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CRIMINOLOGY

CONNECTING THEORY, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

Aida Y. Hass, Chris Moloney
and William J. Chambliss

SECOND EDITION

CRIMINOLOGY

Connections among theory, research, and practice are the heart and soul of criminology. This book offers a comprehensive and balanced introduction to criminology, demonstrating the value of understanding the relationships between criminological theory, research, and practice in the study of crime and criminal behavior. Utilising a range of case studies and thought-provoking features, it encourages students to think critically and provides a foundation for understanding criminology as a systematic, theoretically grounded science. It includes:

- A comprehensive overview of crime in American society, including the nature and meaning of crime and American criminal law, as well as the scientific study of crime.
- A concise, straightforward, and practical approach to the study of the American criminal justice system and its various components, including individual chapters on police, courts, and corrections.
- An overview of criminological theory, including classical, biological, psychological, and sociological approaches.
- A survey of typologies of criminological behavior including interpersonal violent crimes, property crime, public order crime, organized and white collar crime, state crime, environmental harm, and cybercrime.
- Concluding thoughts exploring challenges facing criminal justice policy and the future of criminological theory.

This new edition has been thoroughly revised and updated and includes brand new chapters on corrections, courts, criminal law, law enforcement, and technology and cybercrime. It is packed with useful and instructive features such as themed case study boxes in every chapter, critical thinking questions, lists of further reading, and links to e-resources. A companion website includes PowerPoint slides for lecturers, links to useful resources, and lists of further reading.

Aida Y. Hass is an Associate Professor of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Missouri State University.

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William J. Chambliss (1933–2014) was Professor of Sociology at George Washington University.

“Hass, Moloney and Chambliss’s *Criminology*, second edition, connects theory, research and real-world application in a way that no other book does. It is written in a style that is perfect for undergraduates in criminology or criminal justice courses, or for any practitioners in criminal justice generally. This is a book most students would be wise to keep on their shelves long after graduation.”

Todd M. Krohn, Program/Intern Coordinator, Department of Sociology,
The University of Georgia

“With so many criminology texts to choose from, this book provides a unique perspective that emphasizes criminal law, critical thinking, and the relevance of theory for criminal justice policy and practice. Its integration of concrete legal vignettes and real life case studies provide provocative examples that will help students better understand how crime is socially constructed, and to see how crime and policy impact society, as well as their own lives.”

Karen G. Weiss, Associate Professor, Department of Anthropology
and Sociology, West Virginia University

“Bringing together theories and typologies of offending with research and practical implications, *Criminology: Connecting Theory, Research and Practice* illuminates for our students the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of crime and justice. Hass, Moloney, and Chambliss use lively case studies to engage readers with real-world illustrations of the criminal justice system and explanations for criminal behavior. Their ‘working in’ feature allows students a rare glimpse into the daily activities of practitioners in the system and the ‘crime in global perspective’ feature provides an important international context. With attention to emerging forms of offending, such as terrorism and cybercrime, as well as contemporary issues facing practitioners of courts, policing, and corrections, this is one of the most comprehensive texts in the field.”

Jamie J. Fader, Assistant Professor, Department of Criminal Justice,
Temple University

“In this new edition of *Criminology: Connecting Theory, Research and Practice*, Hass, Moloney and Chambliss once again offer a phenomenal instructional resource helping students to truly grasp criminology. Connecting theory to the importance of research and its practical implications illuminates the excitement of the field, making theory relevant to future practitioners and scholars. This is a must-have text for criminology courses.”

Jennifer C. Gibbs, Assistant Professor, School of Public Affairs,
Penn State Harrisburg

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—SECOND EDITION—

AIDA Y. HASS, CHRIS MOLONEY
AND WILLIAM J. CHAMBLISS

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To my mom and dad: Your endless love and support taught me to make dreams come into reality through determination and hard work.

- Aida

To my grandparents: Ed, Ruth, Walt, and Lorraine. Your strength and love inspire me every day.

- Chris

*In loving memory of our dear friend and mentor,
William J. Chambliss*



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Brief contents

<i>List of images</i>	<i>xxiv</i>
<i>List of figures</i>	<i>xxxi</i>
<i>List of maps</i>	<i>xxxiii</i>
<i>List of tables</i>	<i>xxxiv</i>
<i>List of boxes</i>	<i>xxxvii</i>
<i>About the authors</i>	<i>xl</i>
<i>Preface</i>	<i>xli</i>
<i>How to use this book</i>	<i>xliii</i>

PART I
CRIME, CRIMINAL LAW, AND CRIMINOLOGY **1**

1	Crime, deviance, and criminology: a brief overview	3
2	Criminal law	39
3	How much crime is there?	75
4	Doing criminology: research and theory	117

PART II
THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN ACTION **147**

5	Law enforcement in America	149
6	Courts	195
7	American corrections	229

PART III
AN OVERVIEW OF CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORY **285**

8	Crime as rational behavior: classical and rational choice theory	287
----------	---	------------

9 Biological theories: crime is in the brain	317
10 Psychological theories: crime is in the mind	351
11 Sociological theory: crime is in the structure of society	383
12 Social process theories: crime is socialized behavior	419
13 Sociological theory: crime is from conflict inherent to society	453
PART IV	
TYPOLOGIES OF CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR	489
14 Interpersonal crimes of violence	491
15 Crimes against property	533
16 Public order crimes	567
17 Crimes of the powerful	601
18 Green crimes and harms	637
19 Technology and cybercrime	665
PART V	
A LOOK AHEAD	701
20 Crime today, crime tomorrow: the future of criminological theory	703
<i>Image acknowledgments</i>	736
<i>Index</i>	748

Detailed contents

<i>List of images</i>	xxiv
<i>List of figures</i>	xxxi
<i>List of maps</i>	xxxiii
<i>List of tables</i>	xxxiv
<i>List of boxes</i>	xxxvii
<i>About the authors</i>	xl
<i>Preface</i>	xli
<i>How to use this book</i>	xliii

PART I

CRIME, CRIMINAL LAW, AND CRIMINOLOGY **1**

1 Crime, deviance, and criminology: a brief overview **3**

How do we define crime? **5**

- The definition of crime from a “legalist perspective” 7
- The definition of crime from a “political perspective” 7
- The definition of crime from a “psychological perspective” 8
- The definition of crime from a “sociological perspective” 8

What does deviance mean? **10**

What is criminology? **13**

- What is criminal justice? 14

The “popular image” of crime v. the reality of criminal behavior **17**

Criminology and theory **20**

Criminological research and public policy **23**

Criminology and the law **26**

- The consensus view 26
- The conflict view 27
- A period of change in criminology and the criminal justice system: 1970s–1990s 28
 - Impacts on law enforcement* 30
 - Impacts on courts and corrections* 30

Summary **32**

Critical thinking questions	33
e-Resources	34
Notes	34
2 Criminal law	39
The criminal law, crime, and criminal justice	41
Origins of U.S. law	42
Principles of criminal law	43
The principle of legality	43
Actus reus (the criminal act), harm, causation, mens rea (criminal intent), and concurrence	44
Punishment	49
International common v. international civil law	49
American criminal v. civil law	51
Types of criminal law	51
State and federal criminal law	54
State-level criminal law	54
Federal criminal law	56
Theories of criminal law creation	57
Consensus theory	58
Societal needs theory	59
Ruling class and pluralistic theory (conflict theory)	60
Gender, race, age, and the criminal law	63
Women and the criminal law	63
Race and the criminal law	65
Juveniles, the criminal justice system, and the criminal law	67
Summary	71
Critical thinking questions	71
Notes	72
3 How much crime is there?	75
Criminology and crime data	76
The Uniform Crime Reports (UCR)	78
Data collection for the UCR	79
Problems with the UCR	79
National Incident-Based Reports (NIBRS)	82
National Criminal Victimization Survey (NCVS)	85
<i>Evaluating the NCVS</i>	88
Self-report surveys	89
<i>Evaluating self-report studies</i>	89
Social correlates of offending	91
Age and crime	91

Race and crime	93
Gender and crime	96
Criminal careers	98
Crime trends in the United States	100
Trends in violent crime	102
Trends in property crime	104
Trends in crimes against women	105
Trends in victimization	106
Cross-cultural trends in victimization	107
Summary	109
Critical thinking questions	110
e-Resources	111
Notes	111
4 Doing criminology: research and theory	117
The science of criminology	121
Criminology and “common sense”	121
Constructing scientific theories	121
Theories and concepts are logically consistent	123
Testing theories and hypotheses	124
Validity and reliability measures	125
Showing relationships among variables	126
Scientific theories are objective	127
Criminological research methods	128
Survey research	129
Fieldwork	131
Experiments	132
Working with existing information	133
A student’s guide to criminological research	134
Define the problem	134
Review the literature	135
Formulate a hypothesis	136
Collect and analyze data	137
Develop a conclusion	138
Share the results	138
Applying ethics in conducting criminological research	139
Looking ahead: evidence-based criminal justice policy	140
Summary	142
Critical thinking questions	144
e-Resources	144
Notes	145

PART II	
THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM	
IN ACTION	147
<hr/>	
5 Law enforcement in America	149
The mission and roles of law enforcement agencies	151
Law enforcement mission	151
Law enforcement roles and responsibilities	152
Unique aspects of law enforcement and policing	152
<i>Trust</i>	152
<i>Power</i>	153
<i>Stress</i>	153
<i>Expectations</i>	154
The police subculture	155
A brief history of American law enforcement	159
Types of law enforcement agencies	162
Federal law enforcement	162
State and local law enforcement	163
Law enforcement strategies	164
Order maintenance policing and zero-tolerance strategies	164
Community- and problem-oriented policing (COP and POP)	168
Contemporary issues in law enforcement	171
Law enforcement misconduct	172
<i>Overview</i>	172
<i>History</i>	172
<i>Causes and solutions</i>	174
Use of force	177
<i>Overview</i>	177
<i>Current controversies</i>	179
<i>Prevalence of use of force</i>	180
<i>Demographics and use of force</i>	182
<i>Perceptions of use of force</i>	183
The future of American law enforcement	185
Summary	188
Notes	189
6 Courts	195
“A busy month for the Supreme Court . . .”	195
Function and types of courts	196
Criminal v. civil courts	197

Federal courts	198
State courts	199
Courtroom participants	200
Criminal courtroom processes	204
Initial processes and arraignment	204
Pre-trial procedures and motions	206
Trial	208
<i>Opening statements</i>	208
<i>Presenting the prosecution's case</i>	208
<i>Presenting the defense</i>	209
<i>Procedural defenses</i>	209
<i>Affirmative defenses</i>	209
<i>Closing arguments and jury instructions</i>	212
Post-trial	213
The sentencing phase	215
Overview of sentencing	215
Types of sentences	216
The pre-sentence investigative report and victim impact statement	216
Contemporary court issues	218
Overloaded dockets	218
<i>Overview</i>	218
<i>Causes</i>	219
<i>Implications</i>	219
Jury tampering and jury nullification	220
Corruption	222
Summary	223
Critical thinking questions	224
Notes	225
7 American corrections	229
Mass incarceration in the United States	229
Situating corrections within the criminal justice system	231
The origins of mass incarceration	231
A brief history of punishment	232
Punishment as retribution, or “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth”	233
Punishment in the ancient world	233
The Enlightenment, positivism, and punishment	235
Early punishment and corrections in America	238
Modern punishment philosophy and correctional models	240

Retribution and the retributive/isolative/incapacitory/just deserts model	240
Deterrence and the crime prevention model	241
Rehabilitation/reintegration and the rehabilitative and/or community model	242
American correctional systems	243
Jails in the United States	244
<i>Current jail populations</i>	244
<i>Functions of American jails</i>	245
<i>A brief history of jails</i>	245
Prisons in the United States	246
<i>Functions of prisons</i>	246
<i>A brief history of American prisons</i>	246
<i>The Pennsylvania System</i>	247
<i>The New York System</i>	248
<i>The Federal Bureau of Prisons</i>	249
<i>Southern prisons</i>	249
<i>Private prisons</i>	250
<i>The prison experience</i>	252
Contemporary prison and jail issues	254
Deaths in custody	254
Violence, gangs, and riots	255
Sexual assault, rape, and sexual violence	255
Community and alternative corrections	256
Probation	256
<i>A brief history of probation</i>	256
<i>Contemporary probation populations</i>	257
Parole	258
<i>A brief history of parole</i>	258
<i>Contemporary parole populations</i>	260
Juvenile corrections	260
Issues in modern corrections	260
Race, class, gender, and corrections	260
Prisoner reentry and recidivism	263
Solitary confinement, wrongful imprisonment, and the death penalty	265
<i>Solitary confinement</i>	265
<i>Wrongful imprisonment</i>	267
<i>The death penalty</i>	270
The future of American corrections	275
Summary	277
Critical thinking questions	278
Notes	279

PART III	
AN OVERVIEW OF CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORY	285
8 Crime as rational behavior: classical and rational choice theory	287
Early explanations of crime	288
The Middle Ages and the Renaissance	289
The Enlightenment	290
Principles of classical theory	291
Cesare Beccaria and the idea of free will	291
Jeremy Bentham and the Classical School	294
Evaluating classical theory	296
Principles of rational choice theories	297
Rational choice theory	298
Situational choice theory	299
Routine activities theory	299
Evaluating rational choice theory	302
Practical application of classical and rational choice theories	305
Situational crime control	305
Deterrence strategies	306
Summary	310
Critical thinking questions	311
e-Resources	312
Notes	312
9 Biological theories: crime is in the brain	317
Major principles of the biological approach	319
Early biological theories	320
Biochemical variables and crime	324
Nutrition	324
Blood glucose	325
Hormones	326
Contaminants	326
Neurocriminology	328
Neurological impairment	329
Brain chemistry	329
Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD)	332
Heredity, genetics, and crime	333
Criminal families	334
Twin studies	336
Adoption studies	337
Chromosomes	338

