Criminology A Sociological Approach 6th edition Beirne Test Bank

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2
The Measurement of Crime
CHAPTER OUTLINE
Chapter 2 outlines the major sources of crime data in the United States. Most official data are statistics, but no measures of crime are objective. Different measures construct crime differently. This chapter helps students think critically about UCR and NCVS data.

2.1 Caution: Data Do Not Speak for Themselves!
The first official crime data date to Quetelet's nineteenth-century work (see section 3.2). Positivist criminology is based on seemingly objective scientific procedures. However, data are not objective facts that speak the truth; rather data represent the interests and viewpoint of the scientist investigating the subject. Data must thus be understood within the context it is gathered and the purpose for which they are used. Concepts and theories shape what "counts" as crime; what crime data mean is open to interpretation. For example, whether killing someone is murder depends on a legalistic definition of crime. If an officer (justifiably) kills someone in the line of duty the act is not murder under criminal law. But a human rights perspective on crime might see the act as murder, leading to different murder data. Worker deaths due to unsafe working conditions, surgical death, and tobacco-related deaths could also be seen as murder using a human rights approach.

2.2 Official Crime Data
In 1927, the federal government established the Uniform Crime Records Committee, and in 1930, the United States began compiling official crime data. In its first year, 400 cities representing 20 million residents in 43 states participated in this new voluntary reporting system. It has become an annual, congressionally mandated report that is often seen as the most reliable source of crime data.

Police-Based Data: Uniform Crime Reports (UCR)
Compiled by the FBI, the UCR now gathers data from more than 18,000 city, county, state, tribal, and federal law enforcement agencies within the United States. These agencies cover the majority of the total U.S. population (e.g., 98.9 percent of metro areas, 93.1 percent of cities and towns, and 94.2 percent of rural areas according to 2013 FBI data). The UCR provides detailed statistics on four violent crimes (murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault) and four property crimes (burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson). Figure 2.1 provides the FBI's 2012 definitions of these crimes. The UCR also provides information on 21 other crimes, including simple assault; forgery and counterfeiting; fraud; embezzlement; buying, receiving, and possessing stolen goods; carrying and possessing weapons; prostitution and commercialized vice; other sex offenses (except rape); drug abuse violations; gambling; offenses against family and children; driving under the influence; liquor law offenses; drunkenness; disorderly conduct; vagrancy; all other offenses except traffic; curfew and loitering; and under-18 runaway persons. Finally, the UCR also includes information on hate crimes (both numbers and bias motivation), police employment, and arrest trends. UCR data about the eight major crimes are based on crimes known to police (CKP). The report includes the number of crimes, rate (per 100,000), percent changes from the prior year, basic demographics of victims and offenders, regional rates for four parts of the country, and clearance (arrest) rates. Figures 2.2 and 2.3 provide "snapshots" for violent and property crime using 2012 FBI data. Violent crime has increased in the West (3.2 percent) and Midwest (1.5 percent), and decreased in the South (0.3 percent) and Northeast (1.2 percent). Larceny-theft and arson did not change from 2011 to 2012. Burglary fell (3.7 percent), but motor vehicle theft rose (0.6 percent).

Police-Based Data: National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS)
The National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) is a supplemental and far more detailed version of the traditional UCR. The computerized NIBRS is not yet fully operational, but it is based on data provided by local agencies to the national UCR program regarding each single incident and arrest for 23 Group A and B offenses. Table 2.1 identifies Group A offense categories. The new NIBRS system records *all* crimes committed in a crime incident (unlike the UCR, which uses the hierarchy rule) and collects detailed descriptive information about the circumstances of the crime; demographics for offender(s) and victim(s); presence of guns; property loss details; and hate crime motive (if present).

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Evaluation of the UCR

The UCR has several shortcomings. Six of the major problems are:

1. An unknown amount of unreported crime occurs daily, but this "**dark figure" of crime** is not in the UCR. Victim surveys and self-reports can help estimate the dark figure.
2. UCR reporting is **voluntary**, which leads to FBI estimates whose accuracy is difficult to assess.
3. **No federal crimes** are included.
4. Only the most serious crime is documented even if more than one crime occurs in any single event. This "**hierarchy rule**" leads to undercounting.
5. **Measurement of seriousness**: the UCR is based on seemingly objective legally defined categories, but the UCR is biased toward crimes more often committed by relatively powerless persons. White-collar, corporate, and political crime receive little attention. Speculation as to why this is the case includes detection and reporting problems. Political bias in favor of powerful persons by the FBI has also been suggested.
6. It is not clear if the UCR **measures crime, police activity, or bureaucratic activity** of official agencies.

