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Chapter 2
The Crime Picture: Theories and Trends

Learning Objectives

After studying this chapter, students should be able to accomplish the following objectives:

- **LO 2-1:** Discuss the difference between a hypothesis and a theory in the context of criminology.
- **LO 2-2:** Contrast the medical model of addiction with the criminal model of addiction.
- **LO 2-3:** Identify the publication in which the FBI reports crime data and list the two main ways in which the data are reported.
- **LO 2-4:** Describe the three ways that victims' rights legislation increases the ability of crime victims to participate in the criminal justice system.
- **LO 2-5:** Explain why income level appears to be more important than race when it comes to crime trends.

Lesson Plan

Correlated with PowerPoints

I. What is a Theory?

- **Criminology** is the scientific study of crime and the causes of criminal behavior.
- It is rich with different explanations for why people commit crimes.
- At the same time, *criminologists*, or those who study the causes of crime, warn against using models or profiles to predict violent behavior.

A. Correlation and Cause

- **Correlation** is the relationship between two measurements or behaviors that tend to move in the same direction.
    - **Causation**, in contrast, is the relationship in which a change in one measurement or behavior creates a recognizable change in another measurement or behavior.

Media Tool
"The danger of mixing up causality and correlation: Ionica Smeets at TEDxDelft"

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http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8B271L3NtAw
This video by TEDxDelft provides warnings on the dangers of deriving causations from correlations.
Discussion: Discuss some causations made in modern society that are clearly correlations. What are some alternative sources for the information provided by the media and the society?

B. The Role of Theory

Lesson Objective 1: Discuss the difference between a hypothesis and a theory in the context of criminology.

The Scientific Method

- In the academic world, a **theory** is an explanation of a happening or circumstance that is based on observation, experimentation, and reasoning.
- A **hypothesis** is a possible explanation for an observed occurrence that can be tested by further investigation.

Theory in Action

- Criminological theories are primarily concerned with attempting to determine the reasons for criminal behavior.
- Two criminologists from Arizona State University, Matthew Larson and Gary Sweeten, wanted to test their hypothesis that young people involved in romantic breakups are at high risk for destructive behavior.
    - According to their data, breakups do indeed correlate with higher rates of criminal offending and substance abuse among young men and higher rates of substance abuse among young women.

Class Discussion/Activity
As students preparing to join the workforce, do you believe theory and research applies to your career choice? Why, or why not? Explain.

See Assignment 1

II. Which Theories of Crime are Most Widely Accepted?

A. The Brain and the Body

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- **Rational choice theory** is a school of criminology that holds that wrongdoers act as if they weigh the possible benefits of criminal or delinquent activity against the expected costs of being apprehended.
    - If the perceived benefits are greater than the potential costs, the person is more likely to commit the crime.

Rational Choice Theory and Public Policy

- Because crime is seen as the end result of a series of rational choices, policymakers have reasoned that severe punishment can deter criminal activity by adding another variable to the decision-making process.
    - For example, supporters of the death penalty emphasize its deterrent effects, and legislators have used harsh mandatory sentences to control illegal drug use and trafficking.

Media Tool
"Parents of Soldier Say They Warned Army About Thrill Kill Sergeant" via ABC News
http://abcnews.go.com/Blotter/soldiers-charged-afghan-thrill-kills-blame-crazy-staff/story?id=11740083#.UcDbM5yjSSo
This video shows Morlock, an army corporal, describing an alleged murder.
Discussion: Is thrill killing a plausible theory in your mind? What type of thrill-seeking crimes can you think of in society? Compare these to arousal theory (if students have heard this terminology).

What If Scenario
Thrill Offenders: Rational Choice Theory
What if . . . you and your friends are in a mood to have some fun and the "rush" gets to you? One of you has a gun and decides to shoot someone as a dare. Would you do it? What actions would you take? Explain your reasoning.

Trait Theories of Crime

- *Trait theories* suggest that certain *biological* or *psychological* traits in individuals could incline them toward criminal behavior given a certain set of circumstances.
- **Biology** is a very broad term that refers to the scientific study of living organisms, while **psychology** pertains more specifically to the study of the mind and its processes.

Genetics and Crime

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- Criminologists who study biological theories of crime often focus on the effect that genes have on human behavior.
- **Genetics** is the study of how certain traits or qualities are transmitted from parents to their offspring.

Class Discussion/Activity
Do you think children of criminals are more likely to involve themselves in criminal activities? Does genetics play a role in keeping the family associated with crime? Or, are there any other factors? Discuss.

Hormones and Aggression

- Chemical messengers known as **hormones** have also been the subject of much criminological study.
  - Hormones are chemical substances, produced in tissue and conveyed in the bloodstream, that controls certain cellular and body functions, such as growth and reproduction.
  - Criminal activity in males has been linked to elevated levels of hormones—specifically, **testosterone**, which controls secondary sex characteristics and has been associated with traits of aggression.

Class Discussion/Activity
Have students discuss the effect of hormones on aggression. Physical changes such as puberty and menstrual cycles can be used as examples to assist the dialogue.

The Brain and Crime

- The study of how genetics and brain activity influence criminal behavior is called neurocriminology.
  - Its practitioners have contributed a great deal to the understanding of what predisposes humans to violent behavior.