Evaluating biological theory	339
Practical application of biological theory	340
Summary	344
Critical thinking questions	345
e-Resources	346
Notes	346
10 Psychological theories: crime is in the mind	351
Major principles of the psychological approach	352
Pathological personality: the psychopath	353
Maladaptation	355
Psychoanalysis	356
Neurosis	359
Psychosis and other major mental disorders	359
Cognition and criminality	361
Behaviorism and criminality	364
Modeling	364
Stimulus-response conditioning	368
Evaluating psychological theory	369
Practical application of psychological theory	372
Predicting criminality before it occurs	372
Responding to criminality after it occurs	373
Summary	375
Critical thinking questions	377
e-Resources	378
Notes	378
11 Sociological theory: crime is in the structure of society	383
The sociological perspective	385
One perspective, three approaches	386
Major principles of the social structure approach	387
Social disorganization theory	388
The Chicago School	388
Environmental criminology	391
Strain theory	393
Anomie	393
General strain	394
Culture conflict theory	398
Subcultures	400

Differential opportunity	403
Drifting	405
Evaluating social structure theories	407
Practical application of social structure theory	409
The Chicago Area Project	410
War on poverty	410
Weed and seed	411
Summary	412
Critical thinking questions	414
e-Resources	414
Notes	414
12 Sociological process theories: crime is socialized behavior	419
Major principles of the social process approach	421
Social learning theories	422
Differential association	423
Differential reinforcement	426
Differential identification	427
Social control theory	428
Containment	428
Social bonds	430
Labeling theory	434
Primary and secondary deviance	435
Stigmatization	437
Evaluating social process theories	439
Youth mentoring initiatives	441
Head Start	441
Diversion	443
Summary	446
Critical thinking questions	448
e-Resources	449
Notes	449
13 Sociological theory: crime is from conflict inherent to society	453
Major principles of the social conflict approach	455
The emergence of conflict theory	457
Functional-conflict theory	458
Power-conflict theory	460

Radical criminological theories	460
Marx and Engels on capitalism	460
Willem Bonger on the economic culture	462
William Chambliss on law and politics	464
Contemporary radical theory	467
Left realism	467
Peacemaking criminology	470
Feminist theories	471
Types of feminist theories	472
<i>Marxist feminist theory</i>	472
<i>Radical feminist theory</i>	472
<i>Socialist feminist theory</i>	473
<i>Multiracial feminism</i>	473
<i>Liberal feminist theory</i>	473
Feminist theory on the victimization of women	473
Feminist theory on female criminality and the gender gap in crime rates	474
Crime and structural contradictions	476
Contradictions and conflicts	476
Crime in capitalist societies	477
Evaluating social conflict theories	479
Practical application of social conflict theory	480
What is restorative justice?	481
How does restorative justice work?	482
Summary	483
Critical thinking questions	484
e-Resources	485
Notes	485

PART IV
TYPOLOGIES OF CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR **489**

14 Interpersonal crimes of violence	491
Homicide	493
Defining homicide	493
Understanding homicide	495
<i>Chronic offending and the subculture of violence</i>	495
<i>Situational homicide</i>	498
<i>Serial murder</i>	499
<i>Mass murder</i>	504
Assault	505
Understanding assault between strangers	506

Understanding assault between non-strangers	506
<i>Intimate partner assault</i>	506
<i>Child maltreatment</i>	508
Rape and sexual assault	510
Defining rape	511
<i>Date rape</i>	512
<i>Spousal rape</i>	513
<i>Gang rape</i>	513
<i>Same-sex rape</i>	515
Understanding rape and sexual assault	515
Robbery	517
Defining robbery	519
Understanding robbery	519
Hate crimes	520
Summary	523
Critical thinking questions	525
e-Resources	526
Notes	526
15 Crimes against property	533
Larceny	535
Describing larceny	536
Understanding the different types of larceny	536
<i>Shoplifting</i>	536
<i>Credit card fraud</i>	537
<i>Check fraud</i>	538
<i>Embezzlement</i>	538
<i>False pretenses/fraud</i>	539
<i>Confidence games</i>	540
<i>Receiving and fencing stolen property</i>	544
Burglary	545
Describing burglary	546
Understanding the crime of burglary	549
<i>Offense specialization</i>	549
<i>Offender motivation</i>	550
<i>The environment and routine activities</i>	550
Motor vehicle theft	552
Describing motor vehicle theft	553
Understanding the occurrence of motor vehicle theft	553
<i>Joyriding</i>	553
<i>Commercial theft for profit</i>	554
<i>Transportation</i>	555
<i>Commission of other crimes</i>	555

Arson	555
Describing arson	555
Understanding different types of arsonists	558
<i>Delinquent fire setters</i>	558
<i>Pathological fire setters</i>	558
<i>Excitement-seeking fire setters</i>	558
<i>Revenge fire setters</i>	559
<i>Instrumental fire setters</i>	559
Summary	559
Critical thinking questions	560
e-Resources	561
Notes	561
16 Public order crimes	567
Crime v. morality: what is social order?	569
Drug use and addiction	572
Drug taking as deviance	572
<i>What is a drug?</i>	573
<i>What is addiction?</i>	574
<i>Why are some drugs illegal?</i>	574
Categories of drugs	575
Trends and patterns in drug use	576
Understanding drug abuse	579
What do we do about drug abuse?	580
Prostitution	584
How common is prostitution?	584
Types of prostitutes	586
<i>Skeezers</i>	586
<i>Streetwalkers</i>	586
<i>Bar girls and dancers</i>	586
<i>Call girls and escorts</i>	587
<i>Indentured sex slaves</i>	588
Factors related to becoming a prostitute	588
What do we do about prostitution?	589
Pornography	590
What is pornography?	590
Is pornography illegal?	591
Is pornography harmful?	593
What do we do about pornography?	593
Summary	594
Critical thinking questions	595
e-Resources	595
Notes	595

17 Crimes of the powerful	601
Critical criminology and the crimes of the powerful	602
Who are the powerful and what crimes do they commit? 603	
Key features of crimes of the powerful 604	
The “unseen” crimes of the powerful 605	
Failing to punish crimes of the powerful 606	
White-collar crime	610
What is white-collar crime? 610	
Characteristics of white-collar crimes 611	
Varieties of white-collar crime 611	
<i>Occupational crime</i> 611	
<i>Embezzlement</i> 612	
<i>Chiseling</i> 613	
Organizational and corporate crime 614	
Crimes against employees	615
Crimes against the public	616
State crime 617	
<i>What is state crime?</i> 617	
<i>Characteristics of state crime</i> 617	
Varieties of state crime 618	
<i>Abuse of power and corruption</i> 618	
<i>State-corporate crime</i> 620	
<i>Crimes against humanity</i> 622	
Organized crime 625	
<i>What is organized crime?</i> 625	
<i>The organization of organized crime</i> 625	
<i>Characteristics of organized crime</i> 627	
<i>The RICO Act and organized crime</i> 630	
Why care about the crimes of the powerful?	630
Summary	632
Notes	633
18 Green crimes and harms	637
Bhopal	637
Introducing green criminology	639
What are green crimes and harms?	641
Varieties of green crimes and harms	642
Air pollution and water pollution 642	
<i>Air pollution</i> 642	
<i>Water pollution</i> 646	
Disposal of hazardous waste and e-waste 648	
Poaching and illegal wildlife trafficking 651	
The control and prosecution of green crimes and harms	654

Summary	658
Critical thinking questions	659
Notes	660
19 Technology and cybercrime	665
Technology, crime, and crime control	666
What is cybercrime?	673
The evolution of cybercrime	674
Characteristics of cybercrime	677
Varieties of cybercrime	679
Computer intrusions	679
Identity and cybertheft	680
Cyberbullying, harassment, stalking, and exploitation	683
Illicit goods and black markets	686
Murder and cyber-terrorism	688
Combatting, controlling, and preventing cybercrime	690
Cybercrime: government responses	690
<i>U.S. context</i>	690
<i>International context</i>	693
Cybercrime: private sector responses	694
Summary	695
Critical thinking questions	696
Notes	696
PART V	
A LOOK AHEAD	701
<hr/>	
20 Crime today, crime tomorrow: the future of criminological theory	703
Comparative criminology	705
What is comparative criminology?	705
How do we conduct comparative criminology?	706
What do we learn from comparative criminology?	707
Crimes reaching beyond national borders	709
Transnational crime	709
<i>Intellectual property crime</i>	710
<i>Money laundering</i>	710
<i>Illegal trafficking</i>	711
<i>Terrorism</i>	713
International crime	715

The role of technology in facilitating crime	716
Modern responses to modern problems	719
Towards a “new” criminology	722
Defining crime: a practical synthesis 723	
Integrating theories 724	
Criminology’s impact on social policy: an integrated approach to crime prevention	726
Primary prevention: targeting risk 726	
Secondary prevention: targeting development 728	
Summary	730
Critical thinking questions	732
e-Resources	732
Notes	732
<i>Image acknowledgments</i>	736
<i>Index</i>	748

Images

1.1	Dennis Hastert	4
1.2	Crime stories coverage	6
1.3	Whose definition of right and wrong is imposed?	7
1.4	What influences our impression of the way people look?	10
1.5a	The public transformation of Bruce Jenner into Caitlyn	11
1.5b	The public transformation of Bruce Jenner into Caitlyn	11
1.6a	Who fits our perception of a criminal?	18
1.6b	Who fits our perception of a criminal?	18
<i>Box 1.2 Image 1 Ariel Castro</i>		19
2.1	Historical punishments	42
2.2	Signing of the Declaration of Independence	43
2.3	Attempted assassination of President Ronald Reagan	47
2.4	John W. Hinckley, Jr.	47
2.5	Sociologist Émile Durkheim (1858–1917) sits for a portrait	59
2.6	Unemployed man	61
2.7	Karl Marx, German radical political thinker	62
2.8	Max Weber (1864–1920), German political economist and sociologist	62
2.9	Women demonstrators	64
2.10	A cafe near the tobacco market in Durham, North Carolina	66
2.11	Little Rock High School	67
3.1	Dennis Rader murdered 10 people in Sedgwick County, Kansas	76
3.2	Crime data collection	85
3.3	Data sources such as the NCVS help us better understand crimes	88
3.4	What social pressures of the teenage years make youth more susceptible to criminal activity?	93
3.5	How has the changing role of women contributed to an increase in their crime rate?	96
3.6	Three-strikes laws are designed to incapacitate repeat violent offenders	100
3.7	Three-strikes laws are designed to incapacitate repeat violent offenders	100
4.1	The U.S. led War on Drugs	118
4.2	Social policies governing employment background checks	123
4.3	How do the techniques of field research help us?	131

4.4	Experiments are often used to determine causal relationships in a controlled environment	133
4.5	A mock prison experiment	139
5.1	Former New York City Detective Frank Serpico	150
5.2	Positive interactions between police and citizens	151
5.3	Chilean Carabineros clash with protestors	154
5.4	Within every culture are thousands of subcultures	156
5.5	Sir Robert Peel is considered to be the father of modern policing	160
5.6	Texas Rangers	161
5.7	A man is arrested in New York and led through the streets	161
5.8	August Vollmer, “father of modern law enforcement”	162
5.9	Alice Stebbins Wells	162
5.10	A poster featuring fugitives James “Whitey” Bulger and Catherine Greig	173
5.11	Less lethal methods for handling encounters with non-compliant citizens are now a common component of a police officer’s training	178
5.12	Minneapolis police guard the entrance to the Fourth Precinct	180
5.13	Walter Scott is shot by police officer Michael Thomas Slager	182
5.14	U.S. President Barack Obama speaks as Commissioner of the Philadelphia Police Department Charles Ramsey and others listen	186
6.1	Supreme Court of the United States Building	196
6.2	The original Juvenile Court Building and Detention Home	200
Box 6.6	<i>Image 1</i> Michael Dunn returns to his seat after reading his statement	210
6.3	Colorado movie theater shooting suspect James Holmes	212
6.4	An undated portrait of Emmett Louis Till	221
6.5	Mamie Mobley, mother of Emmett Till	221
6.6	Luzerne County Judges	222
7.1	Laws of code of Hammurabi	233
7.2	Mamertine Prison, Rome, Italy	234
7.3	Ulrich Tengler, 1447–1511	235
7.4	Charles Louis De Secondat, baron de Montesquieu, French philosopher	236
7.5	Francois-Marie Arouet (Voltaire), the French writer, and philosopher	236
7.6	Immanuel Kant, German philosopher	236
7.7	Denis Diderot, French encyclopaedist and philosopher	236
7.8	John Howard, British jurist and reformer of the English prisons	236
7.9	Cesare Bonesana, Marchese Di Beccaria, Italian economist and jurist	237
7.10	Jeremy Bentham, philosopher and economist	237