When it comes to reporting, law enforcement faces a contradictory dilemma—lower crime rates indicate a successful department, whereas higher rates justify additional resources. Many factors shape the construction of official data, such as reporting patterns, technological improvements, enforcement patters, the number of officers, and even outright manipulation of data. Five things must occur for a criminal incident to appear in the UCR: (1) someone must perceive an event as a crime, (2) that event must come to the attention of the police, (3) the police must agree that it is a crime, (4) they must code the crime on the proper UCR form and submit it to the FBI, and (5) the FBI must include that report in the UCR. Each of these is subject to distortion.

Two studies illustrate some of the problems and politics—Jenkins' controversial study of the rise in serial murder, and Black's research on the conditions that shape police "acceptance" of an act as a crime. Jenkins noted that murders recorded as "motiveless" are often assumed to be the work of serial killers. In 1966, 5.9 percent of murders were motiveless, but by 1984 the number increased to 22 percent. This "epidemic" provided a rationale for a new Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (VICAP) at the FBI Academy. Donald Black documented multiple conditions that influence whether an event is "accepted" as a crime by police (and thus potentially included in the UCR): the legal seriousness of the crime, the complainant's preferences, the relational distance between the complainant and the offender, the complainant's deference to police authority, and the complainant's social status.

Victimization Data: National Crime Victimization Surveys (NCVS)

Another major source of crime data is the NCVS, compiled by the Bureau of Justice Statistics since 1972. This **victimization survey** provides information about the "dark figure" of crime. Whereas the UCR is based on CKP, the NCVS is a representative sample of victimization rather than criminal acts. Individuals are interviewed two times per year for 3.5 years for the survey. In 2012 the report was based on a random sample that included 79,800 households and 143,120 individuals aged 12 and over.

Victimization surveys provide criminologists with a different view of crime patterns than the police-based UCR does. The NCVS is designed more as a substitute for the UCR program than as a complement. Because they used different sources—actually victimized individuals versus incidents reported to police—it is difficult to compare the NCVS and UCR. The reports tell different things about crime. Major findings from the 2012 NCVS show that less then half of all victimizations are reported to the police, and both property and violent victimization rates are near historic lows, but the overall rate of violent crime increased from 22.6 to 26.1 per 100,000. The 2012 rate of property crime also increased, from 138.7 to 155.8. Other findings are: teens and young adults experience the highest rates of violent crime; other than rape and sexual assault, men have significantly higher rates of violent victimization than women, especially for robbery and assault; African Americans experience the highest rates of both violent and property crime victimization; young people are more likely to experience violent crime; and people aged 65 and older experience more property crime. The report also shows no statistically significant change in domestic violence, violent crime with injury, and firearm violence from 2011 to 2012. See Figure 2.4.

Evaluation of the NCVS

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Both the UCR and NVCS show decreased crime in the first decade of the new millennia. Like the UCR, the NCVS has problems, especially underreporting of crimes, response bias, and time-in-sample bias. For example, the NCVS understates crime due to forgetting and/or reluctance to report (e.g., domestic violence); socioeconomic class shapes underreporting; and victimization rates tend to go down the longer an interviewee is in the study. In response to these criticisms the Bureau of Justice Statistics changed NCVS procedures. The redesigned NCVS includes strategies to increase the accuracy of respondent recall and better address anonymity. It includes more crimes and takes a longitudinal approach. The NCVS now permits analysis of such issues as the geographic mobility of respondents, long-term health and economic consequences of victimization, victim contacts with the criminal justice system over an extended period of time, the characteristics of victims, and the degree to which respondents in one year also account for victimizations in other years.

Federal Data on White-Collar Crime, Corporate Crime, and Internet Fraud

Neither the UCR nor the NCVS include corporate crime. Sources of corporate crime data include Federal regulatory agencies such as EPA and OSHA. Box 2.1 identifies a range of sources based on offense type (e.g., the FDA for contaminated food violations). The data suffer from the same problems as police data, and the amount of unreported corporate crime is enormous. Since 2001 the Internet Crime Complaint Center (IC3) has collected data on Internet fraud, including victim and offender demographics and geographic location. IC3 is a joint venture of the FBI and the National White-Collar Crime Center. In 2012, IC3 showed 8.3 percent more complaints than in 2011, amounting to $525.4 million defrauded.

