make criminal behavior less attractive to potential offenders.
  
4. Review the National Institute of Justice's [FIVE THINGS ABOUT DETERRENCE](#), (DOJ/OJP, May 2016)
5. Watch [Self-Control Theory](#) (Danielle MacCartney) [last accessed, Sep. 2023]

a. The self-control theory of crime, also known as the General Theory of Crime or the self-control theory, is a criminological theory developed by Travis Hirschi and Michael Gottfredson in 1990. This theory focuses on understanding why individuals engage in criminal behavior and what factors contribute to their decision to commit crimes. The central premise of this theory is that low self-control is the primary factor underlying criminal behavior.

6. Watch [\*The Trouble with Long Prison Terms\*](#) (Justice Policy Institute, September 2020)

a. The effectiveness of long prison terms in deterring crime is a complex and debated issue within the field of criminology. While some proponents argue that longer sentences act as a deterrent by incapacitating potential offenders and sending a message that crime will be met with severe punishment, others contend that the relationship between long prison terms and crime deterrence is not straightforward.

b. The relationship between long prison terms and crime deterrence is not straightforward, and its effectiveness can vary depending on the type of crime, individual factors, and societal conditions. While long prison sentences may deter some individuals from committing crimes, they are not a panacea for reducing crime rates. Many experts argue for a more balanced approach to criminal justice that considers factors such as rehabilitation, reintegration, and addressing the root causes of criminal behavior in addition to punitive measures like long prison terms.

7. Watch Reason TV's [\*3 Reasons to Get Rid of the Death Penalty\*](#) (Sep. 9, 2014) – last accessed September 2023. Also embedded below.

a. The death penalty, also known as capital punishment, is a controversial and heavily debated topic when considered as a form of deterrence in criminal justice systems. The central argument in favor of the death penalty as a deterrent is that the prospect of facing the ultimate punishment, death, can deter individuals from committing serious crimes, particularly murder. However, this argument is fraught with complexities, and its effectiveness as a deterrent is a subject of extensive research and debate.

b. The idea behind using the death penalty as a deterrent is rooted in deterrence theory, which suggests that potential offenders weigh the potential costs and benefits of their actions before committing a crime. Proponents argue that the death penalty, being the harshest punishment possible, can act as a strong deterrent because individuals may be less likely to commit a murder if they fear execution.

c. Criminologists argue that potential offenders are influenced by various complex factors, such as socioeconomic conditions, family background, drug addiction, mental health issues, and the perceived likelihood of getting caught, in addition to the severity of punishment. Therefore, the effectiveness of the death penalty as a deterrent is challenging to isolate from these other influences.

To access the PPT file, click **HERE**. Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

Read, Review, Watch and Listen to all listed materials by the due date listed within the course LMS (i.e., Blackboard) site.

Contact the professor with any course-related questions

Click **HERE** to report any needed updates, e.g., broken links.



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## Discussion Questions

1. How rational and deterrence theories account for the influence of emotions, impulses, or peer pressure on criminal behavior?
2. What are some of the unintended consequences or side effects of relying on sanctions to prevent crime?
3. How can deterrence and rational choice theories inform crime prevention policies and programs?
4. How do classical criminology and rational choice perspectives differ in their assumptions, methods, and applications?
5. How do the concepts of deterrence and self-control relate to the classical and rational choice perspectives on crime?
6. How do individuals and groups make or structure decisions that lead them to engage in or abstain from criminal behavior?

## Supplemental Resources

- [Executions in Oklahoma: Cruel and Unusual?](#) (VICE News, Feb. 2023) [last accessed, Feb. 2024].
- Cornish and Clarke (2003). [25 Techniques of Situational Crime Prevention](#) (as cited by ASU, Center

- for Problem Oriented Policing, 2024) [last accessed, Feb. 2024].
- Death Penalty Information Center ([DPIC](#))
    - The Death Penalty Information Center (DPIC) is a national non-profit organization whose mission is to serve the media, policymakers, and the general public with data and analysis on issues concerning capital punishment and the people it affects. DPIC does not take a position on the death penalty itself but is critical of problems in its application.
  - Center for Law and Social Policy
    - The Center for Law and Social Policy ([CLASP](#)) is a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advancing policy solutions for people with low incomes.
  - Associated Press (AP), [California moves to dismantle nation's largest death row](#) (January 21, 2022) [last accessed, Feb. 2024].
  - CBS News [Kenneth Eugene Smith executed by nitrogen hypoxia in Alabama, marking a first for the death penalty](#) (Jan. 26, 2024) [last accessed, Feb. 2024].

## Activity

Students should review the course syllabus to determine the assignment of this activity.

This is a copy of the module's activity that students find within Blackboard. For that reason, refer to the Activities page to submit your work for review.

Note to students – Refer to the course learning management system; that is, Blackboard for assigned activity information. In addition, refer to the course syllabus for a detailed week-to-week activity schedule.

Note to faculty – Contact the Dr. Ramirez-Thompson ([thomsne@cod.edu](mailto:thomsne@cod.edu)) for a shared folder containing course activities.

## References

1. Hochstetler, A. (2009). Classical Perspectives. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference Series. 21st Century Criminology. A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 201-209). SAGE Reference. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600034/GVRL?u=cod\\_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=fe41aea7](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600034/GVRL?u=cod_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=fe41aea7)
2. Paternoster, R. (2009). Deterrence and Rational Choice Theories. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference Series. 21st Century Criminology. A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 236-244). SAGE Reference. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600038/GVRL?u=cod\\_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=79736864](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600038/GVRL?u=cod_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=79736864)
3. Arizona State University (2023), *Twenty-Five Techniques of Situational Prevention* (Center for Problem Oriented Policing, 2023). [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g4meX\\_GHR2tu3zIFPFp5srGSc6aWOrVq/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1g4meX_GHR2tu3zIFPFp5srGSc6aWOrVq/view). Accessed 19, Feb. 2024.
4. National Institute of Justice's (NIJ). FIVE THINGS ABOUT DETERRENCE, (DOJ/OJP, May 2016). [https://drive.google.com/file/d/16p1KSzLr-NV-4MD2X5EM8I\\_Ln2leL\\_bS/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/16p1KSzLr-NV-4MD2X5EM8I_Ln2leL_bS/view). Accessed 19 Feb. 2024.
5. Danielle MacCartney (Oct. 2021), *Self-Control Theory*. [https://youtu.be/AiI1DC3fHGY?si=t\\_tlzykM4MTgJ6-P](https://youtu.be/AiI1DC3fHGY?si=t_tlzykM4MTgJ6-P). Accessed 19 Feb. 2024.
6. Justice Policy Institute (Sep. 2020), *The Trouble with Long Prison Terms* (Justice Policy Institute, September 2020). <https://justicepolicy.org/long-prison-terms/>. Accessed 19 Feb. 2024.
7. Reason TV, *3 Reasons to Get Rid of the Death Penalty* (Sep. 9, 2014). [https://youtu.be/ql1-rneRkDE?si=gNFPamsx2h\\_r5llh](https://youtu.be/ql1-rneRkDE?si=gNFPamsx2h_r5llh). Accessed 19 Feb. 2024.



# PSYCHOLOGY OF CRIME

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**Module 6** explores the interaction between psychological factors and criminal behavior. The examination between psychology and crime provides an opportunity to consider how individual psychological characteristics, experiences, and processes can contribute to the commission of criminal acts. The field of forensic psychology focuses on understanding how psychological principles can shed light on the causes of crime, the motivations of offenders, and the impact of crime on victims and society. It also examines the application of psychological knowledge in the criminal justice system to better understand and address criminal behavior. It's important to note that while psychology can provide valuable insights into criminal behavior, it is just one piece of a larger puzzle. Criminal behavior is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon influenced by social, economic, cultural, and environmental factors, in addition to individual psychological traits. The integration of psychological knowledge with other disciplines, such as sociology, criminology, and law, is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of crime and the development of effective strategies for crime prevention, intervention, and justice.



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## Learning Objectives

### After completing this module, you should be able to:

- explain how mental illness relates to crime in general.
- describe the fundamentals of psychoanalytic theory, including Freudian elements of personality and defense mechanisms.
- enumerate the three learning mechanisms operant conditioning, classical conditioning, and observational learning and how they relate to theories of crime.

- explain cognitive structure and cognitive content and how they have been applied to criminal behavior.
- distinguish between general personality research and research on a “criminal personality.” Furthermore, be able to provide examples of general traits related to crime and the specific attributes of a psychopath.
- summarize the debate on the relationship between IQ and criminal behavior.
- discuss the contributions of psychology to the study of crime.
- identify the major principles of psychological perspectives of criminal behavior.
- explain how personality explains criminality.
- recognize the treatment implications of psychological understandings of criminality.

## Summary

The psychology of crime is the study of the psychological factors that contribute to criminal behavior, including the motivations, thoughts, emotions, and personality traits of individuals involved in illegal activities. This field of study seeks to understand why some individuals engage in criminal acts while others do not and how psychological factors interact with social, environmental, and cultural influences to shape criminal behavior.

Certain personality traits have been associated with an increased likelihood of criminal behavior. Traits such as impulsivity, sensation-seeking, low empathy, aggressiveness, and a lack of conscience or guilt (associated with psychopathy) have been linked to criminal conduct.

Cognitive factors play a role in criminal behavior. Deficits in decision-making, problem-solving skills, and executive functions can lead individuals to engage in criminal acts as a way of addressing their problems or achieving their goals.

Mental health issues can be relevant to criminal behavior, particularly in cases of severe disorders like antisocial personality disorder, conduct disorder, or substance use disorders. However, it is essential to recognize that most people with mental health issues are not involved in criminal activities.

Adverse childhood experiences, such as physical or emotional abuse, neglect, or exposure to violence, can significantly impact an individual’s likelihood of engaging in criminal behavior later in life. Early trauma can affect brain development and lead to maladaptive coping strategies.

The social learning theory suggests that individuals learn behaviors, including criminal ones, through observation and imitation of others. Exposure to criminal role models or environments can contribute to the adoption of criminal behavior.

Family influences, such as inconsistent discipline, family conflict, or a lack of parental supervision, can

impact an individual's likelihood of engaging in criminal conduct. A dysfunctional family environment may contribute to the development of delinquent behavior.

Peer relationships and social networks can play a significant role in criminal behavior. Association with delinquent peers can reinforce criminal attitudes and behavior, leading to further involvement in criminal activities.

Substance abuse can impair judgment and increase the likelihood of engaging in criminal acts to obtain drugs or maintain an addiction.

Advances in neuroscience have shown that brain structure and functioning can influence behavior, including criminal conduct. Abnormalities in certain brain regions may be associated with increased aggression or impulsivity.

The psychology of crime is a complex and multidimensional field that considers various individual and environmental factors. It's essential to understand that criminal behavior is the result of an intricate interplay between biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors. By integrating psychological knowledge with other disciplines, policymakers and practitioners can develop more effective prevention and intervention strategies to address criminal behavior and promote public safety. Moreover, understanding the psychological aspects of crime can also contribute to efforts aimed at rehabilitation and reducing recidivism among offenders.

### Key Takeaways

- **Psychological theories** of crime focus on the association among intelligence, personality, learning, and criminal behavior.
- **Psychodynamic theory** suggests that criminal behavior is influenced by unconscious mental processes, early childhood experiences, and the id, ego, and superego.
- **Behavioral theory** proposes that criminal behavior is learned through interactions with others and the environment, especially through modeling and social learning.
- **Cognitive theory** emphasizes the role of mental processes, such as moral reasoning, information processing, and problem-solving, in criminal behavior.
- **Personality and intelligence** are two factors that may affect criminal behavior, according to various measures and models, such as the Big Five, IQ, and psychopathy.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Albert Bandura (1925-2021)**

**Antisocial Personality**

**Attachment Theory**

**Behavioral Theory**

**Behavioral Conditioning**

**Behaviorism**

**Big Five Model of Personality**

**Charles Goring (1870-1919)**

**Cognitive Theory**

**Cyberpsychology**

**Gabriel Tarde (1843-1904)**

**Lawrence Kohlberg (1927-1987)**

**Maladaptation**

**Modeling Theory**

**Psychoanalytic Perspective**

**Psychopath**

**Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)**

**Trait Theory**

Modern Application

### Cyberpsychology

Cyberpsychology, a discipline at the intersection of psychology and technology, explores how digital environments impact human behavior, cognition, and emotions. As the digital age progresses, understanding the psychological aspects of online interactions becomes increasingly crucial, especially in the context of deviance and crime. This field sheds light on the motivations, behaviors, and profiles of individuals engaging in cyber deviance, such as cyberbullying, cyberstalking, hacking, and other forms of cybercrime. Through cyberpsychology, researchers

analyze how the anonymity, perceived detachment, and vast audience reach of the internet contribute to deviant behaviors online.

The application of cyberpsychology in understanding cyber deviance and crime is multifaceted. It helps in identifying psychological traits that predispose individuals to engage in cybercriminal activities, understanding the impact of digital environments on behavior, and developing psychological profiles of potential offenders. This knowledge is instrumental in crafting strategies and tools to combat cybercrime, including the design of safer online environments, the implementation of digital literacy programs, and the enhancement of cybersecurity measures.

Moreover, cyberpsychology contributes to the development of intervention strategies aimed at preventing cyber deviance and assisting victims. By understanding the psychological underpinnings of cybercrime, professionals can create more effective education and awareness programs, improve legal and policy frameworks, and devise therapeutic interventions for those affected by cybercrime.

However, the rapid evolution of technology and the complexity of online interactions pose significant challenges for cyberpsychology. Ethical concerns, the need for cross-disciplinary research, and the dynamic nature of digital technologies demand continuous adaptation and innovation in the field. Despite these challenges, cyberpsychology remains a vital discipline for addressing the complexities of deviance and crime in the twenty-first century, offering insights and solutions to secure cyberspace and protect individuals from the psychological impacts of cybercrime.

## The CyberPsychology of CyberCrime – Mary Aiken, RCSI (Web Summit, Dec. 2015)




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- New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) [What is Cyberpsychology and Why is it Important?](#) (Feb. 2023)
- [Cyberpsychology: Journal of Psychosocial Research on Cyberspace](#) (MUNI Journals)
- CSO. [Why cyberpsychology is such an important part of effective cybersecurity](#) (Mary Pratt, July 4, 2023.) [last accessed, March 3 2024].

## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 31: [Psychological Theories of Crime](#) by John W. Clark, Troy University (Clark, 2009)

- Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
- You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.

2. Review Saul Mcleod's [Operant Conditioning: What It Is, How It Works, And Examples](#) (Simply Psychology, June 2023)

3. Review Saul Mcleod's [Bandura's Bobo Doll Experiment On Social Learning](#) (Simply Psychology, June 2023)

a. Albert Bandura developed a comprehensive social cognition theory of aggression that depends on cognitive processes for its explanatory power.

b. Everyone is capable of aggression but must learn how to behave aggressively.

c. Central to his theory are the ideas of observation, imitation, and modeling. People learn to act (aggressively or otherwise) by observing others, either in person or in the media.

4. Review Kendra Cherry's [What Are the Big 5 Personality Traits? Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism](#) (verywell mind, March 2023)

a. Hans Eysenck explained crime as the result of fundamental personality characteristics or traits, which he believed are largely inherited.

b. He believed the degree to which three universal supertraits are present in an individual accounts for his or her unique personality.

c. Termed these supertraits introversion/extraversion; neuroticism/emotional stability; psychoticism – people who score high on any of these are not easily socialized or conditioned and commit more crime in adulthood.

d. Psychoticism thought to be closely correlated with criminality at all stages.

e. Today, trait theories of personality have expanded to the Five Factor Model with five basic traits: openness to experience, extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and agreeableness.

5. Review NBC News' [The shape of your brain may strongly influence your thoughts and behavior, study finds](#) (Bendix, A. , May 21, 2023) [last accessed July 2023]

6. Watch [Social Learning Theory: Bandura's Bobo Beatdown Experiments](#) (Sprouts, 2022)

a. Social learning theory suggests that all behaviors, including crime, are learned in much the same way, involving the acquisition of norms, values, and patterns of behavior conducive to crime, so that crime is a product of the social environment rather than an innate characteristic of some individuals.

7. Watch [Psychoanalytic Theory](#) (Khan Academy, 2015)

a. Psychoanalytic theory, based on the work of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), suggests that criminal behavior is maladaptive, the result of inadequacies inherent in the offender's personality which is formed by early childhood experiences that influence his or her likelihood for committing future crimes.

b. Psychoanalysis suggests that one possible cause of crime may be a poorly developed superego, which leaves the individual operating without a moral guide.

8. Watch TEDx Talks (May 2016), Brian Boutwell: [The Future of Criminology Saint Louis University](#) [14:34] (TED, 2021) – also embedded below.

9. Watch and Review [How Sociopaths Are Different from Psychopaths](#) by Marcia Purse (verywell mind, November 2022)

a. The concept of the psychopathic personality was developed by Hervey Cleckley, who described a psychopath as a “moral idiot,” with poverty of affect as the central defining characteristic.

b. There are several different types of psychopaths, including sociopaths, who are born with a normal personality but develop psychopathic characteristics due to personal experiences early in life.

c. Today, the terms “psychopath” and “sociopath” have fallen out of favor and have been replaced by the concept of antisocial personality.



10. Watch JCS' [What Pretending to be crazy looks like](#) (May 2021)

11. Watch [Psychopath Child](#) (AP Psychology, August 2013)

To access the PPT file, click [HERE](#). Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

Read, Review, Watch and Listen to all listed materials by the due date listed within the course LMS (i.e., Blackboard) site.

Contact the professor with any course-related questions

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## The Future of Criminology Saint Louis University



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### Activity

Students should review the course syllabus to determine the assignment of this activity.

This is a copy of the module's activity that students find within Blackboard. For that reason, refer to the Activities page to submit your work for review.

### Violent Video Games and Crime Nexus?

#### Purpose

The theory building process requires that we can establish testable assumptions that account for a set of facts. Such facts provide a premise from which we can address contemporary social challenges within the context of a modern society. For example, there is much debate regarding the potential harm caused by violent media, music, and video games. The purpose of this topic



forum is to provide students with an opportunity to explore the possible correlation between video games and violence as part of developing an understanding of evidence-based criminology.

## Instructions

1. Review behavioral theory as explained within Chapter 31 *Psychological Theories of Crime* (p. 274)
2. Read attached article from [Do Violent Video Games Make Kids More Violent](#) and explore a few of those links embedded within the file.
3. Watch **Video 1:** [Video game violence linked to bad behavior, study says](#) (also embedded below)
4. Watch **Video 2:** [How do video games affect behavior?](#) (also embedded below)



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Answer the following questions:

- Use modeling theory within the context of social learning theory to **explain** how you believe violent video games might affect a player's emotions and influence their perceptual or emotional view of the world and increase the likelihood of maladaptive behavior.
- **Summarize** how playing violent video games might influence a person's real-life behavior?
- A recent summary of this emerging literature finds a moderate correlation between exposure to violent video games and both aggression and lack of empathy. An exclusive review of studies of criminal aggression, however, did not find that video gaming had a significant impact. Skeptics of the link between media exposure and real-world violence also point out that both cross-national research and American crime trends cast doubt on the existence of a

large effect. **Using aspects of Module 6, explain whether or not you believe there is in fact a connection between video games and real-world violence.**

### Key Terms/Concepts

Definitions for these terms are found within [Module 6](#)

- **Albert Bandura**
- **Behavioral Theory**
- **Behavioral Conditioning**
- **Modeling Theory**

Refer to the course learning management system (LMS); that is Blackboard (BB), for the correct due date. In addition, submit your work via BB for grading.

## Discussion Questions

1. How does the development of the id, ego, and superego influence deviant and/or criminal behavior?
2. How does social learning theory explain the acquisition of violent and aggressive behavior?
3. What are the three primary sources of behavior modeling according to Bandura?
4. How does moral development theory account for the different stages of moral reasoning?
5. What are some factors that may impair the information-processing abilities of criminal offenders?
6. How does the Big Five model of personality measure individual differences in personality?
7. What are some personality traits that are correlated with delinquent and criminal behavior?
8. What are the arguments for and against the nature-versus-nurture debate in relation to intelligence and crime?

## Supplemental Resources

- [The Moral Sense Test: How do you decide between right and wrong?](#)
- [Treating Antisocial Personality Disorder](#) (Psych Central, 2023)

## References

1. Clark, J. W. (2009). Psychological Theories of Crime. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference Series. 21st Century Criminology: A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 271-278). SAGE Reference. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600042/GVRL?u=cod\\_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=18bf305f](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600042/GVRL?u=cod_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=18bf305f)
2. Simply Psychology, Operant Conditioning: What It Is, How It Works, And Examples (Saul Mcleod, Feb. 2, 2024). <https://www.simplypsychology.org/operant-conditioning.html>. Accessed 3 March, 2024.
3. Simply Psychology, Bandura's Bobo Doll Experiment On Social Learning (Saul Mcleod, Feb. 1, 2024). [https://www.simplypsychology.org/bobo-doll.html#:~:text=Bobo%20doll%20experiment%20demonstrated%20that,\(1977\)%20Social%20Learning%20Theory](https://www.simplypsychology.org/bobo-doll.html#:~:text=Bobo%20doll%20experiment%20demonstrated%20that,(1977)%20Social%20Learning%20Theory). Accessed 3 March, 2024.
4. verywell mind, What Are the Big 5 Personality Traits? Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism (Kendra Cherry, March 11, 2023). <https://www.verywellmind.com/the-big-five-personality-dimensions-2795422#toc-the-big-5-personality-traits>. Accessed 3 March, 2024.
5. NBC News (May 21, 2023), The shape of your brain may strongly influence your thoughts and behavior, study finds (Bendix, A.). <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/brain-shape-may-influence-thoughts-behavior-rcna86938>. Accessed 3 March, 2024.
6. Sprouts (April 2022), *Social Learning Theory: Bandura's Bobo Beatdown Experiments* [Video] (YouTube). <https://youtu.be/XHlHkM1cAv4?si=c3m8YiBZrBLQWj24>. Accessed 3 March, 2024.
7. Kahan Academy (Sep. 13, 2013), *Psychoanalytic theory* [Video] (YouTube). <https://youtu.be/jdawTFsCNtc?si=qpix8Hg3Xh5-9509>. Accessed 3 March, 2024.
8. TEDx Saint Louis University (May 26, 2016), Brian Boutwell: *The Future of Criminology* [Video] (YouTube). [https://youtu.be/xbikaH4GTSo?si=hjHj5F\\_yzrYJ8sqZ](https://youtu.be/xbikaH4GTSo?si=hjHj5F_yzrYJ8sqZ). Accessed 3 March, 2024.
9. verywell mind, (Nov. 14, 2022) How Sociopaths Are Different from Psychopaths (Purse, M.). <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-a-sociopath-380184>. Accessed 3 March, 2024.
10. JCS (May 26, 2021), *What Pretending to be crazy looks like* [Video] (YouTube). <https://youtu.be/Mwt35SEeR9w?si=4BKfZ3c6Zkk1Lz2>. Accessed 3 March, 2024.
11. AP Psychology (Aug. 26, 2013), *Psychopathic Child* (Calvin Hecker) [Video] (YouTube).

[https://youtu.be/VDVaiwzU8yc?si=5LicZqkle\\_BmHgl0](https://youtu.be/VDVaiwzU8yc?si=5LicZqkle_BmHgl0). Accessed 3 March, 2024.

# SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND CRIME

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**Module 7** introduces various general assumptions and types of sociological theories before focusing specifically on social structure theories. Social structure theories are a group of sociologically based theories that consider formal and informal economic and social arrangements of society as root causes of crime and deviance. Structure based theories highlight arrangements within society that contribute to the low socioeconomic status of identifiable groups as significant causes of crime. The three main types of social structure theories are: (1) social disorganization theories, (2) general strain theories [GST], and (3) the culture conflict perspectives. Particular attention is given to exploring how social structure theories have influenced social policy, through programs such as the Chicago Area Project ([CAP](#)), [Mobilization for Youth](#), and the War on Poverty.



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## Learning Objectives

### **After completing this module, you should be able to:**

- explain the meaning of a “structural” explanation of crime.
- recognize the contributions of Emile Durkheim and how his work connects to modern criminological theory.
- identify the central themes captured by the Chicago School and social disorganization theory.
- describe the anomie/strain tradition, including the work of Robert K. Merton and subsequent revisions of his theory.
- identify the different subcultural explanations of delinquency and connect them to broader theoretical traditions.

- explain how culture conflict connect the theories within this chapter to their respective policy implications.

## Summary

Social structure theory, also known as social disorganization theory, is a criminological perspective that links crime rates to the characteristics of a community or neighborhood. The theory posits that the structural and social features of a community can influence the prevalence of criminal behavior and deviance within that community. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the social context and environment in which individuals live to comprehend the factors contributing to crime.

Key elements of social structure theory and crime include social disorganization, the ecological perspective, strain and anomie, informal social control, poverty and inequality, neighborhood effects, and collective efficacy.

Social disorganization refers to a breakdown in the social fabric of a community, which can result from factors such as poverty, residential mobility, ethnic heterogeneity, and weak community ties. When a community lacks social cohesion and collective efficacy, it becomes more susceptible to crime and delinquency.