7.11	The ducking stool	238
7.12	The Old Jail in Barnstable, MA	239
7.13	William Penn, 1644–1718, English Quaker and founder of Pennsylvania	240
7.14	Hallway of the Eastern State Penitentiary	247
7.15	Aerial view of the Sing Sing prison at Ossining, New York (USA), in 1920	248
7.16	Convicts leased to harvest timber, around 1915, Florida	250
7.17	Corrections Corporation of America (CCA) detention center	251
7.18	Prisonization is the process of adopting the prison/inmate subculture	253
7.19	Dorothea Dix	259
7.20	A solitary confinement cell known as “the bing,” in New York’s Rikers Island jail	266
7.21	In 1989, 5 Black and Hispanic teenage boys were arrested	269
	<i>Box 7.4 Image 1</i> George Stinney’s mugshot, 1944	273
8.1	Harry King was a professional thief	288
8.2	Before criminology offered scientific explanations of criminal behavior	289
8.3	John Locke, English philosopher and physician	290
8.4	Portrait of Voltaire	290
8.5	Jean-Jacques Rousseau, French philosopher	290
8.6	The rational behavior of criminals is portrayed in <i>Ocean’s 13</i>	291
8.7	Police stand over David Sweat	295
8.8	Joyce Mitchell, a training supervisor at Clinton Correctional Facility	295
8.9	Ferguson, Missouri, became a battleground of protests and civil disorder	297
8.10	How do the location, hours of operation, and type of products sold here make this store a possible crime target?	301
8.11	American youth Michael Fay stirred up controversy	305
8.12	Stores all over the country install hi-tech security cameras	306
8.13	How are these prison conditions examples of specific deterrence strategies?	307
9.1	Criminologist Adrien Raine was the first to use imaging technology	318
9.2	Franz Gall founded the study of the relationship between human physical features and criminal behavior	320
9.3	How do you think Cesare Lombroso was influenced by Darwin’s theory on the evolution of human beings?	321
9.4	Where is this apartment building that has been condemned for high levels of lead toxins likely to be, and who has been affected by its contamination?	327
9.5	The field of neurocriminology is revolutionizing our understanding	329

9.6	How are these individuals—mountain climbers and gang members—both thrill seekers?	331
9.7	How are these individuals—mountain climbers and gang members—both thrill seekers?	331
9.8	Hyperactivity, distractibility, and poor attention span	332
9.9	The way identical twins are treated	336
9.10	The way identical twins are treated	336
10.1	Who would have known that this elegant, attractive ice-cream parlor owner killed?	352
10.2	Notorious serial killer Charles Manson	354
10.3	What skills must children develop in order to adapt to this type of structured environment?	355
10.4	Mom has already said no going out tonight	356
<i>Box 10.1 Image 1</i>	Elisabeth Fritzl was imprisoned for 24 years in this basement cellar by her father	358
10.5	Even though this child is actually playing, what role does the social learning mechanism of modeling play here?	364
10.6	What impact might this type of sporting event have on the behavior of observers?	364
10.7	How do you think this dog learned to shake hands at his owner's command?	368
10.8	How can psychological theories help us understand criminal behavior?	370
11.1	Nine people were killed and over twenty were injured when two rival motorcycle gangs collided	384
11.2	How might the social forces of economic depression and unemployment affect the behavior of these individuals?	385
11.3	What aspects of the social environment may contribute to the high rate of crime found in this urban community?	388
11.4	Children playing in a bounce house	389
11.5	How does society define success for us?	394
11.6	How can we explain the criminal activities of wealthy business woman Martha Stewart?	397
11.7	How do you suppose the differences in cultures found here can affect the ways people think and act?	398
11.8	Throwing punches at a hockey game is the norm	402
11.9	Choosing between right and wrong	405
12.1	Photo of a shooting victim being wheeled away by paramedics	420
12.2	Active learning in a classroom takes place through an interactive process of communication	422
12.3	How does differential association theory help explain the learning processes involved here?	425
12.4	Herbert Diess, CEO of Volkswagen Corporation	432
<i>Box 12.1 Image 1</i>	Staff for the House Energy and Commerce Committee sift through Enron Corporation documents	433

12.5	Head Start educational programming	442
13.1	A neighborhood pool in McKinney, Texas	454
13.2	How did the violation of criminal laws during the civil rights movement affect our understanding and definition of crime?	458
13.3	Society includes groups and individuals with opposing points of view	459
13.4	Great thinkers Karl Marx and Frederick Engels laid the groundwork for the development of radical criminological theories	461
13.5	Sales and other tactics retail stores use to attract customers	463
13.6	Thousands of people are killed or injured each year from post-collision fires	466
13.7	This statue is a symbol of our justice system's embodiment of fairness and equity	470
13.8	How does the subordinate status of females in the work place influence the gender gap in crime rates between men and women?	472
13.9	How has the changing role of women in the workforce affected the type of crimes they commit?	475
13.10	Structural contradictions theory helps us understand strikes and protests	479
14.1	What patterns of interaction trigger a violent attack?	492
14.2	Outbursts of violence	493
14.3	Ted Bundy is a notorious U.S. serial killer	499
14.4	Michael Jackson dangled his nine-month-old baby by the arm	509
14.5	How does society's perception of the crime of rape affect the treatment of rape victims?	511
14.6	The use of ATM machines in isolated, poorly lit places	518
14.7	What makes this type of expression a form of criminal behavior?	521
15.1	Rembrandt, <i>A Lady and a Gentleman</i>	534
15.2	How might the presence of this video surveillance equipment affect a shoplifter's decision?	537
15.3	If this bank teller kept some of the money from the cash drawers, why would that type of stealing be considered embezzlement?	539
15.4	Televangelist Jim Bakker and his wife Tammy Faye	541
15.5	What specific elements of this crime makes it a burglary?	545
15.6	<i>Thick as Thieves</i> , the 2009 film about a jewel heist	549
15.7	Why do you suppose the majority of joyriding is perpetrated by younger offenders?	554
15.8	Arsonists enjoy the thrill and attention that such havoc and devastation bring	556
16.1	Colombian anti-narcotics police officers keep watch in a field	568

16.2	The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that same-sex couples have the right to marry	571
16.3	Definitions of crime are influenced by moral entrepreneurs	572
16.4	What type of feelings does screaming on a roller coaster create in the mind?	573
16.5	What individual and environmental variables contribute to drug abuse and addiction?	580
16.6	How do visibility and bias play a role in arrests for prostitution?	587
16.7	How do cultural norms about dress influence the definition of pornography?	590
16.8	How do cultural norms about dress influence the definition of pornography?	590
17.1	Jeffrey Webb, Jose Maria Marin, Nicolas Leoz, Eugenio Figueredo, Jack Warner, and Eduardo Li	602
17.2	Vietnam War protestors march at the Pentagon	603
17.3	The “average offender” and the atypical “crimes of the powerful offender”	604
17.4	The “average offender” and the atypical “crimes of the powerful offender”	604
17.5	Patty Ramage, posing with her 1975 Ford Pinto	607
17.6	A woman walks in front of the HSBC bank headquarters in Mexico City	609
17.7	The Royal Caribbean Freedom of the Seas heads out to sea	609
17.8	Chiseling occurs when a doctor or treatment specialist recommends treatments	613
17.9	Canal Street in New York City	614
17.10	Human skulls from the Rwandan genocide	623
17.11	A wailing and distraught Rwandan woman	624
17.12	James “Whitey” Bulger, left, and his girlfriend, Catherine Greig	628
18.1	A worker cleans the dust as he displays a panel of photos	638
18.2	Rachel Carson, author of <i>Silent Spring</i>	640
18.3	Steam seeps up through the ground in Centralia, PA	640
18.4	A fire tug fights flames on the Cuyahoga River	641
Box 18.1	Image 1 Protestors carry a photo of Gov. Jerry Brown	643
18.5	Pedestrians walking through a shopping and office complex in Beijing	644
18.6	Groups of workers dye clothes in the river around the factory	649
18.7	Walter Palmer (L) poses with a lion he killed (not Cecil)	651
18.8	These homes in the Hillcrest neighborhood are contrasted by stacks of refineries	655
Box 18.8	Image 1 A pile of American bison skulls waiting to be ground for fertilizer	657

<i>Box 19.1 Image 1</i>	Police respond to the scene of an active shooting at Inland Regional Center	667
19.1	Employees look closely at a live video in the command center	670
19.2	Video tape shot by George Holliday	670
19.3	An alleged altercation between a Chicago police officer and a female bartender	673
19.4	Video footage of John McKenna	673
19.5	Computer technology is changing at a rapid pace	675
19.6	Dharun Ravi, the former Rutgers University student who was found guilty of hate crimes	684
19.7	In this courtroom drawing, Ross William Ulbricht is seated at the defense table	688
19.8	A 28-gram portion of speed is shown on sale	688
20.1	Family, friends, and supporters remember victims who were killed	704
20.2	Globalization affects many aspects of social interaction	705
20.3	Interpol sponsored a two-day conference that brought together law enforcement officials from around the world	710
20.4	Children in India participate in a rally	711
20.5	Over a million people in a show of solidarity against the threat of Islamic terrorism	713
20.6	Technology has dramatically facilitated the theft of information	716
20.7	The many faces of deviance and criminal behavior in mainstream society	723
20.8	The Wilmington, NC, police department sponsors an annual “Santa Cop” program	727

Figures

1.1	Individual rights or public order . . . You decide	5
1.2	What is the sequence of events in the criminal justice system?	15
1.3	Criminology: linking theory, research, and practice	23
1.4	Two perspectives on law: which is more convincing?	26
2.1	Key foci of substantive and procedural criminal law	52
3.1	Comparative crime rates in seventeen industrialized countries	78
3.2	NCVS data on violent and property crime rates, 1993–2014	87
3.3	Percentage of all those arrested for a crime in 2013 who are of various ages (category: serious crime arrests)	92
3.4	Gender and arrest rates (percentage of all arrests) for violent and property crimes	97
3.5	1960–2009 homicide rate trends in the United States	103
3.6	1973–2010 rape trends in the United States	106
4.1	Percentage of students who reported using illicit drugs, by race, 2012–2013	120
4.2	How to make a good survey	130
4.3	The scientific method	134
4.4	Examples of causal logic: X leads to Y	136
5.1	POP and the SARA process	169
5.2	The use of force continuum	179
5.3	Ethnicity of the American population	183
6.1	Criminal case flowchart	205
7.1	International comparative incarceration rates for select countries	230
8.1	Beccaria on punishment . . . A means to an end?	292
8.2	Routine activities theory's three variables	302
9.1	Nature or nurture . . . What drives our actions?	324
9.2	What fuels our brain?	325
9.3	The Kallikaks: a family of criminals?	335
10.1	Freud: one personality, three parts	356
10.2	Cognitive processes in the decision to cheat	361
10.3	Direct and indirect reinforcement	369
11.1	A concentric zone model	390
11.2	Sources of strain: what hurts?	397
11.3	Techniques of neutralization	406
12.1	According to differential association theory, behavior is the outcome of which side weighs more	424

12.2	Which have more of a deterrent effect, internal or external containments?	429
12.3	Elements of the social bond: successful social bonds = conformity	431
12.4	Secondary deviance: how it occurs	436
12.5	The labeling process	437
13.1	Functional-conflict versus power-conflict	458
13.2	Marx and Engels: the cycle of capitalism	462
13.3	The square of crime	469
13.4	Conflicts, contradictions, dilemmas, and resolutions	476
14.1	Types of criminal homicide	495
	<i>Box 14.2 Figure 1</i> Gun ownership around the world	500
	<i>Box 14.2 Figure 2</i> Gun ownership and homicide rates for countries covered by the Small Arms Survey	501
14.2	The cycle of violence	508
15.1	How do people steal? Reported larceny offenses by type	535
15.2	When and where are burglaries accomplished?	545
15.3	Burglary trends in the United States: 1988–2014	548
16.1	Percentage of 12 graders who have used these drugs in the past year	575
16.2	Trends in drug use: 2002–2014	578
16.3	Consequences of a war: incarceration for drug arrests, 1980–1996	581
17.1	Victims of white collar crime by offense type	611
19.1	Three ways technology impacts crime in the 21st century	669
19.2	Primary characteristics of cybercrime	679
19.3	Most people are only familiar with the surface web—the common news, social media, commerce, and shopping websites that are easily accessible and frequently used	687

Maps

6.1	Geographic boundaries of United States Courts of Appeals and United States District Courts	198
18.1	Illegal animal trade in the world	652

Tables

1.1	What is crime? Four perspectives	6
1.2	Criminal, deviant, neither, or both?	11
1.3	Are all rules created equally?	12
1.4	How do we do criminology?	14
1.5	Major categories of crime	21
2.1	The Constitution and criminal law	53
2.2	Major types of civil law	53
2.3	Major differences between civil and criminal law and procedure	54
2.4	Overview of theories of law creation	58
2.5	Differences between the adult and juvenile justice systems	70
3.1	U.S. homicide rates per 100,000 people, 1950–2014	77
3.2	Summary of methodological biases built into the UCR data collection	83
3.3	Offence categories in the National Incident Based Reporting System	84
3.4	Differences between summary UCR data and incident based NIBRS Data	85
3.5	Percentage of high school seniors reporting criminal involvement in selected activities	90
3.6	Comparing rates of arrest for whites and blacks	94
3.7	Percentage of high school seniors admitting to at least one offense during the past 12 months, by gender	97
3.8	Major savings and loans criminal cases, 1988–1992	101
4.1	How truthful are respondents on surveys?	126
4.2	Some major sociological research methods: how to choose?	129
4.3	Important issues a literature review addresses	135
4.4	Ethical considerations in conducting your research project	140
5.1	Summary of the police mission, role responsibilities, and unique factors	152
5.2	Timeline of key events in the history of American law enforcement	163
5.3	Timeline of major events relating to law enforcement misconduct	176
5.4	Timeline and summary of recent high profile use of force cases	181
6.1	Legal tests and rules for insanity	213