2.3 Unofficial Crime Data

Criminologists often do not limit themselves to the sources of data available through official government agencies. The text addresses six such sources of unofficial data: self-report, life-course, life-history, criminal biographies, observation, and comparative-historical.

Self-Report Data

Since the 1940s, asking individuals to anonymously report on their own criminal activities has been used to address underestimates of crime in official reports. Austin Porterfield's research highlighting trends in delinquency was the first **self-report** study. He found no significant difference in the offending patterns of college students compared to individuals processed by the courts. But he did find a significant difference when it came to court appearances—which were mostly by lower socioeconomic status youth. Self-report studies challenge the reliability of police-based data in areas such as gender differences in prevalence, incidence, and seriousness of delinquent involvement and arrests.

As with all sources of data, self-report studies are flawed. They are vulnerable to exaggeration by respondents, especially by males. Some respondents forget offenses, and most research ignores the most serious offenses. Self-report studies tend not to rely on convenience sampling (e.g., students) rather than use representative sampling. Although they may show patterns of offending behavior, self-report research does explain why they are shaped by gender, race, and class.

Life-Course Data

Life-course research is the most dominant form of unofficial criminological data. Data come from official crime data, self-reports, psychological evaluations, IQ tests, criminal histories, court records, incarceration records, and coroners' reports. Life-course data are typically collected and then integrated through large-scale, retrospective longitudinal studies. Common topics include why some adolescents offend and others do not, factors related to the onset of criminality, demographics of serious versus trivial offenders, persistence and escalation, and the consequences of offending for offenders and their families.

A major question posed by life-course researchers is whether a small group of chronic offenders continue offending into and beyond middle age. Longitudinal studies are ongoing in Cambridge, Pittsburg, Rochester, and Denver. The Rochester Youth Development Study is a three-phase inquiry regarding adolescent gang activity, high school drop-out rates, and teen parenthood. Among the findings are that "precarious transitions" and intensity of gang involvement lower one's chances for a later crime-free life.

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Life-History Data

Life-history data create a detailed document of the offender's changing personal choices and life experiences over time with an eye to how social position both enables and constrains criminal activity. Some life histories are sociological, while others are more psychosocial or even psychological in nature. Yet, all life histories try to reveal the "lived experiences" of individuals and how they see the world. Examples include studies of violent adolescents and boxer Mike Tyson. Box 2.2 looks at the development of offending.

Criminal Biographies

We must be careful when generalizing from a few cases. But data can also be obtained by examining an offender's own account of criminal behavior, usually recorded by ethnographers working with the criminals themselves. Box 2.3 describes famous biographies: *The Professional Thief* by Edwin Sutherland, *Tragic Magic* by Stuart Hills and Ron Santiago, *Confessions of a Dying Thief* by Steffensmeir and Umer, and *Criminal Identities and Consumer Culture* by Hall, Winlow, and Ancrum.

Observation Research and Participant Observation Research

In **observation research**, researchers study people in their natural settings. Sometimes the researcher is known to be observing (e.g., Jill McCorkle's prison research). Other researchers "go underground" and try to blend in, an approach helpful when studying those who usually resist the presence of outsiders, such as Hell's Angels. Sometimes the researcher takes part in the behavior being studied. Such **participant observation** raises difficult questions of objectivity and ethics (e.g., right to privacy, whether to report observed crimes, and danger). Neither courts nor IRBs tend to look favorably on participation observation. Box 2.4 notes some classics studies: *Tearoom Trade* by Laud Humphreys, *Part-Time Crime* by Jason Ditton, *The Nude Beach* by Jack Douglas and Paul Rasmussen, and Marc Resiner's *Game Wars*.

Comparative and Historical Research

Comparative criminology involves systematic comparison of crime in two or more societies, for example, homicide rates. The approach allows researchers to investigate a variety of questions in unique ways. Both official and unofficial sources can be compared. Data from INTERPOL, the United Nations, and the World Health Organization are the former. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and Doctors Without Borders are the latter. Chapter 14 discusses difficulties with cross-national research. Cursory comparisons may actually measure different phenomena, for example. **Historical** data help us see how the past has shaped the present. It also makes it possible to generalize beyond the particular patterns of a given era. Historical research can also be cross-cultural. Kilday's (2007) study of 18th-century Scottish murder, infanticide, and assault is an example.