Social structure theory adopts an ecological perspective by viewing communities as ecosystems. It focuses on the spatial distribution of crime and delinquency, examining how crime rates vary across different neighborhoods with distinct social characteristics.

Social structure theory is influenced by strain theory and anomie theory, which suggest that individuals may turn to crime when they experience a disconnection between socially approved goals and the means to achieve those goals. In socially disorganized communities with limited opportunities and resources, the likelihood of criminal coping mechanisms increases.

The theory highlights the importance of informal social control mechanisms in preventing crime. When communities lack strong bonds, mutual trust, and shared norms, informal social control mechanisms that discourage criminal behavior weaken, allowing deviant acts to proliferate.

Social structure theory recognizes the impact of poverty and social inequality on crime rates. Communities with higher levels of poverty and economic disadvantage often experience higher crime rates due to limited access to resources and opportunities for social and economic advancement.

The theory emphasizes the impact of the neighborhood environment on an individual's behavior. Individuals living in socially disorganized areas may adopt the norms and values prevalent in their immediate surroundings, which can influence their involvement in criminal activities.

Collective efficacy refers to a community's ability to work together to address common problems and

maintain social order. Strong collective efficacy can serve as a protective factor against crime, as communities with high levels of cooperation and social integration are better equipped to prevent criminal behavior.

Social structure theory highlights the significance of the broader social context in shaping crime rates and patterns. By understanding the dynamics of communities and neighborhoods, policymakers and practitioners can develop targeted interventions to address the root causes of crime, such as poverty, lack of opportunities, and weak social ties. Strengthening community bonds, promoting economic development, and implementing community-based crime prevention programs are some of the strategies that can be employed to reduce crime in socially disorganized areas and foster safer and more resilient communities.

### Key Takeaways

**Social disorganization theory** is a criminological theory that explains how ecological characteristics of neighborhoods influence crime rates and delinquency.

**Shaw and McKay** are the main proponents of social disorganization theory, who studied the spatial distribution of delinquency in Chicago and identified three structural factors that contribute to social disorganization: poverty, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential mobility.

**Recent developments** in social disorganization theory have introduced new concepts such as collective efficacy, social capital, and neighborhood dynamics, and have used more sophisticated methods such as multilevel modeling, spatial analysis, and longitudinal design.

**Strain theories** explain crime because of the negative emotions caused by certain types of stress or strain, such as the inability to achieve one's goals, the loss of positive stimuli, or the presence of negative stimuli.

**General strain theory (GST)** is the dominant version of strain theory in criminology. It identifies the types of strain most conducive to crime, the mechanisms by which strain leads to crime, and the factors that influence the likelihood of criminal coping.

**Group differences in crime**, such as gender, age, class, and race differences, can be partly explained by strain theory. The members of groups with higher rates of crime are more likely to experience strains that are conducive to crime and to cope with these strains through crime.

**Controlling crime** can be achieved by reducing the exposure of individuals to strains that are conducive to crime and by reducing the likelihood that individuals will respond to strains with crime. Several programs based on strain theory have shown some success in preventing or reducing crime.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Anomie**

**Chicago School**

**Clifford R. Shaw and Henry D. McKay (1942)**

**Collective Efficacy**

**Culture Conflict Theory**

**Differential Opportunity**

**Émile Durkheim (1858-1917)**

**Focal Concerns**

**General Strain Theory (GST)**

**Mechanical Solidarity**

**Middle-Class Measuring Rod**

**Neutralization Theory**

**Organic Solidarity**

**Reaction Formation**

**Relative Deprivation**

**Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess (1928)**

**Robert K. Merton (1910-2003)**

**Social Disorganization**

**Social Ecology**

**Strain Theory**

**Subculture Theory**

**Zone in Transition**

Modern Application

### Can Cybercrime be Explained with Strain Theory?

According to strain theory, individuals engage in computer crime when they experience strain or



pressure in their lives, such as economic hardship or social exclusion. Computer crime may provide a way for them to alleviate their stress or gain a sense of power and control.

Computer crime, encompassing a range of illegal activities conducted through digital means, offers individuals a unique pathway to exert power and control, as well as a method to alleviate stress.

The digital realm provides a veil of anonymity and a physical distance from victims, enabling individuals to commit crimes without the immediate risk of identification or confrontation. This detachment not only emboldens them but also creates a perceived environment of control and power over their targets.

Engaging in computer crime often requires a certain level of technical skill and knowledge, which can contribute to a sense of superiority and mastery. For some, the challenge of bypassing security measures and exploiting vulnerabilities is intellectually stimulating and gratifying, reinforcing their sense of control and capability.

The immersive nature of the digital world offers a form of escapism from real-world problems and stressors. Engaging in computer crime can be a way for individuals to divert their attention from personal issues, using the thrill and focus required for such activities as a form of stress relief.

Computer crime can invert traditional power dynamics, allowing individuals who may feel powerless or marginalized in their physical lives to exert influence and command over others online. This shift can provide a psychological boost, empowering them in ways they do not experience offline.


Some people engage in computer crime as part of online communities or groups. The sense of belonging to a community that shares skills, knowledge, and goals can further enhance feelings of power and control, alongside providing social support mechanisms that alleviate stress.

Computer crime offers individuals a complex interplay of power, control, and stress relief, facilitated by the anonymity, technical challenge, escapism, altered power dynamics, and community belonging inherent in the digital world.


- [Institutional Anomie Theory and Cybercrime—Cybercrime and the American Dream, Now Available Online](#) (Dearden, Thomas & Parti, Katalin & Hawdon, James. (2021). Institutional Anomie Theory and Cybercrime—Cybercrime and the American Dream, Now Available Online. *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*.) [last accessed, March 3, 2024].
- Verywell Minda. [The Psychology of Cyberbullying](#) (Arlin Cuncic, MA, Dec. 31, 2023) [last accessed, March 3, 2024].

## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 36: [Social Disorganization](#) by Jeffrey T. Walker, University of Arkansas, Little Rock

- Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
- You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.

2. Read Chapter 38: [Strain Theories](#) by Robert Agnew, Emory University

- Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
- You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.

3. Review the [Chicago Area Project](#) (CAP) website. Identify various initiatives that CAP supports, e.g., community and youth services, prevention and wellness, and workforce development.

a. Environmental criminology is an emerging perspective building on routine activities theory, situational crime prevention, and ecological approaches and emphasizing the importance of location and architectural features in the prevalence of victimization.

b. Lawrence Sherman’s “hot spots” of crime research found that a small percentage of places in Minneapolis produced half of all calls to the police.

4. Review a category of your choice from [The Power of Place The indelible mark of neighborhoods](#) (Vital City Journal, Issue 3). Issue 3 contains several categories from which you will find compelling articles; that is, Setting the Stage, Looking Back, Conversations, etc.

5. Watch [How does Merton’s Strain Theory work? Sociology of Crime and Deviance](#) (Precooked Sociology, August 15, 2022) – also embedded below.

a. Strain theory is a sociological concept that was developed by Robert K. Merton in the mid-20th century. It seeks to explain deviant behavior by examining the tension or “strain” individuals experience when they are unable to achieve socially accepted goals through legitimate means. Here’s a summarized explanation of strain theory:

b. Strain theory states that society sets culturally approved goals, such as success, wealth, and status, which are desirable to all members. Society also prescribes legitimate means to achieve these goals, like education and hard work.

c. When individuals are unable to attain these goals through conventional means or feel that the means are blocked for them, they experience a state of “anomie,” or normlessness. This leads to feelings of strain and frustration.

d. In response to strain, individuals may adopt different modes of adaptation, which can be categorized into five types:

1. **Conformity:** Individuals continue to pursue societal goals through accepted means.
2. **Innovation:** People create new, often unconventional methods to achieve societal goals.
3. **Ritualism:** Individuals abandon the pursuit of societal goals but continue to adhere rigidly to the means.
4. **Retreatism:** People withdraw from both societal goals and conventional means, often turning to substance abuse or deviant lifestyles.
5. **Rebellion:** Individuals reject both the established goals and means, striving to replace them with alternative values and goals.

e. Strain theory suggests that deviant behavior can result from the inability to resolve the tension caused by the gap between societal goals and the means available for achieving them. The specific form of deviance depends on the individual's mode of adaptation.

f. In essence, strain theory helps us understand how social structures and opportunities influence individuals' choices and the potential for deviant behavior when these structures create a sense of frustration and blocked opportunities for success. It remains a valuable perspective in the field of criminology and sociology for examining the root causes of deviance and crime.

6. Watch [Breaking Down How the Broken Windows Theory Promotes Racial Bias](#) (theGrio Politics, January 29, 2022). Consider the unintended consequences of policies that are rooted deeply in criminological teachings – also embedded below.

7. Listen to [Gun violence in our region, and who's working to curb it](#) (WMRA | Randi B. Haji, November 21, 2022).

a. Thorsten Sellin suggests that the root causes of crime are found in different values about what is acceptable or proper behavior. Consider which norms are in at odds and how differently socialized groups solve problems.

b. Franco Ferracuti and Marvin Wolfgang have proposed the existence of a subculture emphasizing values that support violence and violent behavior.

c. They suggest that for members of these violent subcultures, violence can be a way of life and thus the users do not feel guilty about their aggressive behavior.

8. Listen to [Incarcerated teens find escape in music and poems composed with artists](#) (NPR-WEBZ Chicago, Olivia Hampton June 2, 2023)

a. Consider that the likelihood that a juvenile will react to strains with criminal behavior depends on a range of factors influencing the individual's (1) ability to engage in legal coping, (2) costs of crime, and (3) disposition of crime. As you listen, isolate which aspects of music and the related experience are positive reinforcements that strengthen the ability of the youth to resist engaging in antisocial behavior.

To access the PPT file, click **HERE**. Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

Read, Review, Watch and Listen to all listed materials by the due date listed within the course LMS (i.e., Blackboard) site.

Contact the professor with any course-related questions

Click **HERE** to report any needed updates, e.g., broken links.

## How does Merton's Strain Theory work? Sociology of Crime and Deviance



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## Breaking Down How the Broken Windows Theory Promotes Racial Bias



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## Collective Efficacy



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An interactive H5P element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here:

<https://cod.pressbooks.pub/criminology/?p=209#h5p-6>

## Discussion Questions

1. How did the early studies of urban ecology, plant biology, and crime patterns in Chicago influence the development of social disorganization theory?
2. What were the main findings and limitations of the studies that replicated Shaw and McKay's analysis of ecological characteristics and juvenile delinquency in different cities?
3. How did the concepts of collective efficacy, social capital, and environmental criminology advance the understanding of the relationship between neighborhoods and crime?
4. What are some of the methodological innovations and substantive issues that need to be addressed to test and improve social disorganization theory in the 21st century?
5. How do strain theories suggest that crime can be prevented or reduced? What are some examples of programs or policies that are based on strain theories?
6. What are the types of strain that are most conducive to crime, according to general strain theory? How do these strains differ from other types of strain that are less likely to result in crime?
7. How do emotions mediate the relationship between strain and crime? What are some emotions that are more likely to lead to crime than others? How do gender differences in emotional reactions to strain affect crime rates?
8. How do strain theories explain group differences in crime, such as gender, age, class, and ethnic-racial differences?

## Supplemental Resources

- [Say NOPE to social disorganization criminology: the importance of creators in neighborhood social control](https://doi.org/10.1186/s40163-022-00167-y) (Linning, S.J., Olaghere, A. & Eck, J.E. Say NOPE to social disorganization criminology: the importance of creators in neighborhood social control. *Crime Sci* 11, 5 (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40163-022-00167-y>) [last accessed, March. 2024].

## References

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2. Agnew, R. S. (2009). Strain Theories. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference Series. 21st Century Criminology: A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 332-339). SAGE Reference. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600049/GVRL?u=cod\\_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=7f2d384c](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600049/GVRL?u=cod_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=7f2d384c)
3. Chicago Area Project. <https://www.chicagoareaproject.org/>. Accessed 23 March, 2024.
4. Vital City – The Power of Place The indelible mark of neighborhoods. <https://www.vitalcitynyc.org/issues/issue-3>. Accessed 23 March, 2024.
5. Precooked Sociology (Aug. 15, 2022), *How does Merton's Strain Theory work? Sociology of Crime and Deviance – A Level and GCSE*. [https://youtu.be/NU9I3nNEtiA?si=\\_F\\_4VElqmoO4zsz2](https://youtu.be/NU9I3nNEtiA?si=_F_4VElqmoO4zsz2). Accessed 23 March, 2024.
6. theGrio Politics (January 29, 2022), *Breaking Down How the Broken Windows Theory Promotes Racial Bias*. <https://youtu.be/y44Dui0w8Kk?si=JgnmKCRcn2UXh3ye>. Accessed 23 March, 2024.
7. WMRA (Nov. 21, 2022), *Gun violence in our region, and who's working to curb it* (Randi B. Hagi). <https://www.wmra.org/2022-11-21/gun-violence-in-our-region-and-whos-working-to-curb-it>. Accessed 23 March, 2024.
8. NPR-Morning Edition (June 2, 2023), *Incarcerated teens find escape in music and poems composed with artists* (Olivia Hampton). <https://www.npr.org/2023/06/02/1178762181/incarcerated-teens-find-escape-in-music-and-poems-composed-with-artists>. Accessed 23 March, 2024.



# SOCIAL PROCESS AND CRIME

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**Module 8** covers social process theory, which is a criminological perspective that focuses on how criminal behavior is learned and shaped through social interactions and processes. Readings and resources provide an opportunity to identify how social process theory is unlike other criminological theories that emphasize individual traits or structural factors, social process theory highlights the significance of socialization, peer influence, and the impact of social interactions in shaping an individual's propensity for criminal conduct. An examination of social forces throughout the module provides an opportunity to understand in what ways the theory suggests that crime is not solely determined by inherent characteristics or external circumstances, but rather, it is a result of ongoing social processes and interactions.



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## Learning Objectives

### After completing this module, you should be able to:

- examine the nature of process theories of crime, including the important institutions within these theories and the role of socialization.
- explain the history and major concepts within the differential association/social learning perspective.
- identify what makes control theories different from other explanations of crime.
- list the types of informal control and explain how they fit into the various control theories of criminal behavior.
- discuss the social context of labeling theory and the labeling process.
- summarize the policy implications derived from learning, control, and labeling theories of



crime.

## Summary

Social process theory is a criminological perspective that focuses on how criminal behavior is learned and shaped through social interactions and processes. Unlike other criminological theories that emphasize individual traits or structural factors, social process theory highlights the significance of socialization, peer influence, and the impact of social interactions in shaping an individual's propensity for criminal conduct. This theory suggests that crime is not solely determined by inherent characteristics or external circumstances, but rather, it is a result of ongoing social processes and interactions with intimate, peer, and social relationships. Furthermore, socialization, not the social structure, determines life chances. The more social problems encountered during the socialization process, the greater the likelihood that youths will encounter difficulties and obstacles.

Social process theory draws heavily from social learning theory, which posits that individuals learn behaviors, including criminal ones, through observation, imitation, and reinforcement. Criminal behavior may be acquired by associating with delinquent peers, family members, or engaging in criminal subcultures. The collection of theories within the social process perspective argues that socialization, not the social structure, determines life chances. The more social problems encountered during the socialization process, the greater the likelihood that youths will encounter difficulties and obstacles.

In 1939, Edwin Sutherland put forth one of the most notable social process theories. He explained that criminal behavior is learned through interactions with others who hold favorable attitudes toward crime. Individuals exposed to pro-criminal attitudes and values are more likely to adopt those values and engage in criminal activities.

Social process theory considers the role of socialization in shaping an individual's behavior. Early socialization experiences, especially within the family and peer groups, can significantly influence a person's attitudes towards authority, norms, and the acceptability of deviant behaviors. The relationship between family structure and crime is critical when the high rates of divorce and single parents are considered, but family conflict and discord are more important determinants of behavior than are family structure.

Peer influence may be a universal norm. Peer relations are a vital aspect of maturation and adolescents feel a persistent pressure to conform to group values. Those who regularly attend religious services should also eschew crime and other antisocial behaviors. The association between religious attendance and belief and delinquent behavior patterns is negligible and insignificant; participation seems to be a more significant inhibitor of crime than merely having religious beliefs and values.

The effect of the family on delinquency has also been observed in other cultures. Educational process and adolescent achievement in school have been linked to criminality. Schools contribute to criminality in that when they label problem youths, they set them apart from conventional society. Many school dropouts, especially those who have been expelled, face a significant chance of entering a criminal career. In addition, the perspective connected to labeling theory, which emphasizes how the process of labeling individuals as criminals or deviants can influence their self-concept and behavior. Being labeled as a criminal can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, where individuals internalize the criminal identity and engage in further criminal behavior.

Social process theory examines the effectiveness of social control mechanisms in regulating behavior. Weak social bonds, low attachment to conventional institutions, and a lack of social control can lead to an increased likelihood of criminal behavior. In addition, the theory recognizes the role of rational choice and the availability of criminal opportunities. Individuals may weigh the costs and benefits of engaging in criminal behavior based on their social interactions and the perceived likelihood of getting caught.

Social process theory highlights the dynamic nature of criminal behavior and the importance of social influences in shaping individuals' choices. By focusing on the social context and social interactions, this theory provides insights into how criminal behavior can be prevented or redirected through positive socialization, strong social bonds, and supportive networks. Intervention programs that target social learning and the reinforcement of pro-social behaviors can be instrumental in reducing criminal behavior and promoting prosocial outcomes within communities.

### Key Takeaways

**Social Interaction and Learning** emphasizes that criminal behavior is learned through social interactions, highlighting the influence of socialization, peer influence, and intimate relationships on an individual's propensity for criminal conduct.

**Social Learning Theory** suggests that behaviors, including criminal ones, are acquired through observation, imitation, and reinforcement, particularly from delinquent peers and family members.

**Influence of Socialization** proposes that life chances are determined by socialization rather than social structure, with more social problems during socialization increasing the likelihood of encountering difficulties and engaging in criminal activities.

**Edwin Sutherland's Theory**, introduced the idea that criminal behavior is learned through interactions with others who hold favorable attitudes toward crime, suggesting the adoption of these attitudes leads to criminal activities.

**Family and Peer Influence** – Highlights the significant impact of early socialization experiences within the family and peer groups on attitudes towards authority, norms, and deviant behaviors, with family conflict being a more crucial determinant of behavior than family structure.

**Labeling Theory**, discusses how being labeled as a criminal or deviant can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, where individuals internalize the criminal identity and continue engaging in criminal behavior.

**Social Control Mechanisms** provide for an examination of the role of social control in regulating behavior, suggesting that weak social bonds and low attachment to conventional institutions can increase criminal behavior likelihood.

**Prevention and Intervention** – Advocates for intervention programs targeting social learning and the reinforcement of pro-social behaviors to reduce criminal behavior and promote prosocial outcomes, underscoring the potential for positive social influences to redirect criminal tendencies.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Differential Association**

**Differential Association-Reinforcement Theory**

**Differential Identification**

**Containment Theory**

**Control Balance Theory**

**Frank Tannenbaum (1938)**

**General Theory of Crime (GTC)**

**Labeling Theory**

**Reintegrative Shaming**

**Ronald L. Akers (1966)**

**Social Bond Theory**

**Social Control Theories**

**Social Learning Theory**

**Stanley Cohen (1995)**

**Symbolic Interaction**

## Modern Application

## Cybersecurity and Differential Association


The relationship between cybersecurity and social norms is both complex and dynamic, reflecting the evolving landscape of digital interactions and the expectations that govern them. Cybersecurity, fundamentally concerned with protecting information and systems from digital threats, intersects with social norms at the juncture where human behavior meets technology. Social norms dictate what is considered acceptable or ethical in online behavior, influencing the development of cybersecurity policies and practices. For instance, the increasing emphasis on privacy and data protection has been shaped significantly by societal values and expectations, leading to more robust cybersecurity measures. Conversely, cybersecurity incidents often prompt a reevaluation of social norms, as seen in the growing public discourse on the responsibility of individuals and organizations to maintain cyber hygiene. This bidirectional relationship highlights the critical role that societal values play in shaping cybersecurity strategies and the importance of cybersecurity awareness in cultivating a safer digital culture.

Social process theories provide a basis from which we can better understand the relationship between cybersecurity and social norms within the digital context. For example, social Interaction and learning emphasizes that criminal behavior is learned through social interactions, highlighting the influence of socialization, peer influence, and intimate relationships on an individual's propensity for criminal conduct. In addition, social learning Theory suggests that behaviors, including criminal ones, are acquired through observation, imitation, and reinforcement, particularly from delinquent peers and family members. Therefore, there is value in developing information and communication technology policies that are in part informed by these criminological theories.


- Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (Nov. 30, 2017), [Cybersecurity and the Concept of Norms](#) (Marth Finnemore, Nov. 30, 2017.)

## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 37: [Social Learning Theory](#) by Ronald L. Akers, University of Florida and Wesley G. Jennings, University of Louisville

- Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
- You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.

2. Read Chapter 29: [Labeling and Symbolic Interaction Theories](#) by Sean Maddan, University of Tampa and Ineke Haen Marshall

- Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
- You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.

3. Watch [Self control: Dan Ariely at TEDxDuke](#) (April 18, 2011) – also embedded below

- In 1990, Hirschi and Michael Gottfredson proposed a general theory of crime (GTC) based on control theory concepts.
- The theory asserts that low self-control accounts for all types of crime, always.
- Self-control is acquired early in life and low self-control combined with impulsivity is the premier individual-level cause of crime.
- A well-developed social bond will result in the creation of effective mechanisms of self-control.

4. Watch [The Rescue Me Project](#) | The Identity of the JUMP (The Rescue Me Project, December 2, 2021) – also embedded below

- Social process theories emphasize crime prevention programs that work to enhance self-control and build prosocial bonds.
- The Juvenile Mentoring Program (JUMP) is run by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).
- JUMP attempts to build strong social bonds while teaching positive values to juveniles.
- JUMP places at-risk youth in a one-on-one relationship with favorable adult role models
- Both youth and mentors are very positive when rating the mentoring experience

5. Watch [Labeling Theory](#) (disorient0, September 2013)

- Society's response to offenders is important.
- It determines the individual futures of those labeled as criminals.

c. It may contribute to increased criminality by reducing the behavioral options available to labeled offenders.

d. Frank Tannenbaum's 1938 research used the term "tagging" to describe what happens to offenders after arrest, conviction, and sentencing.

6. Listen to Caught: [Introducing Charged](#) (NPR – WBEZ Chicago, May 8, 2019) [last accessed August 2023]

To access the PPT file, click [HERE](#). Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

Read, Review, Watch and Listen to all listed materials by the due date listed within the course LMS (i.e., Blackboard) site.

Contact the professor with any course-related questions

Click [HERE](#) to report any needed updates, e.g., broken links.



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## Activity – Understanding Mechanisms of Social

## Process/Control Within a Digital Context

Students should review the course syllabus to determine the assignment of this activity.

This is a copy of the module's activity that students find within Blackboard. For that reason, refer to the Activities page to submit your work for review.



### Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to strengthen the student's understanding of social process theory, most specifically social control, within the context of a digital environment.

### Instructions

1. This module's activity requires that students have completed a cursory review of Chapter 37: *Social Learning Theory* by Ronald L. Akers, University of Florida and Wesley G. Jennings, University of Louisville
2. Read K. Jaishankar's Abstract and seven (7) postulates for [Space Transition@ Theory of Cyber Crimes](#)

3. Learn about B.F. Skinner. Watch [B.F. Skinner in 2 Minutes](#) (May 26, 2016)
4. Watch [Social Media as Social Control](#) (Luke Smith, Feb. 2021)

### Answer the following questions:

- Discuss the significance of social control mechanisms (e.g., family, education, media and technology, self-control, etc.), as outlined in social process theory, in preventing online criminal behavior via social media applications.
- The Space Transition Theory suggests that individuals exhibit different behaviors when they transition from *physical* spaces to *cyberspace*. Explain how the ‘transition’ might make it difficult to develop effective measures of social control and prevention strategies in cyberspace?
- Considering the unique aspects of cybercrimes as distinct from traditional crimes in physical spaces, how might existing criminological theories such as Social Learning Theory, Kohlberg’s Moral Development Theory, or Gottfredson or Hirschi’s General Theory of Crime be adapted or expanded to better address the phenomena of cybercrimes?

### Key Terms/Concepts

**General Theory of Crime** – Also known as Self-Control Theory, is a prominent criminological theory developed by Michael Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi in 1990. The theory posits that the primary cause of criminal behavior is low self-control, which is formed early in childhood and remains relatively stable throughout an individual’s life.

**Social Control Theories** – A group of criminological theories that focus on the mechanisms and processes by which societies regulate and control individual behavior to prevent deviance and criminality. These theories suggest that the presence of social bonds, attachments, and conformity to societal norms play a crucial role in deterring individuals from engaging in deviant behavior.