Mental Illness and Crime

- In recent years, violent crime has been linked to *schizophrenia*, a chronic brain disorder that can lead to erratic, uncontrollable behavior.
- There may be a correlation between mental conditions such as schizophrenia and violence, but such conditions cannot be said to cause violent behavior.

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Psychology and Crime

- One influential branch of psychology—*social psychology*—focuses on human behavior in the context of how human beings relate to and influence one another.
- **Social Psychology** is the study of how individual behavior is influenced by the behavior of groups in social situations.
    - It rests on the assumption that the way people view themselves is shaped to a large degree by how they think others view them.

B. Bad Neighborhoods and Other Economic Disadvantages

- **Sociology** is the study of the development and functioning of groups of people who live together within a society.
- Criminologists focusing on sociology have long argued that neighborhood conditions are perhaps the most important variable in predicting criminal behavior.

Social Disorganization Theory

- In the early twentieth century, juvenile crime researchers Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay popularized sociological explanations for crime with their social disorganization theory.
- According to the **social disorganization theory**, factors that lead to crime in high-crime neighborhoods are as follows:
    - High levels of high school dropouts.
    - Chronic unemployment.
    - Deteriorating buildings and other infrastructures.
    - Concentrations of single-parent families.

Strain Theory

- **Strain theory** is a social structure theory with the assumption that crime is the result of frustration felt by individuals who cannot reach their financial and personal goals through legitimate means.
- Strain theory has its roots in the works of French sociologist Emile Durkheim and his concept of **anomie**—a condition in which the individual feels a disconnect from society due to the breakdown or absence of social norms.

Social Conflict Theories

- **Social conflict theories** are theories that view criminal behavior as the result of

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class conflict.

- According to social conflict theory, the poor commit property crimes for reasons of need and because, as members of a capitalist society, they desire the same financial rewards as everybody else.

C. Life Lessons and Criminal Behavior

- Some criminologists find class theories of crime overly narrow.
- Surveys that ask people directly about their criminal behavior have shown that the criminal instinct is pervasive in middle- and upper-class communities, even if it is expressed differently.

The Abandoned Car Experiment

- Philip Zimbardo conducted a well-known, if rather unscientific, experiment to show the broad potential for misbehavior.
  - The psychologist placed an abandoned automobile with its hood up on the campus of Stanford University.
  - The car remained in place, untouched, for a week.
  - Then, Zimbardo smashed the car's window with a sledgehammer.
  - Within minutes, passersby had joined in the destruction of the automobile, eventually stripping its valuable parts.
- **Social process theories** function on the same basis as Zimbardo's "interdependence of decisions experiment": the potential for criminal behavior exists in everyone and will be realized depending on an individual's interaction with various institutions and processes of society.
- Two major branches of social process theory are (1) learning theory and (2) control theory.

Learning Theory

- Popularized by Edwin Sutherland in the 1940s, **learning theory** contends that criminal activity is a learned behavior.
  - In other words, a criminal is taught both the practical methods of crime (such as how to pick a lock) and the psychological aspects of crime (how to deal with the guilt of wrongdoing).
- Sutherland's *theory of differential association* held that individuals are exposed to the values of family and peers such as school friends or co-workers.
  - If the dominant values a person is exposed to favor criminal behavior, then that person is more likely to mimic such behavior.

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Control Theory

- **Control theory** assumes that all individuals have the potential for criminal behavior, but are restrained by the damage that such actions would do to their relationships with family, friends, and members of the community.

Life Course Theories of Crime

- Practitioners of life course criminology believe that risk factors that exist in early childhood are the strongest predictors of future criminal behavior and have been seriously undervalued in the examination of why crime occurs.

Self-Control Theory

- Focusing on childhood behavior raises the question of whether conduct problems established at a young age can be changed over time.
    - Michael Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi, whose 1990 publication *A General Theory of Crime* is one of the foundations of life course criminology, think not.
- In general, someone who has low self-control is impulsive, thrill-seeking, and likely to solve problems with violence rather than intellect.
    - Thus, Gottfredson and Hirschi subscribe to what has been called the *continuity theory of crime*, which essentially says that once negative behavior patterns have been established, they cannot be changed.

The Possibility of Change

- Not all of those who practice life course criminology follow the continuity theory.
- Terrie Moffitt, for example, notes that youthful offenders can be divided into two groups.
    - The first group are life course-persistent offenders: they are biting playmates at age five, skipping school at ten, stealing cars at sixteen, committing violent crimes at twenty, and perpetrating fraud and child abuse at thirty.
    - The second group are adolescent-limited offenders: as the name suggests, their “life of crime” is limited to the teenage years.
- According to Moffitt, change is possible, if not for the life course-persistent offenders, then for the adolescent-limited offenders.

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Class Discussion/Activity
Set a placard denoting each of the varying theories of crime around the classroom. Have students move to the area that they feel is the best explanation for criminal offenses. Have students explain the rationale behind their selections.

Media Tool
"Can brain scans forecast future Crimes?" from Fox News
http://video.foxnews.com/v/2281963000001/can-brain-scans-forecast-future-crimes/
This video shows an interview with Kent Kiehl, a neuroscientist from the University of Mexico. The video focuses on study that predicts criminal behavior based on brain scans.
Discussion: Is this plausible? Is this ethical? Do you see this as a real-world "Minority Report?" Is this more than smoke and mirrors in your opinion?

Class Discussion/Activity
Have students discuss social disorganization theory, particularly "zones" characterized by "disorganization." Have them relate the discussion to the town nearest to their university or to their hometown. Does the idea of "zones" characterized by "disorganization" make sense?