7.1	Two types of deterrence, general v. specific	242
7.2	America's largest jail systems	244
7.3	Primary functions of American jails	245
7.4	Current prison and jail populations in America	246
7.5	Innovations at Eastern PA/Cherry Hill State Prison	247
7.6	America's 6 largest prison gangs	255
7.7	Race, gender, and U.S. prison populations 2013	261
7.8	Important death penalty cases	271
8.1	Calculating pleasure versus pain	295
8.2	Rational choice theory: variables in evaluating criminal choices	298
8.3	The classical and rational choice perspective	304
8.4	Which punishment would stop you from . . .	306
9.1	Biological perspectives on criminal behavior	320
9.2	Atavistic features of Lombroso's Primitive Menu	321
9.3	Sheldon's three body types	323
9.4	How do those with ADHD behave?	333
9.5	The XYY phenomenon: what are the findings?	338
9.6	The biological perspective	341
10.1	Psychological perspectives on criminal behavior	353
10.2	Signs and symptoms of anti-social personality disorder	355
10.3	Patients of major mental disorders: who are they and how do they act?	360
10.4	Whom do we observe?	367
10.5	The psychological perspective	373
10.6	Behavior predictors of future criminality	374
11.1	Social structure theories of criminal behavior	387
11.2	Anatomy of dangerous persons, places, and situations	392
11.3	Ways of adapting to a frustrating social structure	395
11.4	Focal concerns . . . what do the urban poor worry about?	401
11.5	The social structure perspective	409
12.1	Social process theories	422
12.2	The social process perspective: definition, cause, and solution to crime	440
13.1	Social conflict theories of criminal behavior	457
13.2	Class interest, class conflict, the law, and crime	466
13.3	The conflict perspective	480
13.4	Restorative justice in action	482
14.1	Stages of chronic offending	498
14.2	Four types of serial killers based on motive	503
14.3	Four types of mass murderers based on motive	504
14.4	Categories of domestic violence	507
14.5	Robbery as a response to norm violations within the street subculture	520

15.1	Shoplifting trends in 2014: incident and cost at 25 major retailers	538
15.2	Possible indicators of embezzlement	540
15.3	Four categories of burglary	548
15.4	Reporting crime victimization to the police: how does motor vehicle theft compare?	553
15.5	Distribution of arsons in 2014: type of structure and how much damage	556
16.1	Categories of drugs	577
16.2	Percent of offenders testing positive for drugs at time of arrest	579
17.1	Various types of corporate and organizational crimes	615
17.2	Most common causes of American workplace injury and death	615
17.3	Corruption in government by state 2001–2010	621
17.4	Organized crime networks	626
17.5	The world’s most profitable organized crime groups	627
18.1	Environmental legislation, 1960s and 1970s	641
18.2	Examples of green crimes and harms	642
18.3	Guide to AQI levels	646
19.1	Timeline of major events in cyber crime history 1971–2001	676
19.2	Recent high profile cyberthefts	682
19.3	Recent examples of major internet child pornography cases	685
19.4	Federal penalties for violations of the CFAA	692
19.5	Federal criminal statutes related to cybercrimes	693
19.6	Private sector cybersecurity initiatives	694
20.1	Global crime concern . . . what are we doing about it?	721

Boxes

1.1	Protecting a country from its protectors	9
1.2	Surviving a house of terror	19
1.3	Does white collar crime “make sense”?	22
1.4	Does increased surveillance reduce crime?	24
2.1	Ambiguity and the principle of legality	45
2.2	Interpreting mens rea or criminal intent	48
2.3	Working in . . . criminal law	55
2.4	Kids without counsel	69
3.1	The cost of corporate crime	81
3.2	Demonstrating the effects of police bias in New York City	95
3.3	Three strikes and you’re out! Life course theories in action	98
4.1	Creating a fear of youth	119
4.2	Why “just say no”?	122
4.3	Prime time crime in Washington D.C.	141
5.1	Working in . . . law enforcement	158
5.2	Broken windows theory and stop-and-frisk policies	165
5.3	Improving law enforcement practice through criminal intelligence analysis	170
5.4	Pulling levers: POP and focused deterrence strategies	170
5.5	POP in action	171
5.6	The Miami River Cops Scandal	175
5.7	Repairing the law enforcement–citizen relationship	184
5.8	Law enforcement and public order in Europe	187
6.1	Going to court in the Czech Republic	201
6.2	Judges profile	201
6.3	Attorney profile	202
6.4	Working in . . . the courts	203
6.5	Plea bargaining in the courts	207
6.6	Self-defense and stand-your-ground laws	210
6.7	Reforming the insanity defense	214
6.8	The high stakes nature of criminal trials	215
6.9	Sentencing and the Victim Impact Statement	217
7.1	Working in . . . corrections	254
7.2	The lifelong impact of a criminal record and incarceration	264
7.3	The toll of solitary confinement	268
7.4	Juveniles and the death penalty	273
7.5	Does the death penalty actually deter crime?	274

7.6	The future of corrections?	276
8.1	Does punishment certainty stop criminals?	292
8.2	College girl . . . Call girl?	300
8.3	A closer look at deterrence	308
9.1	Decades of decline in crime rates: is it cleaner air?	327
9.2	Low serotonin levels and the angry brain . . . A study from the U.K.	330
9.3	Are defective genes inherited? Policy implications of trait theory	335
9.4	Building teens through positive adventures	342
10.1	Twenty-four years of rape, abuse, and imprisonment	357
10.2	Restructuring distorted thinking—cognitive behavior therapy in action	362
10.3	Media violence and behavior . . . Lessons learned from research	365
10.4	The Abu Ghraib prison guards	371
11.1	Does collective efficacy really deter crime?	390
11.2	Successful businessmen turn fraudsters	395
11.3	When murder is defined as honor	399
11.4	Juvenile delinquents . . . Give them something to do	404
12.1	Committed to social norms: what happened?	432
12.2	The Saints and the Roughnecks	438
12.3	Reacting to school violence through collaboration	445
13.1	Who is defined criminal in Pakistan?	456
13.2	The power of voice	465
13.3	The “community” in community policing	468
13.4	<i>The Rich Get Richer and The Poor Get Prison</i>	471
14.1	Public policy and the subculture of violence	497
14.2	Around the world . . . Trends in homicide rates and gun ownership	500
14.3	When “good guys” rape	514
14.4	Hate crime laws: criminalizing free speech or protecting human rights?	522
15.1	Religion or confidence game?	542
15.2	Burglary trends in the United States and the United Kingdom	546
15.3	Burglary prevention . . . Lessons learned from routine activities theory	552
15.4	Evidence based arson prevention	557
16.1	Marijuana as medicine . . . The debate continues	570
16.2	“Get tough” doesn’t always get it right!	582
16.3	Prostitution’s “unlikely clients”	585
16.4	Protecting children worldwide: INHOPE	591
17.1	Getting rich in Pasadena	612
17.2	Marbles in the soup?	616
17.3	State crime, the Bennett Freeze, and Native American reservations	619

17.4	The role of dehumanization in mass killing	623
17.5	The making of organized crime	629
18.1	The Aliso Canyon gas leak	643
18.2	The crime of climate change	645
18.3	Unsafe to drink	647
18.4	Fracking	648
18.5	E-waste	650
18.6	The treadmill of production	653
18.7	Dealing with pollution	656
18.8	The annihilation of North American bison	657
19.1	The tension between security and privacy	667
19.2	The eye in the sky	671
19.3	Anonymous, Edward Snowden, and technological transparency	672
19.4	Ransomware	681
19.5	Routine activities theory and cybercrime	691
20.1	Crime control via shaming . . . An application of labeling theory	708
20.2	The war in Afghanistan . . . A war on terror or a war on drugs?	712
20.3	“Calling all haters” . . . Using the internet to solicit terrorism	717
20.4	Criminals beware! Fighting crime with “cybergenetics”	720

About the authors

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Preface

MAKING CONNECTIONS

Connections among theory, research, and practice are the heart and soul of criminology. This book offers a comprehensive and balanced introduction to criminology and demonstrates the value of understanding the relationship among criminological theory, research, and practice in the study of crime and criminal behavior. Encompassing a range of case studies and features designed to encourage critical thinking, it emphasizes the key role of criminological theory and research in the development of criminal justice policies and practices.

PART I: CRIME, CRIMINAL LAW, AND CRIMINOLOGY

Part I provides a comprehensive overview of crime in American society, with specific attention given to the varieties of crime and the victims of crime, the principles of criminal law, the sources of data on crime, and the tools for evaluating the scientific utility of criminological theories and research. This builds a foundation for students to understand criminology as a systematic, theoretically grounded science, whose goal it is to define crime, understand criminal behavior, and offer scientific solutions to lawmakers and politicians to form the basis of policies to alleviate the problem of crime in society. Students are introduced to the nature and meaning of crime and American criminal law, as well as the scientific study of crime.

PART II: THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM IN ACTION

Part II provides a concise, straightforward, and practical approach to the study of the American criminal justice system and its various components. We distinguish between criminology and criminal justice as distinct areas of study united by a common interest in better understanding crime. Individual chapters are dedicated to a critical examination of the primary components of the criminal justice system: police, courts, and corrections. Within the chapter on corrections, we also devote special attention to the topic of juvenile justice and juvenile corrections.

PART III: AN OVERVIEW OF CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORY

Part III provides an overview of criminological theory. It begins by briefly examining the roots of criminological theory in Classical and Neoclassical paradigms and then turns to a focus on contemporary theories. We move from biological and psychological theories of crime causation to sociological theories. Sociological theories are further divided into social structural, normative, and social conflict theories. We then examine the underlying policy implications of the theoretical perspective in light of specific case studies.

PART IV: TYPOLOGIES OF CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR

Part IV gives students the opportunity to better understand the various categories of criminal behavior, by focusing specific chapters to criminal typologies. We introduce discussions on a variety of violent crimes that go beyond the typically studied forms of interpersonal violence, to include terrorism, organized crime, military rape, and police brutality. We further carry this discussion into the individual chapters on property, public order crimes, and white collar crimes, as well as exploring cyber- and green crimes in their own chapter.

PART V: A LOOK AHEAD

Finally, Part V provides the student with a glimpse into the future of crime, criminological theory, and research. It proposes a practical synthesis of the various definitional elements of crime, the theoretical integration of crime causation, and a pragmatic discussion of effective crime control strategies. We highlight the trans-national aspects of many crimes today, especially crimes like terrorism, organized, state, green, and cybercrimes.

How to use this book

We packed this book with useful and instructive features that will facilitate classroom learning and encourage critical thinking and further discussion. These features include:

CONSIDER THIS

This feature attracts student interest with a surprising, ambiguous, or inequitable real-world situation and asks the student “*What do you think?*”

CRIME IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

This feature highlights the importance of exploring criminology from the perspective of diverse cultures, criminal justice systems, and crime problems in different parts of the world.

CONNECTING THEORY TO PRACTICE

This feature allows students to understand and appreciate how certain theories drive crime control strategies in the real world of criminal justice policy.

CONNECTING RESEARCH TO PRACTICE

This feature brings to life the aspects of criminal justice research that have a direct impact on implementing and evaluating crime control strategies.

WORKING IN . . .

This feature provides a realistic and vivid portrayal of the field of criminal justice practitioners.

IN THIS CHAPTER . . . QUESTIONS

This feature gives students a glimpse of what is to be covered in each chapter.

KEY TERMS

This feature highlights important concepts, ideas, and terminology that are essential components of each chapter.

LISTS OF FURTHER READING

This feature lists various materials to reinforce, expand upon, and explore in greater detail certain topics covered in the chapter.

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

This feature is designed to enhance student learning by allowing instructors to assign interactive activities and discussion points that engage students in further inquiry and illustration of the reading material.

E-RESOURCES

This feature provides students with further material via links to various resources that supplement reading material in the chapters as well as give additional foundation to policies, programs, and practices that are discussed.

CHAPTER SUMMARIES

This feature provides a brief overview of the main themes and ideas contained in each chapter.

Crime, criminal law, and criminology

PART I: CRIME, CRIMINAL LAW, AND CRIMINOLOGY

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|--|-----|
| 1. Crime, deviance, and criminology:
a brief overview | 3 |
| 2. Criminal law | 39 |
| 3. How much crime is there? | 75 |
| 4. Doing criminology: research and theory | 117 |

CHAPTER OUTLINE

How do we define crime?	5
The definition of crime from a “legalist perspective”	7
The definition of crime from a “political perspective”	7
The definition of crime from a “psychological perspective”	8
The definition of crime from a “sociological perspective”	8
What does deviance mean?	10
What is criminology?	13
What is criminal justice?	14
The “popular image” of crime v. the reality of criminal behavior	17
Criminology and theory	20
Criminological research and public policy	23
Criminology and the law	26
The consensus view	26
The conflict view	27
A period of change in criminology and the criminal justice system: 1970s–1990s	28
Impacts on law enforcement	30
Impacts on courts and corrections	30
Summary	32
Critical thinking questions	33
e-Resources	34
Notes	34

Crime, deviance, and criminology: a brief overview

1

In this chapter we will explore the following questions

- How do we define crime?
- What is deviance?
- When is crime deviant, and deviant behavior criminal?
- What is criminology?
- Does the popular image of crime measure up to reality?
- How does criminology guide our study of crime?
- How does criminology influence social policy?
- How do criminology and criminal justice relate to one another?

KEY TERMS

legalist perspective
political perspective
sociological perspective
psychological perspective
deviance
social norms
folkways
mores
taboos
laws
crime
criminology
criminologist
criminal justice
law enforcement agencies
courts
correctional system
criminal law
theory
consensus model
conflict model

In 2015, America was shocked to witness the man who once stood second in line to the presidency appear in federal court on charges of improperly withdrawing large amounts of cash from his bank account, violating federal laws, and lying to federal agents about the reason for the withdrawals. What's even more dismaying are emerging reports that the former U.S. Speaker of the House, Dennis Hastert, had allegedly withdrawn the amounts, totaling over \$3 million, in order to compensate and keep quiet a man who, as a high school student, was sexually abused by Hastert.¹ The allegations of sexual misconduct and abuse have expanded to include several other victims as well.

The plethora of stories and events we hear about through various media sources, whether newspaper, radio, internet or television, are many and diverse. Whether in Los Angeles or Little Rock, Harlem or Beverly Hills, they draw our attention and pique our interest. They are stories of thrill-seeking youth and defiant adults entangled in drugs, sex scandals, acts of violence, abuse of power, and corruption motivated by personal gain or as an expression of discontent. While the stories are different, they all have one thing in common: the behaviors they describe are generally condemned by society and prohibited by the law.