**Social Process Theory** – Also known as Social Cognitive Theory or Social Learning Socialization Theory, is a psychological and criminological theory developed by Albert Bandura in the 1960s. The theory proposes that individuals learn new behaviors, attitudes, and values by observing and imitating others, particularly those they perceive as role models or authority figures. Social Learning Theory emphasizes the importance of



the social environment in shaping human behavior and focuses on how learned behaviors influence future actions.

**Space Transition Theory** – A theoretical framework proposed by Jaishankar in 2008 to explain the causation of cybercrimes. It argues that people behave differently when they move from one space to another, such as from physical space to cyber space.

Refer to the course learning management system (LMS); that is Blackboard (BB), for the correct due date. In addition, submit your work via BB for grading.

## Discussion Questions

- How does social process theory explain the influence of family structure and conflict on an individual's likelihood to engage in criminal behavior, and how does this compare to the impact of peer relationships and socialization outside the family?
- Considering Edwin Sutherland's theory that criminal behavior is learned through interaction with others holding pro-criminal attitudes, discuss how modern social media and online communities might affect the spread of such attitudes among youths today.
- Reflect on the role of schools and the educational system in potentially contributing to criminal behavior, as suggested by the labeling theory aspect of social process theory. How do labels like "problem youth" affect students' self-concept and behavior, and what alternatives might schools consider preventing such outcomes?
- Discuss the significance of social control mechanisms, as outlined in social process theory, in preventing criminal behavior. How can communities strengthen these mechanisms to reduce crime rates effectively?
- Analyze the claim that religious participation, rather than mere belief, acts as a more significant inhibitor of crime. What might this suggest about the nature of social influences and the effectiveness of communal activities in deterring delinquent behavior?
- Considering the dynamic nature of criminal behavior as suggested by social process theory, evaluate the potential of intervention programs targeting social learning and the reinforcement of pro-social behaviors. How might these programs be designed to effectively address and mitigate the root social causes of criminal behavior?

## Supplemental Resources

1. Cybercrimeology (April 14, 2020). S1:E12 podcast – [\*Social Learning Theory and Cybercrime: The impact of Family, Friends and Bronies\*](#) (last accessed, March 14, 2024).

### References

1. Akers, R. L., & Jennings, W. G. (2009). Social Learning Theory. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference Series. 21st Century Criminology. A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 323-331). SAGE Reference. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600048/GVRL?u=cod\\_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=395956fe](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600048/GVRL?u=cod_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=395956fe)
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# CRITICAL APPROACHES TO LAW AND CRIME

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**Module 9** examines crime from the conflict perspective as proposed within the writings of Karl Marx, who believed that conflict was inevitable in any capitalist society. The six key elements of the conflict perspective are outlined and the concept of social class, a topic central to the conflict perspective, is discussed. Also introduced are the early conflict theorists that include George Vold, who described crime as the result of political conflict between groups, Ralf Dahrendorf, who considered conflict to be a normal part of any society, and Austin Turk, who considered crime a natural consequence of intergroup conflict. The module continues with an examination of modern radical criminology, which suggests that crime causes are rooted in social conditions empowering the wealthy and politically well-organized and disenfranchising those less fortunate. William Chambliss, a modern radical thinker, emphasizes the power gap between the powerful and powerless as helping to create crime. Richard Quinney outlined six Marxist principles for an understanding of crime. He stated that crime is inevitable under capitalist conditions and that the problem of crime can only be solved by the development of a socialized society.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://cod.pressbooks.pub/criminology/?p=213#audio-213-1>*

## Learning Objectives

### **After completing this module, you should be able to:**

- explain the difference between a consensus and conflict view of society and identify the core themes of critical theories.
- recognize how conflict among different interest groups shapes the content of the law and the operation of the criminal justice system.

- interpret the evidence regarding the relationship between race, class, and criminal justice outcomes.
- describe how radical criminologists explain the law, criminal justice system, and criminal behavior.
- recognize extensions of radical theory, including peacemaking criminology and critical realism.
- describe how gender may shape both criminal justice processing and theories of crime.
- evaluate the crime-control implications of social conflict theories.

## Summary

Critical approaches to understanding law and crime are theoretical perspectives that examine the role of power, social inequality, and the impact of societal structures in shaping legal systems, criminal justice policies, and definitions of crime. These perspectives challenge traditional and mainstream views of law and crime, aiming to uncover hidden power dynamics, oppressive practices, and social injustices within the criminal justice system. Critical approaches emphasize the importance of considering broader social, political, and economic contexts in understanding crime and law enforcement.

Critical criminology seeks to understand crime as a product of social inequality and unequal distribution of resources and opportunities. It critiques the role of capitalism, class conflict, and structural factors in generating criminal behavior. This perspective argues that crime can be seen as a form of resistance or rebellion against oppressive social conditions.

Marxist criminology is an approach that builds on Marxist theories and explores how economic factors influence crime. It views crime as a response to the capitalist system, wherein some individuals may resort to criminal behavior due to economic deprivation and exploitation. Marxist criminology highlights how laws and the criminal justice system can protect the interests of the ruling class while criminalizing behavior that threatens the established order.

Feminist criminology focuses on the intersection of gender and crime. It examines how patriarchal structures contribute to the perpetuation of crime and victimization. This perspective also critiques how the criminal justice system may perpetuate gender biases and stereotypes.

Postcolonial criminology examines the impact of colonialism and imperialism on crime and the criminal justice system. It recognizes how colonial legacies and ongoing neocolonial practices can influence crime rates, the treatment of marginalized communities, and the development of punitive policies.

Peacemaking Criminology is an approach that seeks to challenge punitive models of justice and focuses on healing, reconciliation, and community-based responses to crime. Peacemaking criminology emphasizes

restorative justice practices that involve the offender, victim, and the community in finding resolutions to the harm caused by the crime.

Critical legal studies critique the formalistic and neutral approach to law, highlighting how law reflects and reinforces existing power structures. It questions the objectivity of legal reasoning and how legal norms often serve the interests of dominant groups in society.

Intersectional approaches recognize the interconnected nature of various social identities, such as race, class, gender, and sexuality, and how these intersect to shape experiences of crime and criminal justice. Intersectionality emphasizes the need to consider multiple dimensions of social inequality in understanding law and crime.

Critical approaches challenge the dominant narratives and question the status quo in understanding law and crime. They call for more inclusive, equitable, and transformative approaches to address the root causes of crime, reduce social inequality, and promote a more just and fair criminal justice system. By examining the social and political context of law and crime, critical perspectives contribute to broader conversations about social change and the pursuit of justice for marginalized and vulnerable populations.

### Key Takeaways

**Emphasis on Power and Social Inequality** – Critical approaches scrutinize the influence of societal structures, power dynamics, and inequalities in shaping legal systems and criminal justice policies.

**Critical Criminology's Focus** – This approach views crime because of social inequalities and the unequal distribution of resources and opportunities.

**Marxist Criminology** – Building on Marxist theory, this perspective examines the relationship between economic factors and crime, arguing that criminal behavior can stem from economic deprivation and exploitation within a capitalist system.

**Feminist Criminology** – This approach focuses on the intersection of gender with crime, exploring how patriarchal structures foster crime and victimization, and critiquing gender biases and stereotypes within the criminal justice system.

**Postcolonial Criminology** – This perspective examines the impacts of colonialism and imperialism on crime rates, the treatment of marginalized communities, and the formulation of punitive policies, acknowledging the influence of colonial legacies and neocolonial practices.

**Peacemaking Criminology** – Advocating for non-punitive responses to crime, peacemaking

criminology emphasizes healing, reconciliation, and community-based approaches, promoting restorative justice practices that involve offenders, victims, and communities.

**Critical Legal Studies** – This approach critiques the formalistic and purportedly neutral stance of law, highlighting how legal systems reflect and reinforce existing power structures and often serve the interests of dominant societal groups.

**Intersectional Approaches** – Recognizing the interconnectedness of social identities (e.g., race, class, gender, sexuality).

**Call for Transformative Change** – Critical approaches collectively challenge dominant narratives and the status quo, advocating for more inclusive, equitable, and transformative strategies to address the root causes of crime, reduce social inequality, and foster a just and fair criminal justice system.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Conflict Perspective**

**Consensus Perspective**

**Critical Criminology**

**Convict Criminology**

**Feminist Criminology**

**Left-Realist Criminology**

**Peacemaking Criminology**

**Pluralist Perspective**

**Post Modern Criminology**

**Radical Criminology**

Modern Application

A relevant and modern application of criminology's critical theory perspective can be seen when examining the criminal justice system itself and its interactions with marginalized communities.

Critical criminology focuses on understanding how power dynamics, inequality, and social structures contribute to crime and the administration of justice.


In today's context, this perspective can be applied to analyze issues such as:

- [Mass Incarceration](#) – Critical criminologists may examine how mass incarceration disproportionately affects marginalized communities, particularly people of color and those from low-income backgrounds. They would critique the structural factors—such as racial bias in policing and sentencing—that contribute to this disparity.
- [Policing Practices](#) – Critical criminologists might analyze police practices such as stop-and-frisk or the use of force, questioning how these tactics target certain communities and perpetuate social inequalities. They would explore the role of power dynamics and institutional racism within law enforcement agencies.
- [War on Drugs](#) – Critical criminologists often critique the War on Drugs as a policy that disproportionately targets minority communities while failing to address underlying social and economic factors contributing to drug abuse and crime.
- [Racial Profiling](#) – Examining how racial profiling operates within the criminal justice system, leading to unjust treatment of individuals based on their race or ethnicity. Critical criminologists would analyze the systemic biases that lead to profiling practices and advocate for reforms to address these issues.
- [Restorative Justice](#) – Some critical criminologists advocate for restorative justice approaches that focus on repairing harm and addressing the root causes of crime, rather than punitive measures that perpetuate cycles of incarceration and marginalization.

Overall, the critical theory perspective in criminology continues to be relevant in highlighting and challenging the structural injustices within the criminal justice system and advocating for reforms that promote equity and social justice.

## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 24: [Critical Criminology](#) by David O. Friedrichs, University of Scranton

- Print a copy or have access to this reading via a digital device for in class review and discussion.
- You can choose to listen to the article by clicking on the listen icon  located within the navigation bar associated with the article.

2. Review [U.S. Poverty Census Bureau information on poverty](#) (July, 2023)

a. From a critical theory perspective, poverty is not simply an individual failing or a natural outcome of economic processes, but rather a social and systemic issue deeply embedded in the structures of society. Critical theory seeks to understand and challenge the power dynamics, inequalities, and oppressive structures that perpetuate poverty and social injustice.

b. Critical theory provides a lens through which poverty can be understood as a product of social, economic, and political structures. It calls for transformative action to challenge and dismantle these structures, with the goal of creating a more just and equitable society where poverty is no longer a pervasive and entrenched issue.

3. Review [The Fortune Society](#) website and watch the embedded presentation (also accessible via YouTube) *Both Sides of the Bars – Words Matter: The Importance of Humanizing Language* (MNN NYC, February 1, 2017)

a. Convict criminology is an emerging perspective within the field of criminology that emphasizes the lived experiences and perspectives of individuals who have been convicted of crimes. It challenges traditional criminological theories and perspectives that often neglect or marginalize the voices of those who have been directly affected by the criminal justice system.

b. The origins of convict criminology can be traced back to the United States in the late 1990s when a group of formerly incarcerated individuals and academic scholars started to advocate for a more inclusive and humanistic approach to understanding crime and punishment. The movement aims to address the social, economic, and political factors that contribute to crime by drawing on the personal experiences and insights of those who have been incarcerated.

4. Watch [Social Class & Poverty in the US: Crash Course Sociology #24](#) (Crash Course, September 11, 2017)5. Watch [Why is there Social Stratification?: Crash Course Sociology #22](#) (Crash Course, August 14, 2017)

a. In their 1971 book *Law, Order, and Power*, Chambliss and Seidman argue that economic stratification require dominant groups to enforce norms through coercion.

b. According to the authors, life conditions affect values and norms; complex societies are comprised of groups with divergent life conditions and conflicting values; and political and economic power determines whose values are embodied in the law.

6. Watch [Restorative Practices to Resolve Conflict/Build Relationships: Katy Hutchison at TEDxWestVancouverED](#) (TEDx Talks, June 10, 2013) – also embedded below.

a. Peacemaking criminology emphasizes crime control through the adoption of a peace model based on cooperation rather than retribution.

b. The peace model of crime control focuses on effective ways for developing a shared consensus on critical issues such as crime.

c. Alternative dispute resolution programs such as mediation are characterized by cooperative efforts to resolve disputes rather than by adversarial proceedings.



- d. Dispute resolution is based on the participatory justice principle in which all parties accept a form of binding arbitration by neutral parties.
- e. Restorative justice is a modern social movement to reform the criminal justice system and stresses healing over retribution.
- f. The primary goal of restorative justice is restoration.

7. Listen to Forms Editor's Pick, [New Year, New Glass Heights: Women Now Comprise 10% Of Top U.S. Corporation CEOs](#) (January 27, 2023).

To access the PPT file, click **HERE**. Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

Read, Review, Watch and Listen to all listed materials by the due date listed within the course LMS (i.e., Blackboard) site.

Contact the professor with any course-related questions

Click **HERE** to report any needed updates, e.g., broken links.



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## Discussion Questions

1. How do critical approaches to understanding law and crime differ from traditional views, and what implications does this have for policymaking within the criminal justice system?
2. Discuss the significance of considering broader social, political, and economic contexts in the analysis of crime and law enforcement as proposed by critical criminology. How can this perspective help in addressing the root causes of criminal behavior?
3. Marxist criminology views crime as a response to the capitalist system and economic deprivation. What are the potential strengths and limitations of applying Marxist theories to understand and address crime?

4. Feminist criminology highlights the impact of patriarchal structures on crime and victimization. In what ways can integrating gender perspectives into criminology lead to a more comprehensive understanding of crime and its solutions?
5. Peacemaking criminology advocates for restorative justice practices over punitive models. Discuss the potential benefits and challenges of implementing restorative justice practices within the current criminal justice system.

## Supplemental Resources

- Still missing: Female business leaders ([CNN Business](#), March 2015)
- National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) – [Fast Facts](#) (last accessed October 2023)

## References

1. Friedrichs, D. O. (2009). Critical Criminology. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference Series. 21st Century Criminology: A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 210-218). SAGE Reference. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600035/GVRL?u=cod\\_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=dc46c40d](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600035/GVRL?u=cod_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=dc46c40d)

# CRIME OVER THE LIFE-COURSE

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**Module 10** examines the work of Glen Elder, John Laub, Robert J. Sampson, and Terri Moffitt. Their work collectively is called the life-course perspective. Life-course theory focuses on the dimensions of criminal offending and the development of criminal careers as the result of criminogenic influences affecting individuals over the entire life course. Key concepts include activation, aggravation, and desistance. Glen Elder's key principles provide a concise summary of life course theory. John Laub and Robert J. Sampson's age-graded theory of informal social control emphasizes two key turning points (marriage and job stability) that seem to be particularly important in reducing the frequency of offending in later life. They also stress the importance of social capital. Terrie Moffitt's dual taxonomic theory of criminality helps explain the observation that most antisocial children do not become adult criminals. Her two-path biosocial theory argues that neuropsychological deficits combined with poverty and family dysfunction explains why some people display rather constant patterns of behavior throughout life, while others go through limited periods with high probabilities of offending.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://cod.pressbooks.pub/criminology/?p=215#audio-215-1>*

## Learning Objectives

### After completing this module, you should be able to:

- examine the nature of process theories of crime, including the important institutions within these theories and the role of socialization.
- explain the history and major concepts within the differential association/social learning perspective.
- identify what makes control theories different from other explanations of crime.

- list the types of informal control and explain how they fit into the various control theories of criminal behavior.
- discuss the social context of labeling theory and the labeling process.
- summarize the policy implications derived from learning, control, and labeling theories of crime.

## Summary

Life-course theory, also known as the life course perspective, is a theoretical framework in sociology and developmental psychology that examines individual development and behavior across the lifespan. This theory emphasizes the importance of considering the interconnectedness of various life events, transitions, and experiences in shaping an individual's life trajectory.

Life-course theory recognizes that early life experiences and opportunities can have long-term consequences. Individuals who experience advantages early in life, such as quality education and stable family environments, tend to accumulate further advantages over time. Conversely, those who face disadvantages early on may be more susceptible to additional challenges and setbacks as they age.

Life-course theory highlights significant life events or transitions that can redirect an individual's life trajectory. These turning points may include marriage, parenthood, educational attainment, job changes, and encounters with the criminal justice system. These events can have lasting effects on an individual's development and behavior.

Life-course theorists explore the pathways that individuals take through life and how they are influenced by both individual agency and broader social contexts. The choices and decisions individuals make at various points in their lives can be influenced by their social environment, including family, peers, and community.

Life-course theory emphasizes the importance of the timing and sequencing of events in an individual's life. For example, the timing of marriage or the order of educational and career transitions can have different impacts on life outcomes.

The theory acknowledges the interconnectedness of people's lives within families, communities, and social networks. Events in one person's life can have ripple effects on the lives of others they are connected to, creating a web of linked lives.

Life-course theorists explore both continuity and change in an individual's life. Some aspects of personality and behavior may remain relatively stable over time, while other aspects may change in response to new circumstances and experiences.

Life-course theory draws on insights from various disciplines, including sociology, psychology, demography, and social work, to understand the complexities of human development and behavior.

By adopting a life-course perspective, researchers and policymakers gain a more comprehensive understanding of individual development and behavior over time, enabling them to design more effective interventions and policies that address the diverse needs and challenges people face throughout their lives.

## Key Takeaways

**Interconnectedness of Life Events** – Life-course theory underscores the importance of viewing an individual’s life as a continuum, where various events, transitions, and experiences are interconnected, significantly shaping one’s life trajectory.

**Impact of Early Life Experiences** – The theory highlights the crucial role of early life experiences and opportunities in determining future outcomes.

**Role of Significant Life Transitions** – Life-course theory identifies key transitions (such as marriage, parenthood, educational achievement, and career changes) as pivotal moments that can alter an individual’s life path, emphasizing their lasting impact on development and behavior.

**Influence of Individual Agency and Social Context** – This perspective considers the dual influences of individual choices and broader social contexts (family, peers, community) on the life paths individuals take, illustrating how decisions are shaped by both personal agency and environmental factors.

**Timing and Sequencing of Life Events** – The theory stresses the significance of the timing and sequence of life events, indicating that when and in what order these events occur can have varied effects on an individual’s life outcomes.

**Web of Linked Lives** – Life-course theory acknowledges the interconnectedness of individuals within families, communities, and social networks, suggesting that events in one person’s life can influence the lives of others, creating interconnected webs of relationships and impacts.

**Continuity and Change** – The theory explores the balance between continuity and change in an individual’s life, noting that while some aspects of personality and behavior may remain stable, others can change in response to new experiences and circumstances.

**Multidisciplinary Insights** – Life-course theory integrates insights from sociology, psychology,

demography, and social work, reflecting its comprehensive approach to understanding the complexities of human development and behavior.

**Implications for Policy and Interventions** – By adopting a life-course perspective, researchers and policymakers can gain a deeper understanding of individual development and behavior over time.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Activation**

**Age Graded Theory**

**Aggravation**

**Criminal Career**

**Desistance**

**Evolutionary Ecology**

**Farrington's Delinquent Development Theory**

**Moffitt's Dual Taxonomic Theory**

**Onset**

**Persistence**

**Thornberry's Interactional Theory**

**Turning Points**

Modern Application

## Parental Control and Cyber Victimization in Adolescents

Life-course theory underscores the interconnectedness of lives within families, communities, and broader social networks. Within a modern context life-course theory provides an instructive

position from which we can explore the influence of parents and peers on a child's behavior within and via digital devices, e.g., cell phones.

Although Farrington, Moffitt, and Thornberry's original theories did not involve technology, the importance of parental control was central to those social frameworks. A modern application of life-course theory must consider how parental control might mitigate cyber-victimization among adolescents. Parents who monitor and regulate online activities, can shield their children from harmful content and predatory behaviors. This oversight helps in early detection of cyberbullying, inappropriate interactions, and exposure to risky online communities.

Effective parental control involves not only the use of technological tools, such as content filters and usage limits, but also open communication about the dangers of the digital world. Educating adolescents about online safety, encouraging them to share their online experiences, and setting clear guidelines for internet use create a safe digital environment. However, it is essential that this control balances supervision with adolescents' need for autonomy to foster trust and responsibility. Ultimately, a proactive and balanced approach to parental control can significantly reduce the risk of cyber-victimization, promoting a healthier online experience for adolescents.

1. [The Effect of Parental Control on Cyber-Victimization in Adolescence: The Mediating Role of Impulsivity and High-Risk Behaviors](#) by David Álvarez-García\*, José Carlos Núñez, Paloma González-Castro, Celestino Rodríguez and Rebeca Cerezo (Frontiers in Psychology, 22 May 2019).

The article examines the impact of parental control on cyber-victimization among adolescents, focusing on impulsivity and high-risk internet behaviors as mediating factors. The study involved 3360 Spanish adolescents and found that parental control, particularly supervision, can reduce the likelihood of cyber-victimization by mitigating impulsivity and risky online activities. The research highlights the complexity of the relationship between parental control and cyber-victimization, suggesting that effective prevention requires a supportive family environment.

2. Louisa Clarence-Smith's article [Parents urged to buy 'dumb' phones to protect children from social media](#) (April 6, 2024) highlights key concerns and actions related to the impact of social media and smartphones on children's mental health.

According to Smith, the NEU general secretary suggests parents should have the option to buy phones without social media apps for teenagers, citing a link between social media addiction and mental health issues.

A grassroots movement, Parents for a Smartphone-free Childhood, has gained support from

thousands of parents and celebrities, advocating for delaying smartphone access for children. [Safescreens Campaign](#) calls for government action to restrict smartphone use for under-16s, emphasizing the need for regulation to protect children from social media's harmful effects.

An [NEU survey](#) reveals a significant rise in student mental health issues, with teachers observing increased anxiety and social difficulties among pupils.

## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 30: [Life Course Criminology](#) by Wesley G. Jennings, University of Louisville and Alex R. Piquero, University of Maryland
2. Review [The Attachment Biobehavioral Catch-Up \(ABC\) Program](#) as an example of an initiative dedicated to the parent-child relationship. Pay particular attention to the research that supports the ABC program. Click [here](#) to access an overview of the research that supports the ABC program (last accessed, July 2023).
3. Review the brief overview of Moffitt's two-path theory (Soz Theory, April 2022) and watch [Jacobs Research Prize 2010 Caspi + Moffitt](#) (Jacobs Foundation, October 21, 2010)
  - a. Terrie E. Moffitt has developed a two-path, or dual taxonomic, theory of criminality to explain the observation that most antisocial children do not become adult criminals.
  - b. Life course persisters (LCPs) display relatively constant patterns of misbehavior throughout life – the theory suggests this is due to neuropsychological deficits combined with poverty and family dysfunction.
  - c. Adolescence-limited offenders (ALs) go through limited periods where they exhibit high probabilities of offending – they are led into offending mainly by structural disadvantages.
4. Review and learn more about the Project on Human Development in Chicago Neighborhoods ([PHDCN+](#)) [Harvard University, last accessed, July 2023].
  - a. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has adopted the social development model as the foundation for its Comprehensive Strategy Program, which helps communities develop programs for preventing and responding to delinquency and crime and for early intervention.
  - b. The Boys and Girls Clubs of America's Targeted Outreach program diverts at-risk juveniles into activities intended to develop a sense of belonging, competence, usefulness, and self-control.
5. Watch the National Gang Center's (NGC) [Why Youth Join Gangs](#)
  - a. The National Gang Center (NGC) is a project funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ).



b. According to Thornberry's Interactional Theory, delinquent peers (including gang membership) are particularly important in providing the environment necessary for criminal behavior to develop because delinquents will seek out association with ever more delinquent groups if their delinquency continues to be rewarded, delinquency is seen as a process that unfolds over the life-course.

c. Childhood maltreatment could also be an important element of the developmental process leading to delinquency.

To access the PPT file, click [HERE](#). Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

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Contact the professor with any course-related questions

Click [HERE](#) to report any needed updates, e.g., broken links.

## Discussion Questions

1. How do Glen Elder's key principles within the life-course perspective contribute to our understanding of criminal careers, and in what ways do they intersect with or differ from the concepts of activation, aggravation, and desistance? Consider discussing specific examples to illustrate these dynamics.
2. Discuss the role of informal social controls, as outlined by John Laub and Robert J. Sampson, in the context of life-course criminology. How do turning points such as marriage and job stability influence the trajectory of criminal behavior, and what implications does this have for rehabilitation and policy-making? Include an analysis of the importance of social capital in this framework.
3. Evaluate Terrie Moffitt's dual taxonomic theory of criminality, focusing on the interaction between neuropsychological deficits and socio-economic factors like poverty and family dysfunction. How does this theory explain the divergence in criminal behavior patterns observed from childhood to adulthood? Discuss the implications of Moffitt's theory for prevention and intervention strategies targeting youth at risk of engaging in criminal activities.
4. Consider how early life experiences and opportunities, as highlighted by life-course theory, impact the accumulation of advantages or disadvantages over time and discuss the role of quality education and stable family environments in shaping an individual's future life trajectory and the potential for reversing early disadvantages.