What If Scenario
Life course: Criminal?
What if . . . your younger sibling, who just turned nine, was found smoking marijuana behind his grade school after skipping class for the day? He has already been expelled from his first school for (accidentally) starting a fire with matches in the boy's bathroom at age seven. What does life course theory say about your brother's future? What do the other theories discussed in the chapter say about his future? Does he have a chance?

See Assignment 2

III. What Is the Connection Between Drug Use and Crime?

- In general, offenders who use greater amounts of alcohol and illegal drugs have significantly higher crime rates than those who are less involved with these substances.
- In popular usage, the word **drug**—any substance that modifies biological, psychological, or social behavior—has a more specific connotation.

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- When people speak of the drug problem, or the war on drugs, or drug abuse, they are referring specifically to illegal **psychoactive drugs**, which affect the brain and alter consciousness or perception.

A. The Criminology of Drug Use

- At first glance, the reason people use drugs, including legal drugs such as alcohol, is obvious: such drugs give users pleasure and provide a temporary escape for those who may feel tension or anxiety.
    - Ultimately, though, such explanations are unsatisfactory because they fail to explain why some people use drugs while others do not.

Drugs and the "Learning Process"

- Focusing on the question of why first-time drug users become habitual users, sociologist Howard Becker sees three factors in the "learning process."
- Becker believes first-time users:
    - Learn the techniques of drug use.
    - Learn to perceive the pleasurable effects of drug use.
    - Learn to enjoy the social experience of drug use.

Drug Use and Drug Abuse

- Science has aided in understanding the difference between drug *use* and drug *abuse*.
- **Drug abuse** is the use of drugs that results in physical or psychological problems for the user, as well as disruption of personal relationships and employment.

B. The Drug-Crime Relationship

- Drugs and crime are related in the following three general ways:
    - Drug-defined offenses.
    - Drug-related offenses.
    - The Drug-using lifestyle.

Models of Addiction

Lesson Objective 2: Contrast the medical model of addiction with the criminal model of addiction.

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- According to the **medical model of addiction**, addicts are not criminals, but mentally or physically ill individuals who are forced into acts of petty crime to "feed their habit."
- Those who believe in the *enslavement theory of addiction* advocate treating addiction as a disease and hold that society should not punish addicts but rather attempt to rehabilitate them, as would be done for any other unhealthy person.
- The **criminal model of addiction** is an approach to drug abuse that holds that drug offenders harm society by their actions to the same extent as other criminals and should face the same punitive sanctions.

Marijuana Law Trends

- The legalization of marijuana—America's most-used illicit drug—has become an important policy issue.
- Proponents of marijuana legalization insist that casual marijuana use by adults is relatively benign, a claim that the opponents of marijuana legalization argue is only marginally relevant.
    - These detractors point out that, more crucially, in the first year that recreational marijuana use was legal in Washington State, "drugged driving" arrests, marijuana-related fatal car crashes, and hospitalizations for overdoses all increased.

Class Discussion/Activity
Have students split into two to four groups depending on class size. Given the facts presented in the text, have the students discuss what they think is the primary theoretical understanding of drug use in their community and which drugs are most prominent. Finally, have each group present a solution for the problem and allow the other groups to weigh in at the conclusion of the presentations.

Media Tool
"Why Marijuana Should be Legalized: An Expert's Perspective" via YouTube
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9KLy150NR_U
This video by DrugPolicyAlliance presents experts' perspective on the legalization of marijuana.
Discussion: Discuss the pros and cons of legalizing marijuana.

What If Scenario
Drug Use: Legalization

What if . . . the United States legalized marijuana in all 50 states to those 19 or

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older? First, do you believe it is a good idea? What effects would it have on crime, correctional populations, and society?

See Assignment 3

IV. How is Crime Measured?

A. The Uniform Crime Report

- The United States' most far-reaching and oft-cited set of national crime statistics is known as the **Uniform Crime Reports (UCR)**.
  - The UCR is a compilation of data prepared by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).
- Since its inception in 1930, the UCR has attempted to measure the overall rate of crime in the United States by collecting data on "offenses known to law enforcement."
- To produce the UCR, the FBI relies on the voluntary participation of local law enforcement agencies.
  - These agencies base their information on the following three measurements:
    - The number of persons arrested.
    - The number of crimes reported by victims, witnesses, or the police themselves.
    - Police employee data.

Part I Offenses

- **Part I offenses** are those crimes that, due to their seriousness and frequency, are recorded by the FBI to give a general idea of the "crime picture" in the United States in any given year.
- Part I violent offenses are those most likely to be covered by the media and, consequently, most likely to inspire fear in the population.

Part II Offenses

- **Part II offenses** include all crimes recorded by the FBI that do not fall into the category of Part I offenses.
- While Part I offenses are almost always felonies, Part II offenses include crimes that may be classified as misdemeanors.

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B. The National Incident-Based Reporting System

- In the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), local agencies collect data on each single crime occurrence within twenty-three offense categories made up of forty-nine specific crimes called Group A offenses.
    - These data are recorded on computerized record systems provided—though not completely financed—by the federal government.
- The NIBRS became available to local agencies in 1989.
- Criminologists are responding enthusiastically to the NIBRS because the system provides information about four "data sets"—offenses, victims, offenders, and arrestees—unavailable through the UCR.
- The NIBRS also presents a more complete picture of crime by monitoring all criminal "incidents" reported to the police, not just those that lead to an arrest.