The study of crime has two main dimensions: a behavioral dimension that seeks to describe and explain the origins and causes of criminality, and a definitional dimension that explains why certain behaviors come to be defined



Image 1.1 In 2015, Dennis Hastert was indicted on charges relating to nearly \$3 million of bank withdrawals from four different bank accounts. The transactions were never disclosed, a violation of federal law. Hastert was accused of using those funds for payment as “hush money” to an individual who threatened to report past sexual misconduct by the politician. When a public official like Hastert violates the public’s trust by committing criminal acts, we want to know why.

Charles Rex Arbogast/AP/Press Association Images

as crime. When we hear about a crime story or criminal event, we want immediate answers that tell us why: why a mother kills her three children, why a priest molests a child, why a sports hero commits rape, and why a respected public servant engages in fraud. However, in order to study and account for the diversity in crime causation, we must first come to an understanding of why certain behaviors are legally prohibited.

The reaction to the activities of former House Speaker Dennis Hastert is a testimony to society’s disapproval of his conduct, which constituted a violation of the trust given to a public servant. While acts such as child abuse and political corruption are met with immediate social disapproval, there are far more behaviors that we cannot so easily or arbitrarily define as crime. In a study of the organization and growth of police bureaucracies in U.S. cities, researcher Eric Monkkonen notes that “real crime leaves an injured or dead victim, an outraged community, or inflicts some kind of human suffering.”

Moreover, we can categorize social behavior as either conforming to the established order or contributing to social disorder. Crime control is often a means of maintaining social order. Meanwhile, the need to balance the rights of individuals against the overall protection of society is critical to the way we define certain behaviors as crime and others as non-crimes.²

Individual rights are at the heart of the constitutional protections and civil liberties guaranteed to each and every U.S. citizen. We look upon the government

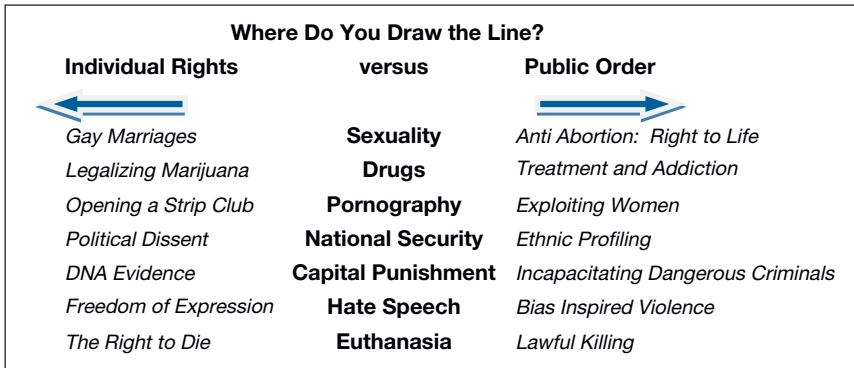


Figure 1.1
Individual rights or
public order . . .
You decide

as a sovereign protector of those rights and guarantees. The fact is, however, that we also look to the law and government to protect us from individual behaviors that threaten our sense of security. We desire order, safety, conformity, and enforcement of society's interests. We feel we have a right to be protected from acts that may threaten the integrity of our society, and we may even, in the face of threat, be willing to give up some of our personal rights in the interest of public safety or order.³ As a society, we do not always agree on where to draw the line between individuality and conformity. We can clearly see such disagreement in the various debates on issues such as abortion, gun control, and freedom of speech (see Figure 1.1). The question this chapter will seek to answer is: where and how do we draw the line of definition in deeming the acts of individuals as criminal?

Scholars, writers, politicians, the media, and the general public have long been fascinated with crime and punishment. This chapter introduces criminology as a systematic science, grounded in theory, whose goal is defining crime, understanding criminal behavior, and offering scientific solutions to help policymakers alleviate the problem of crime in our society. Are there elements common to all crimes? Are all crimes wrong? Are all crimes immoral? Can a mere thought or plan be a crime? Where do we draw the line in defining and limiting peoples' behavior? We turn now to the science of criminology to answer these questions.

HOW DO WE DEFINE CRIME?

The subject of crime has become an integral part of U.S. popular culture. Think of prime-time television shows such as *The Detective*, *Orange is the New Black*, *Law & Order*, *Criminal Minds*, *The District*, *The Shield*, *The Wire*, and various spin-offs that reflect the public's fascination with criminal motive, criminal intent, the apprehension of suspects, detective work, and forensics. Media coverage continues to draw our attention to the criminal acts of celebrities, athletes, and other well-known individuals. Unofficial experts try to explain through the eyes of popular culture why pop star Chris Brown was arrested

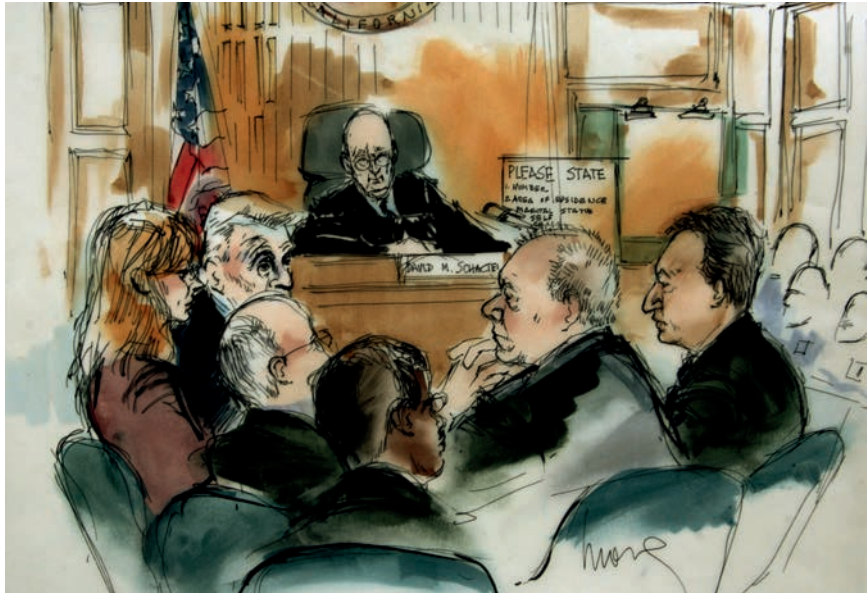


Image 1.2 *Crime stories often receive an inordinate amount of coverage in the media when they involve the rich and famous, as in the 2001 murder of Bonny Lee Bakley, wife of actor Robert Blake, shot to death while sitting in their car in an alley behind a restaurant in affluent Los Angeles. Blake was charged with one count of murder and two counts of solicitation for murder. The excessive media coverage of such trials often misleads us into thinking that these are the most common types of crimes being committed.*

Mona Shafer Edwards/AP/Press Association Images

for physically abusing intimate partner Rihanna, Lindsay Lohan’s probation was revoked due to a failed drug test, Winona Ryder was convicted of shoplifting, and Mike Tyson served time for rape. Gossip, headlines, and media commentary become the shaky foundations upon which the meaning of crime and understanding of criminal behavior are built.

Considering the real complexity of criminal behavior, it makes sense for us to study it with a more scholarly approach. To arrive at a comprehensive understanding, we turn to four perspectives—legalist, political, psychological, and sociological—that each offers a distinct approach to the meaning of crime (see Table 1.1). We will first examine the nature and meaning of crime from the legalist point of view.

Table 1.1 What is crime? Four perspectives

The legalist perspective	Crime is behavior that violates criminal codes and statutes
The political perspective	Crime is socially constructed behavior
The psychological perspective	Crime is maladaptive behavior
The sociological perspective	Crime is behavior that threatens the social order



Image 1.3
 Whose definition of right and wrong is imposed in the controversial issue of war and the fight for freedom in other lands?

John Giles/PA Archive/
 Press Association
 Images

The definition of crime from a “legalist perspective”

Within the **legalist perspective**, criminologists view crime as conduct that violates criminal laws of local, state, or federal government. For example, federal law makes it a crime to lie under oath in a court of law; this offense is called perjury. The legalist perspective assumes that without a legal definition, there would be no criminal act, no matter how deviant or offensive to society a behavior may be.⁴

The legalist definition is good as far as it goes, but it makes some unsupported assumptions. First, it assumes everyone agrees with the laws that forbid certain behaviors, such as jaywalking or euthanasia. That, in turn, implies that everyone shares the same definition of moral right and wrong. We can clearly see the error in this assumption by merely considering all the various issues we disagree about in our society, such as gun control, the death penalty, abortion rights, and the legalization of certain drugs such as marijuana.

Moreover, the legalist definition assumes that the power to define certain behaviors as violations of the law is fair and legitimate. This implies that everyone’s views of right and wrong are equally reflected in the law, without the interest of any particular group outweighing another. This is also an incorrect assumption, as those with the power to define are capable of imposing criminal definitions that reflect their own interest. Clearly, we need a definition of crime that doesn’t make this assumption. Let us examine what the political perspective has to offer.

The definition of crime from a “political perspective”

The **political perspective** assumes individuals with political power use their position to define illegal behavior and establish laws governing crime. Their

goal is to protect their own interests and gain control over those with less power, who may represent direct or indirect threats to their interests.⁵ Laws thus reflect not what society agrees is right and wrong, but rather who has the power to define certain behaviors.

Critics of the political perspective say many laws do protect the relatively powerless against such crimes as murder, rape, and assault. However, the point of the political perspective is not that there are no such laws, but rather that the primary motive behind creating laws is to serve the interests of those in power.⁶ While it gives us a better understanding of the creation of legal definitions, the political perspective does not assess the role of individual behavior in determining whether certain acts are criminal. We turn to a discussion of the psychological perspective to shed some light.

The definition of crime from a “psychological perspective”

Criminologists relying on the **psychological perspective** view crime as maladaptive behavior, or an individual’s inability to be in harmony with his or her environment.⁷ The environment poses stressful stimuli every day—someone cuts us off while we’re driving, we get laid off from our jobs, we find our spouse in bed with our best friend—and the way we react and adapt to these pressures determines whether a crime will be committed. For example, if someone cuts you off on the road, you can either drive on (no crime) or chase and ram the other car (crime).

The psychological perspective, while insightful, provides us with a very broad definition of crime that includes overeating, alcohol abuse, and compulsive gambling. If we adhered to this definition alone, criminologists would need to understand, combat, and control a wider variety of human behavior than we normally consider criminal.

The definition of crime from a “sociological perspective”

A final viewpoint on crime is the **sociological perspective**. This defines crime as any anti-social act that threatens the existing social structure or the fundamental well-being of humans.⁸ Laws serve to protect human relationships, preserve individuals’ well-being, and provide for their security and safety. The focus of criminological inquiry in this view is to examine *all* actions that cause harm, misfortune, and distress to others. The sociological perspective forces us to examine crime as behavior anyone can commit—first-degree murder, rape, robbery, and arson are crimes, but so are job discrimination, unsafe dumping of manufacturing waste, creating hazardous working conditions, misleading consumers, and insider trading. This broader understanding allows us to define as criminal those actions by individuals in power that may slip through the cracks of a narrower perspective on crime⁹ (see Box 1.1).

Our discussion of perspectives on crime may leave you thinking a definition of crime must be somewhat elusive. For example, why and how do we come



BOX 1.1: CRIME IN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Protecting a country from its protectors

Public turmoil and dissent against the Egyptian government spawned a plethora of demonstrations, civil disobedience, and peaceful protests in communities throughout the country. Protests began in January of 2011, with activists leading an uprising to protest against rampant government corruption and police brutality that lead to unprecedented poverty and unemployment throughout Egypt. For nearly three weeks, men and women of all ages, backgrounds, and interests united together and called for freedom, democracy, and social justice, demanding the removal of President Mubarak and an end to his thirty year “reign” of exploitation and abuse.

The revolution in Egypt continued for almost three years, and consisted of citizens from a wide range of socioeconomic and religious backgrounds demonstrating, striking, marching, occupying public plazas, and engaging in non-violent civil acts of resistance and disobedience. Their actions were loud and clear, and their voices were united on various legal and political issues, calling for freedom of speech, democracy, and justice, and an end to government corruption, police brutality, low wages, inflation, high unemployment, and repression. Their voices were heard throughout the world, but silenced by officials in power. During this time period, and in the years to follow, peaceful demonstrations throughout the streets of Cairo, Alexandria, Suez, and other cities, turned into the bloody mass killings of unarmed protestors by government forces that took the lives of well over 2,000 people.

In the aftermath of protests, political unrest, and civil turmoil, a *Human Rights Watch* (HRW) taskforce investigating the killings of at least 1,000 protestors at a Rabaa al-Adawiya Square sit-in in Cairo in 2013, where Egyptian security forces gunned down unarmed protestors, concluded that this can be considered a “crime against humanity.” Their report (2014) calls the massacre one of the world’s largest killings of demonstrators in recent history. According to HRW Executive Director Kenneth Roth, this was part of a government policy to use lethal force against largely unarmed protesters on political grounds, and not “merely a case of excessive force or poor training; it was a violent crackdown planned at the highest levels of the Egyptian government . . . Many of the same officials are still in power in Egypt, and have a lot to answer for.” Egyptian laws, statutes, and ordinances provide guidelines for which acts of crime, abuse, and violence are defined and prosecuted accordingly, in order to protect human rights and preserve the social order. It seems that in the case of the revolution in Egypt, it was this law and its creators, upholders, and enforcers, that fell short of a true assessment of defining criminal behavior.

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to impose meanings and labels upon certain acts and not others? Do these meanings and labels change over time? Why do some acts elicit a stronger negative reaction, draw more attention, and require a stronger social response than others? Why does that social response vary across time, place, and individuals instead of being limited to the act itself? We can, in fact, answer these questions by looking at the relationship between crime, deviance, and social norms.

WHAT DOES DEVIANCE MEAN?



Image 1.4 What influences our impression of the way people look? Under what circumstances would tattoos and body piercings be considered a form of deviance?