5. Life-course theory emphasizes significant life transitions such as marriage, parenthood, and career changes as pivotal in altering an individual's life path. Reflect on how these events can serve as turning points and discuss whether the impact of these transitions is more heavily influenced by the individual's choices or by their social context. Include examples to support your argument.
6. Considering the importance of timing and sequencing of life events in life-course theory, evaluate how the timing of key life events like marriage or career transitions can influence an individual's life outcomes. Discuss the potential consequences of "off-time" transitions (events occurring earlier or later than is typical in one's social context) on an individual's social and psychological well-being.
7. Life-course theory underscores the interconnectedness of lives within families, communities, and broader social networks. Explore the concept of "linked lives" and discuss how events in one person's life can have ripple effects on others. How can this concept inform policies and interventions aimed at supporting individuals through challenging transitions or circumstances?

## Supplemental Resources

- [The Attachment Biobehavioral Catch-Up Program](#)
  - ABC is an evidence-based parenting intervention for caregivers of infants and toddlers who have experienced early adversity. The program is endorsed by the [MIECHV](#)-Home Visiting Coalition, The [California Evidence-Based Clearing](#) House for Child Welfare, and [SAMHSA](#)'s National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices. In light of the evidence supporting the effectiveness of ABC, we are disseminating the program at multiple sites across the nation and internationally.



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1. Jennings, W. G., & Piquero, A. R. (2009). Life Course Criminology. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st*

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## PART III

# SECTION III - CORRELATES OF CRIME

Section III includes five modules: (1) Age, Gender, and Crime, (2) Family and Crime, (3) Mental Illness and Crime, (4) Race/Ethnicity and Crime, and (5) Social Class and Crime. Together, these five modules provide an opportunity to isolate internal and/or external correlations (i.e., statistical relationship) that may lead to antisocial behavior. For example, socioeconomic status, unemployment, urbanization, age and gender, family factors, substance abuse, neighborhood characteristics, police presence and criminal justice policies, gang activity, etc. are all points of examination and lend to an improved crime prevention strategies designed to targeted interventions that address the underlying issues contributing to criminal behavior. Studying the correlates of crime is essential for several reasons as it provides valuable insights into the complex factors that contribute to criminal behavior and its patterns. Understanding these correlates helps in developing effective crime prevention strategies, informing public policy, and addressing the root causes of criminal activity. While correlation does not necessarily imply causation, studying these associations helps researchers understand the complex interplay of factors that contribute to crime rates and patterns.



# AGE, GENDER, AND CRIME

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**Module 11** highlights the age-crime curve, which illustrates a typical pattern where criminal activity peaks during adolescence and declines with age, a phenomenon supported by the curvilinear relationship between age and crime. The analysis extends to aging effects, emphasizing how individuals' involvement in crime evolves over their lifespan, and maturation reform, which describes the natural decrease in criminal activity as people mature. The study also considers cohort effects, noting how generational experiences influence unique patterns of criminal behavior, and period effects, which show how historical and social contexts impact deviance. Additionally, the concept of the “invisible offender” focuses on the overlooked involvement of females in crime, pressing for adjustments in public policy. Lastly, the importance of temporal ordering in research is underscored, crucial for establishing causal relationships between variables and deepening our understanding of crime's life-course.



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## Learning Objectives

### **After completing this module, you should be able to:**

- identify the age-crime curve as it relates to deviance and crime.
- describe aging effects and how criminal involvement evolves over one's life.
- explain how cohort effects impact what social scientists know about unique patterns of criminal involvement compared to other generations.
- recognize how invariance influences what we know about the life-course of deviance and crime.
- define the concept of invisible offender and the implications for public policy involving

females.

- describe the process of what social scientists call maturation reform.
- recognize how period effects influence the nature and extent of deviance and crime.
- explain the curvilinear relationship between age and crime; that is, resilient empirical regularity.
- identify how temporal ordering is an essential feature of understanding the causal relationship between variables.

## Summary

The module examines the nexus between two specific correlates of antisocial behavior and crime; that is, age and gender. The nexus between age and crime is a well-documented phenomenon in criminology. Research consistently shows that crime rates vary significantly across different age groups, and age is one of the most reliable predictors of criminal behavior. The relationship between age and crime is complex and can be understood through various criminological theories and developmental perspectives.

Overall, the nexus between age and crime reflects the dynamic nature of criminal behavior across the lifespan. While crime rates are generally highest among young people, most individuals tend to desist from criminal behavior as they age and become more integrated into society through various life transitions, such as employment, marriage, and parenthood. Understanding the relationship between age and crime is essential for developing effective crime prevention and intervention strategies that consider the unique needs and challenges faced by individuals at different stages of their lives.

The nexus between gender and crime is also a significant area of study in criminology. However, studies and results remain largely male-based. Research consistently shows that crime rates and patterns differ between males and females, and gender is one of the most consistent predictors of criminal behavior. Understanding the relationship between gender and crime is essential for addressing gender disparities in the criminal justice system and developing targeted interventions. In addition, a developed understanding of differences in victimization, substance abuse, and mental health will improve the ability of the criminal justice system to respond with more than a one size fits all form of justice.

Overall, the nexus between gender and crime highlights the complex interplay of biological, social, and cultural factors that contribute to gender differences in criminal behavior. Addressing gender disparities in crime requires a comprehensive approach that considers the unique experiences and challenges faced by men and women in different social contexts. Additionally, developing gender-responsive policies and interventions is essential for promoting gender equity and reducing crime rates among both men and women.



## Key Takeaways

**Age as a Predictor of Crime** – The nexus between age and crime is a well-documented phenomenon, with crime rates varying significantly across different age groups.

**Dynamic Nature of Criminal Behavior Across the Lifespan** – Crime rates are typically highest among younger individuals, but most people tend to desist from criminal activities as they age.

**Gender Differences in Criminal Behavior** – Research indicates that crime rates and patterns differ markedly between males and females, making gender another consistent predictor of criminal behavior.

**Impact of Male-Dominant Research** – The predominance of male-based studies in criminology has affected the understanding and treatment of female criminal behavior.

**Need for Gender-Responsive Policies** – There is a complex interplay of biological, social, and cultural factors that contribute to gender differences in criminal behavior.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Age-Crime Curve**

**Aging Effects**

**Cohort Effects**

**Feminist Criminology**

**Intersectionality**

**Invariance**

**Invisible Offender**

**Male-Based Criminology**

**Maturation Reform**

**Pathways Perspective**

**Patriarchy**

**Period Effects**

**Resilient Empirical Regularity**

**Temporal Ordering**

## Modern Application

## The Gendered Nature of Cybercrime

According to various studies, (e.g., UNODC, 2020; Mayra Rosario Fuentes, 2024), the cybercriminal world, much like many other fields, exhibits a significant gender gap, with male participants overwhelmingly outnumbering females. Current research and anecdotal evidence suggest that men dominate in numbers and visibility within both legal tech industries and illegal cyber activities. Traditionally, studies examining gender differences in crime have not included cybercrime. However, a modern criminology must consider how gender profiles in cybercrime reflect broader societal norms and stereotypes which often portray technology and cyber activities as predominantly male domains.

The disparity between men and women is not just a matter of participation but also extends to the perception of capabilities and roles. Women involved in cybercrime often face stereotypes that may either underestimate their technical abilities or typecast them into specific roles such as money mules or social engineering experts. Such perceptions can influence how cybercriminals are pursued by law enforcement and how their threats are assessed by security professionals.

Despite the skewed gender ratio, there are instances of prominent female cybercriminals who have taken on significant roles within this underworld, challenging the typical gender stereotypes. Increasing awareness and changing perceptions could potentially alter the dynamics within cybercriminal communities and law enforcement strategies. Understanding and addressing the gender gap in cybercrime is crucial for developing more effective and equitable cybersecurity policies and practices.

Here are few sources about gender and cybercrime:

- Trend Micro (2024), [THE GENDER-EQUAL CYBERCRIMINAL UNDERGROUND](#) (Mayra Rosario Fuentes)
- [Gender-Based Interpersonal Crime](#) (UNODC, 2020)
- NBC News, [Study Reveals the Age, Nationality, and Motivation of Hackers](#) (Alyssa Newcomb, Sep. 2016)

## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 4: [Age and Crime](#) by Leana A. Bouffard, Washington State University
2. Read Chapter 10: [Gender and Crime](#) by Janet T. Davidson, Chaminade University of Honolulu and Meda Chesney-Lind, University of Hawaii
3. Review [The Age Crime Curve Perspectives in Crime: Is there a relationship between age and crime?](#) (Pinkerton, last accessed, July 2023)
4. Review The Sentencing Project's Fact Sheet: [Incarcerated Women and Girls](#) (Monazzam, N. and Budd, K. M., April 3, 2023) [last accessed July 2023]
5. Review the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Statistical Briefing Book [Juvenile Population Characteristics](#) page (OJJDP, last accessed, July 2023)
6. Review the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Statistical Briefing Book [Law Enforcement & Juvenile Crime](#) page (OJJDP, last accessed July, 20223)
  - a. Review all data within the following categories: (1) Juvenile Arrests, (2) Juvenile Arrest Rate Trends, (3) Customizable Arrest Tables, and (4) Age-Specific Arrest Rate Trends.
7. Watch [Overview of the Youth and the Juvenile Justice System: 2022 National Report](#) (OJJDP, 2022)
8. Listen to a [Women & Crime](#) podcast of your choice (last accessed, July 2023).
  - a. The podcast series provides an opportunity to learn details about various female offenders.

To access the PPT file, click [HERE](#). Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

Read, Review, Watch and Listen to all listed materials by the due date listed within the course LMS (i.e., Blackboard) site.

Contact the professor with any course-related questions

Click [HERE](#) to report any needed updates, e.g., broken links.

## ACTIVITY – Research and the Gendered Nature of Cybercrime

Students should review the course syllabus to determine the assignment of this activity.

This is a copy of the module's activity that students find within Blackboard. For that reason, refer to the Activities page to submit your work for review.



### Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to provoke thought and discussion on the complexities of gender and crime within the context of a modern era. Focus is placed on the matter of cyber-crime and significant gender-gap, with male participants and perpetrators overwhelmingly outnumbering females.

## Instructions

1. Review the Module 11 [Modern Application](#) via Pressbooks.
2. Read Mayra Rosario Fuentes' [THE GENDER-EQUAL CYBERCRIMINAL UNDERGROUND](#) (Trend Micro).
3. Read Barracuda's [Cybercrime and gender equality: Women comprise a surprisingly large share of cybercriminals](#) (Phil Muncaster, Mar. 2023).

## Answer the following questions:

- In what ways does gender bias in criminal investigations potentially affect the accuracy and outcome of cybercrime cases?
- How has the historical lack of focus on female criminality impacted the treatment and understanding of female offenders in the criminal justice system?
- How do factors like race and class intersect with gender to affect women's experiences of crime and victimization?

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Feminist Criminology** – A field of study that challenges traditional male-based criminology, focusing on female offenders and questioning the applicability of male-based theories to explain female criminality.

**Intersectionality** – A concept within third-wave feminism that examines how overlapping social identities, including gender, race, and class, affect individuals' experiences and opportunities.

**Pathways Perspective** – A theoretical framework that examines the unique life experiences and factors that lead women to commit crimes, emphasizing the role of gender-related risk factors.

**Patriarchy** – A social system characterized by male dominance and privilege, which feminist criminologists argue shapes opportunities and social participation in ways that disadvantage women.

## Discussion Questions

1. How do criminological theories explain the decline in criminal behavior as individuals age? What specific life transitions are most influential in reducing crime among older age groups?
2. Considering that age is one of the most reliable predictors of criminal behavior, how can policymakers utilize this information to develop age-specific crime prevention strategies?
3. How do crime rates and patterns differ between males and females, and what implications does this have for the criminal justice system in terms of equitable treatment and intervention?
4. In what ways has the focus on male-based studies in criminology impacted the understanding and treatment of female offenders? What steps can be taken to balance this research bias?
5. Discuss the roles of biological, social, and cultural factors in shaping the criminal behavior of men and women. How can understanding these factors lead to more effective crime prevention?
6. What are some examples of gender-responsive policies that could address the disparities in crime rates between men and women? How can these policies promote gender equity within the criminal justice system?

## Supplemental Resources

- ABC News', [Former female inmates speak about widespread sexual abuse by prison staff](#) (Quinn Owen, Dec. 2022) [last accessed, October 2023]
- Violence Against Women (VAW) [Women's Experience of Abuse as a Risk Factor for Incarceration: A Research Update](#) (Sue Osthoff, July 2015).
- [The Age-Crime Curve Perspectives in Crime: Is there a relationship between age and crime?](#) (Pinkerton, 2023)
- ASU Center for Problem-Oriented Policing [Juvenile Runaways: The Problem of Juvenile Runaways](#) (Guide No. 37, 2006)

## References

1. Bouffard, L. A. (2009). Age and Crime. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference Series. 21st Century Criminology: A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 28-35). SAGE

Reference. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600014/GVRL?u=cod\\_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=bf05c57a](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600014/GVRL?u=cod_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=bf05c57a)

2. Davidson, J. T., & Chesney-Lind, M. (2009). Gender and Crime. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference Series. 21st Century Criminology. A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 76-84). SAGE Reference. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600020/GVRL?u=cod\\_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=0e29dfc9](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600020/GVRL?u=cod_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=0e29dfc9)

# FAMILIES AND CRIME

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**Module 12** provides an opportunity to examine the influence of families on antisocial behavior and crime. Research and theory from various disciplines, e.g., criminology, sociology, and psychology, is used to strengthen the students understanding of the link between parenting and delinquency. This chapter is concerned with the relationship among the family and child, adolescent, and adult antisocial behavior. In addition, attention is given to a review of the literature associated with the family structure and delinquency. Finally, the module considers the impact of poverty and neighborhood conditions on adolescent delinquency.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://cod.pressbooks.pub/criminology/?p=220#audio-220-1>*

## Learning Objectives

### **After completing this module, you should be able to:**

- identify attributes of an at-risk child
- discuss the relationship among family and child, adolescent, and adult antisocial behavior.
- describe the connection between parental behavior and delinquency.
- define the two dimensions of parenting; that is, responsiveness and demandingness.
- explain how corporal punishment can increase the likelihood of maladaptive behavior.
- discuss the connection between family structure as an at-risk factor for child behavior.

## Summary

The relationship between family and crime is a complex and multifaceted issue that has been widely studied



in various fields, including criminology, sociology, and psychology. While it's essential to recognize that not all individuals from troubled or dysfunctional families become involved in criminal activities, research suggests that family dynamics and upbringing can play a significant role in shaping an individual's propensity for criminal behavior.

Research indicates that children raised in stable, two-parent households tend to have lower involvement in criminal activities compared to those raised in single-parent or unstable family structures. A stable family environment with supportive and involved parents can provide emotional security, positive role models, and a sense of belonging, reducing the likelihood of criminal behavior.

Parents have a crucial role in shaping their children's values, attitudes, and behaviors. If parents' model pro-social behavior, communicate clearly, and set appropriate boundaries, children are more likely to develop prosocial behavior and avoid engaging in criminal activities. Conversely, neglectful, abusive, or criminal parents may increase the risk of their children adopting similar behaviors.

Adequate parental supervision and monitoring of children's activities are essential for reducing the chances of involvement in criminal behavior. Lack of supervision can lead to increased exposure to risky situations and criminal peers, increasing the likelihood of criminal engagement.

Different parenting styles can have varying impacts on a child's propensity for criminal behavior. Authoritative parenting, characterized by warmth, support, and consistent discipline, tends to be associated with lower levels of delinquency. On the other hand, authoritarian, permissive, or neglectful parenting may increase the risk of criminal involvement.

Siblings can also influence each other's behavior, including involvement in criminal activities. If older siblings engage in criminal behavior or associate with delinquent peers, younger siblings might be more likely to follow suit.

Family socioeconomic status can influence crime indirectly by affecting access to resources, educational opportunities, and neighborhood environments. Low-income families may face more challenges in providing a supportive and nurturing environment for their children, potentially increasing the risk of criminal involvement.

Some studies suggest that criminal behavior can be passed down through generations due to a combination of genetic, environmental, and learned factors. Children growing up in families with a history of criminality may be exposed to deviant values and attitudes from an early age.

It's crucial to recognize that the relationship between family and crime is not deterministic, and many other factors, such as peer influence, community characteristics, and individual traits, also contribute to criminal behavior. Nonetheless, addressing family-related risk factors and promoting positive family dynamics can significantly contribute to reducing the likelihood of criminal involvement among individuals. Early intervention and support for at-risk families may also be crucial in breaking the cycle of crime across generations.

## Key Takeaways

**The interconnection** between family dynamics and crime is intricate, drawing insights from criminology, sociology, and psychology.

**Children from** stable, two-parent households are generally less likely to be involved in crime compared to those from single-parent or unstable environments.

**The role** of parents is pivotal in shaping a child's values and behaviors. Prosocial behavior modeled by parents, clear communication, and set boundaries can significantly decrease a child's propensity for crime.

**Adequate** monitoring and supervision by parents are crucial for minimizing a child's involvement in criminal activities. Insufficient supervision can expose children to risky situations and delinquent peers.

**Different parenting** styles affect a child's likelihood of delinquency. Authoritative parenting, which includes warmth, support, and consistent discipline, is linked to lower delinquency rates.

**The behavior of siblings**, especially older ones involved in crime or with delinquent peers, can influence younger siblings to engage in similar behaviors.

**The socioeconomic status** of a family can indirectly impact crime rates by influencing access to resources, educational opportunities, and the quality of neighborhood environments.

**While family** is a significant factor, other influences like peers, community, and individual traits also play crucial roles in criminal behavior.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**At-Risk**

**Authoritarian Parents**

**Authoritative**

**Child Maltreatment**

**Coercion model of antisocial behavior**

**Common Couple Violence**

**Corporal Punishment**

**Demandingness**  
**Intimate Partner Violence**  
**Neglectful/Rejecting Parents**  
**Permissive Parents**  
**Responsiveness**  
**Social Deviance**  
**Spouse Abuse or Battering**

Modern Application

## ***“Disconnected: Youth, New Media, and the Ethics Gap”*** **by Carrie James**

A book that explores the complex relationship between young people, digital media, and ethical decision-making. Published in 2014, James, a researcher at Harvard University’s Project Zero, delves into the ways in which digital technologies shape the moral and ethical landscapes of young users.

The book is based on extensive research conducted with teenagers, ages 12 to 19, from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds in the United States. Through interviews, surveys, and observations, James investigates how young people navigate the ethical challenges presented by digital media platforms, including social networking sites, online gaming, and digital communication tools.

James examines the ethical dilemmas that arise in online environments, such as cyberbullying, privacy concerns, digital plagiarism, and online identity construction. She explores how young people perceive and negotiate these challenges within their peer groups and broader social contexts.

The Ethics Gap: The concept of the “ethics gap” refers to the disparity between young people’s ethical values and their behaviors in digital spaces. James argues that while many adolescents possess a strong sense of right and wrong offline, they may struggle to apply these ethical principles consistently online due to the unique affordances and norms of digital environments.

The book emphasizes the importance of digital literacy and citizenship education in preparing young people to navigate the ethical complexities of the digital age. James advocates for a holistic

approach that goes beyond technical skills to foster critical thinking, empathy, and responsible decision-making in online interactions.

Parental and Educational Roles: “Disconnected” also addresses the roles of parents, educators, and policymakers in supporting young people’s ethical development in digital spaces. James highlights the need for adults to engage in open dialogue with youth about digital ethics, provide guidance on ethical decision-making, and advocate for policies that promote online safety and responsibility.

Overall, “Disconnected” offers a nuanced examination of the ethical challenges and opportunities presented by digital media for today’s youth. It encourages readers to reflect on the ways in which technology shapes moral reasoning and calls for collective action to cultivate a more ethical digital culture.



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## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 9: *Families and Crime* by Leslie Gordon Simons, University of Georgia
2. Review and Watch *Parents Should Not Be Spanking Their Kids, and Here’s Why* (Parents by Nicole Harris, November 2022).
  - a. For an overview of the related discussion and related literature, refer to pp. 70-71 of Chapter 9.
  - b. Corporal punishment refers to the use of physical force, such as spanking or hitting, to discipline or correct a child’s behavior.
  - c. Many child development experts, pediatric associations, and human rights organizations strongly advise against using corporal punishment. Research has shown that it can have negative effects on a child’s emotional and psychological well-being, leading to increased aggression, antisocial behavior, and mental health problems. It may also damage the parent-child relationship and erode trust between the child and their parents.
  - d. Instead, experts recommend positive discipline methods that focus on teaching and guiding children through age-appropriate consequences, setting clear boundaries, using effective communication, and providing positive reinforcement for good behavior. These methods are believed

to be more effective in promoting long-term behavioral and emotional development while fostering a healthier parent-child relationship.

e. It is important for parents to understand the potential consequences of using corporal punishment and consider alternative discipline strategies that promote a supportive and nurturing environment for their children.

3. Review [\*The Statistics Don't Lie: Fathers Matter\*](#) (National Fatherhood Initiative®, last accessed, July 2023).
  - a. For an overview of the related discussion and related literature, refer to pp. 71-72 of Chapter 9.
4. Review [\*The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey \(NISVS\)\*](#) (CDC, last accessed, July 2023).
  - a. For an overview of the related discussion and related literature, refer to pp. 73-74 of Chapter 9.
5. Watch [\*The Making of a Juvenile Delinquent | Byron Williams | TEDxDanielHandHS\*](#) (TEXx Talks, May 3, 2023) [also embedded below]
  - a. Throughout the program, think about possible links between parenting and delinquency.
  - b. Identify ways that Mr. Williams' commitment to fatherhood and family guard against antisocial behavior.
6. Listen to a *Successful Parenting* podcast of your choice: (<https://podcasters.spotify.com/pod/show/successful-parenting>)
  - a. Sociologists, psychologists, and criminologists have produced a voluminous amount research examining the relationship between parental behavior and delinquency.



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## Discussion Questions

1. Considering that children from stable, two-parent households tend to have lower involvement in crime, how might policymakers and community leaders create programs or initiatives that support and reinforce family stability?
2. How do different parenting styles, specifically authoritative versus authoritarian, impact a child's likelihood of engaging in criminal behavior?
3. What interventions can be proposed to educate parents on effective parenting techniques that minimize the risk of delinquency?
4. Discuss the implications of the finding that criminal behavior can be passed down through generations.
5. Evaluate the role of sibling relationships in criminal behavior. Should intervention programs focus more on sibling dynamics and their influence on behavior, especially in families where one or more children are already involved in crime?
6. How does socioeconomic status indirectly influence a child's propensity for criminal behavior?

## Supplemental Resources

- American Academy of Pediatrics [\*AAP policy opposes corporal punishment, draws on recent evidence\*](#)
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP): [\*Juvenile Population Characteristics\*](#)
- MST Services [\*Poverty Impacts Children in a Multitude of Ways\*](#) (Sep. 2018) [last accessed November 2023]

## References

1. Simons, L. G. (2009). Families and Crime. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference*

*Series. 21st Century Criminology: A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 67-75). SAGE Reference. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600019/GVRL?u=cod\\_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=38f46ed0](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600019/GVRL?u=cod_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=38f46ed0)

# MENTAL ILLNESS AND CRIME

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**Module 13** examines the relationship between mental illness and crime. A review of studies involving the prevalence of mental illness within the criminal justice system is provided. In addition, consideration of the impact of defining those who exhibit deviance and or law violating behavior as mentally ill. The module also reviews the public policy and police practice of dealing with the mentally ill.



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## Learning Objectives

### **After completing this module, you should be able to:**

- identify organizations that are dedicated to mental health.
- explain how criminal justice policies and practices impact the wellbeing of the mentally ill offender.
- describe economic cost of criminalizing mental illness.
- illustrate the social cost of criminalizing mental illness.
- recognize the lack of resources available to criminal justice practitioners throughout the system (i.e., law enforcement, courts, and corrections) who interact with the mentally ill.
- identify federal legislation designed to promote public safety and community health.
- describe the susceptibility of mentally ill persons in the criminal justice system to crime victimization.



## Summary

The relationship between mental illness and crime is a complex and multifaceted issue that has been widely studied and debated. It is essential to recognize that most individuals with mental health conditions are not involved in criminal activities, and people with mental illnesses are more likely to be victims of crime than perpetrators. However, some research suggests that there is a correlation between certain mental illnesses and an increased risk of involvement in criminal behavior.

Studies indicate that a significant proportion of individuals involved in the criminal justice system have some form of mental illness. These conditions can include schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, and substance use disorders.

There is a substantial overlap between mental illness and substance abuse. Substance abuse can exacerbate symptoms of mental illness and lead to impulsive or aggressive behavior, which may contribute to criminal activity.

Many individuals with mental illness, especially severe mental illnesses, end up homeless due to a lack of adequate support systems. Homelessness can expose them to various risks, including engaging in criminal behaviors to meet basic survival needs.

Some individuals with mental illness may not receive proper treatment or medication, which can contribute to their involvement in criminal activities. Untreated symptoms may impair judgment and increase the risk of impulsive actions.