C. Victim Surveys

- In **victim surveys**, criminologists or other researchers ask the victims of crime directly about their experiences, using techniques such as interviews or e-mail and phone surveys.
- The most comprehensive victim survey project in the United States is the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which started in 1972.
    - Conducted by the U.S. Bureau of the Census in cooperation with the Bureau of Justice Statistics of the Justice Department, the NCVS conducts an annual survey of approximately 90,000 households with about 169,000 occupants over twelve years of age.
    - Participants are interviewed twice a year concerning their experiences with crimes in the prior six months.

D. Self-Reported Surveys

- Based on many of the same principles as victim surveys, but focusing instead on offenders, **self-reported surveys** are a third source of information for criminologists.
    - In this form of data collection, persons are asked directly—through personal interviews or questionnaires, or over the telephone—about specific criminal activity to which they may have been a party.
- One of the most widespread self-reported surveys in the United States, the Drug Use Forecasting Program, collects information on narcotics use from arrestees who have been brought into booking facilities.
- Because there is no penalty for admitting to criminal activity in a self-reported

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survey, subjects tend to be more forthcoming in discussing their behavior.

Class Discussion/Activity
Divide the class into small groups, and have each group list as many pros and cons of each of the crime measurements previously discussed in this chapter—UCR, NIBRS, NCVS, and others. Have each group elect a "speaker" to present its results. Highlight any differences among the groups, and facilitate a discussion on the variances of opinion.

V. What Role Do Victims Play in Criminal Justice?

- Thirty-five years ago, a presidential task force invited federal and state legislatures to "address the needs of the millions of Americans and their families who are victimized by crime every year and who often carry its scars into the years to come."
  - This call to action was, in large part, a consequence of the rather peculiar position of victims—any person who suffers physical, emotional, or financial harm as the result of a criminal act—in the American criminal justice system.

A. Legal Rights of Crime Victims

Lesson Objective 4: Describe the three ways that victims' rights legislation increases the ability of crime victims to participate in the criminal justice system.

- All states have passed legislation creating certain rights for victims.
  - On a federal level, such protections are encoded in the Crime Victims' Rights Act of 2004 (CVRA), which gives victims "the right to participate in the system."
- The participation primarily focuses on the following three categories of rights:
  - The right to be *informed.*
  - The right to be *present.*
  - The right to be *heard.*
- Most states require *restitution*, or monetary payment, from offenders to help victims repay any costs associated with the crime and rebuild their lives.

B. The Risks of Victimization

- Criminologists Larry Cohen and Marcus Felson devised the *routine activities theory*.
- According to Cohen and Felson, most criminal acts require the following:
  - A likely offender.
  - A suitable target (a person or an object).
  - The absence of a capable guardian—that is, any person (not necessarily a law

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enforcement agent) whose presence or proximity prevents a crime from happening.

Repeat Victimization

- Cohen and Felson also hypothesize that offenders attach "values" to suitable targets.
  - The higher the value, the more likely that target is going to be the subject of a crime.
- Statistics clearly show that a relatively small number of victims are involved in a disproportionate number of crimes.
  - These findings support an approach to crime analysis known as **repeat victimization**.
  - This theory is based on the premise that certain populations—mostly low-income residents of urban areas—are more likely to be victims of crimes than others and, therefore, past victimization is a strong predictor of future victimization.

The Victim–Offender Connection

- Not only does past victimization seem to increase the risk of future victimization, but so does past criminal behavior.

See Assignments 4

VI. What Are Some Important Crime Trends in the United States?

- The UCR, NCVS, and other statistical measures, discussed in this chapter, though important, represent only the tip of the iceberg of crime data.
- Thanks to the efforts of law enforcement agencies, educational institutions, and private individuals, more information on crime is available today than at any time in the nation's history.
- When interpreting and predicting general crime trends, experts tend to rely on what University of California at Berkeley law professor Franklin Zimring calls the three "usual suspects" of crime fluctuation:
  - *Imprisonment*, based on the principle that (a) an offender in prison or jail is unable to commit a crime on the street, and (b) a potential offender on the street may be deterred from committing a crime by the fear of winding up behind bars.
  - *Youth populations*, because those under the age of twenty-four commit the majority of crimes in the United States.

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- The *economy,* because when legitimate opportunities to earn income become scarce, some people will turn to illegitimate methods such as crime.

A. Looking Good: Crime in the 1990s and 2000s

- In 1995, eminent crime expert James Q. Wilson, noting that the number of young males in the United States was set to increase dramatically over the next decade, predicted that "30,000 more young muggers, killers, and thieves" would be on the streets by 2000.
- Starting in 1994 the United States experienced a steep crime decline that it is still enjoying today.

The Great Crime Decline

- From 1990 to 2000 the homicide rate dropped 39 percent, the robbery rate 44 percent, the burglary rate 41 percent, and the auto theft rate 37 percent.
- In retrospect, the 1990s seem to have encompassed a "golden era" for the leading indicators of low crime rates.

Continuing Decreases

- Since the early 1990s, both the violent crime rate and the property crime rate have declined by about 50 percent.