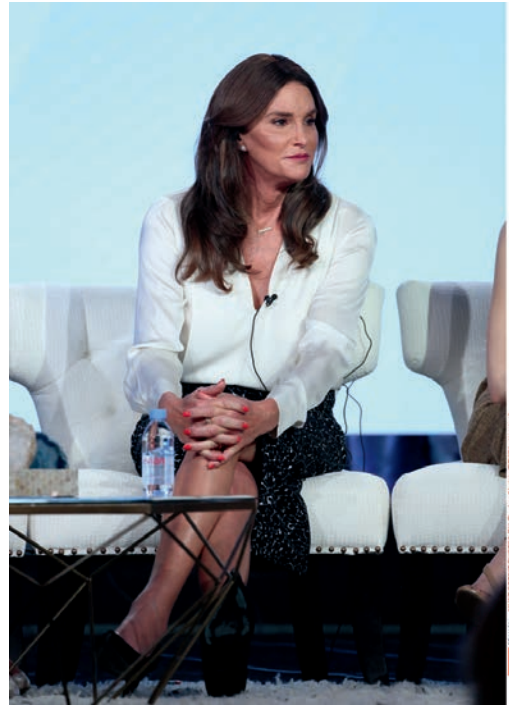
iStock/Slavaleks

When we think of criminal acts such as serial murder, rape, and child molestation, the word “deviant” seems an appropriate label. We cannot agree so easily on other acts. Drinking under age, driving above the speed limit, and betting on a football game are all illegal, yet few people would consider them deviant. By the same token, many acts that some consider deviant are not violations of criminal law; body piercing, excessive tattooing, and poor hygiene are a few examples. So, if all crime is not deviant and all deviant acts are not criminal, what then is deviant behavior, and where do the two concepts intersect? (See Table 1.2).

Deviance is behavior that elicits a social reaction by violating the standards of conduct defined by society.¹⁰ Social reactions to deviance range along a continuum from mild disapproval to arrest, based on a hierarchy of **social norms** or rules of behavior that guide our everyday interactions with one another.¹¹

Social norms fall into four categories (see Table 1.3): folkways, mores, taboos, and laws. **Folkways** are non-binding social conventions and include guidelines on appropriate dress, manners, and hygiene. Western folkways suggest we shake hands with someone when first introduced. **Mores** are strong convictions about certain behaviors—

rules of etiquette, matters of respect, or shared understandings of “the way things are done” in our society. We know we should stand in line at the grocery store, wait our turn to be served at a restaurant, eat with a fork at dinner, and be respectful during religious services. **Taboos** informally forbid socially offensive acts. They regulate sexual conduct, race relations, and other ethical matters. For example, in U.S. society, it is taboo for blood relatives to get married, a




Images 1.5a and 1.5b *The public transformation of Bruce Jenner into Caitlyn created much debate and discussion, with some calling it an act of courage and others questioning motives surrounding publicity. Is this considered a form of deviant behavior? How does society react to what has become known as gender dysphoria? What changes in society have influenced the public’s support or lack of support of this type of behavior?*

Stewart Cook/REX/Shutterstock; David Buchan/Variety/REX/Shutterstock

Table 1.2 Criminal, deviant, neither, or both?

When do the following acts become deviant? When are they criminal? When are they both? What about neither?	
Taking a human life	In the service of vigilante justice, in self-defense, as euthanasia, during wartime, in the heat of passion
Getting married	To someone of the same sex, to someone 20 years older, to a blood relative
Drinking alcohol	At 6 a.m., while driving, in church, at a party
Disciplining a child	At home, in public, by a school teacher, causing bruises
Watching an X-rated movie	While children are present, alone at home, in the theater
Engaging in sexual intercourse	In private, in public, with a same-sex partner, with an under-age partner, without consent, with another person’s spouse
Practicing a religion	By wearing certain clothes, by eating and avoiding certain foods, by engaging in certain ceremonies, by teaching followers to hate
Driving a car	Without a valid license, above the speed limit, into a tree
Being naked	At home, at home with guests present, at the beach, in class
Not paying taxes	By taking allowed deductions, by hiring a good accountant, by making charitable donations, by manipulating numbers

Table 1.3 Are all rules created equally?

Social norm	Definition	Example of violation	Social reaction	Continuum of deviance
Folkway	Non-binding social convention	Wearing cut-off shorts to a formal wedding ceremony	Stares of disapproval or a verbal reprimand	Less deviant  More deviant (criminal)
More	Strong conviction about right/wrong	Talking on your cell phone during a movie at the movie theater	Verbal altercation and demand to stop or be removed from the premise	
Taboo	Prohibition on socially offensive acts	Engaging in sexually explicit conduct at a public park	Verbal and/or physical confrontation; may resort to formal authority such as calling the police	
Law	Written formal decree	Walking away from a restaurant without paying	Being arrested and charged with theft	

common practice in various other cultures such as in the Middle East. **Laws** are formal written sanctions designed to regulate behaviors society considers to require the greatest level of response and control. It is in this last category of social norms—laws—that we find the overlap between crime and deviance.

The legal status of certain behaviors—and the negative societal reaction they elicit—renders them both criminal and deviant.¹² What complicates matters is that we don't all always agree on the social and legal status of some behaviors. Even when we do, consensus can change from time to time and place to place. When and how does behavior become a crime?

Let's get straight to the point. The definitions of both deviance and crime are subject to culturally influenced interpretation by a specific individual or group in a specific time and place. For example, commercial gambling is socially acceptable and legal in Las Vegas, Atlantic City, and on some Native American reservations but outlawed in most other parts of the United States. Likewise, prostitution is morally unacceptable and illegal in nearly all states but a legally regulated and acceptable behavior in parts of Nevada.

To understand the role of subjective interpretation in the way we assign definitions to behavior, consider how school officials, police, and the community responded to the actions of two different groups of delinquent boys. Although the "Saints" were more delinquent by sheer number of illegal acts than the "Roughnecks," these upper-middle class boys were perceived as good, upstanding, non-delinquent youths with bright futures. A Saint who got drunk in a nightclub or tavern, even if he drove around afterwards in a car, was perceived as someone who had simply made a mistake. Because a lower-class boy who drinks in an alley and stands intoxicated on the street corner, steals a wallet from a store, or associates with someone who has committed a burglary is considered a delinquent, the Roughnecks were seen as tough young criminals headed for trouble.¹³

Essentially, then, crime and deviance are socially constructed—they are what society says they are. With this understanding, we can finally develop a comprehensive understanding of crime by integrating components from the various perspectives on crime that we have discussed. **Crime** is human behavior that we interpret as violating society’s norms for a specific time and place and that must be controlled and prevented by legal decree. Now let’s turn to a discussion of criminology and its role in understanding crime as human behavior.

WHAT IS CRIMINOLOGY?

For thousands of years humans have attempted to understand, define, prevent, and punish crime and deviance. In Europe, early beliefs about criminals and social deviants were influenced by religion and explained them as possession by spirits, to be extracted through surgical means or physical torture.

In 1885, Italian law professor Raffaele Garofalo coined the term “criminology” to describe the study of crime as an individual act in a social context. Around the same time, French anthropologist Paul Topinard defined the field as the study of criminal body types, separate from the field of anthropology.¹⁴ In the 1920s sociologist Edwin Sutherland described criminology as “the body of knowledge regarding delinquency and crime as social phenomena. It includes within its scope the process of making laws, of breaking laws, and of reacting towards the breaking of laws.”¹⁵

Today we define **criminology** as the scientific study of the incidence and forms of crime and criminal behavior, their causes and consequences, and social reaction to, control of, and prevention of crime. Criminology emphasizes research, theory testing and theory building. It has become an interdisciplinary study that seeks to explain why some people engage in crime and others do not, and why some criminals are arrested and sentenced to prison while others are not.

Criminologists are academics, researchers, and policy analysts who focus on understanding the nature and meaning of crime, patterns of criminal behavior, various causes of criminality, and society’s reaction to crime. They examine and evaluate the origins, nature, and interpretation of criminal laws, and try to find ways to alleviate crime as a social problem. Criminologists also rely on scientifically grounded theories and explanations of criminal behavior—and society’s responses to it—to help us understand the experiences of victims throughout the criminal justice process. Table 1.4 summarizes the various tasks criminologists undertake. Regardless of which task they engage in, criminologists are dedicated to the study of crime and criminal behavior.

Table 1.4 How do we do criminology?

Field in criminology	Specific tasks
Statistics and research	We focus on analyzing crime data, developing methods for gathering crime information, measuring crime trends, and developing and evaluating crime prevention programs and strategies
Criminal profiling	We study specific categories of offenses to determine the anatomy of criminals; understand the specific nature, cause, and motive of certain types of criminal behavior.
Theory development	We conduct scientific research about the causes of criminality, its beginnings, and its continuation.
Law, policy, and social control	We examine the evolution of law within the context of social reaction and change, and its impact on criminal sanctions and crime control policies.
Victimology	We highlight victims issues, advance theories of victimization, and promote programs to support crime victims.

What is criminal justice?

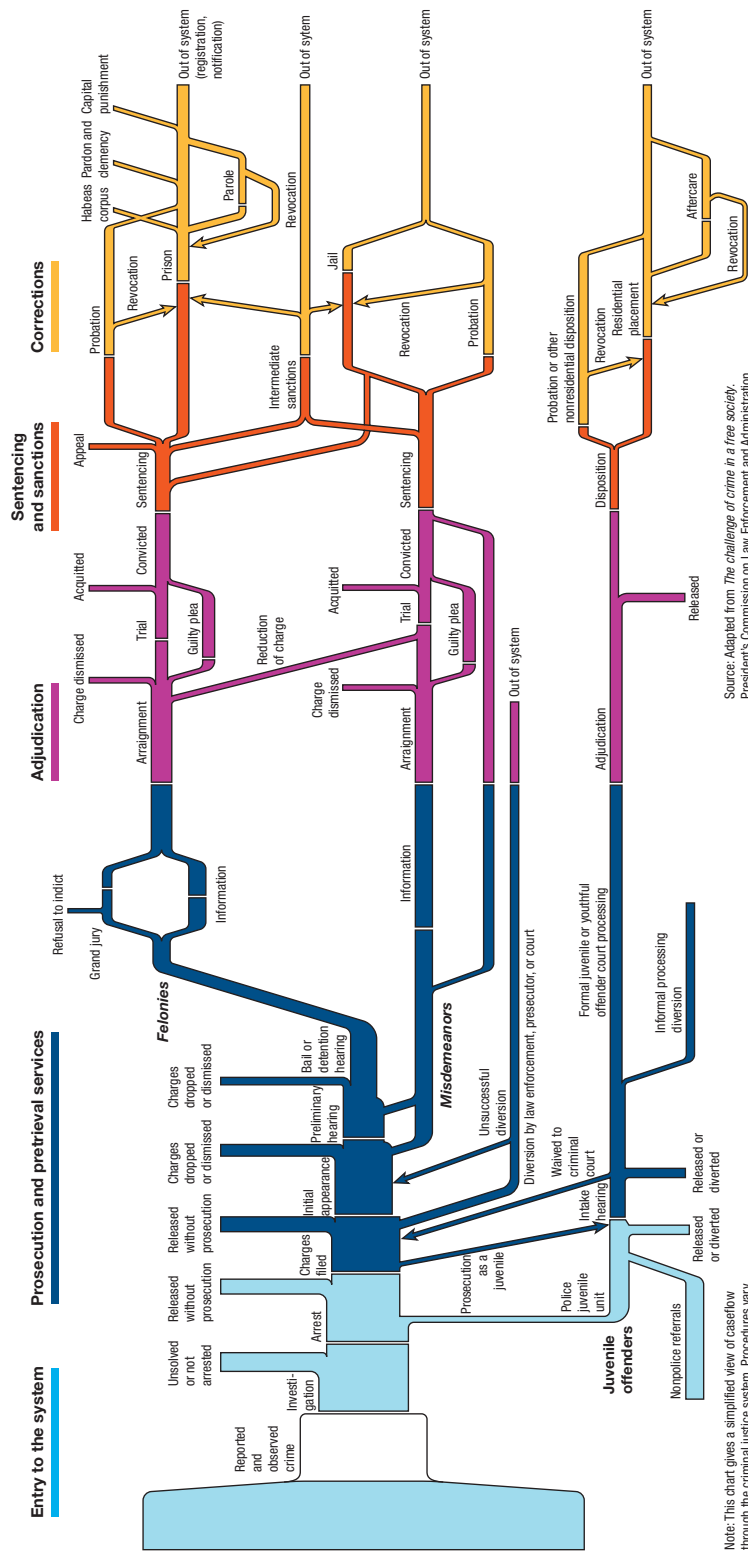
Criminal justice is a newer field of academic study than criminology, arising in the early part of the 20th century with the creation of the first criminal justice program at the University of California Berkeley in 1916.^{16,17} Like criminology, the study of **criminal justice** emphasizes the use of research and theory, but it differs in that its focus is not on describing different types of crime or understanding the causes of criminal behavior. Instead, it is concerned with advancing our understanding of the how the American criminal justice system functions and can be improved.

The American criminal justice system has three primary components: (1) the **police (law enforcement agencies)**, who enforce criminal laws, investigate crimes, and arrest criminal offenders, (2) the **courts** that ensure law breakers are held responsible for their conduct, and (3) the **correctional system**, where convicted criminal offenders are punished for their unlawful behavior. The American **criminal law** is another area that has a significant impact on the American criminal justice system, so it too receives significant attention from criminal justice scholars as well. Thus, the study of criminal justice is, ultimately, the study of police, courts, corrections, and the criminal law. The study of criminal justice, unsurprisingly, is often attributed a more practical or applied focus than criminology, given the impact that criminal justice system research can, and does, have on public policy.