Several risk factors associated with mental illness, such as impulsivity, poor coping mechanisms, and difficulty in social interactions, may also contribute to criminal behavior.

The correlation between mental illness and crime can depend on the specific mental health condition, individual circumstances, and socio-economic factors. Not all mental illnesses are equally linked to criminal behavior.

Stigmatization and discrimination against people with mental illness may contribute to their marginalization and isolation, making it harder for them to access resources and support, thus increasing the likelihood of involvement in criminal behavior.

Some jurisdictions have implemented diversion programs that focus on treatment rather than punishment for individuals with mental illness who commit minor offenses. These programs aim to address the underlying mental health issues and reduce the risk of reoffending.

The management of mentally ill inmates in jails and the importance of addressing their specific needs. It highlights the eight most important issues in managing mentally ill inmates, such as reception, housing, programming and services, medical services, discipline, physical plant, linkage, and staff training. It also mentions the formation of a subcommittee by the Ohio Supreme Court Advisory Committee on the Mentally Ill in the Courts to address jail standards for the mentally ill. Additionally, the document discusses the Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program, which aims to effectively deal with mentally ill offenders through collaboration and specialized training for law enforcement officers.

It is important to avoid generalizing about people with mental illnesses and to treat each individual case with sensitivity and understanding. Addressing the correlation between mental illness and crime requires a multi-faceted approach that involves improving access to mental health care, reducing stigmatization, providing adequate housing and support systems, and implementing diversion programs when appropriate. Additionally, a strong focus on early intervention and prevention can help reduce the likelihood of criminal behavior among those with mental health conditions.

### Key Takeaways

- A significant proportion of individuals within the criminal justice system are reported to have mental health conditions, including schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, major depression, and substance use disorders.
- Although there is some correlation between mental illness and criminal behavior, it is crucial to recognize that individuals with mental health conditions are more often victims rather than perpetrators of crime.
- There is a substantial overlap between mental illness and substance abuse, with substance abuse potentially exacerbating mental health symptoms and contributing to criminal behavior through impulsive or aggressive actions.
- Many individuals with severe mental illnesses become homeless due to inadequate support systems, which may lead them to engage in criminal activities to survive.
- Lack of appropriate treatment or medication for individuals with mental illness can lead to impaired judgment and increase the risk of impulsive behavior, contributing to their involvement in criminal activities.
- Some jurisdictions have implemented diversion programs aimed at treating rather than punishing individuals with mental health issues who commit minor offenses, thus addressing underlying health issues and potentially reducing reoffending rates.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Casey v. Lewis (1990)**

**Community Supervision**

**Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)**

**Diversion Program****Dual Diagnosis****Gaol Act of 1774****"hands-off doctrine"****Mental Health Courts****Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction Act of 2003****National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)****Second Chance Act*****Standards for the Mentally Ill in Jails*****Wyatt v. Stickney (1972)**

## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 13: [Mental Illness and Crime](#) by Scott Blough, Tiffin University
2. Read [How Nellie Bly went undercover to expose abuse of the mentally ill](#) (PBS News Hour, May 5, 2018)
2. Read RAND Corporation's, [Is Mental Illness a Risk Factor for Gun Violence?](#) (Rajeev Ramchand, Lynsay Ayer, April 2021)
3. Review the National Alliance on Mental Illness ([NAMI](#)) website
  - a. NAMI is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness.
  - b. NAMI formed an advocacy center called the Law and Criminal Justice Action Center.
4. Review the Prison Policy Initiative's [Mental Health Policies and practices surrounding mental health](#) (last accessed July 2023)
5. Watch [How Memphis has changed the way police respond to mental health crises](#): (PBS News Weekend, November 7, 2015) [last accessed July 2023]
6. Watch Rethink Criminal Justice's [Improving Mental Health in Jails and Prisons](#) (Kodrich, A., December 2020) [also embedded below – last accessed July 2023]
7. Watch/Listen to Wendy Lindley's [The high price of criminalizing mental illness](#) (TEDxOrangeCoast, October 16, 2013) [also embedded below – last accessed July 2023]
8. Listen to [Mentally Ill and Incarcerated America's 19th Century Response to Treatment](#) (News Beat A Social Justice Podcast, July 2023) [last accessed July 2023]





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Contact the professor with any course-related questions

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## Discussion Questions

1. Considering the research suggesting a correlation between certain mental illnesses and criminal behavior, what specific mental health conditions are most frequently associated with increased criminal activity, and why?
2. How does the overlap between mental illness and substance abuse complicate the treatment and management of individuals in the criminal justice system, and what strategies can be implemented to address both issues simultaneously?
3. Discuss how homelessness among individuals with severe mental illnesses contributes to their involvement in criminal activities. What are the key interventions that could reduce this risk?
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of diversion programs that focus on treatment rather than punishment for individuals with mental illness who commit minor offenses. What are the key components of successful programs, and how can they be improved?

5. How does stigmatization of mental illness affect the ability of individuals to access necessary resources and support, potentially leading to criminal behavior?

## Supplemental Resources

- [Responding to Individuals Experiencing Mental Health Crises: Police-Involved Programs](#)
- Rethinking interactions between police and the mentally ill – embedded below:



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- [Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law](http://https://www.bazelon.org/) (http://https://www.bazelon.org/, last accessed May 2024).
- National Alliance to End Homelessness, [State of Homelessness: 2023 Edition](#)
- CIT Center – [Memphis Model](#)
- Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) – [Mental Health Courts Program – Overview](#)
- PBS: [Any Given Day | Chicago's Mental Health Court](#)
- [Estelle v. Gamble](#), 429 U.S. 97 (1976)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration ([SAMHSA](#))



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## References

1. Blough, S. (2009). Mental Illness and Crime. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference Series. 21st Century Criminology. A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 100-109). SAGE

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# RACE/ETHNICITY AND CRIME

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**Module 14** considers how the meaning of race impacts criminological theory and criminal justice practice. A brief review of the history of race is used to contextualize how modern criminological theory, e.g., sociobiology, was influenced and contributed to forms of institutional racism. In addition, the module provides a cursory historical review of race in the areas of the American legal system and politics. Moreover, the module includes a review of pre to post Civil War eras, which provided the foundation for several criminal cases brought against private individuals for discrimination. The module concludes with the timeframe of 1960 to the present and includes an essential discussion of the death penalty as an example of racially influenced punishment.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://cod.pressbooks.pub/criminology/?p=226#audio-226-1>*

## Learning Objectives

### **After completing this module, you should be able to:**

- discuss the history of race as a source of conflict between one human group against another.
- explain how the intersection of race and crime complicate social science inquiry.
- illustrate how race has tainted legal proceedings and enforcement of the criminal law.
- describe how Jim Crow laws were enacted and used to enforce segregation between the white and minority populations.
- discuss the disproportionate involvement of minorities with street crime.
- identify seminal and modern sociobiological theories of crime causation.
- summarize the Human Genome Project (HGP).
- discuss how race is related to the disproportionate number of African Americans who are executed at a rate much greater than whites in the American Criminal Justice System.

## Summary

Race/ethnicity and crime remain sensitive and contentious topics that have been subject to extensive research, debate, and public discourse. It is important to approach this discussion with an understanding that crime is a complex issue influenced by multiple factors, and attributing criminal behavior solely to race or ethnicity would be an oversimplification.

Numerous studies have consistently shown that certain racial and ethnic groups, particularly Black and Hispanic individuals, are overrepresented in various stages of the criminal justice system, including arrests, convictions, and incarcerations. These disparities have led to concerns about racial profiling, discrimination, and unequal treatment within the justice system.

Crime rates are closely related to socioeconomic factors, and communities experiencing poverty and limited access to education and job opportunities tend to have higher crime rates. Racial and ethnic minorities are more likely to face economic challenges due to historical and systemic inequalities, which may contribute to higher crime rates in those communities.

There have been well-documented cases of racial bias and discriminatory policing practices, leading to increased scrutiny of law enforcement's treatment of racial and ethnic minorities. Instances of racial profiling and excessive use of force have further strained trust between minority communities and law enforcement agencies.

The history of institutional and structural racism in societies has perpetuated inequalities in education, housing, employment, and economic opportunities for racial and ethnic minorities. These inequalities can contribute to crime by limiting opportunities for advancement and fostering an environment of hopelessness and desperation in some communities.

Media portrayals of crime can perpetuate negative stereotypes about racial and ethnic minorities, leading to biases and prejudice among the public and law enforcement. This can result in biased perceptions of crime and criminality based on race or ethnicity.

It is important to consider intersectionality when discussing race/ethnicity and crime. People who belong to multiple marginalized groups, such as Black women or LGBTQ+ individuals of color, may experience unique challenges that can impact their interactions with the criminal justice system.

The relationship between race/ethnicity and crime is not unique to any specific country. Different societies have their historical and cultural contexts that influence crime rates and patterns, and these factors should also be considered in any analysis.

Addressing race/ethnicity and crime requires a multifaceted and comprehensive approach. This includes addressing systemic racism, promoting equal opportunities and resources, reforming policing practices, investing in education and social services, and supporting community-based interventions. It is essential to foster understanding, empathy, and open dialogue to create a fair and just society that respects the dignity and rights of all individuals, regardless of their race or ethnicity.



## Key Takeaways

- Studies have found that certain racial and ethnic groups, particularly Black and Hispanic individuals, are disproportionately represented in various stages of the criminal justice system, such as arrests, convictions, and incarcerations.
- Crime rates are closely associated with socioeconomic conditions. Communities that experience poverty and have limited access to education and job opportunities tend to exhibit higher crime rates.
- Racial and ethnic minorities often face greater economic challenges due to historical and systemic inequalities, which may contribute to higher crime rates in these communities.
- There have been documented instances of racial bias and discriminatory policing practices, including racial profiling and excessive use of force.
- Historical institutional and structural racism has perpetuated inequalities in education, housing, employment, and economic opportunities for racial and ethnic minorities.
- Media portrayals of crime often perpetuate negative stereotypes about racial and ethnic minorities, leading to biases and prejudice among the public and within law enforcement.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Human Genome Project (HGP)**

**Institutional Racism**

**Jim Crow Laws**

**National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)**

**Race**

**Racial Profiling**

**Segregation**

**Scottsboro Boys**

**Sociobiological Theories**

**Subculture-of-Violence**

## Modern Application

Douglas Heaven (July 2020) argues that, [Predictive policing algorithms are racist. They need to be dismantled](#) (MIT Technology Review).

- How big data might contribute to effective police work and increase public safety?
- How a predictive algorithm is potentially skewed by arrest rates?
  - According to US Department of Justice figures, you are more than twice as likely to be arrested if you are Black than if you are white.
- According to Dorothy Roberts who studies law and social rights at the University of Pennsylvania, “Racism has always been about predicting, about making certain racial groups seem as if they are predisposed to do bad things and therefore justify controlling them,” she said.

## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 17: [Race/Ethnicity and Crime](#) by Matthew Pate, State University of New York at Albany & William C. Plouffe Jr., Kutztown University
2. Review the National Human Genome Research Institute’s [Fact Sheet: Human Genome Project](#) (NIH, 2023).
  - a. After the HGP was completed, research began to focus on finding individual variants from the reference human genome. HGP-related information may have significant implications for crime-control policy.
  - b. The human genome refers to a complete copy of the entire set of human gene instructions.
  - c. Genes are made of DNA and carry coded instructions for making everything the body needs.
  - d. The focus has now turned to finding individual differences or variants from the reference human genome that was developed by the HGP.
  - e. Genetic knowledge can have significant implications for criminal justice.

- f. Many of the questions raised about the role of genetics in behavior may be answered by the results of research begun by the HGP.
- g. HGP-related information is expected to support the development of public policy options related to crime prevention and offender treatment.
3. Review the Death Penalty Information Center's (DPIC) Facts about the Death Penalty [Fact Sheet](#)
- According to the [DPIC](#), the death penalty has been imposed disproportionately on racial minorities throughout most of U.S. history.
  - Capital punishment advocates are more concerned with whether the death penalty is fairly imposed than whether there are ethnic differences in the rates of imposition.
  - They say that the focus should be on sentencing those who commit capital crimes to death, regardless of any social characteristic (race, ethnicity, gender, etc.).
  - The Washington-based Constitution Project has recommended that all jurisdictions imposing the death penalty should create mechanisms to help ensure it is not imposed in a racially discriminatory manner.
4. Review [Scottsboro Boys](#) (History, August 20, 2022) [last accessed August 2023]
- The Scottsboro Boys were a group of nine African American teenagers who were falsely accused of raping two white women on a freight train in Alabama in 1931. The case gained national and international attention due to its blatant injustice and racial prejudice, becoming a symbol of the deeply ingrained racism and flawed legal system of the time.
5. Watch [Racial Profiling 2.0](#) (CBS News, February 20, 2020) [last accessed August 2023]
6. Listen to [Why the crack cocaine epidemic hit Black communities 'first and worst'](#)
7. Listen to NPR's Author Interviews, [Why the crack cocaine epidemic hit Black communities 'first and worst'](#) (Mosley, T. July 13, 2023) [last accessed August 2023]

To access the PPT file, click [HERE](#). Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

Read, Review, Watch and Listen to all listed materials by the due date listed within the course LMS (i.e., Blackboard) site.

Contact the professor with any course-related questions

Click [HERE](#) to report any needed updates, e.g., broken links.

## Discussion Questions

1. How do socioeconomic conditions influence crime rates in racially and ethnically diverse communities, and what specific interventions can be implemented to address these root causes?
2. What evidence supports the claim that racial and ethnic minorities are overrepresented in the criminal justice system, and what are the potential solutions to address these disparities?
3. In what ways have documented cases of racial bias and discriminatory policing practices affected the trust between law enforcement and minority communities, and what steps can be taken to rebuild this trust?
4. How do historical institutional and structural racism contribute to higher crime rates among racial and ethnic minorities, and what long-term strategies are necessary to break this cycle?
5. How do media portrayals of crime shape public perceptions of racial and ethnic groups, and what can be done to ensure more balanced and accurate media representations?

## Supplemental Resources

- U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics (January 2018), [\*Race and Ethnicity of Violent Crime: Offenders and Arrestees, 2018\*](#) (Allen J. Beck, Ph.D., BJS Statistician)
- [\*Prevalence rate of violent crime in the United States from 2014 to 2022, by race/ethnicity\*](#) (Statista, Sep. 2023) [last accessed Nov. 2023]
- [\*2019 Crime In the United States: Arrests by Race and Ethnicity\*](#) (FBI, 2019) [last accessed, Nov. 2023]

# SOCIAL CLASS AND CRIME

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**Module 15** examines the long-standing debate in criminology regarding the relationship between social class and crime. It also investigates the potentially incorrect causal relationship between lower social classes and criminality, which has profoundly impacted criminal justice policy and practice. Particular attention is given to the examination of social class as a construct that attempts to differentiate social groups according to their access to economic, social, political, cultural, or lifestyle resources.



*One or more interactive elements has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view them online here: <https://cod.pressbooks.pub/criminology/?p=228#audio-228-1>*

## Learning Objectives

### **After completing this module, you should be able to:**

- discuss the relationship between social class and crime.
- recognize those most notable aspects of the relationship between social class and crime; that is, how social class shapes the definition of crime, how social class influences patterns of victimization and wrongful behavior, and how the commonly held perception that crime is predominantly a lower-class problem.
- identify social class and why it is important.
- discuss the social class-crime link.
- explain the relation between social class and criminality.
- identify factors that establish the perception of crime as a lower-class phenomenon.
- illustrate how social class and criminal victimization are related.
- discuss the nexus between social class, crime, and policy.
- analyze how crimes of the financial and political elite potentially cause more harm than those who commit various forms of street crime.

## Summary

The relationship between social class and crime has been a topic of considerable debate and research in sociology and criminology. Various studies have explored the correlations and potential causal links between socioeconomic status (SES) or social class and criminal behavior. While it is essential to note that crime is a complex and multi-faceted phenomenon influenced by numerous factors, including individual, social, and economic elements, there are some notable patterns regarding social class and crime.

Research has consistently found a positive correlation between lower socioeconomic status and higher rates of involvement in criminal activities. People from lower social classes, who often face economic hardships, limited access to education, and fewer opportunities for legitimate means of income, may be more likely to engage in criminal behavior as a means of survival or to achieve their material goals.

Structural theorists argue that crime rates are influenced by the structural inequalities prevalent in society. According to this perspective, individuals from lower social classes are more likely to experience strain and frustration due to their limited access to resources, leading to higher levels of deviance and criminality as a coping mechanism.

Opportunity theory suggests that crime rates are influenced by the availability of criminal opportunities. People from lower social classes may be more exposed to crime-prone environments, making them more likely to engage in criminal activities as they perceive a lack of legitimate opportunities to improve their lives.

Labeling theorists argue that individuals from lower social classes may be more likely to be labeled as criminals by the authorities and society due to the negative stereotypes associated with their class. This labeling can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, where individuals internalize the criminal identity imposed on them and engage in further criminal behavior.

While crime is often associated with lower social classes, white-collar crime refers to nonviolent offenses committed by individuals in higher social classes, such as corporate fraud, embezzlement, and insider trading. White-collar crime can cause significant financial harm but is often treated differently by the criminal justice system compared to street crimes.

It is crucial to avoid oversimplifying the relationship between social class and crime. Not everyone from a lower social class engages in criminal behavior, and crime is not exclusive to any particular social class. There are many law-abiding individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds who rise above their circumstances through hard work, determination, and access to opportunities. Additionally, there are wealthy individuals who engage in criminal activities despite their privilege.

To address crime effectively, it is essential to consider and address the underlying social and economic factors that contribute to criminal behavior, rather than solely focusing on punitive measures. Policies aimed at reducing crime should focus on improving educational opportunities, providing access to employment, reducing economic inequality, and creating safer and more supportive communities for everyone.

## Key Terms/Concepts

**Cultural Capital**

**Lifestyle Resources**

**Marxian Model of Social Class**

**Moral Poverty**

**Political Resources**

**Social Interactionist Theories**

**Social Resources**

**Weberian Model of Social Class**

## Read, Review, Watch and Listen

1. Read Chapter 19: [Social Class and Crime](#) by Michael T. Costelloe and Raymond J. Michalowski, Northern Arizona University
2. Review the Bureau of Justice Statistics' (BJS) [Employment of State and Federal Prisoners Prior to Incarceration, 2016](#) (Maruschak, L.M. and Snell, T.L., February 2023) [last accessed August 2023]
  - a. Social structure theories emphasize social structure as the root cause of crime. Therefore, they suggest policies that emphasize social action would be the best approach to ameliorating the crime problem.
  - b. Social changes and governmental policy initiatives based on these theories would focus on alleviating the social conditions believed to produce crime, such as income inequality, educational deprivation, racism, social injustice, and other economic and social inequities. These programs would focus on increasing the availability of socially approved opportunities for success and increasing the availability of meaningful employment. Some programs of this type have been shown to be effective in reducing rates of delinquency and crime.
3. Review the Prison Policy Initiative's [Prisons of Poverty: Uncovering the pre-incarceration incomes of the imprisoned](#) (Bernadette Rabuy and Daniel Kopf, July 2015) [last accessed August 2023]
4. Review the U.S. Bureau of Census' [Income in the United States: 2021-Current Population Reports](#) (Jessica Semega and Melissa Kollar, September 2022) [last accessed August 2023]
  - a. Social structure theories have influenced social policy, through programs such as the Chicago Area Project, Mobilization for Youth, and the War on Poverty. The social structural perspective is closely associated with the social problems approach and negates the claims of the social responsibility perspective.
  - b. The social problems perspective sees crime as a manifestation of underlying social problems

(poverty, discrimination, inequality of opportunity, the poor quality of education in some parts of the country, etc.).

c. This perspective suggests that we need to deal with crime the same way we deal with public health concerns.

d. Solutions to the crime problem are seen as coming from large-scale government expenditures supporting social programs that address the issues that are at the root of crime.

e. This is a macro approach because it sees individual behavior (crime) as resulting from widespread and contributory social conditions that enmesh unwitting individuals in a causal nexus of uncontrollable social forces.

5. Watch [\*US: Probation, Parole Feed Mass Incarceration Crisis\*](#) (Human Rights Watch, July 31, 2020)

To access the PPT file, click [HERE](#). Note that files are updated regularly and as such might change in content and appearance.

Read, Review, Watch and Listen to all listed materials by the due date listed within the course LMS (i.e., Blackboard) site.

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## Discussion Questions

1. How can we measure and compare the harms caused by different types of crimes?
2. How can we reduce the social and economic inequalities that contribute to crime and victimization?
3. How can we ensure that the criminal justice system is fair and impartial to all social classes?

## Supplemental Resources

- Added by the professor if/when deemed relevant to the module.



## References

1. Costelloe, M. T., & Michalowski, R. J. (2009). Social Class and Crime. In J. M. Miller (Ed.), *21st Century Reference Series. 21st Century Criminology. A Reference Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 153-161). SAGE Reference. [https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600029/GVRL?u=cod\\_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=66606965](https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/CX3201600029/GVRL?u=cod_lrc&sid=bookmark-GVRL&xid=66606965)



### "hands-off doctrine"

An approach that allowed prisons and jails in the United States to operate in relative obscurity because the courts believed that correctional administrators were better equipped than the judicial system to govern the operation of prisons and jails.

### Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS)

An international association established in 1963 to foster professional and scholarly activities in the field of criminal justice. ACJS promotes criminal justice education, research, and policy analysis within the discipline of criminal justice for both educators and practitioners.

### Activation

A key concept to the life course perspective and describes the ways that delinquent behaviors, once initiated, are stimulated and the processes by which the continuity, frequency, and diversity of delinquency are shaped.

### Age Graded Theory

Also known as Age-Graded Social Control Theory, is a criminological theory developed by Robert J. Sampson and John H. Laub. This theory focuses on the role of social bonds and life events at different stages of an individual's life in shaping their involvement in criminal behavior. It emphasizes that various life events and experiences can influence an individual's propensity to engage in criminal activities over time.

### Age of Reason (also known as the age of Enlightenment)

An important social movement in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Key thinkers whose ideas were the foundation for the Enlightenment were Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), John Locke (1632-1704), and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778).

### Age-Crime Curve

Also known as the age-crime relationship or the age-crime pattern, is a significant concept in criminology that describes the relationship between a person's age and their involvement in criminal activities. This

curve illustrates the fluctuating rates of criminal behavior based on age and has been widely observed and studied in various societies and historical periods.

### Agency Practice

Describes methods and approaches that criminal justice agencies, i.e., law enforcement, courts, corrections, rely on during prevention, enforcement, and punishment activities.

### Aggravation

A key concept to the life course perspective and describes the existence of a developmental sequence of activities that escalate or increase in seriousness over time.

### Aging Effects

Refers to the changes in criminal behavior and patterns that occur as individuals grow older. These aging effects are crucial to understanding how criminal involvement evolves over the course of a person's life.

### Albert Bandura

Albert Bandura was a prominent psychologist best known for his work on social learning theory, which later evolved into the broader framework of social cognitive theory. Bandura made significant contributions to the field of psychology through his research on the processes through which individuals learn in social contexts.

### American Society of Criminology (ASC)

An international organization whose members pursue scholarly, scientific, and professional knowledge concerning the measurement, etiology, consequences, prevention, control, and treatment of crime and delinquency.

### Anomie

A concept originally introduced by French sociologist Émile Durkheim, refers to a state of normlessness or a breakdown in the norms and values that guide individuals' behavior in society. In a state of anomie, there is a lack of social cohesion and regulation, leading to a sense of disconnection, confusion, and uncertainty among individuals about what is expected of them.

### Antisocial Personality

Refers to a psychological disorder characterized by a persistent pattern of disregard for and violation of

the rights of others. Individuals with antisocial personality typically demonstrate a lack of empathy and remorse for their actions, along with a tendency to engage in impulsive and irresponsible behavior. This disorder is also known as antisocial personality disorder (ASPD) and is often associated with behaviors such as lying, manipulation, aggression, and a disregard for social norms and rules.

## Applied Criminology

Applied criminology is a multidisciplinary field that utilizes theories, research methods, and practical knowledge to address and solve real-world problems related to crime, criminal behavior, and the criminal justice system. It involves the practical application of criminological theories and concepts to develop strategies and interventions that can prevent crime, reduce criminal behavior, and improve the functioning of the criminal justice system.

Applied criminology draws from various disciplines such as sociology, psychology, law, anthropology, and public policy. Its primary focus is on practical outcomes and the implementation of evidence-based practices to create safer communities, enhance the effectiveness of law enforcement agencies, and promote social justice.

Professionals working in applied criminology may engage in a range of activities, including conducting research to evaluate the effectiveness of crime prevention programs, analyzing crime patterns and trends, developing policies and interventions to address specific crime issues, providing expertise and guidance to law enforcement agencies, advocating for criminal justice reform, and working with communities to implement crime prevention strategies.

Overall, applied criminology aims to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application, with the goal of reducing crime, improving the criminal justice system, and creating safer societies.

## At-Risk

Refers to young individuals who face a higher probability of experiencing negative life outcomes due to various factors, circumstances, or behaviors that put them in vulnerable situations. These young people may be at risk of engaging in behaviors that can lead to personal, social, and academic difficulties, potentially hindering their overall development and success.