B. Crime, Race, and Poverty

- Although crime and victimization rates have decreased across racial lines over the past twenty years, the trends have been less positive for African Americans than for whites.
  - For example, blacks are considerably more likely to be both homicide victims and homicide offenders than are whites.
  - African Americans are particularly susceptible to gun violence, with firearm murder rates of 14.6 per 100,000 adults, compared with 1.9 for whites and 4.0 for Latinos.

Race and Crime

- Official crime data seem to indicate a strong correlation between minority status and crime: African Americans—who make up 13 percent of the population—constitute 36 percent of those arrested for violent crimes and 28 percent of those

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arrested for property crimes.

- Even as overall marijuana arrests plummeted in Colorado and Washington State after the drug was legalized, African Americans were still twice as likely as whites to be arrested for using the drug.

Class and Crime

- The racial differences in the crime rate are one of the most controversial areas of the criminal justice system.
- At first glance, crime statistics seem to support the idea that the subculture of African Americans in the United States is disposed toward criminal behavior.
  - Not all of the data, however, support that assertion.

Income Level and Crime

Lesson Objective 5: Explain why income level appears to be more important than race when it comes to crime trends.

- A research project led by sociologist Ruth D Peterson of Ohio State University suggests that, regardless of race, a person is at a much higher risk of being a violent offender or a victim of violence if he or she lives in a disadvantaged neighborhood.
- Given that African Americans are two times more likely than whites to live in poverty and hold low-wage-earning jobs, they are, as a group, more susceptible to the factors that contribute to criminality.

Class Discussion/Activity
Have students contemplate the factors leading to the overrepresentation of African American youth in the nation's corrections system and discuss and debate potential remedies.

C. Women and Crime

- Crime is an overwhelmingly male activity.
- Only about 9 percent of the national prison and jail population are female, and in 2015 only 24 percent of all arrests involved women.

A Growing Presence

- Research shows that as recently as the 1980s, many of the women now in prison

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would not have been arrested or would have received lighter sentences for their crimes.
    - Consequently, more scholars are convinced that rising female criminality is the result of a criminal justice system that is "more willing to incarcerate women."

Women as Crime Victims

- Statistically, women are at a greater risk of being victims of **domestic violence**.
    - This umbrella term covers a wide variety of maltreatment, including physical violence and psychological abuse, inflicted among family members and others in close relationships.
- Another crime that appears to mainly involve female victims is **stalking**, or a course of conduct directed at a person that would reasonably cause that person to feel fear.

Lecture Notes

Chapter 2 introduces students to the various causes of crime. Criminological theories are primarily concerned with attempting to determine the reasons for criminal behavior.

Sociological theories assert that offending is the result of interaction between the offender and his or her environment. These theories are grouped into three families: social structure theories, social process theories, and social conflict theories. Life course theory focuses on the behavioral patterns of childhood such as bullying, lying, and stealing as predictors of future criminal behavior.

Further, the link between drugs and crime is examined and two models of addiction are presented: the medical model of addiction and the criminal model of addiction. Next, the chapter provides an explanation of the relationship between drug use and criminal activity and illustrates the effects of drug usage on the body.

The next section talks about how crime is measured. The Uniform Crime Report has attempted to measure the overall rate of crime in the United States by collecting data on "offenses known to law enforcement."

Next, the chapter explains the role of victims in criminal justice, their legal rights, and the risks of victimization. Finally, the chapter talks about the state of crime in the United States. Starting in 1994, the United States experienced a steep crime decline. However, the trends have been less positive for African Americans than for whites. Official crime data seem to

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indicate a strong correlation between minorities' status, class, and income level with crime. Rising female criminality and women's victimization to violent crimes (mainly domestic violence and stalking) are discussed at the end of the chapter.

Key Terms

Anomie (p. 29): A condition in which the individual feels a disconnect from society due to the breakdown or absence of social norms

Biology (p. 25): The science of living organisms, including their structure, function, growth and origin

Causation (p. 24): The relationship in which a change in one measurement or behavior creates a recognizable change in another measurement or behavior

Control theory (p. 30): A series of theories that assume that all individuals have the potential for criminal behavior, but are restrained by the damage that such actions would do to their relationships with family, friends, and members of the community

Correlation (p. 24): The relationship between two measurements or behaviors that tend to move in the same direction

Criminal model of addiction (p. 34): An approach to drug abuse that holds that drug offenders harm society by their actions to the same extent as other criminals and should face the same punitive sanctions

Criminology (p. 23): The scientific study of crime and the causes of criminal behavior

Dark Figure of Crime (p. 37): A term used to describe the actual amount of crime that takes place. The "figure" is "dark," or impossible to detect, because a great number of crimes are never reported to the police

Domestic Violence (p. 43): An act of willful neglect or physical violence that occurs within a familial or other intimate relationship

Drug (p. 31): Any substance that modifies biological, psychological, or social behavior; in particular, an illegal substance with those properties

Drug abuse (p. 33): The use of drugs that results in physical or psychological problems for the user, as well as disruption of personal relationships and employment

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Genetics (p. 25): The study of how certain traits or qualities are transmitted from parents to their offspring

Hormone (p. 26): A chemical substance, produced in tissue and conveyed in the bloodstream, that controls certain cellular and body functions such as growth and reproduction

Hypothesis (p. 24): A possible explanation for an observed occurrence that can be tested by further investigation

Learning theory (p. 30): The theory that delinquents and criminals must be taught both the practical and the emotional skills necessary to participate in illegal activity