Assessment

This survey of major sources of crime data stresses that data are not neutral, unbiased representations of criminal behavior. As the authors put it, "Data do not speak for themselves!" Whether official or unofficial, crime data reflect concepts (e.g., the legalistic approach) and criminologists differ on which concepts are best suited to study crime. Underlying theoretical assumptions also guide the interpretation of data.

CLASS EXERCISES

After reading this chapter, students should be able to critically evaluate crime data from the popular media, as well as crime data used in published studies. Students should be able to discern the relative merits of self-reported data from official data, such as the National Crime Victimization Survey. Students should also be able to articulate the historical and comparative trends in crime in contemporary society.

1. First, have students research one crime in a local newspaper or weekly news magazine. Next, have them consider whether this crime is more likely to be reported in the UCR or NCVS, and how this might affect public knowledge of the crime. Alternatively, have students discuss how different research method(s) might shape what we know about the crime.
2. Visit the most recent UCR online and review the hate crimes statistics. Next, visit the website of a GLBT rights organization in your state and compare the overall statistics and those presented for your state to the UCR data. Have students discuss the discrepancies in light of the critiques of official statistics presented in the chapter. (Note: the Human Rights Campaign website has maps of anti-GLBT hate statutes as well as information about each state's protected classes.: http://www.hrc.org.)

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3. Require students to find a recent newspaper report that discusses crime rates. Ask them to identify the source of the data used in the story and, based on the information in the text, to evaluate the utility of the data. What is missing from the report? How is the story presented? How are the statistics portrayed?
4. Take several copies of the UCR to class (or have students review the UCR online). Split students into small groups, and require them to find a variety of reported crime statistics for their hometown, state, and region of the country. Ask students to compare their findings with students from other locations. How might they explain these differences?
5. Have students visit the website for the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data to review information about the NIBRS, compare the NIBRS to the UCR, and learn how to perform custom searches of NIBRS data: http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/index.html.

TEST BANK FOR CHAPTER 2

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. The word *statistics* derives from the seventeenth-century English term *state-istics* which referred to the
a. census bureau's compilation of information regarding the quality of life.
b. officially gathered counts of births, deaths, and marriages.
c. department of human services trends on state expenditures.
d. president's economic forecast for the upcoming fiscal year.

2. The use of statistics within criminology began with
a. Quetelet's use of natural science procedures.
b. Descartes' observations of the natural world.
c. Copernicus' discovery that the earth orbits the sun.
d. Columbus' explorations into the Western Hemisphere.

3. Who compiles the Unified Crime Reporting statistics (UCR)?
a. Local police departments and state officials.
b. The Bureau of Justice Statistics.
c. The FBI.
d. Academic criminologists at "Research 1" schools.

4. The UCR was originally established in
a. 1964.
b. 1987.
c. 1979.
d. 1930.

5. The UCR provides information on
a. four violent street crimes offenses.
b. four property crime offenses.
c. victimization rates per 100,000 people.
d. both a and b above

6. In addition to murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, the most "serious" UCR crimes include
a. rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.
b. rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft.
c. robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.
d. rape, robbery, simple assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

7. Where are murder rates highest according to the UCR?
a. The murder rate is higher in rural areas than urban areas.
b. The murder rate is higher in urban areas than rural areas.
c. Murder rates are highest in the South, and lowest in the West.
d. Murder rates vary dramatically from year to year, making it impossible to track such trends.

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8. How does the NIBRS compare to the UCR?
a. Because the NIBRS is superior it will replace the UCR.
B. Unlike the UCR, the NIBRS only counts the most serious incident at a crime event.
C. Due to the hierarchy rule, the NIBRS undercounts the amount of crime.
D. The NIBRS is more detailed and comprehensive than the UCR.

9. Criticism of the UCR include(s)
a. unreported crimes, or the "dark figure" of crime.
b. voluntary reporting by police and the potential for manipulation.
c. the fact that only the most serious offense is recorded when more than one crime occurs.
d. all of the above.

10. Which of the following is not a criticism of the UCR?
a. It relies on the legalistic definition of crime.
B. It distorts the image of crime by not counting white-collar, corporate, or political crime.
C. It may measure police activity rather than crime events.
D. It uses a representative sample of criminal events.