## Attachment Theory

Suggests that healthy personality development in young children requires a warm, intimate, and continuous relationship with the primary caregiver. Children lacking such a relationship are more likely to engage in maladjusted behavior.

Attachment theory postulates three forms of attachment. Secure attachment is a healthy form of attachment and develops when a child is confident that the mother figure will be responsible and available

when needed. Anxious-avoidant attachment develops when children feel rejection and develop a lack of confidence in the support and care of the parent. Anxious-resistant attachment develops from similar experiences and results in feelings of uncertainty, causing the child to feel anxious, to become fearful of his or her environment, and to cling to potential caregivers and partners. The latter two forms of attachment are non-secure and may lead to delinquent behavior.

### Authoritarian Parents

Characterized by their strict and controlling parenting style. They tend to have high expectations for their children and enforce rules and discipline rigorously.

### Authoritative

A style of parenting that is both high on responsiveness and demandingness.

### Behavioral Conditioning

Emphasizes the concept of operant behavior: behavior choices operate on the environment to produce consequences for the individual. When behavior results in rewards or desirable feedback, the behavior is reinforced and will probably become more frequent. When behavior results in punishment, the frequency of that behavior decreases. There are four conceptual categories of rewards and punishments:

1. Positive rewards
2. Negative rewards
3. Positive punishments
4. Negative punishments

Behavior theory differs from other psychological theories in that the major determinants of behavior are in the surrounding environment rather than in the individual.

### Behavioral Theory

The second main thrust of early psychological theorizing, built upon the concept of conditioned behavior, particularly concept of classical conditioning demonstrated by Pavlov. Researchers such as B.F. Skinner further developed the theory, which involves the use of rewards and punishments to control a person's responses, or operant behavior. One of the earliest learning theories was Gabriel Tarde's theory, which was based on imitation and suggestion. Albert Bandura's social cognition theory of aggression suggests that people learn to act by observing others; observation of aggressive behavior teaches one how to behave aggressively.

## Behaviorism

A psychological theory and approach that focuses on the study of observable behaviors rather than mental processes or internal states. It emerged as a dominant school of thought in the early 20th century, particularly with the work of behaviorist pioneers such as Ivan Pavlov, John B. Watson, and B.F. Skinner.

## Benchmark

Refers to a standard or point of reference against which the performance or characteristics of something can be measured or evaluated. Benchmarks are commonly used to assess the relative performance or quality of data, processes, systems, or investments.

## Big Five Model of Personality

Also known as the Five-Factor Model (FFM), is a widely accepted and influential framework for understanding and categorizing human personality traits. It proposes that personality can be described and organized into five broad dimensions, or factors, which capture the most important and distinctive aspects of an individual's personality. These five factors are often referred to by the acronym OCEAN.

## Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS)

BJS is the primary statistical agency of the Department of Justice. It is one of the thirteen principal federal statistical agencies throughout the Executive Branch, agencies whose activities are predominantly focused on the collection, compilation, processing, or analysis of information for statistical purposes.

## Casey v. Lewis (1990)

This case 1990 was brought by female inmates in the Arizona Prison system. The plaintiff class alleged that the defendants are deliberately indifferent to their serious health care needs including medical, dental, and mental health care needs.

## Cesare Beccaria (1738-1794)

Cesare Bonesana, Marchese di Beccaria, was an Italian philosopher, criminologist, and jurist. Beccaria is best known for his influential work in the field of criminology, particularly for his groundbreaking treatise titled "On Crimes and Punishments" ("Dei delitti e delle pene" in Italian), which was first published in 1764. In "On Crimes and Punishments," Beccaria argued against the prevalent and harsh penal practices of his time and advocated for a more humane and rational approach to criminal justice. He criticized the use of torture, the death penalty, and other cruel forms of punishment that were common in Europe

during the 18th century. Beccaria believed that punishment should be based on the principle of utility, aiming to deter crime and protect society while avoiding unnecessary cruelty.

Beccaria proposed that punishment should be severe enough to deter individuals from committing crimes, but it should not be excessively cruel. He argued that the certainty of punishment is more effective in deterring crime than its severity.

Beccaria emphasized the importance of equality before the law, advocating for a legal system that treats all individuals equally regardless of their social status or wealth.

Beccaria urged for quick and transparent trials, ensuring that justice is delivered promptly and that the public can trust the legal system.

Beccaria strongly opposed the use of the death penalty, arguing that it was neither effective in deterring crime nor in achieving justice.

### Charles Goring (1870-1919)

Was a British psychiatrist and criminologist who is known for his research on the relationship between crime and intelligence. He conducted a significant study that focused on the connection between criminality and intellectual abilities.

Goring's most famous work is "The English Convict: A Statistical Study," which was published in 1913. In this extensive study, Goring examined the characteristics and backgrounds of over 3,000 prisoners in English prisons. He compared these characteristics with those of non-criminals to determine whether there was a significant difference in intelligence between the two groups.

Goring's research aimed to investigate the prevalent eugenic theories of his time, which suggested that there was a hereditary basis for criminality and that criminals were more likely to have lower intelligence. However, his study did not support these ideas. He found that there was no evidence of a direct link between criminal behavior and low intelligence. In fact, Goring's research indicated that criminals did not differ significantly from non-criminals in terms of intelligence.

This finding challenged the eugenic views of his era, which had proposed that criminality was largely inherited and associated with low intelligence. Goring's work contributed to a more nuanced understanding of the complex factors that contribute to criminal behavior, including social, environmental, and psychological factors. His research played a significant role in shifting the focus of criminology away from simplistic notions of biological determinism and toward a broader exploration of the causes of crime.

### Chicago School

Was a major sociological movement that emerged in the early 20th century at the University of Chicago. It is recognized for its pioneering contributions to the field of sociology and its innovative research on



urban social issues. Led by prominent sociologists such as Robert Park, Ernest Burgess, and Louis Wirth, the Chicago School focused on the study of urban life and social dynamics in rapidly growing cities.

### Chicago School of Social Ecology

Chicago School of Social Ecology also known as the Chicago School of Sociology, refers to a sociological tradition that emerged in the early 20th century at the University of Chicago. It is recognized as a prominent and influential approach within the field of sociology.

The Chicago School of Social Ecology emphasized the importance of studying social phenomena within their specific social and physical environments. Its scholars sought to understand how social structures, urban environments, and community dynamics influenced individual behavior and social interactions.

The school's researchers conducted groundbreaking studies, particularly in the areas of urban sociology and criminology, focusing on the city of Chicago as their primary laboratory. Their work explored the relationship between social disorganization, urbanization, and crime rates, as well as the impact of community structures and institutions on individual behavior.

Notable scholars associated with the Chicago School of Social Ecology include Robert E. Park, Ernest Burgess, Louis Wirth, and Clifford Shaw. Their studies often involved conducting field research, employing qualitative methods, and employing concepts such as social disorganization, urban ecology, and the concentric zone model.

The Chicago School's ideas and research methods had a profound influence on the development of sociology, criminology, and urban studies. The school's emphasis on the importance of social context and environmental factors in shaping human behavior continues to inform research in these fields today.

### Child Maltreatment

Refers to any form of abuse or neglect directed towards children under the age of 18 by a parent, caregiver, or another individual in a position of responsibility. Child maltreatment encompasses a range of harmful actions and omissions that can have severe and lasting consequences on a child's physical, emotional, and psychological well-being. It is a significant social issue that requires attention and intervention to protect vulnerable children.

### Classical Criminology

A school of thought in criminology that emerged during the 18th century as a response to the harsh and arbitrary legal systems of that time. It is considered one of the foundational theories in the field of criminology and marks a significant departure from earlier approaches to crime and punishment.

## Classical School of Criminology

Classical school of criminology - A theory of crime and punishment that originated in the 18th century and was developed by various Enlightenment thinkers, most notably Cesare Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham. It is considered one of the foundational theories of criminology.

The classical school of criminology is based on the idea of free will and rational choice. It posits that individuals are rational beings who weigh the potential benefits and costs of their actions before engaging in criminal behavior. According to this perspective, people choose to commit crimes when the perceived benefits outweigh the potential risks or punishments.

Key principles and concepts of the classical school of criminology include:

1. **Hedonistic Calculus:** Individuals seek pleasure and avoid pain. They make rational decisions based on the expected outcomes and weigh the pleasure or gain against the potential negative consequences.
2. **Deterrence:** The main purpose of punishment is to deter individuals from committing crimes. The certainty, severity, and swiftness of punishment are believed to influence an individual's decision-making process and discourage criminal behavior.
3. **Punishment:** Punishments should be proportionate to the crime committed, based on the principle of proportionality. Excessive or overly harsh punishments are seen as unjust and ineffective.
4. **Legal Equality:** The law should apply equally to all individuals, regardless of social status or wealth. This principle emphasizes the importance of fairness and equal treatment under the law.

The classical school of criminology had a significant impact on the development of modern criminal justice systems. Its principles have influenced the establishment of legal codes, the design of punishment systems, and the focus on deterrence in criminal justice policies. While the classical school has been criticized and supplemented by other theories over time, its emphasis on rationality, free will, and deterrence remains influential in the field of criminology.

## Clearance Rates

Represent the percentage of reported crimes that result in an arrest, charge, or other form of resolution by law enforcement. Clearance rates can indicate the effectiveness of police investigations and the likelihood of holding offenders accountable.

## Clifford R. Shaw and Henry D. McKay (1942)

Published a groundbreaking research paper titled "Juvenile Delinquency and Urban Areas: A Study of Rates of Delinquents in Relation to Differential Characteristics of Local Communities in American Cities." This study laid the foundation for the social disorganization theory, which sought to explain the relationship between neighborhood characteristics and crime rates.

## Coercion model of Antisocial Behavior

A psychological theory that seeks to explain the development of aggressive and disruptive behaviors in individuals, particularly in the context of family interactions. It was first proposed by researchers Gerald Patterson and John Reid in the 1970s and has since been widely studied and supported by empirical evidence. According to the Coercion Model, the development of antisocial behavior is a result of a coercive cycle that occurs within family relationships.

The Coercion Model highlights the importance of early intervention and prevention strategies to disrupt the coercive cycle and promote positive parenting practices. Interventions often focus on teaching parents more effective and positive discipline techniques, improving communication skills, and fostering a supportive and nurturing family environment. By breaking the cycle of coercion, it is possible to reduce the risk of antisocial behavior development and improve the long-term outcomes for at-risk children and adolescents.

## Cognitive Theory

A psychological perspective that focuses on the study of mental processes, such as thinking, memory, perception, problem-solving, and decision-making. Unlike behaviorism, which emphasizes observable behaviors, cognitive theory looks at the internal mental processes that influence how people perceive and interact with the world.

## Cohort Effects

In criminology studies refer to the impact of a specific group of individuals, often born during the same time, sharing common experiences or historical events that influence their criminal behavior. These cohorts may display unique patterns of criminal involvement compared to individuals from different generations, and studying cohort effects can help criminologists understand how historical, social, and cultural factors shape criminality.

## Collective Efficacy

In the context of sociology and criminology, refers to the shared belief and social cohesion within a community that enables its members to work together to achieve common goals and effectively address social problems, including crime and disorder. It is a concept developed by sociologists Albert Bandura and Francesca S. Yang.

## Common Couple Violence

Occurs infrequently, does not escalate over time, and rarely results in physical injury or psychological trauma.

## Community Supervision

Also known as probation or parole, is a legal arrangement in which individuals convicted of certain crimes are allowed to serve part of their sentence under the supervision of authorities while residing in the community instead of being incarcerated in prison. It is an alternative to incarceration that aims to provide rehabilitation and reintegration into society while ensuring public safety.

## Comparative Criminology

A field of study within criminology that involves the systematic comparison of criminal justice systems, crime rates, and related phenomena across different countries or regions. This interdisciplinary field draws on principles from sociology, law, political science, anthropology, and other disciplines to analyze and compare various aspects of crime and criminal justice.

Researchers in comparative criminology aim to understand the similarities and differences in the patterns of crime, the effectiveness of criminal justice policies, and the social, economic, and cultural factors that may contribute to variations in criminal behavior and law enforcement practices. By examining these factors across different contexts, scholars in comparative criminology seek to identify commonalities and unique features that can inform theories and policies aimed at preventing and controlling crime.

## Conflict Perspective

A theoretical framework in criminology that views crime and the criminal justice system as products of social conflicts and power struggles within society. It emerged as a response to the limitations of other criminological theories, such as the consensus or functionalist perspectives, which tended to focus on social cohesion and stability. The conflict perspective, instead, emphasizes the role of inequality, social divisions, and power differentials in shaping crime, law enforcement, and criminal justice policies.

## Consensus Perspective

A theoretical framework in criminology that focuses on the idea of social cohesion and shared values within a society. It emphasizes the existence of a consensus among members of society regarding what is considered morally right and wrong, and how these shared values are reflected in the creation and enforcement of laws. This perspective assumes that most individuals in society agree on what constitutes criminal behavior, and the criminal justice system serves to maintain social order and protect common values.

## Constitutive Theory

A philosophical approach to understanding the nature and meaning of social practices, such as language,

law, politics, art, etc. It argues that these practices are not simply given by nature or convention, but are actively constituted by the participants who engage in them. Constitutive theory draws on the later work of Ludwig Wittgenstein, who suggested that language is not a fixed system of rules and representations, but a dynamic and creative activity that shapes our understanding of reality.

### Containment Theory

Developed by sociologist Walter C. Reckless in the 1960s, is a criminological theory that seeks to explain why some individuals are more resistant to social pressures and less likely to engage in deviant or criminal behavior despite facing external and internal pressures. The theory posits that various factors can act as buffers or containment forces, preventing individuals from succumbing to delinquent temptations.

### Contextual Constructionism:

A version of social constructionism that accepts that some underlying reality exists but argues that humans build social constructions that vary depending on the social and cultural context.

### Control Balance Theory

Developed by Charles R. Tittle in the 1990s. It offers an explanation of deviant and criminal behavior by examining the balance of control that individuals have over their own lives and the control they exert over others.

### Convict Criminology

An emerging field within the broader discipline of criminology that focuses on the experiences and perspectives of formerly incarcerated individuals, commonly referred to as ex-convicts or ex-offenders. Unlike traditional criminology, which often analyzes crime and criminal behavior from an outsider's perspective, convict criminology seeks to integrate the insights and voices of those who have been directly impacted by the criminal justice system.

### Corporal Punishment

A disciplinary method that involves the use of physical force to inflict pain or discomfort as a means of correcting or controlling a person's behavior. It is often used as a form of punishment for children, students, or individuals who are perceived to have misbehaved or violated rules.

### Correlation

Correlation refers to a statistical measure that quantifies the relationship or association between two or more variables. It describes the extent to which changes in one variable are related to changes in another

variable. Correlation does not imply causation, meaning that a correlation between two variables does not necessarily indicate that one variable causes the other to change. Correlation analysis is widely used in various fields, including statistics, social sciences, economics, and medical research. It helps researchers and analysts understand the degree and direction of association between variables, identify patterns, make predictions, and guide decision-making. However, it is important to note that correlation alone does not establish a cause-and-effect relationship between variables, as other factors or variables may be involved.

## Crime

Refers to any behavior or action that is considered illegal, prohibited, or punishable by law. It involves the violation of societal norms, rules, and regulations established by the government or governing authorities. Criminal acts are generally harmful or detrimental to individuals, communities, or society as a whole and are subject to various legal consequences, such as fines, probation, imprisonment, or other forms of punishment.

Crimes can encompass a wide range of behaviors, from minor offenses like traffic violations or petty theft to more serious offenses like assault, robbery, murder, or fraud. The definition of crime may vary across jurisdictions, as different countries or states may have specific laws and statutes that determine what actions are considered criminal within their legal framework.

Crimes are typically classified into two main categories: misdemeanors and felonies. Misdemeanors are less serious offenses and are generally punishable by fines, community service, or short-term imprisonment. Felonies, on the other hand, are more severe offenses and often involve more extended periods of imprisonment or other severe penalties.

## Crime Mapping

Involves the visualization of crime data on maps, allowing analysts to identify crime hotspots, patterns, and trends. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) technology is often used to map crime data, enabling law enforcement agencies to allocate resources efficiently.

## Criminal Career

Refers to the pattern of an individual's involvement in criminal behavior over time. It involves the series of criminal acts or offenses committed by a person during their lifetime. Just as a person's career typically encompasses a sequence of jobs and positions held over the course of their working life, a criminal career describes the various criminal activities a person engages in from their first criminal act to their potential cessation or desistance from criminal behavior.

## Criminal Justice

Criminal Justice refers to the system of practices and institutions established by governments to maintain

social order, deter and control crime, and administer justice to those who violate the law. It encompasses a broad range of processes, organizations, and individuals involved in the detection, investigation, prosecution, and punishment of criminal offenses.

The criminal justice system typically consists of three main components: (1) law enforcement, (2) courts, and (3) corrections.

## Criminologist

A criminologist is a professional who studies the causes, consequences, prevention, and control of criminal behavior. Criminology is a multidisciplinary field that draws from various disciplines, including sociology, psychology, law, anthropology, and criminal justice. Criminologists apply scientific methods and theories to analyze and understand crime patterns, criminal behavior, and the functioning of the criminal justice system.

The work of a criminologist can vary depending on their specialization and the context in which they operate. Some common roles and responsibilities of criminologists include:

1. **Research:** Criminologists conduct empirical research to examine crime trends, identify risk factors for criminal behavior, and evaluate the effectiveness of crime prevention programs and policies. They collect and analyze data, design research studies, and interpret findings to contribute to the knowledge and understanding of crime and its implications.
2. **Crime Prevention:** Criminologists develop and assess strategies and interventions aimed at preventing crime and reducing recidivism. They work with communities, law enforcement agencies, policymakers, and other stakeholders to implement evidence-based practices and policies that promote public safety and crime reduction.
3. **Policy Analysis:** Criminologists analyze existing laws, policies, and practices within the criminal justice system to assess their impact and effectiveness. They provide recommendations for policy reform and improvements based on their research findings and understanding of criminological theories.
4. **Criminal Profiling:** Some criminologists specialize in the field of criminal profiling, where they use psychological and behavioral analysis to create profiles of unknown criminals based on crime scene evidence and patterns. They assist law enforcement agencies in investigations by providing insights into the likely characteristics and motivations of offenders.
5. **Education and Advocacy:** Criminologists often work in academic institutions, teaching criminology courses and mentoring students. They contribute to the education and training of future professionals in the field of criminal justice. Additionally, criminologists may engage in public outreach and advocacy, promoting evidence-based policies and raising awareness about criminal justice issues.

Overall, criminologists play a crucial role in understanding, analyzing, and addressing issues related to crime, criminal behavior, and the criminal justice system. Their work aims to inform policy, improve crime prevention strategies, and contribute to the development of effective and fair criminal justice practices.

## Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)

A specialized program in law enforcement designed to improve the way police respond to incidents involving individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. CIT programs aim to enhance public safety, reduce the risk of violence, and ensure appropriate and compassionate handling of individuals with mental health issues.

## Critical Criminology

A theoretical approach within the field of criminology that seeks to examine and challenge the social, economic, and political structures that contribute to crime, deviance, and the functioning of the criminal justice system. It emerged in the late 1960s as a response to traditional criminological perspectives that often overlooked or downplayed the underlying causes of crime and the role of power dynamics in shaping criminal behavior and social responses to it.

## Cultural Capital

A sociological concept developed by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu in the 1970s. It refers to the non-financial social assets that individuals acquire through their socialization, education, and exposure to various cultural practices. This concept is essential for understanding how social inequality is perpetuated and how different forms of capital (economic, social, and cultural) contribute to an individual's social status and opportunities in life.

## Culture Conflict Theory

Also known as Cultural Deviance Theory, is a criminological perspective that focuses on the clash between the cultural values and norms of different groups within a society. This theory posits that criminal behavior can arise when individuals from subcultures or marginalized groups adopt norms and values that deviate from the dominant culture.

## Cyberpsychology

A study of the human mind and behavior in the context of human-technology interaction, particularly focusing on how digital technologies, the Internet, and virtual environments influence psychological processes, emotions, and social behaviors. This interdisciplinary field combines elements from psychology, computer science, and information technology to explore a wide range of topics, including online identity, digital communication patterns, cyberbullying, online addiction, virtual reality, and the impact of social media on mental health.



## Daniel Nagin

A prominent criminologist who has conducted extensive research on the empirical status of deterrence theory and the role of choice in criminological theory.

## Demandingness

Within the context of parenting, refers to the level of expectations, rules, and control that parents exert over their children's behavior and activities through supervision, disciplinary efforts, and a constant imposition of consequences for failing to meet expectations. It is one of the two main dimensions of parenting style, with the other being responsiveness.

## Desistance

A key concept to the life course perspective and describes a reduction in offending; that is, deceleration, specialization, and deescalation. Deceleration is a slowing down in the frequency of offending. Specialization is a slowing down in the variety of offending. Deescalation is a slowing down in the seriousness of the offenses committed.

## Determinism

Determinism is a philosophical concept that posits that every event or phenomenon, including human actions and choices, is causally determined by preceding events and conditions. It suggests that there is a fixed chain of cause and effect in the universe, and given the same circumstances, the same outcome will always occur.

According to determinism, free will is an illusion, and human behavior is ultimately governed by factors beyond individual control, such as genetics, environment, upbringing, and societal influences. It suggests that individuals do not have true autonomy or the ability to make choices that are independent of causal factors.

## Deterrence

A concept in the fields of international relations and criminology that refers to the use of threats or the imposition of costs to prevent others from taking certain actions or engaging in undesirable behavior. The idea behind deterrence is to discourage potential adversaries or individuals from pursuing a course of action by making them believe that the costs or consequences of their actions will outweigh any potential benefits.

## Deviance

Refers to any behavior, belief, or characteristic that deviates from the norms, values, and expectations of a particular society or social group. In simpler terms, deviance refers to actions or attributes that are considered different, unusual, or even unacceptable within a given cultural context.

Deviance is a relative concept because what is considered deviant can vary across different cultures, societies, and historical periods. Certain behaviors or attributes that are considered normal or acceptable in one society may be seen as deviant in another. Additionally, the definition of deviance can evolve over time as societal norms and values change.

## Differential Association

One of the most influential forms of learning theory, developed in 1939 by Edwin H. Sutherland. It suggests that criminality is learned through a process of differential association with others who communicate criminal values and advocate the commission of crimes. Sutherland suggested that all significant human behavior is learned, and that crime is not substantively different from any other form of behavior.

## Differential Association-Reinforcement Theory

Combines elements of both Differential Association Theory and Social Learning Theory. This theory, developed by Ronald Akers in the 1970s, seeks to explain how individuals learn criminal behavior through interactions with others and how they are reinforced or punished for their actions.

## Differential Identification

A concept introduced by sociologists Daniel Glaser and William Glaser in the context of social learning theory. It is an extension of Edwin H. Sutherland's Differential Association Theory and emphasizes the role of identification with significant others in the process of learning deviant or criminal behavior.

## Differential Opportunity

A criminological perspective that builds upon the concept of strain theory and expands it to explain how individuals may turn to criminal behavior because of limited legitimate opportunities. This theory, developed by Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin in the 1960s, suggests that access to illegitimate opportunities can influence whether individuals choose conventional or deviant paths to achieve their goals.

## Disaggregate

Means to break down or divide something into its individual components, parts, or smaller units. This term is often used in various fields, including statistics, economics, data analysis, and decision-making, to gain a more detailed or granular understanding of a larger entity or dataset.

## Diversion Program

An alternative approach to the traditional criminal justice system, designed to provide certain offenders with opportunities for rehabilitation and community-based interventions instead of proceeding with formal prosecution and sentencing. The primary goal of diversion programs is to address the root causes of criminal behavior, promote rehabilitation, reduce recidivism, and prevent the unnecessary incarceration of individuals who may benefit more from treatment and support.

## Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.®)

A validated, copyrighted, comprehensive drug and violence prevention education program for children in kindergarten through 12th grade. D.A.R.E.® represents a collaborative effort between school and law enforcement personnel. The program is nationally coordinated by D.A.R.E.® America, with input received from State and local agencies and communities.

## Dual Diagnosis

Also known as co-occurring disorders, refers to a situation in which an individual is experiencing both a mental health disorder and a substance use disorder simultaneously. This term is commonly used in the context of mental health and addiction treatment.

In the past, mental health and substance abuse issues were often treated separately, but it was discovered that individuals with these conditions often have overlapping symptoms and need integrated treatment approaches. Dual diagnosis recognizes that both conditions can interact and exacerbate each other, leading to more complex challenges for the individual's overall well-being.

## Edwin Lemert (1967)

Was an American sociologist known for his work in the field of criminology and deviance. In 1967, he published a book titled "Human Deviance, Social Problems, and Social Control." This book expanded upon his earlier ideas about primary and secondary deviance, concepts he introduced in his earlier work "Social Pathology: A Systematic Approach to the Theory of Sociopathic Behavior" (1951).

## Edwin Sutherland

Edwin Sutherland (1883-1950) was an influential American sociologist and criminologist who made significant contributions to the field of criminology. He is best known for developing the theory of differential association, which has had a lasting impact on our understanding of crime and delinquency.