Legalization (p. 34): To make a formerly illegal product or action lawful. In the context of marijuana, the process includes strict regulation, including a ban on sale to or use by minors

Life course criminology (p. 30): The study of crime based on the belief that behavioral patterns developed in childhood can predict delinquent and criminal behavior later in life

Medical model of addiction (p. 34): An approach to drug addiction that treats drug abuse as a mental illness and focuses on treating and rehabilitating offenders rather than punishing them

Part I Offenses (p. 35): The most serious crimes recorded by the FBI in its Uniform Crime Report

Part II Offenses (p. 35): All crimes recorded by the FBI that do not fall into the category of Part I offenses

Psychoactive drug (p. 32): A chemical that affects the brain, causing changes in emotions, perceptions, and behavior

Psychology (p. 25): The scientific study of mental processes and behavior

Rational choice theory (p.24): A school of criminology that holds that wrongdoers act as if they weigh the possible benefits of criminal or delinquent activity against the expected costs of being apprehended

Repeat Victimization (p. 39): The theory that certain people and places are more likely to be subject to repeated criminal activity and that past victimization is a strong indicator of future

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victimization

Self-Reported Survey (p. 37): Methods of gathering crime data that rely on participants to reveal and detail their own criminal or delinquent behavior

Social conflict theories (p. 29): Theories that view criminal behavior as the result of class conflict

Social Disorganization Theory (p. 28): The theory that deviant behavior is more likely in communities where social institutions such as the family, schools, and the criminal justice system fail to exert control over the population

Social process theories (p. 30): Theories that consider criminal behavior to be the predictable result of a person's interaction with his or her environment

Social psychology (p. 27): The study of how individual behavior is influenced by the behavior of groups in social situations

Sociology (p. 27): The study of the development and functioning of groups of people who live together within a society

Stalking (p. 43): The criminal act of causing fear in a person by repeatedly subjecting that person to unwanted or threatening attention

Strain theory (p. 28): The assumption that crime is the result of frustration felt by individuals who cannot reach their financial and personal goals through legitimate means

Testosterone (p. 26): The hormone primarily responsible for the production of sperm and the development of male secondary sex characteristics

Theory (p. 24): An explanation of a happening or circumstance that is based on observation, experimentation, and reasoning.

Uniform Crime Report (UCR) (p. 34): An annual report compiled by the FBI to give an indication of criminal activity in the United States

Victim (p. 38): Any person who suffers physical, emotional, or financial harm as the result of a criminal act

Victim Survey (p. 37): A method of gathering crime data that directly surveys participants to

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determine their experiences as victims of crime

Student Assignments

1. Provide students a number of scenarios or a case study, and have them dissect it and find as many correlation and causation factors as they can. For instance, your attendance at Pittsburgh Steeler games results in a seven-win and a zero-loss record for the Steelers. Is this a correlation or a causation? Have the students present and defend their findings.

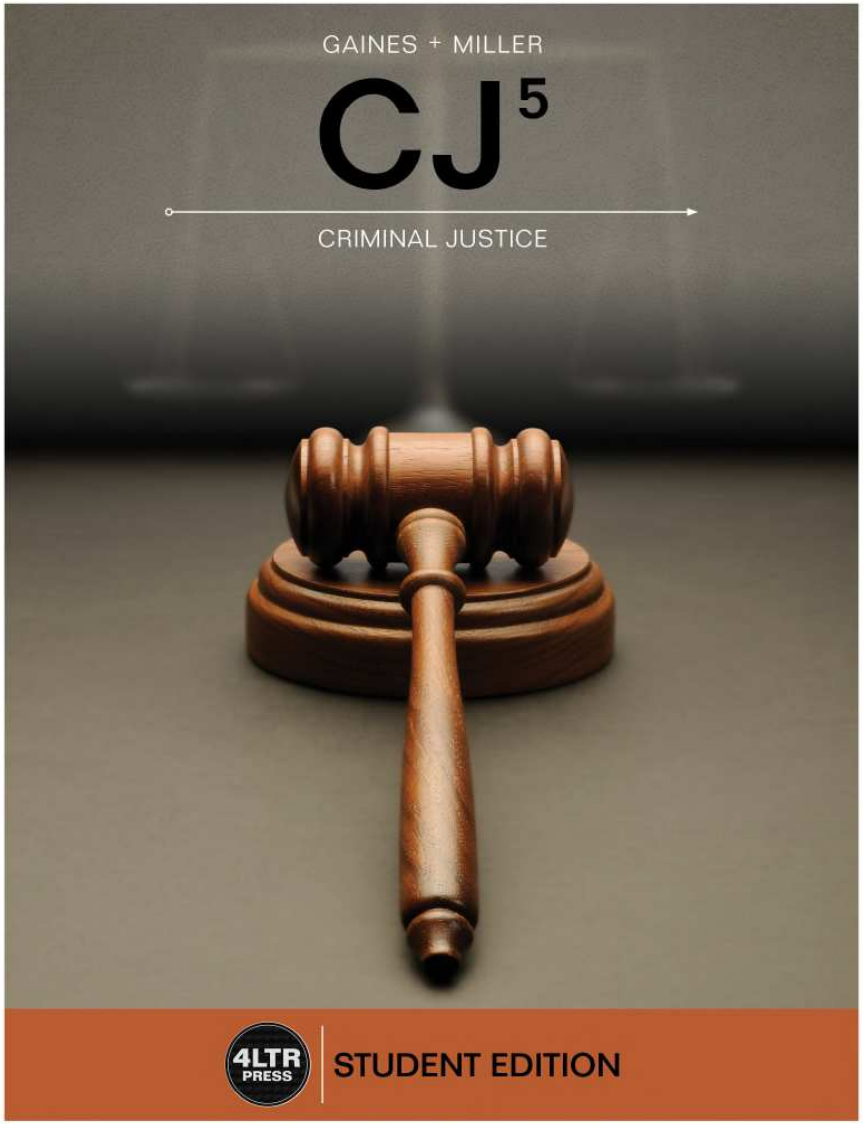
2. Ask students to submit a report on the psychological theories of crime and the biological theories of crime.