11. Which of the following does a better job of estimating the "dark figure" of crime?
a. The UCR.
b. The NCVS.
c. Unofficial measures of crime.
d. Official measures of crime.

12. Which of the following is NOT necessary for a crime to be reported in the UCR?
a. Someone must perceive an event as criminal.
b. Someone must alert the police, who must then agree that it is criminal.
c. The report must be reviewed by the offender for accuracy.
d. The police must code the event on the proper UCR form and submit the report to the FBI.

13. Philip Jenkins' research using homicide data from the UCR indicates how easily manipulated data can be used to create an "epidemic" in
a. forcible rape.
b. burglary.
c. serial murder.
d. manslaughter.

14. Donald Black's research indicates that several conditions must be met in order for an event to be filed and submitted to the UCR by the police. Those conditions do NOT include
a. the seriousness of the crime or the social status of the complainant.
b. the complainant's preference for resolution or his or her demeanor toward the police.
c. the relational distance between the offender and the complainant.
d. the ethnic identity of the victim.

15. Which type of hate crime bias is most common according to the UCR?
a. religion and ethnicity
b. sexual orientation
c. disability
d. race

16. Victimization data allows analysts to estimate how much crime exists that is
a. not reported to the police.
b. frivolous.
c. committed for fun and games.
d. redundant with those reported to the police.

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17. The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) was established in _____, in order to provide a more accurate view of crime in the United States.
a. 1962
b. 1972
c. 1982
d. 1992

18. How often are NCVS participants interviewed?
a. Once per year.
b. Twice per year.
c. Three times per year.
d. Four times per year.

19. The UCR and the NCVS differ in several respects. Most importantly,
a. the UCR estimates the rate of criminal acts reported to the police, whereas the NCVS estimates the amount of personal victimizations annually.
b. the NCVS allows estimates for the "dark figure" of crime, while the UCR does not.
c. the NCVS interviews actual victims, whereas the UCR takes only the perspective of the police into consideration.
d. All of the above are important differences between these two sources of crime data.

20. Major findings from the NCVS show that
a. except for homicide and motor vehicle theft, less than half of all victimizations are reported to the police.
b. crime victimization rates have been increasing significantly over the last two decades.
c. perpetrators are becoming increasingly vicious in their offending.
d. victims are entirely satisfied with the criminal justice system's response to their needs.

21. Problems with the NCVS have included a time-in-sample bias, which is when respondents
a. are victimized repeatedly over the course of their participation.
b. become paranoid about "stranger danger" and insist that everyone is out to get them.
c. become overly vigilant about crime and take greater precautions for themselves thereby producing a reduced crime victimization trend.
d. become experts on crime just by participating.

22. A major change in the NCVS since 1992 is that the surveys are now _____, which means that they deal with changing rates over a longer period of time.
a. collaterally conducted
b. longitudinal
c. attitudinal
d. latitudinal

23. Neither the UCR nor the NCVS compile statistics on
a. homicide.
b. burglary.
c. corporate crime.
d. arrest rates.

24. Official sources of data for corporate crime are usually found in different federal agencies, such as
a. the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration.
b. the National Labor Relations Board, and the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor.
c. the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Federal Trade Commission, and the Food and Drug Administration.
d. all of the above

25. Self-report studies provide
a. police-based data.

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b. offender-based data.
c. victim-based data.
d. incident-based data.

26. Self-report studies generally ask respondents about their own criminal behavior, and do so with the promise of
a. confidentiality.
b. anonymity.
c. absolution.
d. precision.

27. Austin Porterfield's pioneering research, published in 1946, is a good example of the utility of self-report studies. It showed that
a. despite claims to the contrary, boys and girls offend in a similar manner.
b. regarding class status, middle-class and working-class respondents had similar offending patterns.
c. despite similar patterns, working-class offenders were much more likely to be processed by the courts than middle-class offenders.
d. both b and c are true in Porterfield's study.

28. Large-scale, self-report studies have found that
a. boys commit more offenses than girls.
b. girls commit more offenses than boys, but they don't get caught.
c. boys and girls are equal in the amount of crime that they commit.
d. gender is irrelevant when estimating criminal behavior with self-report data.

29. Self-report data rely on honesty and clear memories of the respondents, which means that the responses provided may be
a. exaggerated.
b. underreported.
c. understated.
d. all of the above

30. Self-report studies may be useful as sources of offender-based information, however, they do not illuminate
a. the stereotypes of criminal offenders.
b. why class, race, and gender patterns exist in offending behavior.
c. why girls are more delinquent than boys.
d. the actions each offender engaged in.