One of Sutherland's most notable contributions was the development of the theory of differential association. In 1939, he published his influential book "Principles of Criminology," where he introduced this theory. The theory proposes that criminal behavior is learned through social interaction and communication with others. According to Sutherland, individuals acquire criminal attitudes, values, techniques, and motives through their associations with others who engage in criminal behavior.

Sutherland's theory challenged the prevailing views of his time, which focused primarily on individual traits and biological factors as the primary causes of crime. His differential association theory emphasized the importance of social and environmental influences on criminal behavior, highlighting the role of interpersonal relationships, peer groups, and subcultures in shaping individuals' propensity for criminality.

In addition to his work on differential association, Sutherland made significant contributions to the study of white-collar crime. He coined the term "white-collar crime" to refer to offenses committed by individuals of higher social and economic status during their occupational activities. His research and writings on this topic shed light on the prevalence and impact of corporate and financial crimes, challenging the notion that crime is solely a product of lower-class or marginalized individuals.

Edwin Sutherland's work continues to be highly influential in the field of criminology, shaping our understanding of the social and environmental factors that contribute to criminal behavior. His focus on the importance of social learning and the role of influential social groups has informed subsequent research and theories in the field.

## Efficiency Analysis

Not as common as other forms of program evaluation in criminal justice as impact and cost are often of greater significance. Cost-benefit analysis and cost-effectiveness analysis are two basic types and used to determine whether the benefits gained from a particular program/initiative justify the cost.

## Émile Durkheim (1858-1917)

Was a prominent French sociologist who is often regarded as one of the founding figures of modern sociology. His work laid the foundation for the systematic study of society and social phenomena as distinct fields of academic inquiry. Here are some key aspects of Émile Durkheim's life and contributions:

## Evaluation Research

Refers to a systematic and objective investigation conducted to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, and impact of a program, policy, intervention, or project. It aims to gather evidence and information that can inform decision-making, improve program design and implementation, and ultimately contribute to better outcomes.

Evaluation research involves the use of various research methods, such as surveys, interviews, observations, and data analysis, to collect and analyze data related to the specific program or intervention under examination. The key focus is on evaluating the extent to which the program or intervention achieves its stated objectives and desired outcomes, and identifying factors that contribute to its success or failure.

The evaluation process typically includes defining clear evaluation questions, developing appropriate evaluation designs and methods, collecting, and analyzing data, interpreting findings, and providing actionable recommendations. It may also involve assessing the program's efficiency in terms of resource utilization, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability.

Evaluation research plays a crucial role in informing evidence-based decision-making, improving program effectiveness, and facilitating accountability. It is widely used in various fields, including education, healthcare, social sciences, public policy, and nonprofit organizations, to evaluate the impact and outcomes of interventions, policies, and initiatives.

## Evidence-Based Criminology

An approach that requires that high-quality evaluation research form the basis of policy or practice in the field of criminology and criminal justice.

## Evolutionary Ecology

A significant part of life course researchers. Through a method of cohort analysis designs, it traces the development from birth to some predetermined age of a population whose members share common characteristics. Marvin Wolfgang's analysis of a birth cohort in the 1960s found that a small number of chronic juvenile offenders (6% of the cohort) accounted for a disproportionately large number of juvenile arrests (52%). Lawrence Cohen and Richard Machalek's evolutionary ecology approach attempts to explain how people acquire criminality, when and why they express it as crime, how those crimes are responded to, and how all these factors interact.

## Expert Testimony

Refers to the presentation of specialized knowledge or opinions by a qualified expert during a legal proceeding, such as a trial, hearing, or legislative session. Expert witnesses are individuals, e.g.,

criminologists, with recognized expertise and experience in a specific field or subject matter relevant to the case at hand. They are called upon to provide their professional opinions, interpretations, or analysis to assist the court or jury in understanding complex issues or technical matters beyond the understanding of the average person.

### Farrington's Delinquent Development Theory

Developed by criminologist David P. Farrington and is a prominent longitudinal study that explores the factors influencing the development of delinquent behavior from childhood to adulthood. This theory is based on extensive research that followed individuals over an extended period to understand the patterns and risk factors associated with delinquency and crime. Farrington's Delinquent Development Theory has significantly contributed to the field of criminology by providing a comprehensive understanding of the complex and dynamic nature of delinquent behavior. Its longitudinal approach and identification of key risk and protective factors have informed evidence-based practices for preventing and reducing delinquency and guiding individuals toward positive life trajectories.

### Feminist Criminology

A branch of criminology that examines crime, criminal behavior, and the criminal justice system through a gendered lens, with a particular focus on the experiences and perspectives of women. It emerged in the 1970s as part of the larger feminist movement, aiming to address the historical neglect of gender issues in traditional criminology and to challenge the male-centric assumptions and biases in the study of crime.

### Focal Concerns

Sets of values, beliefs, and attitudes that were introduced by Walter B. Miller, an American sociologist, in his influential work "Lower-Class Culture as a Generating Milieu of Gang Delinquency" (1958). Focal concerns refer to a set of values, beliefs, and attitudes that are prevalent among lower-class individuals, particularly those in urban settings. Miller argued that these focal concerns play a significant role in shaping the behavior and social interactions of individuals in lower-class communities.

### Formative Evaluations

In the context of program evaluation, are assessments conducted during the development and implementation phases of a program or intervention. These evaluations are primarily focused on providing feedback, identifying strengths and weaknesses, and informing ongoing improvements to the program. Formative evaluations are an essential component of the evaluation process, as they help shape and refine the program as it evolves.

## Frank Tannenbaum (1938)

Was a prominent sociologist and criminologist known for his work in the early 20th century. While he is not particularly known for a publication in 1938, one of his significant works is "Crime and the Community" (1938), which might be the reference you are looking for. In "Crime and the Community," Tannenbaum explored the social and cultural aspects of crime and delinquency. He argued that society's reaction to criminal behavior often played a crucial role in shaping the behavior of individuals labeled as criminals.

## Full-Participation Agency

NIBRS participating agencies that submit data on all Group A and B offenses.

## Gabriel Tarde

Was a French sociologist, criminologist, and social psychologist. He is known for his significant contributions to the field of sociology, particularly in the areas of social theory, social psychology, and the study of social phenomena. Tarde suggested that the basis of society was imitation, and he developed a theory of behavior built upon three laws of imitation and suggestion: (1) People in close contact tend to imitate each other's behavior, (2) Imitation moves from the top down, and (3) New acts and behaviors either reinforce or replace old ones.

## Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.®)

An evidence-based and effective gang and violence prevention program built around school-based, law enforcement officer-instructed classroom curricula. The Program is intended as an immunization against delinquency, youth violence, and gang membership for children in the years immediately before the prime ages for introduction into gangs and delinquent behavior.

## Gary Becker (1968)

An influential American economist known for his pioneering work in the field of economics. Becker made significant contributions to various areas of economics, particularly in the areas of human capital theory, labor economics, and the economics of discrimination. Some of his most notable contributions and ideas include human capital theory, economics of discrimination, economic approaches to family and household, and rational choice theory. Gary Becker received numerous awards and honors during his lifetime, including the Nobel Prize in Economic Sciences in 1992. His work continues to be a foundation for research in economics and has had a lasting impact on the field.

## General Strain Theory (GST)

A criminological theory developed by sociologist Robert Agnew in the early 1990s. GST builds upon earlier strain theories, such as the work of Robert Merton, and offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the link between strain, negative emotions, and criminal behavior.

## General Theory of Crime (GTC)

Also known as Self-Control Theory, is a prominent criminological theory developed by Michael Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi in 1990. The theory posits that the primary cause of criminal behavior is low self-control, which is formed early in childhood and remains relatively stable throughout an individual's life.

## Goal Act of 1774

The result of the testimony that John Howard provided to a committee of the House of Commons, Parliament passed the 1774 Gaol Act. The terms of this legislation abolished gaolers' fees and suggested ways for improving the sanitary state of prisons and the better preservation of the health of the prisoners.

## Homo Economicus

Often referred to as "economic man," is a theoretical concept in economics that represents an idealized and simplified model of human behavior within economic contexts. It is not a description of how real people always behave, but rather a simplifying assumption that helps economists analyze and understand economic decision-making.

## Hotel Rule

Within the context of the UCR, means that if a number of units under a single manager are burglarized and the offenses are most likely to be reported to the police by the manager rather than the individual tenants, the burglary must be reported as a single offense. Burglaries of hotels, motels, lodging houses, or other places where lodging of transients is the main purpose can present reporting problems to law enforcement.

## Howard Becker (1963)

A prominent American sociologist known for his significant contributions to the field of sociology, particularly in the areas of labeling theory and the sociology of deviance. In 1963, Becker published a groundbreaking book titled "Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance." This book is considered one of his most influential works and had a significant impact on the field of sociology.



## Human Genome Project (HGP)

The HGP was an international scientific research initiative that aimed to map and sequence the entire human genome. It was one of the most significant and ambitious scientific endeavors in history, spanning several countries and involving thousands of researchers and institutions.

The primary goal of the Human Genome Project, which was officially launched in 1990, was to identify and determine the sequence of all the genes in the human genome and to analyze their functions. The human genome is the complete set of genetic information present in human DNA, and it contains all the instructions necessary for building and maintaining a human being.

## Impact Evaluation

A specific type of evaluation research that focuses on assessing the causal impact or effects of a program, policy, intervention, or project. It aims to determine whether and to what extent the intervention has achieved its intended outcomes, and whether any observed changes can be attributed to the intervention rather than other factors.

The primary goal of an impact evaluation is to understand the cause-and-effect relationship between the intervention and the observed outcomes. It involves comparing the outcomes of the group or individuals who received the intervention (the treatment group) with those who did not (the control group) or with a baseline measure before the intervention was implemented.

Impact evaluations employ rigorous research methods and techniques to ensure that the observed changes can be confidently attributed to the intervention. Commonly used methods include randomized controlled trials (RCTs), quasi-experimental designs, and matching techniques. These methods aim to minimize biases and confounding factors, allowing for a more accurate estimation of the intervention's impact.

The evaluation process typically involves defining clear evaluation questions, developing appropriate research designs, collecting data through surveys, interviews, observations, or other means, analyzing data using statistical or qualitative techniques, interpreting the findings, and drawing conclusions about the intervention's impact.

Impact evaluations are frequently conducted in various fields, including education, healthcare, social services, development programs, and public policy. They provide valuable evidence on the effectiveness, efficiency, scalability, and sustainability of interventions, helping policymakers, program implementers, and funders make informed decisions about allocating resources, improving program design, and maximizing desired outcomes.

## Institutional Racism

Also known as systemic racism, is a form of racism that is embedded within the policies, practices, and structures of social institutions, leading to the perpetuation of racial disparities and inequalities. Unlike

individual acts of racism, which involve prejudiced beliefs or discriminatory actions by individuals, institutional racism operates at a broader societal level and affects entire communities or racial/ethnic groups.

### Intensive Supervision Programs (ISP)

Also known as Intensive Supervision Probation (ISP), is an approach to community-based supervision of individuals who have been convicted of a crime and are serving a probation sentence. ISP aims to provide a higher level of supervision and support than traditional probation while still allowing the individuals to remain in the community instead of being incarcerated.

ISP typically involves more frequent and intensive contact between probation officers and probationers compared to standard probation. The specific components and requirements of ISP can vary depending on jurisdiction and the nature of the offense, but common features may include: (1) increased supervision, (2) enhanced surveillance, (3) treatment and support services, and (4) case management.

### Intersectionality

A concept within third-wave feminism that examines how overlapping social identities, including gender, race, and class, affect individuals' experiences and opportunities.

### Intimate Partner Violence

Also known as domestic violence and intimate terrorism, is a pattern of abusive behavior that occurs within a romantic or intimate relationship. It involves the use of physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, or economic tactics to control and dominate one's partner. IPV can occur in both heterosexual and same-sex relationships and affects individuals of all ages, genders, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

### Invariance

Refers to the quality or state of being unchanging or constant in a specific context or situation. It is a concept used in various fields, including mathematics, physics, statistics, and social sciences, to describe properties, relationships, or principles that remain consistent and unaffected by certain transformations, variations, or conditions.

### Invisible Offender

A way to describe the context of studying females and crime. It refers to the idea that female offenders are often overlooked or underestimated in criminological research and the criminal justice system. It suggests

that female involvement in criminal activities may be less visible, less recognized, or less studied compared to male offenders.

Historically, criminology has predominantly focused on male offenders due to higher overall crime rates among men. As a result, female criminal behavior has received comparatively less attention, leading to an incomplete understanding of the factors contributing to female criminality.

### Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832)

Was an influential British philosopher, jurist, and social reformer. He is best known for his contributions to the fields of ethics, political philosophy, and legal theory. Bentham was a leading figure of the utilitarian movement and is often considered the father of utilitarianism.

### Jim Crow Laws

A series of state and local laws enacted in the United States from the late 19th century through the mid-20th century. These laws enforced racial segregation and discrimination, primarily targeting African Americans and other racial minorities, particularly in the Southern states.

The term "Jim Crow" originated from a caricature of a Black man used in minstrel shows in the 19th century, which perpetuated racial stereotypes. The Jim Crow laws were a response to the Reconstruction Era (1865-1877), during which significant efforts were made to establish civil rights for African Americans following the abolition of slavery. As Reconstruction ended, Southern states began enacting laws to establish a system of racial segregation and disenfranchisement.

### Just Deserts

A concept in criminal justice that refers to the idea that individuals who commit crimes should receive punishments that are commensurate with the severity of their offenses. In other words, it means that the punishment should be proportional and fair, reflecting the moral responsibility of the offender for their actions.

### Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment

Conducted between 1972 and 1973, was a landmark study in the field of policing and crime prevention. The experiment aimed to evaluate the impact of different levels of police presence, specifically preventive patrol, on crime rates and public perception of safety.

The experiment was designed and implemented by researchers from the Kansas City Police Department, in collaboration with criminologists. The study divided the city into three groups: one group received traditional levels of police patrol, another group experienced greatly increased patrol, and a third group had almost no patrol presence. The experiment employed a randomized control trial design, with different areas assigned to each group.

The key findings of the Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment challenged the conventional wisdom that a high level of police presence, in the form of preventive patrol, was necessary to deter crime and enhance public safety.

## Labeling Theory

Also known as Social Reaction Theory or Interactionist Perspective, is a criminological and sociological theory that focuses on how social labels and societal reactions can influence an individual's self-identity and behavior. The theory suggests that when individuals are labeled as deviant or criminal by society, it can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy, where they internalize and embrace the label, resulting in increased deviant or criminal behavior.

## Lawrence Kohlberg (1927-1987)

Was an American psychologist known for his research and theory on moral development. He was a professor at Harvard University and is best known for his work in the field of developmental psychology, particularly his theory of moral development, which expanded on the ideas of Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget.

Kohlberg's theory of moral development proposed that individuals progress through distinct stages of moral reasoning as they mature. He identified six stages of moral development, which were grouped into three main levels:

Preconventional Level:

- a. Stage 1: Obedience and Punishment Orientation
- b. Stage 2: Individualism and Exchange

Conventional Level:

- a. Stage 3: Interpersonal Relationships and "Good Boy/Girl" Orientation
- b. Stage 4: Maintaining Social Order and Authority Orientation

Postconventional Level:

- a. Stage 5: Social Contract and Individual Rights
- b. Stage 6: Universal Principles

Kohlberg's theory suggested that moral development is a lifelong process, and individuals may not necessarily progress through all the stages. He argued that individuals move through these stages as they encounter moral dilemmas and engage in moral reasoning.

## Left-Realist Criminology

A criminological perspective that emerged in the 1980s as a response to criticisms of both conservative and liberal approaches to crime and crime control. Left-Realists seek to address the issue of crime in a

more practical and policy-oriented manner, combining a concern for social justice with a focus on the real experiences of crime and victimization in local communities.

## Legislative Process

Refers to the series of steps and procedures followed by a legislative body, such as a parliament, congress, or legislature, to propose, debate, amend, and enact laws. It involves the development, consideration, and approval of legislation, including bills and resolutions, that govern various aspects of a country's legal framework.

## Lifestyle Resources

Refers to the degree to which group-based patterns of behavior and belief are valued or devalued within a society, e.g., modes of speech, style of dress, attitudes and values, etc.

## Limited-Participation Agency

A NIBRS participating agency unable to meet the offense-reporting requirements of full-participation agencies. That is, these agencies submit detailed incident information only on Part I UCR offenses.

## Mala In Se

A Latin term that translates to "wrong or evil in itself." It refers to acts or behaviors that are universally considered inherently immoral or wrong, regardless of the laws and social norms of a particular society.

Crimes that are considered mala in se are offenses that are fundamentally wrong from a moral standpoint, reflecting a broad consensus across cultures and societies. Examples of mala in se crimes include murder, rape, theft, and assault. These offenses are universally condemned because they violate basic ethical principles and human rights.

## Maladaptation

Refers to a condition or response that is not well-suited or appropriate for the given situation or environment. In various fields, such as psychology, biology, and ecology, the term is used to describe instances where an organism or individual exhibits behaviors, traits, or characteristics that hinder their ability to function effectively or adapt to their surroundings.

## Male-Based Criminology

Refers to the historical focus of criminology on male scholars seeking to explain the criminality of men, often excluding female offenders from research and analysis.

## Marxian Model of Social Class

Developed by the German philosopher and economist Karl Marx, is a key component of Marxist theory. Marx's analysis of class focuses on the relationship between the means of production, the ruling class, and the working class, providing insights into the dynamics of capitalist societies and the inherent conflict between different social classes.

## Maturation Reform

A type of biological explanation that refers to the process of maturing.

## Mechanical Solidarity

A concept introduced by French sociologist Émile Durkheim in his seminal work, "The Division of Labor in Society" (1893). It refers to a form of social cohesion and solidarity that is characteristic of traditional, preindustrial societies, where individuals are bound together by a shared collective conscience and a strong sense of shared values, norms, and beliefs.

## Mental Health Courts

Specialized court programs that aim to address the needs of individuals with mental health disorders who have become involved in the criminal justice system. These courts provide an alternative approach to traditional criminal courts by focusing on rehabilitation, treatment, and support rather than solely on punitive measures. Mental Health Courts are part of the broader movement towards diversion programs that aim to address the underlying issues contributing to criminal behavior.

## Mentally Ill Offender Crime Reduction Act of 2003

A significant piece of legislation aimed at addressing the needs of individuals with mental illness who are involved in the criminal justice system. The Act was introduced in the United States Congress and signed into law by President George W. Bush on July 25, 2003.

## Middle-Class Measuring Rod

A concept that was introduced by sociologist Paul L. Wirth in his article "The Measurement of Social Status in the United States" published in 1938. The Middle-Class Measuring Rod refers to the tendency of people to evaluate social status, success, and well-being based on middle-class norms and values.

## Modeling Theory

Within the context of psychology, refers to a framework for understanding how individuals learn and

acquire new behaviors, attitudes, and emotional responses through observation and imitation of others. Rooted in the principles of social learning theory, particularly as developed by Albert Bandura, modeling theory posits that people can learn not only through direct experience but also by observing the actions and outcomes of others' behaviors. This process involves attention to the model's behavior, retention of the observed behaviors, reproduction of the behavior, and motivation to replicate the behavior based on the observed consequences. Modeling theory has broad applications, including understanding the acquisition of social skills, the impact of media on behavior, therapeutic interventions, and educational strategies. It underscores the significant influence that societal, familial, and media models have on an individual's development and behavior.

### Moffitt's Dual Taxonomic Theory

Developed by criminologist Terrie E. Moffitt, is a prominent theory within the field of criminology that seeks to explain the different trajectories of criminal behavior observed in individuals. The theory proposes two distinct subgroups of offenders based on their patterns of antisocial behavior: life-course persistent offenders (LCP) and adolescence-limited offenders (AL).

### Moral Crusader

Refers to an individual or group who passionately and actively advocates for a particular moral or ethical cause, often with a strong sense of righteousness and conviction. Moral crusaders are driven by a deep belief in the rightness of their cause and seek to promote and enforce their moral values within society.

These individuals or groups may engage in various activities to advance their moral agenda, such as public advocacy, lobbying for legislative changes, organizing protests or demonstrations, and attempting to influence public opinion through media and social platforms.

### Moral Panic

A term used to describe a social phenomenon characterized by an exaggerated, widespread, and often irrational fear or concern over a perceived threat to societal values, norms, and moral order. It typically involves the amplification and sensationalization of a specific issue or group, often fueled by all forms of media, public opinion, and authorities.

### Moral Poverty

A concept that refers to the lack or deficiency of moral values, ethical principles, and empathy in individuals or societies. It suggests that individuals or communities may experience poverty not only in material or economic terms but also in their moral and ethical development.

### National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI)

A nonprofit organization in the United States dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness. It was founded in 1979 by a group of volunteers and individuals with mental health conditions who sought to create a support network and advocate for better mental health services and policies.

NAMI's mission is to provide support, education, and advocacy for people living with mental health conditions and their families. The organization works to promote awareness, reduce stigma, and improve access to mental health services across the country.

### National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

A civil rights organization in the United States. It was founded on February 12, 1909, in response to widespread racial violence and discrimination against African Americans, particularly the 1908 race riot in Springfield, Illinois.

The NAACP's mission is to secure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights for all people and to eliminate race-based discrimination. The organization has been instrumental in advocating for civil rights and working towards the elimination of segregation and other forms of racial injustice.

The NAACP uses a variety of strategies to achieve its goals, including legal action, advocacy, lobbying, and public education. Throughout its history, the NAACP has played a crucial role in landmark civil rights cases, such as *Brown v. Board of Education*, which led to the desegregation of public schools, and it has been involved in numerous other efforts to combat discrimination and promote equal rights for all citizens. The organization continues to be active in addressing contemporary civil rights issues.

### National Crime Victim Survey (NCVS)

Conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in the United States, gathers information on criminal victimization, regardless of whether it was reported to law enforcement. The survey collects data through interviews with individuals, aiming to capture crimes that may go unreported to the police.

### National Crime Victim Survey (NVCS)

Conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in the United States, gathers information on criminal victimization, regardless of whether it was reported to law enforcement. The survey collects data through interviews with individuals, aiming to capture crimes that may go unreported to the police.

### National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS)

An advanced method of crime data collection and reporting developed by the Federal Bureau of



Investigation (FBI) in the United States. Since January 2021, NIBRS replaced the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) as it was designed to provide a detailed and comprehensive review of crime, victims, and more nuanced factors. That is, it provides more detailed and comprehensive information about crimes and incidents.

Unlike the UCR, which only captures summary data on a limited number of offenses, NIBRS collects data on each reported incident and includes a wide range of offense types, such as crimes against persons, property crimes, and crimes against society. It captures extensive details about the incident, the victim(s), the offender(s), and other pertinent factors related to the crime.

## Natural Law

The philosophical perspective that certain immutable laws are fundamental to human nature and can be readily ascertained through reason. In contrast, human-made laws are said to derive from human experience and history, both of which are subject to continual change.

## Needs Assessment

A systematic process used to identify and evaluate the needs, gaps, and priorities of a specific target population or community. It involves gathering information and analyzing data to understand the current situation, assess the needs and challenges faced by the population, and determine the resources and interventions required to address those needs effectively.

A needs assessment is a valuable tool used in various fields, such as public health, education, social services, community development, and organizational planning. It helps ensure that resources are allocated efficiently, interventions are tailored to the specific needs of the population, and desired outcomes are achieved effectively.

## Neglectful/Rejecting Parents

Characterized by a lack of emotional involvement, attention, and support for their children. This parenting style is associated with a failure to meet the child's physical and emotional needs.

## Neoclassical Criminology

A kind of middle ground between the total free will of the classical perspective and the hard determinism of positivism. It differs from the classical perspective in that it focuses on the importance of character and the dynamics of character development, but also incorporates classical concepts by considering the rational choices people make when faced with opportunities for crime. Essentially, it is a modern-day application of classical principles to current problems of crime and crime control in contemporary society.

## Neutralization Theory

Also known as Techniques of Neutralization, is a criminological theory developed by David Matza and Gresham Sykes in the 1950s. The theory explores how individuals rationalize and justify their deviant or criminal behavior while still adhering to societal norms and values. It suggests that people use various psychological and cognitive techniques to neutralize the guilt or shame associated with their actions.

## Nominalist Philosophy

A philosophical position that denies the existence of abstract, universal, or real essences for general categories or concepts. According to nominalism, these general categories or universals are merely names or labels

## Objective Deterrence

Refers to a concept in criminology and criminal justice that focuses on reducing or preventing criminal behavior by creating an environment where potential offenders perceive a high likelihood of getting caught and facing severe consequences for their actions. It is a theory that relies on the objective elements of deterrence rather than the subjective motivations of individual offenders.

## Onset

Refers to the initiation of criminal behavior.

## Organic Solidarity

A sociological concept introduced by French sociologist Émile Durkheim in his seminal work, "The Division of Labor in Society" (1893). It refers to a form of social cohesion and solidarity that is characteristic of modern, industrial societies, where individuals are bound together by their interdependence and specialization in different roles and functions.