To illustrate how the criminal justice system's three main components—law enforcement, courts, and corrections—work with each other (Figure 1.2), let's imagine a young man named Jack has just committed an armed robbery at a local pharmacy. Clearly, Jack has violated at least one criminal law—that which prohibits people from committing robbery. Jack's violation of the criminal law activates the first phase of the criminal justice system: law enforcement.

Law enforcement, discussed in detail in chapter 5, is primarily carried out by local and state police agencies, though there are many federal law enforcement

What is the sequence of events in the criminal justice system?



Note: This chart gives a simplified view of caseload through the criminal justice system. Procedures vary among jurisdictions. The weights of the lines are not intended to show actual size of caseloads.

Source: Adapted from *The Challenge of Crime in a Free Society*, President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice, 1967. This revision, a result of the Symposium on the 30th Anniversary of the President's Commission, was prepared by the Bureau of Justice Statistics in 1997.

Figure 1.2 What is the sequence of events in the criminal justice system?
Source: Adapted from Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1997.

agencies as well. Law enforcement is the first phase of the criminal justice system because law enforcement agencies are tasked with, among many things, investigating crimes and arresting people who violate criminal laws (i.e., criminals). Think of law enforcement agencies and officers as translators of the criminal law in the real world. They are at the front lines of the criminal justice system. In order to end up in a criminal court and, possibly, incarcerated, one must first come into contact with law enforcement.

Now, let's assume Jack got arrested two days after the armed robbery and that the local district attorney decides to charge him with that crime. Jack's arrest and subsequent charging by the D.A. activates the second phase of the criminal justice system: the courts.

The court phase is a dynamic, complicated one. While we discuss courts in more detail in chapter 6, for now it is worth pointing out that just ending up in a criminal court does not mean you will end up serving a sentence in a jail or a prison. Indeed, the vast majority of criminal cases do not lead to sentences of incarceration, but instead receive other dispositions. All kinds of social, economic, and political factors influence how criminal court proceedings play out, from the wealth of the defendant (i.e., the person charged), to their race/ethnicity, to the number of cases on the court docket. However, let's assume that Jack's case proceeds in a very straightforward manner. He is charged with armed robbery and put on trial for the crime. His trial ends swiftly and a jury of his peers finds him guilty. The judge in Jack's case then determines a sentence. Jack is sentenced to 6 years in prison for armed robbery.

In banging her gavel after reading Jack's sentence, the judge activates the third and final phase of the criminal justice system: corrections. Once a person is found guilty of committing a crime and is given a sentence of incarceration, they are immediately remanded into the custody of the state and are transported to whatever jail or prison they will serve their sentence in corrections is the topic of chapter 7, but for now we wish to point out that sentences of incarceration for more than 1 year are almost always served in a state or federal prison facility, while sentences of less than 1 year are served in a local or county jail. Ostensibly, the crimes that get people a prison sentence are more serious than the crimes that get people a jail sentence.

What happens to Jack after arriving at prison? Many things are possible. Depending on various factors, Jack may become eligible for parole (early release) before his complete prison sentence is served. However, if Jack commits another crime in prison, like assault, he might serve a longer sentence. As we discuss in the corrections chapter of this text, for many people, getting arrested, convicted, and incarcerated initiates a cycle that is tough to break. A criminal record and time behind bars block many opportunities to becoming a successful member of society. Jack, like many real-life people who have moved through the criminal justice system, undoubtedly will face an uphill battle in his efforts to become reintegrated into society in a positive way.

THE “POPULAR IMAGE” OF CRIME V. THE REALITY OF CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR

In the mid-1980s, high-level government officials and military personnel within the Reagan-Bush Administration, during the course of their jobs, hid behind political rhetoric to sell arms to terrorist groups in Iran, divert profits from the sales to themselves, and cover up their acts. The result was one of the nation’s most embarrassing political scandals, the Iran-Contra Affair.

On January 6, 1994, at a practice session during the 1994 U.S. Figure Skating Championships, competitor Nancy Kerrigan was attacked and injured in a conspiracy allegedly instigated by co-competitor Tonya Harding, whose ex-husband Jeff Gillooly hired Shane Stant to strike Kerrigan on the knee. On February 1, Gillooly accepted a plea bargain in exchange for his testimony against Harding. Harding avoided further prosecution and a possible jail sentence by pleading guilty to hindering the investigation. After conducting its own investigation, the United States Figure Skating Association concluded Harding knew of the attack before it happened, stripped her of her 1994 title, and banned her for life from participating in sanctioned events and from becoming a coach.¹⁸

There was nothing extraordinary about Mary Kay Letourneau. She was a bright, energetic, well-dressed teacher who always showed interest in and enthusiasm for her students. She also went to prison for over seven years for the rape of 13-year-old Vili Fualaau, a former student who was 21 years her junior. After serving her time in prison, Letourneau married Fualaau, and they had two children together.¹⁹

Crime is committed by ordinary people—politicians, doctors, lawyers, opera singers, school teachers, nurses, business men and women, car mechanics, movie stars, media figures, students, and athletes. Regardless of the crime, however, we want to know *why*. Why do politicians abuse their power, doctors and nurses kill, teachers engage in sex with children, business men and women cheat, and professional athletes commit rape? As a society we want immediate answers that help us understand the extraordinary behavior of apparently ordinary individuals. We want solutions to crime that satisfy our demand for justice, but that also address the apparently inexplicable acts of individuals, acts with consequences that often hit close to home.

Crime continually challenges law enforcement officials, criminal justice agents, and politicians to whom we look for protection. Close your eyes for a moment and picture the word “crime.” What do you see happening? Who are the actors? Is someone being shot or stabbed? Do you hear screams or imagine a struggle? Is it late at night? Where is the crime taking place? Are you angry or afraid? Does your response have anything to do with the image of crime we have as a society, and if so, where does that image come from?

We derive our popular image of crime from media portrayals that convince us to be afraid and to barricade ourselves behind locked doors, barred windows, and security systems. Is this fear justified? Should we be concerned about an



Images 1.6a and 1.6b *Who fits our perception of a criminal? When you think of crime, do you see an image of this gang banger, or do you see Leona Helmsley, the successful businesswoman and owner of a real estate empire who was convicted on several counts of tax evasion and sentenced to 16 years in federal prison? From where do we get these images about crime and criminals?*

iStock/Yuri; RICHARD DREW/AP/Press Association Images

alleged soaring rise in violence that leaves us afraid to be free in our own homes, streets, and society? We'll address these questions in more detail in chapter 3 when we discuss patterns and trends in criminal behavior. For now, we recognize the faces of crime and crime victims are many. Yet, we tend to hear far more about peculiar or especially offensive acts of violence because they are so sensationalized by the media and public portrayal (see Box 1.2).

We must go beyond this perception to a more comprehensive understanding of the many different types of crimes. Our interpretation of and reaction to crime is built upon a false representation of crime-related facts and incidents, a problem largely perpetrated by the media, as we stated above. The truth is that crimes reported by the media, such as murder and rape, are often crimes that take place the least.²⁰ Studies show that violent crimes represent 60 to 90 percent of crime news stories while making up only 12 percent of all crimes. Newsworthy stories emphasize the dramatic, the unusual, and the shocking, while placing less emphasis on the everyday criminal behavior of regular people who assault family members, cheat on their taxes, steal from retail stores, and abuse drugs.²¹

Trying to capture the varieties of crime is like trying to draw a map of the world. If the map has all the details in it, it is as large as the world and worthless as a map. If it leaves out all the rivers and mountains, roads and alleys, it is



BOX 1.2: CONSIDER THIS . . .

Surviving a house of terror



Box 1.2 Image 1 For more than a decade, Ariel Castro imprisoned Michelle Knight, Gina De Jesus, and Amanda Berry just minutes away from their homes. Castro tormented and tortured the women for years, shackling them in chains for 24 hours a day and abusing them both mentally and physically. Their stories unfolded through various media outlets, including the Dr. Phil show, ABC News, The Washington Post, and various other sources.

Tony Dejak/AP/Press Association Images

There was nothing remarkable about the dilapidated home in the Tremont neighborhood of Cleveland, Ohio. Inside however, was a completely different story. Inside, for over a decade, Ariel Castro imprisoned three women, subjecting them to horrible acts of violence, rape, physical and psychological abuse, and torture. Between 2002 and 2004, three young women, Michelle Knight, Amanda Berry, and Gina DeJesus, were kidnapped by Ariel Castro and kept locked in his “house of horrors” for ten years. On May 6, 2013, Amanda Berry escaped with her 6-year-old daughter, fathered by Castro during her imprisonment, and called 911. That day, the other two women held in captivity were rescued by officers responding to the call; Castro was arrested within hours of the rescue. He was charged with multiple counts of kidnapping and rape, pleading guilty to 937 criminal offenses and sentenced to life in prison without the chance of parole plus 1,000 years. Nearly one month later, Castro, age 52, was found dead in his prison cell, hanging himself using bedsheets.

Michelle Knight was 21 years old when she was kidnapped after visiting a relative that day. Amanda Berry, just one day shy of turning 17, was offered a ride home from work by Castro, who was a friend of her father. Gina

DeJesus was only 14 when she went missing after walking home from her middle school. In the months and years after their rescue, the gruesome tales of the three victims unfolded and their stories of unspeakable acts of abuse at the hands of Castro emerged. The public learned of how Castro chained them like dogs in the basement of his home, raping them several times a day, starving them, keeping them in darkness, and forcing them to go to the bathroom in trashcans. Their horror was compounded by Castro’s psychological abuse and taunting as he showed them news stories of how agonized their families were about their disappearance and claimed that they now “belonged to him.”

Newspaper and television media all over the world flooded the stories of these three brave women, telling the tales of their hope and survival in their fight against despair and imminent harm. Their stories are documented in a Lifetime movie production “Cleveland Kidnapping,” and two written memoirs, *Finding Me: A Decade of Darkness*, *a Life Reclaimed: A Memoir of the Cleveland Kidnappings* and *Hope: A Memoir of Survival in Cleveland*.

What brought this case such wide public attention? Was it the length of time that the victims were held captive? Was it the heinous nature of the acts committed against them by Castro? Or perhaps the fact that it was more than one victim? What about a desire to make the public more aware of the dangers that are out there? *What do you think?*

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compact but does not tell us enough to give us a sense of where we are or where we are going.²² However, reality forces us to settle on maps in our descriptions of crime, in an effort to capture its endless varieties without being overwhelmed. In chapter 2, we’ll elaborate further on the nature and extent of crime, crime trends, and patterns of criminality. To get started, however, Table 1.5 lists the various official categories of criminal behavior, with a brief description of each. Only by understanding the variety of criminal behavior can we move forward with social control measures that intervene on behalf of *all* criminals to address *all* criminal behavior. Only then can we properly draw the link between crime and theory.

CRIMINOLOGY AND THEORY

Crime affects the lives of many people, even those who are not direct participants in a criminal event. The perpetrator, victim, police, witnesses, family members, judge, jury, and lawyers are all touched by crime. While we may not all agree on why individuals engage in criminal activities, crime generally makes us angry and afraid.²³ Our response to crime is often embedded in these emotions, without a true understanding of the social context of criminal behavior. Unfortunately, without this understanding, we can develop crime prevention strategies and solutions that compound the problem and do little to address its origins.²⁴

Table 1.5 Major categories of crime

Interpersonal violence (chapter 14)	Crimes against property (chapter 15)	Public order crimes (chapter 16)	Crimes of the powerful (chapter 17)	The new face of crime (chapter 19)
<p>Murder The willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another human being.</p> <p>Rape Penetration of the vagina or anus with any body part or object, or oral penetration by a sex organ of another person, without the consent of the victim.</p> <p>Assault The attempted commission of bodily injury to another human being. Assault can also mean putting an individual in fear of imminent bodily harm, injury, danger, or threat. An assault can therefore include threats, taunting, intimidation, and harassment; it requires no physical contact.</p> <p>Robbery The taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.</p> <p>Hate crime Crimes directed at certain individuals because of their race, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, political orientation or physical condition.</p>	<p>Larceny The unlawful taking away of someone's property without using force, violence, or by fraud.</p> <p>Burglary The unlawful entry into a building or structure to commit a theft or felony.</p> <p>Arson The willful and malicious burning of a home, vehicle, building, or other structure or property.</p> <p>Motor vehicle theft The theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle.</p>	<p>Prostitution The unlawful engaging in sexual activities for profit.</p> <p>Pornography The portrayal or depiction of sexually explicit material.</p> <p>Drug abuse The violation of laws pertaining to the possession, use, manufacture, or sale of controlled substances.</p>	<p>White collar crime Non-violent acts involving deception, concealment and guile committed by individuals, businesses, and corporations, for the purposes of obtaining money, avoiding loss, or gaining personal advantage.</p> <p>State crime Illegal activities by government officials to advance their political agendas or promote their own interests.</p> <p>Organized crime The illegal activities of groups of individuals in the course of some type of illegal business or enterprise set up for monetary gain.</p>	<p>International crime Systematic practices involving the infringement of human rights, peace agreements or other violations of international laws.</p> <p>Political crime Crimes committed to threaten, oppose, or challenge the government in power.</p> <p>Technology crimes Criminal offenses that are perpetrated using some type of network communication device such as the internet.</p>

Source: *Crime in the United States*. 2015. Uniform Crime Report, Federal Bureau of Investigation. U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, D.C. www.fbi.gov/about-us/cjis/ucr/ucr.

**BOX 1.3: CONNECTING THEORY TO PRACTICE****Does white collar crime “make sense”?**

How do individuals who often appear to be respected members of society—who take leadership roles in the community and perform charitable deeds—participate in illegal activities? According to the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, over 90 percent of white-collar crime felons have no prior criminal history. In an interview with *Wall Street Journal* columnist Herb Greenberg, Sam E. Antar, former chief financial officer of Crazy Eddie, a New York electronics retailer that cheated investors out of millions of dollars, describes how he put on a front to protect his image:

As criminals we built false walls of integrity around us; we walked old ladies across the street. We built wings to hospitals. We gave huge amounts of money to charity. We wanted you to trust us.