31. Studies that include self-reports, psychological evaluations, IQ tests, and criminal histories are often referred to as
a. life-course data.
b. life-history data.
c. participant observation.
d. unofficial crime data.

32. *The Professional Thief* by Edwin Sutherland and *Tragic Magic* by Stuart Hills and Ron Santiago are examples of what kind of research?
a. participant observation
b. comparative-historical
c. self-report surveys
d. biographical

33. *Tearoom Trade* by Laud Humphreys and *The Nude Beach* by Jack Douglas and Paul Rasmussen are examples of what kind of research?
a. participant observation
b. uniform crime reports
c. self-report surveys

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d. biographical

34. Comparative criminology allows analysts to examine crime using a _____ approach.
a. cross-disciplinary
b. cross-structural
c. cross-cultural
d. cross-behavioral

35. The utility of comparative analysis extends to the analysis of
a. political agendas surrounding crime.
b. social policy addressing crime.
c. crime trends and types.
d. all of the above

36. Data for comparative criminological studies is available from official sources, such as
a. the United Nations, the World Health Organization, and the International Police Organization.
b. the United States Military, and the Transnational Coalition for Human Rights.
c. Amnesty International, and Mothers Against Drunk Driving.
d. Police Boosters International, and Prisoners United.

37. One challenge of comparative criminology is that
a. an "obviously" illegal behavior in one country is also an illegal behavior in most other countries.
b. illegal acts in one cultural context may not be viewed as criminal in another cultural context.
c. legal acts in the United States are usually illegal in other countries, because of the United States' promise of personal liberty.
d. gender issues differ in all countries, so studying male and female criminality would be impossible.

38. Crime data generally represent
a. the objective truth about crime.
b. the reality of street crime in a comprehensive view.
c. the interests and biases of the analyst.
d. nothing.

39. Well-educated analysts examine crime data based on their understanding of the
a. objectively gathered information.
b. inherent biases and flaws within the measures of crime.
c. inherent biases and misunderstandings of the offenders.
d. trends that crime data clearly indicate are true.

40. Which of the following is a reason why participant observation is *not* a common research method in criminology?
a. It is extremely time-consuming.
b. IRBS often don't give approval for it.
d. It raises issues of ethics, objectivity, and danger.
d. It is relatively inexpensive.

41. Which of the following is *not* a source of data regarding corporate crime?
a. OSHA
b. FDA
c. NHTSB
d. UCR
e. EEOC

42. Using NCVS data we know that _____ of all victimizations are reported to police.
a. less than one-quarter
b. less than one -half

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c. more than one-half
d. almost all

43. Which of the following is *not* a cause of distortion of UCR data?
a. "crusades" against particular crimes
b. intentional manipulation of data by police
c. technological changes
d. all of these are sources of UCR distortion

44. What is the hierarchy rule?
a. The requirement that only the most serious offense is coded for UCR reporting.
b. The requirement that the FBI must estimate statistics for agencies that do not supply their own data.
c. The practice of viewing UCR data as superior to that in the NCVS.
d. The rule that unofficial measures of crime must only be used when official measures are unavailable.

45. What is the source of data on the eight "most important" UCR crimes?
a. actual arrests
b. interviews with victims
c. crimes reported to the police
d. criminal convictions

True or False Questions

1. _____ Crime data are "objective facts" that always indicate precisely how much crime exists.
2. _____ Data measuring crime are shaped by the interests and biases of the analyst.
3. _____ The Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) are compiled annually by the Department of Human Services.
4. _____ The Uniform Crime Reports may be a measure of police activity rather than crime.
5. _____ The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is designed more as a substitute for the UCR program than as a complement.
6. _____ The NCVS provides offender-based data for estimating the prevalence and incidence of crime.
7. _____ The Uniform Crime Reports categorize criminal behavior into Part I and Part II offenses.
8. _____ Both the UCR and the NCVS have methodological and conceptual flaws.
9. _____ Self-report studies provide victim-based data for estimating the prevalence and incidence of crime.
10. _____ Comparative criminological studies allow scholars to evaluate the relative merits of social policies related to crime control.
11. _____ It is possible to know the entire amount of crime in a community, state, or nation.
12. _____ Although life-histories and criminal biographies may not be generalizable, they nonetheless offer useful information about crime and criminality.
13. _____ Social science researchers have sometimes gone "underground" to observe criminal and deviant behavior.
14. _____ Comparative criminology allows criminologists to view crime from a variety of theoretical perspectives.
15. _____ Historical criminological data is implicitly comparative.
16. _____ NCVS data provide a means to estimate the dark figure of crime.
17. _____ The UCR includes FBI estimates of data for localities that do not report their information.
18. _____ Police face pressures to have both high and low numbers of arrests.
19. _____ The FBI encourages the use of UCR data as a measure of law enforcement effectiveness.
20. _____ Group A offenses provide data about street crime; Group B offenses provide data on corporate crime.