3. Have students research drug statistics in their local area and prepare a PowerPoint presentation that outlines their findings, their thoughts as to the primary theoretical understanding for drug use in their community. Students should include a list of the most prominent drugs and a potential solution for the drug problem.

4. Have students create a photo collage with descriptors depicting the evolution of the victims' rights movement.

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2

The Crime Picture: Theories and Trends

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Discuss the difference between a hypothesis and a theory in the context of criminology.
2. Contrast the medical model of addiction with the criminal model of addiction.
3. Identify the publication in which the FBI reports crime data and list the two main ways in which the data are reported.

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES *(continued)*

4. Describe the three ways that victims' rights legislation increases the ability of crime victims to participate in the criminal justice system.
5. Explain why income level appears to be more important than race when it comes to crime trends.

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LO 1

Discuss the difference between a hypothesis and a theory in the context of criminology.

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Criminology, Correlation, and Cause

- **Criminology**: Scientific study of crime and the causes of criminal behavior
  - *Criminologists study the causes of crime*
- **Correlation**: Relationship between two variables that tend to move in the same direction
- **Causation**: Relationship in which a change in one variable creates a recognizable change in another

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Theory and Hypothesis

- **Theory**
  - *Explanation of a happening or circumstance that is based on observation, experimentation, and reasoning*
- **Hypothesis**
  - *Possible explanation for an observed occurrence that can be tested by further investigation*
- Criminological theories attempt to determine reasons for criminal behavior

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Rational Choice Theory and Trait Theories of Crime

- **Rational choice theory**
  - *Holds that wrongdoers act as if they weigh possible benefits of criminal or delinquent activity against expected costs of being apprehended*
- **Trait theories**
  - *Suggest that certain biological or psychological traits in individuals could incline them toward criminal behavior, given a certain set of circumstances*

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Traits and Crime: Trends

- **Genetics** helps in determining criminality
  - *Neurocriminology is the study of the influence of genetics and brain activity on criminal behavior*
    - Criminal activity in males has been linked to elevated levels of hormones
    - Female violent behavior is believed to stem from hormones
- Violent crime has been linked to schizophrenia

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Psychological Theories of Crime

- Assume that individuals have traits that make them more or less predisposed to criminal activity
  - ***Social psychology*** *focuses on human behavior in the context of how human beings relate to and influence one another*

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Social Disorganization Theory (Slide 1 of 2)

- Assumes that deviant behavior is more likely in communities where social institutions fail to exert control over the population
- Stages of social disorganization
  - *Poverty*
  - *Social disorganization*
  - *Breakdown of social controls*

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Social Disorganization Theory (Slide 2 of 2)

- *Criminal careers*
- *Cultural transmission*
- *Criminal areas*

- Factors that lead to crime in neighborhoods
  - *High levels of high school dropouts*
  - *Chronic unemployment*
  - *Deteriorating buildings and other infrastructures*
  - *Concentrations of single-parent families*

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Strain Theory and Social Conflict Theory

- **Strain theory**
  - *Holds that crime is the result of frustration felt by individuals who cannot reach their financial and personal goals through legitimate means*
  - *Has its roots in the concept of anomie*
    - ***Anomie***: Condition in which the individual feels a disconnect from society due to breakdown or absence of social norms
- **Social conflict theories**: View criminal behavior as the result of class conflict

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Social Process Theories

- Consider criminal behavior to be the predictable result of a person's interaction with his or her environment
  - ***Learning theory****: Delinquents and criminals must be taught practical and emotional skills necessary to participate in illegal activity*
  - ***Control theory***
    - Assumes that all individuals have the potential for criminal behavior but are restrained by the consequences of such actions on relationships

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Life Course Criminology

- Based on the belief that behavioral patterns developed in childhood can predict delinquent and criminal behavior later in life
- Self-control theory
  - *Criminal behavior is linked to low self-control*
    - Individuals with low self-control are impulsive, thrill-seeking, and likely to solve problems with violence rather than intellect

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LO 2

Contrast the medical model of addiction with the criminal model of addiction.