## Pathways Perspective

A theoretical framework that examines the unique life experiences and factors that lead women to commit crimes, emphasizing the role of gender-related risk factors.

## Patriarchy

A social system characterized by male dominance and privilege, which feminist criminologists argue shapes opportunities and social participation in ways that disadvantage women.

## Peacemaking Criminology

A theoretical perspective within the field of criminology that seeks to promote peace, social justice, and non-violent conflict resolution as alternatives to punitive and retributive approaches to crime and justice. It emerged as a response to traditional criminological theories and criminal justice practices that often prioritize punishment and retribution over rehabilitation and healing.

## Peer Review

A rigorous evaluation process used to assess the quality, validity, and credibility of scholarly work before it is published. It involves having experts in the relevant field, known as peers or referees, review and provide feedback on an author's work, such as research articles, conference papers, or book manuscripts. The purpose of peer review is to ensure that published research meets high academic standards and contributes to the advancement of knowledge.

## Perceptual Deterrence

Also known as subjective deterrence, is a concept in criminology and criminal justice that focuses on how individuals' perceptions and beliefs about the likelihood of getting caught and the severity of punishments influence their decision-making regarding criminal behavior. Unlike objective deterrence, which emphasizes the actual, observable aspects of law enforcement and punishment, perceptual deterrence centers on the subjective factors that affect an individual's choice to engage in or abstain from criminal acts.

## Period Effects

Refers to the impact or influence of living within a particular historical period.

## Permissive Parents

Also known as indulgent parents, exhibit a lenient and non-authoritarian parenting style. They are characterized by their high levels of warmth, responsiveness, and support but their relatively low levels of control and discipline.

## Persistence

Refers to the continuation or duration of an offending career.

## Pluralist Perspective

A theoretical approach in criminology that acknowledges the existence of multiple competing interests,

values, and power structures within society. This perspective recognizes that different groups and individuals have diverse viewpoints and may vie for influence and control over the creation and enforcement of laws and the criminal justice system.

### Political Resources

Refers to the exercise of power outside of government.

### Positivism

Positivism within criminology refers to a theoretical approach that emphasizes the application of scientific methods and empirical observation in the study of crime and criminal behavior. It emerged in the late 19th century as a response to the limitations of earlier philosophical and moralistic explanations of crime.

Positivist criminology rejects the idea that crime is solely a result of individual choices or moral failings. Instead, it seeks to understand crime as a social phenomenon influenced by various factors, including biological, psychological, and social determinants. Positivist criminologists believe that scientific methods can uncover the underlying causes of criminal behavior and inform effective crime prevention and control strategies.

The key principles of positivist criminology include: (1) empiricism, (2) determinism, and (3) objectivity, and (4) use of the scientific method.

Positivist criminology has led to advancements in the understanding of crime through the use of empirical research and statistical analysis. It has influenced the development of various subfields within criminology, such as biosocial criminology, psychological criminology, and sociological criminology. Positivist perspectives have also influenced the development of evidence-based policies and interventions in the field of criminal justice.

### Post Modern Criminology

A theoretical approach within the field of criminology that emerged in the late 20th century and is influenced by postmodern philosophy. This perspective challenges the assumptions and methods of traditional criminology and questions the notion of a universal and objective truth. Instead, postmodern criminologists emphasize the subjectivity of knowledge and the complexities of crime, deviance, and the criminal justice system.

### Postmodernist Constructionism

A version of social constructionism that challenges the modernist assumptions of universal truth, rationality, and progress, and instead emphasizes the diversity, complexity, and contingency of social reality.

## Process Evaluation

A systematic assessment and analysis of the implementation, delivery, and operations of a program, intervention, or policy. It focuses on understanding how the program is being implemented and the processes involved in delivering the intended services or activities. The primary aim of process evaluation is to provide insights into program operations, identify areas for improvement, and assess fidelity to the program model.

## Psychoanalytic Perspective

Refers to a psychological approach that was developed by Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis. It is a theory of personality and a method of psychotherapy that focuses on the unconscious mind and its influence on human behavior. The core ideas of the psychoanalytic perspective revolve around the role of unconscious thoughts, feelings, and motivations in shaping human experiences and behaviors.

## Psychopath

Also known as a sociopath, is an individual who exhibits a cluster of personality traits and behaviors associated with antisocial personality disorder (ASPD). Psychopathy is a term commonly used in forensic psychology and criminology to describe individuals who display a specific set of characteristics, which often include manipulateness, a lack of empathy, shallow emotions, and a propensity for engaging in impulsive and antisocial behaviors.

## Public Policy

Refers to the decisions, actions, and guidelines adopted by governments or public authorities to address societal issues, regulate behavior, and promote the collective well-being of the public. It encompasses a wide range of laws, regulations, programs, and initiatives that shape and guide the actions of governments and public institutions.

## Race

A social construct used to categorize and classify human populations based on physical characteristics such as skin color, hair texture, and facial features. The concept of race has been historically used to distinguish and group people into distinct categories, often with the assumption of inherent biological or genetic differences between racial groups.

It is important to understand that race is a social construct and not a biological or scientific category. While there are variations in physical traits among human populations, genetic variation does not align neatly with traditional racial classifications. In fact, genetic differences between individuals within a racial group are often greater than differences between racial groups.

The understanding of race and racial categories varies across different cultures and societies, and classifications have changed over time. Racial categories can also be influenced by cultural, historical, and political factors.

Due to its social nature, race has been used as a basis for discrimination, inequality, and prejudice throughout history. However, it is crucial to recognize that race should not be used to determine intelligence, character, or other inherent qualities of individuals or groups. Acknowledging the social construct of race is essential in promoting a more inclusive and equitable society that respects the diversity of human populations and values the dignity and rights of all individuals, regardless of their racial background.

### Racial Profiling

A law enforcement practice in which individuals are targeted or treated differently by law enforcement solely based on their race, ethnicity, national origin, or perceived racial characteristics. It involves the use of race or ethnicity as a factor in making decisions about whom to stop, question, search, or investigate, without any specific evidence of criminal activity or wrongdoing.

### Radical Constructionism

A version of social constructionism that completely rejects the idea of an objective reality and sees everything as socially constructed, including one's own analysis.

### Radical Criminology

A theoretical approach within the field of criminology that seeks to address crime and social deviance from a structural and critical perspective. It focuses on the underlying social, economic, and political conditions that contribute to crime, rather than solely focusing on individual motivations and actions. Radical criminology emerged in the 1960s and 1970s as a response to the limitations of traditional criminological theories, particularly those that ignored the role of power dynamics and social inequalities in shaping criminal behavior and the criminal justice system.

### Rational Choice Theory

Rational Choice Theory is a perspective within criminology that suggests individuals make decisions and engage in behavior based on a rational calculation of costs and benefits. It is a framework that assumes individuals act in their own self-interest and seek to maximize their personal advantages while minimizing potential disadvantages.

According to rational choice theory, individuals consider the potential rewards and risks associated with a particular action before deciding whether to engage in it. They weigh the expected benefits, such as financial gain or personal satisfaction, against the potential costs, such as legal consequences or physical

harm. The theory posits that individuals make rational choices by comparing the potential outcomes and selecting the course of action that offers the greatest net benefit.

### Rational Choice Theory (RTC)

Developed out of the neoclassical school of criminology and is based on the belief that criminals make a conscious, rational, and at least partially informed choice to commit crime after weighing the costs and benefits of available alternatives. The two main varieties of choice theory are routine activities theory and situational choice theory.

### Reaction Formation

A psychological defense mechanism identified by Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis. It refers to a process in which an individual unconsciously adopts beliefs, attitudes, or behaviors that are the opposite of their true feelings or desires. This defense mechanism operates to manage anxiety or internal conflicts by presenting an outward expression that is socially acceptable or morally aligned, despite conflicting thoughts or emotions within the individual.

### Reification

A concept that refers to the process of treating abstract or conceptual ideas as if they were concrete, tangible, or real entities. It involves attributing a higher degree of concreteness or objectivity to something that is abstract or subjective in nature.

In the context of social theory, reification often involves treating social constructs or relationships as if they are natural or inherent aspects of reality, rather than recognizing them as socially constructed and contingent upon human interpretation and interaction. This can lead to the perception that social structures or categories, such as race, gender, or social classes, are fixed and unchangeable, rather than being socially constructed and subject to change.

### Reintegrative Shaming

A concept developed by Australian criminologists John Braithwaite and John M. Braithwaite as part of their theory of restorative justice. Reintegrative shaming is a form of social control that aims to address and reduce criminal behavior by using shame in a way that promotes the reintegration of offenders back into society.

### Relative Deprivation

In the context of sociology and social psychology, refers to the perception or feeling of being disadvantaged or deprived in comparison to others. It occurs when individuals or groups believe that they

are not receiving their fair share of resources, opportunities, or rewards, which can lead to feelings of frustration, resentment, and discontent.

### Replacement Theory

A political ideology that claims that the ethnic and cultural identity of a certain group of people is being threatened or erased by the influx and integration of another group of people, usually of a different race, religion, or culture. Replacement theory also accuses the elites or the authorities of facilitating or encouraging this process, either deliberately or negligently.

### Resilient Empirical Regularity

A way to describe the curvilinear relationship between age and crime.

### Responsiveness

A dimension of parenting that refers to the level of warmth, emotional support, and sensitivity that parents show in response to their children's needs and emotions. It is one of the two main dimensions of parenting style, with the other being demandingness.

Responsive parents are attuned to their children's feelings, desires, and developmental stages, and they provide appropriate support and guidance. They actively listen to their children, validate their emotions, and offer comfort and understanding during times of distress. Responsive parents also foster open communication, allowing children to express themselves freely without fear of judgment or punishment.

### Robert E. Park and Ernest W. Burgess (1928)

Prominent sociologists associated with the Chicago School of Sociology, a major sociological tradition that emerged in the early 20th century, primarily at the University of Chicago. Their collaboration and research made significant contributions to the fields of urban sociology, social ecology, and human ecology.

### Robert K. Merton (1910-2003)

Was an influential American sociologist renowned for his contributions to the field of sociology and the development of various sociological theories. He made significant contributions in the areas of social theory, the sociology of science, and the sociology of deviance.

### Ronald Clarke and Derek Cornish

Leading scholars of RCT who have proposed a framework for modeling offenders' decisions and have applied RCT to various types of crimes and crime prevention strategies.



## Ronald L. Akers (1966)

A criminologist who is known for his work in the area of social learning theory. He developed and expanded upon Edwin Sutherland's differential association theory. Akers argued that criminal behavior is learned through social interactions and that individuals are more likely to engage in criminal activities if they associate with others who have pro-criminal attitudes and behaviors. His work emphasizes the role of reinforcement and punishment in shaping criminal behavior and has had a lasting influence on the understanding of how individuals acquire criminal values and engage in criminal acts.

## Routine Activities Theory

Examines the interaction of motivated offenders, capable guardians, and suitable targets as an explanation of crime and suggests that an individual's everyday activities contribute significantly to the likelihood of his or her victimization.

## Scottsboro Boys

A landmark legal case in the United States that exposed racial injustice and highlighted the deep racial prejudices and flaws in the American justice system during the 1930s. The case involved the wrongful arrest, trial, and conviction of nine African American teenagers on false charges of raping two white women.

## Second Chance Act

Authorizes federal grants to government agencies and community faith-based organizations to provide employment assistance, substance abuse treatment, housing, family programming, mentoring, victim support, and other services intended to reduce recidivism.

## Segregation

Refers to the enforced separation of different racial, ethnic, religious, or social groups in a community, organization, or society. This separation can occur in various aspects of life, such as housing, education, employment, and public facilities. Historically, segregation has been most prominently associated with racial segregation, particularly in the United States during the era of Jim Crow laws, where laws and policies enforced the separation of African Americans from white Americans in various public spaces.

Segregation can take different forms, including de jure segregation, which is segregation imposed by law, and de facto segregation, which occurs without explicit legal mandates but as a result of social and economic factors. Efforts to combat segregation and promote integration have been central to various civil rights movements around the world. The goal is to create more inclusive and equitable societies where individuals from different backgrounds have equal access to opportunities and resources.

## Self Control Theory

Another descendant of classical criminology that argues that low self-control, a stable personality trait, predisposes individuals to crime and other present-oriented activities.

## Self-Report Surveys

Involves individuals reporting their own involvement in criminal activities. These surveys are typically conducted anonymously and can provide insights into less detected or unreported crimes. They are often used to study juvenile delinquency and certain types of offenses.

## Sigmund Freud

Was an Austrian neurologist and the founder of psychoanalysis, a groundbreaking approach to understanding the human mind and behavior. He is considered one of the most influential figures in the field of psychology and his ideas have had a profound impact on various disciplines, including psychology, psychiatry, and cultural studies.

## Situational Crime Control

Shifts the focus of crime prevention away from the offender and onto the context in which crime occurs. Instead of focusing on why people commit crime, it looks primarily at why crime occurs in specific settings. It emphasizes the concept of opportunity – reduce opportunities for crime in specific situations to prevent crime. Situational crime control works by removing or reducing criminal opportunity.

## Social Bond Theory

Also known as Social Control Theory, is a criminological theory developed by Travis Hirschi in 1969. The theory proposes that the strength of an individual's social bonds to society plays a crucial role in determining their propensity to engage in deviant or criminal behavior. It suggests that individuals with strong social bonds are less likely to commit crimes because they have more to lose by engaging in such behavior.

## Social Construction

Refers to the idea that many aspects of our reality, including concepts, categories, identities, and even certain behaviors, are not inherent or naturally occurring but are instead created, shaped, and maintained by society and culture. These constructs are not objective or universal truths but are rather products of human perception, interpretation, and interaction.

## Social Constructionism

A theoretical perspective that argues that what counts as reality is the outcome of social processes through which humans interactively create and negotiate meaning about the world.

## Social Control Theories

A group of criminological theories that focus on the mechanisms and processes by which societies regulate and control individual behavior to prevent deviance and criminality. These theories suggest that the presence of social bonds, attachments, and conformity to societal norms play a crucial role in deterring individuals from engaging in deviant behavior.

## Social Deviance

Refers to behaviors, actions, or characteristics that violate social norms, values, or expectations within a particular society or culture. Deviance is a relative concept, as what is considered deviant in one society may be accepted or even encouraged in another. The concept of social deviance is essential for understanding how societies define and enforce acceptable behavior.

## Social Disorganization

A criminological theory that focuses on the influence of neighborhood characteristics and social factors on crime and deviance. Developed by sociologists at the University of Chicago, particularly Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay, in the early 20th century, this theory examines how certain neighborhood attributes can contribute to higher rates of crime and a breakdown in social control.

## Social Ecology

An interdisciplinary field that studies the complex interactions between human societies and their environment. It draws from sociology, anthropology, geography, urban planning, and other disciplines to understand how social and environmental factors influence each other and shape human behavior and social organization.

## Social Interactionist Theories

A set of sociological perspectives that focus on the role of social interactions in shaping human behavior, language development, and the construction of social reality. These theories emphasize how individuals develop a sense of self and meaning through their interactions with others and the larger social

## Social Learning Theory

Also known as Social Cognitive Theory or Social Learning Socialization Theory, is a psychological and criminological theory developed by Albert Bandura in the 1960s. The theory proposes that individuals learn new behaviors, attitudes, and values by observing and imitating others, particularly those they perceive as role models or authority figures. Social Learning Theory emphasizes the importance of the social environment in shaping human behavior and focuses on how learned behaviors influence future actions.

## Social Resources

Also known as social capital, refer to the network of relationships and connections that individuals and groups have in a society. These resources include both tangible and intangible assets that arise from social interactions and can provide various advantages and opportunities for individuals and communities. Social resources are essential for personal and collective well-being, as they facilitate access to information, support, and resources that may not be available through other means.

## Sociobiological Theories

Also known as evolutionary psychology or sociobiology, are theoretical frameworks that seek to explain human behavior and social phenomena by integrating evolutionary biology and genetics with social and cultural factors. These theories propose that certain behavioral and social traits in humans have evolved through natural selection, as they provided survival and reproductive advantages to our ancestors.

## Spouse Abuse or Battering

Often referred to as domestic violence, is a pattern of abusive behavior or mistreatment that occurs within an intimate or familial relationship, typically between spouses or partners. It involves the use of physical, emotional, psychological, sexual, or economic tactics to exert power and control over the other person.

## Standards for the Mentally Ill in Jails

Provides for the Basic Mental Health Services standard (F-03 in the 2018 manuals for jails and prisons) and is meant to ensure that individuals with mental health problems are able to maintain their best level of functioning. The immediate goal of treatment is to alleviate symptoms of serious mental disorders and to prevent relapse.

## Stanley Cohen (1995)

Was a renowned sociologist and criminologist known for his work on social reactions to deviant behavior

and moral panics. In 1995, he published a book titled "Visions of Social Control: Crime, Punishment, and Classification." In this book, Cohen explored various aspects of social control, including how societies define, classify, and respond to deviance and criminal behavior.

### Strain Theory

A criminological and sociological perspective that seeks to explain the relationship between social structure, cultural goals, and the occurrence of deviant behavior. The theory, first proposed by sociologist Robert K. Merton in the 1930s, suggests that individuals may turn to deviance and criminal behavior when they experience strain or stress resulting from the discrepancy between culturally prescribed goals and the means available to achieve those goals.

### Subculture Theory

A sociological and criminological perspective that explores how certain social groups develop distinct norms, values, beliefs, and practices that differ from those of the dominant culture. These subcultures can emerge as a response to social and economic conditions, creating unique ways of life and patterns of behavior that may sometimes lead to deviance or criminal activities.

### Subculture-of-Violence

A sociological concept that proposes the existence of certain subcultures or social groups within a society that promote and accept violence as a means of resolving conflicts and gaining social status. This theory was first introduced by Marvin Wolfgang and Franco Ferracuti in the 1960s as an attempt to explain the high rates of violent crime in urban areas.

### Subjective Utility Model

A concept in economics and decision theory that focuses on how individuals make choices based on their subjective evaluations of the utility, or satisfaction, they expect to derive from different options or outcomes. This model is a fundamental component of microeconomics and helps explain how individuals make rational decisions by weighing the benefits and costs of various alternatives.

### Summative Evaluations

In the context of program evaluation, summative evaluations play a crucial role in assessing the overall effectiveness and impact of a program. They provide insights into whether the program's objectives and goals have been achieved and whether the intended outcomes have been realized. Summative evaluations are typically conducted at the conclusion of the program's implementation and focus on making judgments about the program's success or effectiveness.

## Supplemental Homicide Report

A specialized dataset and reporting tool used to collect detailed information about homicides in the United States. It is part of the broader UCR program administered by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The UCR SHR is designed to provide law enforcement agencies with a more comprehensive and detailed picture of homicides in their jurisdiction. While the standard UCR report collects basic information about crimes, including the number of homicides, the SHR goes further by collecting extensive details about each homicide incident.

## Symbolic Interaction

A sociological perspective that focuses on the study of how individuals create and interpret symbols to develop shared meanings and construct their social reality. It is a micro-level theory that examines the everyday interactions between people and how these interactions shape their perceptions, identities, and social behavior.

## Symbolic Interactionism

A sociological perspective and theoretical framework that focuses on the role of symbols and human interaction in shaping society and individual behavior. It emerged as a prominent school of thought in sociology during the early 20th century, primarily associated with scholars like George Herbert Mead and Herbert Blumer.

## Temporal Ordering

Also known as temporal precedence or time order, is a fundamental concept in research and science that refers to the chronological sequence of events or occurrences. It asserts that there is a clear cause-and-effect relationship between two variables, with one variable (the cause) preceding the other variable (the effect) in time.

To establish causal relationships between variables, temporal ordering is essential. For a cause to truly lead to an effect, the cause must happen before the effect. This principle is a crucial criterion in experimental and quasi-experimental research designs, where researchers manipulate an independent variable (the cause) to observe its impact on a dependent variable (the effect) while ensuring that the cause precedes the effect in time.

## Theoretical Criminology

Theoretical Criminology refers to the study of crime and criminal behavior through the lens of various theoretical perspectives. It seeks to understand the causes, patterns, and dynamics of crime by developing and applying theoretical frameworks. Theoretical criminology plays a crucial role in shaping our

understanding of crime, informing policy and interventions, and guiding research in the field of criminology.

Theoretical criminology encompasses a wide range of perspectives and theories, each offering different explanations and insights into criminal behavior. Some prominent theoretical perspectives within criminology include:

1. **Classical Criminology:** Based on the ideas of the Enlightenment thinkers, classical criminology emphasizes rationality, free will, and the concept of deterrence. It posits that individuals choose to engage in criminal behavior when the perceived benefits outweigh the potential costs or punishments.
  2. **Biological and Biosocial Theories:** These theories explore the role of biological factors, genetics, and physiological characteristics in shaping criminal behavior. They examine how biological predispositions, brain functioning, and hormonal imbalances may contribute to criminal tendencies.
  3. **Psychological Theories:** Psychological theories focus on individual traits, personality disorders, cognitive processes, and social learning as factors that influence criminal behavior. They explore concepts such as impulsivity, self-control, psychopathy, and the impact of childhood experiences on later criminality.
  4. **Sociological Theories:**
    - a. **Social Disorganization Theory:** It suggests that crime is a result of social and structural factors, such as poverty, neighborhood characteristics, and community disorganization.
    - b. **Strain Theory:** This theory posits that crime arises when individuals experience strain or frustration due to the inability to achieve socially valued goals through legitimate means.
    - c. **Social Learning Theory:** It highlights the role of social interactions, observation, and imitation in the acquisition of criminal behavior. Individuals learn criminal techniques and attitudes through their interactions with others.
  5. **Critical Criminology:** This perspective focuses on the power dynamics, social inequalities, and structural issues that contribute to crime. It examines how social, economic, and political factors shape criminal behavior and highlights the role of class, race, gender, and other forms of social oppression.
- These are just a few examples of the theoretical perspectives within criminology. Theoretical criminology provides a framework for understanding the complex causes of crime and helps generate hypotheses and guide empirical research. By studying these theories, criminologists seek to develop effective crime prevention strategies, inform policy decisions, and contribute to the broader understanding of crime and criminal justice.

## Theory

Succinctly, an explanation. Also, a part of everyday life and an attempt to identify and explain the order of natural occurrences through statements about correlations between observable events that would be otherwise unexplainable.

## Thornberry's Interactional Theory

A criminological theory developed by Marvin D. Thornberry. It provides a comprehensive framework for understanding delinquent behavior by examining the complex interaction between individual characteristics and social factors over time.

## Trait Theory

Also known as personality trait theory, is a psychological perspective that focuses on identifying and describing the enduring patterns of behavior, thoughts, and emotions that make up an individual's personality. According to trait theory, individuals possess characteristic traits or predispositions that influence how they perceive, interpret, and respond to the world around them.

## Turning Points

Refers to significant life events or experiences that have the potential to alter an individual's trajectory away from delinquent behavior. These events can act as pivotal moments that lead to desistance or a reduction in criminal involvement.

## U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)

Under the leadership of the Attorney General of the United States, the Justice Department is composed of more than 40 separate component organizations and more than 115,000 employees. Headquartered at the Robert F. Kennedy Building in Washington, D.C., the Department maintains field offices in all states and territories across the United States and in more than 50 countries around the world.

## Uniform Crime Report (UCR)

Was a program, maintained by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in the United States, collects and publishes data on reported crimes. It includes information on various crimes, such as murder, robbery, burglary, and motor vehicle theft, providing statistics at the national, state, and local levels.

## Variables

Variables in the social science refers to a measurable or observable concept or characteristic that can vary or take on different values. Variables are used to study and understand the relationships between different phenomena or concepts. Variables can be classified into two main types; that is independent and dependent.



## Victimization Rates

Measures the frequency of individuals or households experiencing crime. These rates provide an understanding of the likelihood of becoming a victim of crime within a given population.

## Weberian Model of Social Class

Proposed by the German sociologist Max Weber, is a theoretical framework that emphasizes the multidimensional nature of social stratification. Unlike Karl Marx, who focused primarily on economic factors as the basis of social class, Weber argued that social class should be understood as a combination of three interrelated dimensions: class, status, and party.

## What-Works Movement

A paradigm that draws on an evidence-based criminological approach to identify and promote effective programs and practices for preventing and controlling crime.

## White Papers

Detailed and authoritative documents that presents information, analysis, and proposals on a particular topic or issue. It is typically produced by a government, organization, or company to educate readers, provide insights, and offer recommendations or solutions related to a specific subject.

White papers are often used to address complex problems, introduce new policies or strategies, or present research findings. They serve as informative and persuasive documents, aiming to influence opinions, shape debates, and guide decision-making. White papers are widely used in various fields, including government, business, technology, healthcare, and education.

## Wyatt v. Stickney (1972)

The right to treatment for people with mental illness was first recognized in this 1972 case within Alabama. The court concluded that there were many treatment options for individuals with mental illness that did not involve warehousing in large state institutions.

## Zone in Transition

Also known as the "Zone of Transition" or the "Transitional Zone," is a term used in urban sociology and criminology. It refers to a specific area within a city that experiences rapid demographic and social changes, often associated with high levels of crime, poverty, and urban decay.