Essay Questions

1. GLBT community and state organizations typically report much higher numbers of hate crimes against gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered persons than does the UCR. Based on what you know about sources of UCR data distortion and the processes involved in creating a UCR datum point, explain why the UCR might undercount anti-GLBT hate crime.
Required content
   a. UCR data are based on crimes known to the police (CKP).
   b. Much anti-GLBT crime is not reported to police (fear of police, fear of outing).
   c. At least one of the following:

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- Law enforcement might not "accept" the event as a crime due to anti-GLBT bias.
- The crime might not be coded as a hate crime.
- The crime might be recorded as less serious than it was due to police perception.

Additional content

d. Victims may be more likely to report to local organizations than the police.
e. Victims perceive they will be supported by local organizations.
f. Local organizations provide other victim services, e.g., therapy and legal assistance.
g. Local organization numbers are not based on CKP, so the numbers tend to be higher.

2. Identify, compare, and contrast the two main official sources of crime data in the United States on the following points: who produces the report, what kind of data the report is based on, and the relation of the report to the dark figure.

Required content

a. UCR is produced by the FBI.
b. UCR is a measure of criminal acts known to police (CKP).
c. Because UCR numbers are based on CKP, they undercount the true rate of crime.
d. NCVS is produced by the BJS.
e. NCVS is a representative sample of victimizations.
f. NCVS may do a better job of estimating the true rate of crime.

Additional content

g. UCR is the oldest and most important measure.
h. NCVS is newer than the UCR.
i. Using both NCVS and UCR data it appears that less than half of criminal victimizations are reported to police.
j. UCR and NCVS are complementary measures.

3. Although the UCR is the oldest and most important measure of crime in the United States, it is a flawed document. Identify and briefly explain three critiques of the UCR.

Required content: any three of the following

a. UCR is based on CKP and thus undercounts crime.
b. Participation in the UCR is voluntary.
c. The FBI estimates numbers for agencies that do not report.
d. The hierarchy rule is mandatory, which undercounts crime.
e. UCR does not include federal-level crimes.
f. UCR does not include white-collar, corporate, or political crime.
g. UCR is biased toward crimes committed by the least powerful members of society.
h. Few crimes against children, animals, or the environment make it into the UCR.
i. The focus on violent crime distorts the seriousness of street crime.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES

Bittner, Egon. 1980. *The Functions of the Police in Modern Society*. Rockville, MD: National Institutes of Mental Health Center for Studies of Crime and Delinquency.

Chambliss, William, and Harry King. 1972. *Box Man: A Professional Thief's Journey*. New York: Harper & Row.

Klockars, Carl.1974. *The Professional Fence.* New York: The Free Press.

Jenness, Valerie, and Kendal Broad. 2001. *Making Hate a Crime*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Manning, Peter K. 2003. *Policing Contingencies*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

The Wire. HBO. Many episodes of the television show dramatize law enforcement and political manipulation of arrest data, including slate-cleaning, crusades, and municipal politics.

ANSWER KEY

Chapter 2: The Measurement of Crime

Multiple Choice

1. b
2. a
3. c

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4. d
5. d
6. a
7. b
8. d
9. d
10. d
11. b
12. c
13. c
14. d
15. d
16. a
17. b
18. b
19. d
20. a
21. c
22. b
23. c
24. c
25. b
26. b
27. d
28. a
29. d
30. b
31. d
32. d
33. a
34. c
35. d
36. a
37. b
38. c
39. b
40. c
41. d
42. b
43. d
44. a
45. c

True or False

1. False
2. True
3. False
4. True
5. True
6. False
7. True
8. True
9. False
10. True
11. False
12. True
13. True

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14. True
15. True
16. True
17. True
18. True
19. False
20. False