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Criminology of Drug Use: Drugs and the Learning Process

- First-time drug users become habitual users because they learn:
  - *The techniques of drug use*
  - *To perceive the pleasurable effects of drug use*
  - *To enjoy the social experience of drug use*

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Criminology of Drug Use: Drug Abuse

- Use of any drug, licit or illicit, that causes either psychological or bodily harm to the abuser or to third parties
- Theory regarding drug use and abuse
  - *Some people possess overly sensitive drug receptors in their brains and are therefore biologically disposed toward drug use*

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Criminology of Drug Use: Drug–Crime Relationship

- Drug-defined offenses
  - *Violation of laws that prohibit possession, use, distribution, or manufacture of illegal drugs*
- Drug-related offenses
  - *Crimes motivated by drug abuse*
- Drug-using lifestyle
  - *Experienced by drug abusers who do not participate in the legitimate economy*
    - Rely on crime for the means of survival

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Criminology of Drug Use: Models of Addiction

- **Medical model of addiction**
  - *Treats drug abuse as a mental illness*
  - *Focuses on treating and rehabilitating offenders rather than punishing them*
  - *Advocated by the people who believe in the enslavement theory of addiction*
- **Criminal model of addiction**
  - *Holds that illegal drug abusers and addicts endanger society with their behavior*
    - Should be punished the same as persons who commit non-drug-related crimes

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Marijuana Law Trends in the United States

- Eight states have legalized the possession and sale of small amounts of marijuana for recreational use
- Nationwide legalization would:
  - *Put the black market for marijuana out of business*
  - *Remove the stigma of recreational marijuana use*
  - *Save the criminal justice system costs associated with marijuana arrests*

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LO 3

Identify the publication in which the FBI reports crime data and list the two main ways in which the data are reported.

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Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) (Slide 1 of 3)

- Set of annual reports compiled by the FBI to give an indication of criminal activity in the United States
- Information is based on the following measurements:
  - *Number of persons arrested*
  - *Number of crimes reported by victims, witnesses, or the police themselves*
  - *Police employee data*

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Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) (Slide 2 of 3)

- Information is sent to the FBI, which publishes the crime data in the following ways:
  - *As a rate per 100,000 people*
  - *As a percentage change from the previous year or other time periods*
- Crime data is published in *Crime in the United States*
  - *Criminal offenses are categorized into Part I and Part II offenses*

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Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) (Slide 3 of 3)

- **Part I offenses**: Murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny or theft, arson, and motor vehicle theft
- **Part II offenses**: Drug abuse violations, simple assaults, driving under the influence, and disorderly conduct

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National Incident-Based Reporting System (Slide 1 of 2)

- Local agencies collect data on every crime occurrence within twenty-three offense categories made up of forty-nine specific crimes called group A offenses
- Data are recorded on computerized record systems provided by the federal government

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National Incident-Based Reporting System (Slide 2 of 2)

- Provides information about offenses, victims, offenders, and arrestees that are unavailable through the UCR
- Presents a complete picture of crime by monitoring criminal incidents reported to the police

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Victim Surveys and Self-Reported Surveys

- **Victim surveys**
  - *Example: National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS)*
  - *Provide a better understanding of the **dark figure of crime**, or the actual amount of crime that takes place*
- **Self-reported surveys**
  - *Rely on offenders to reveal and detail their own criminal or delinquent behavior*

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LO 4

Describe the three ways that victims' rights legislation increases the ability of crime victims to participate in the criminal justice system.

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Legal Rights of Crime Victims

- Right to be informed
- Right to be present
- Right to be heard

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Routine Activities Theory

- Requirements for a criminal act
  - *Offender, suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian*
- Offenders attach "values" to suitable targets
  - *The higher the value, the more likely that target is going to be the subject of a crime*

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Repeat Victimization

- Theory that certain people and places are more likely to be subject to repeated criminal activity
- Past victimization and past criminal activity increase the risk of future victimization

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LO 5

Explain why income level appears to be more important than race when it comes to crime trends.

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Factors of Crime Fluctuation That Help in Interpreting and Predicting Crime Trends

Imprisonment

Youth populations

The economy

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Crime in the 1990s and 2000s

- Crime rates dropped between 1990 and 2000
  - *Economy was robust and the incarceration rate was skyrocketing*
- The United States is presently enjoying historically low levels of crime
  - *Rise in national murder rate was seen in 2015*
    - Attributed to gang violence, the heroin epidemic, and the economy

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Crime, Race, and Poverty

- Strong correlation exists between minority status and crime
- Neighborhoods with higher levels of disadvantage have uniformly higher violent crime rates
- Income levels and lack of education correlate with criminal behavior

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Women and Crime

- Female presence in the criminal justice system has been increasing
  - *Reasons*
    - Dramatic changes in the life circumstances and behavior of women
    - The criminal justice system's attitude toward women
- Women face greater risk of **domestic violence** and **stalking**

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KEY TERMS

- Social psychology
- Sociology
- Social disorganization theory
- Strain theory
- *Anomie*
- Social conflict theories
- Social process theories
- Learning theory
- Control theory
- Life course criminology
- Drug
- Criminology
- Correlation
- Causation
- Theory
- Hypothesis
- Rational choice theory
- Biology

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KEY TERMS *(continued)*

- Psychology
- Genetics
- Hormone
- Testosterone
- Psychoactive drug
- Drug abuse
- Medical model of addiction
- Criminal model of addiction
- Legalization
- Uniform Crime Report (UCR)
- Part I offenses
- Part II offenses
- Victim surveys
- Dark figure of crime
- Self-reported surveys
- Victim
- Repeat victimization
- Domestic violence
- Stalking

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SUMMARY

- Criminology has different theories to explain why people commit crimes
- Medical and criminal models of addiction explain how society should deal with addicts
- The UCR is an annual report compiled by the FBI to give an indication of criminal activity
- All states have passed legislation creating certain rights for victims
- Crime rates have significantly dropped between the years 1990 and 2000

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