Criminologist Edwin Sutherland defined white-collar crime as “crime committed by a person of respectability and high social status in the course of his occupation.” His definition put regulatory and public welfare violations by businesspeople on the same footing as other criminal acts and attached to them the same stigma earned by criminals of lower social and economic standing. Sutherland’s theories set the stage for decades of fruitful research on the nature and extent of white-collar crime and how the structure of modern organizations makes such acts possible. Criminology has since brought to light the acts of apparently upstanding members of the community and redefined their behavior as crime. We can now attribute white-collar offenses to larger forces like organizational structure and competition and personal factors like greed.

Sutherland and his followers laid the foundation for the passage of laws targeting white-collar offenses. In fact, the Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organizations Act (RICO), one of the most important such pieces of legislation, was largely influenced by the work of Donald Cressey, a student of Sutherland, and the U.S. Sentencing Commission cited Sutherland and other social science researchers as evidence of the need for standards to avoid the preferential treatment of white-collar offenders.

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Criminology helps us think theoretically, without anger, about crime, criminal justice, and social control.²⁵ It guides our understanding by developing theories that elaborate on the nature, occurrence, and distribution of crime in various segments of society. In chapter 4, we will discuss how theories are constructed in greater detail. For now, we define a **theory** simply as a set of propositions that put forward a relationship between the categories of events or phenomena we are studying. For example, heredity theory is used to explain how certain traits—eye color, hair texture, height, intelligence—are passed down from biological parents to their children.

Criminological theory must account for the great diversity of crime, from petty theft to corporate fraud, simple assault to first-degree murder, campaign bribes to political assassination. It must incorporate a variety of perspectives that take into account individual, psychological, social-psychological, and social-structural variables that influence the commission of crime.²⁶ Only then can it guide criminal investigation toward the solution of difficult cases and help us understand why some individuals break the law (see Box 1.3).

In the chapters to come, we will present criminological theories on the nature and origin of criminal behavior that go beyond the representation of crime in the mass media, to help us gain insight into criminal events in an analytical and reflective manner. It is in this context that we recognize the significance of criminological theory in shaping the course of criminal justice policy and practice.

CRIMINOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND PUBLIC POLICY

Criminology provides the research and other tools policy makers like Congress need to make informed decisions in responding to crime.²⁷ Policies shaping the response to crime and crime-control strategies must be grounded in evidence-based criminological research. Developing a knowledge base from which politicians can derive an understanding of criminal behavior is essential to creating programs that effectively respond to the problem of crime. Political debates on crime control policy are often driven by public opinion and media persuasion on issues surrounding crime and punishment. This can lead to a misguided discourse on the state of crime and the real policy choices available.

Criminologists provide a more accurate representation of the nature and extent of crime, describe and explain the variables associated with criminal behavior, and evaluate the effectiveness

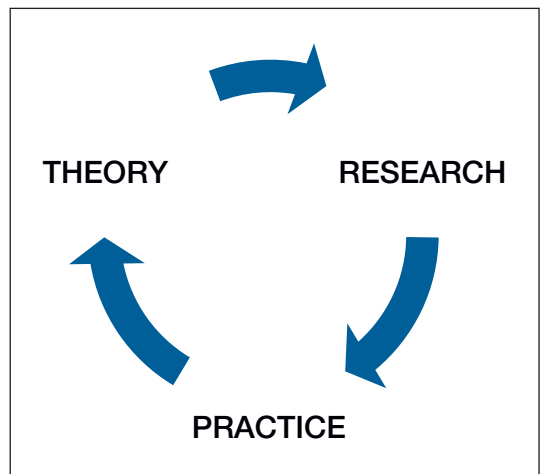


Figure 1.3
Criminology: linking theory, research, and practice

**BOX 1.4: CONNECTING RESEARCH TO PRACTICE****Does increased surveillance reduce crime?**

We've seen them at stop lights, ATM machines, and department stores, sometimes hidden and sometimes out in the open. They are designed for our protection, keeping us safe from the reckless driver and secure from the predatory thief. They are video surveillance cameras, and since September 11, 2001, they have been sparking debate about the expanded use of domestic surveillance by the Department of Defense, the FBI, and the National Security Agency.

Some fear the danger to individual rights and civil liberties from increased government surveillance and the use of sophisticated technology that allows facial scanning and computer-readable identification tags. They see such monitoring as damaging to the fundamental civil rights guaranteed to citizens and a threat to freedom, privacy, and anonymity. A legal debate over the right to privacy was sparked by the finding of an FBI global positioning system tracking device attached to Yasir Afifi's car. The device was discovered by a mechanic during an oil change. Puzzled, Afifi took pictures of the device and posted the photos online. A couple of days later, FBI agents showed up at his home and demanded the return of their device.²⁸

Others, however, see such types of surveillance as necessary, considering the challenges faced by law enforcement in high-crime areas where gangs, violence, terrorism, and drug trafficking are prevalent. Some local politicians and police officials have turned to the federal government to sponsor video surveillance as another way to monitor and apprehend crime suspects.

There is very little evidence to show that video surveillance deters criminal activity, curbs violent behavior, or reduces fear of crime. Studies in Great Britain, where such monitoring is more widespread than in the United States, reported little change in crime statistics before and after the installation of video surveillance equipment. The University of Cincinnati found the installation of video cameras was an ineffective deterrent to crime that simply shifted criminal activity away from the view of the camera. Other research has shown that young male minorities are disproportionately targeted by video monitoring programs.

If video surveillance is a costly alternative that has not yielded the anticipated results, why do you think its use continues to expand?

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of crime control intervention strategies. Is violent crime increasing? Does punishment deter criminal behavior? Do individuals brought up in a deprived social environment turn to crime? Criminologists answer by conducting research guided by principles of the scientific approach, which includes defining the problem, reviewing the literature, formulating a hypothesis, collecting and analyzing the data, developing a conclusion, and sharing the results. We will discuss criminological research methods in detail in chapter 4. For now, it is important to recognize the important role criminology plays in developing research studies that provide policy makers and politicians with evidence-based criminal justice strategies and interventions.²⁹

Herein lies the connection between criminological research and public policy. In the 1990s, for example, a surge in school shootings prompted public concern over growing violence among youth.³⁰ The effects of television violence on children's behavior became the focus of deliberation in public, academic, and political arenas.³¹ Studies concluded that extensive viewing of violence on television leads to an increase in aggressive and violent behavior among children, making them gradually accept violence as a means to solving problems, imitate violent behavior they observe, and become insensitive to the pain and suffering caused by violence in the real world.

Relying on expert testimony and research findings, in 1999 the Senate Judiciary Committee issued a report on media portrayals of violence, outlining national reforms aimed at reducing their effects on children.³² The Committee's policy recommendations focused on practical results, such as ensuring media companies comply with existing industry ratings systems; developing guidelines for measuring media violence and industry efforts to reduce it; allowing parents access to filtering technology to block certain types of entertainment on their TVs; criminalizing the posting of violent hate material on the Internet; and conducting further research on the effects of media violence on children and youth. Legislators relied on scientific evidence, gathered through criminological research, to create policies for controlling the impact of media violence on children and adolescents.

As technology continues to advance, debates on the effects of media violence will widen, with policy makers turning to experts to find effective solutions.³³ Criminology continues to be the source on which we rely to guide our unbiased understanding of criminal justice issues today (see Box 1.4). While it may not have all the policy answers we need at any given time, only criminology can help us understand the criminal acts of ordinary individuals and what to do about their not-so-ordinary behavior.

Before we leave this chapter, we must revisit the question we began it with, regarding the definition of behavior as criminal. What defines the behavior of individuals as *not so ordinary*? We turn now to a brief description of the development of criminal law.

CRIMINOLOGY AND THE LAW

We noted earlier in this chapter that what constitutes crime changes over time and from society to society. What remains consistent is that most people accept criminal law as a given. Like the chemical composition of water, the pressure of the atmosphere, and the physics of gravity, it is just there. Criminologists, however, approach the study of criminal law by raising two very important questions: how do certain behaviors come to be defined as criminal acts, and who benefits from legally defining these behaviors as criminal acts? Two perspectives offer viewpoints on the origins and development of criminal law: the consensus view and the conflict view (see Figure 1.4). Each operates from a unique understanding of the relationship between deviant behavior, crime, law, and society. Let us turn now to a discussion of these two perspectives, beginning with the consensus view.

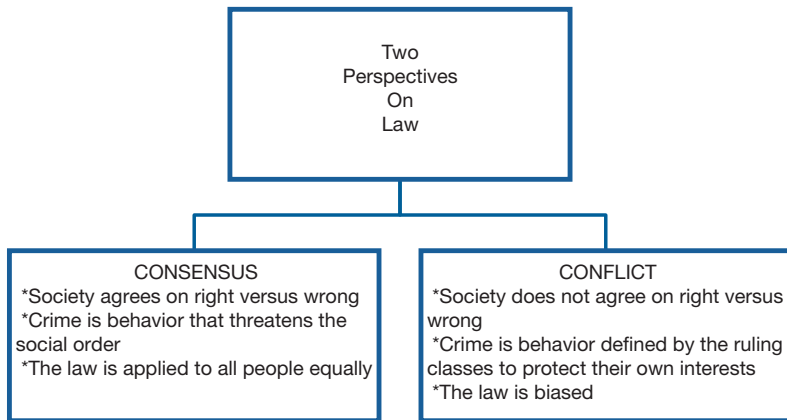


Figure 1.4 Two perspectives on law: which is more convincing?

The consensus view

French sociologist Émile Durkheim noted that social conformity is achieved through sanctions that society imposes on those who choose to deviate.³⁴ Whether these sanctions are strict such as the formal sanction of imprisonment, or less formal like social isolation, as signs of disapproval they are sufficient to coerce individuals to conform to the prevailing norms of society. Crime as a social phenomenon therefore is behavior that society has generally agreed is harmful, undesirable, and disruptive to the smooth functioning of society. Thus, according to this **consensus model**, criminal law defines as criminal all behavior believed to be repulsive to all individuals in society. The law reflects the beliefs, morals, and values of mainstream society that views certain behaviors as needing to be managed, controlled, and eliminated for the good of society as a whole, and it is therefore applied uniformly and equitably to all members.

Individuals adhering to the consensus model of understanding crime and crime control note that we would all agree behaviors such as murder, rape, and robbery are clearly wrong and certainly morally repugnant to society. How, though, do we justify the control of certain types of behavior that elicit a little more disagreement and controversy, such as gambling, prostitution, and drug use?³⁵ While society is obligated to protect its members from danger and harm, how can it do so when there is not always agreement on what we need protection from? Moreover, if society does criminalize these behaviors, how do they find their way into the criminal codes and statutes given there is no consensus? Whose view of right and wrong wins in the end? The conflict perspective offers an alternative understanding of crime.

The conflict view

The **conflict model** views crime and deviance as products of unequal power relationships in society.³⁶ Society is made up of diverse groups of individuals—business owners, students, factory workers, engineers, clergymen, teachers, and politicians—each with its own set of unique values, norms, and interests. Individuals themselves come from different classes, races, religions, and cultures. With this breadth of diversity, it is very difficult for everyone to agree about right and wrong, so conflict arises between competing groups to impose their own views on the rest of society. Groups with the greatest financial resources and political power control legislation and define as criminal the behaviors that threaten their own interests.

Crime control therefore becomes a tool of the rich and powerful to control the behavior of the less powerful, in an effort to advance their own interests and maintain their privileged position in society.³⁷ Conflict criminologists note that even laws forbidding crimes such as robbery and murder, which on the surface appear to be in the interests of protecting society as a whole, nevertheless are designed to maintain the overall social order by ensuring that the anger and hostility of the poor and powerless does not become directed at the wealthy and privileged.³⁸ Crime control efforts are therefore primarily directed at the lower classes, who are under constant surveillance by criminal justice authorities for committing “street” types of crime such as theft and assault. On the other hand, the equally detrimental and sometimes more harmful acts of the upper classes such as discrimination, environmental pollution, and political assassinations go relatively undetected and unpunished.

Criminology cannot simply accept the law as a given. It must investigate how the law came to be the way it is, why some acts are defined as criminal and others are not, what the goals of criminal law are and what the legal definition of a criminal act is. We turn to a further exploration of these questions in chapter 2.

A period of change in criminology and the criminal justice system: 1970s–1990s

The 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s were critical decades in the history of the American criminal justice system and for the field of criminology. Events taking place in those decades continue to effect the functioning of the American criminal justice system as well as the type of research criminologists conduct.

History textbooks often depict the decades of the 1960s and 1970s as a period of tremendous social upheaval in America, that, despite causing many conflicts, generally led to positive social change in American society. For example, during that brief period, progressive social movements developed around civil rights and race, women’s rights, prisoner’s rights, gay rights, and the environment. Moreover, there was dynamic growth in art, literature, music, and film. Politically, the presidential administrations of John F. Kennedy and, later, Lyndon B. Johnson, sought to implement far-reaching, liberal reforms via their New Frontier and Great Society programs. Finally, many critical perspectives and voices emerged within social science disciplines like sociology and criminology. Those perspectives challenged both the academic and societal status quo as it existed at the time and helped push research on important topics like crime in new directions.

As so often happens, however, periods of social progress are often followed by periods of social conservatism and retraction. Even as many aspects of American society were changing for the better during the 1960s and 1970s, some things, like our approach to crime and criminals, were experiencing changes that, in hindsight, were anything but positive.

The election of Richard Nixon as president of the United States in 1968 was an important moment for our criminal justice system and the field of criminology. By 1971, Nixon had declared drugs “public enemy number one” and pledged to fight a “war on drugs.” Nixon’s pledge reflected his personal views toward drugs and drug users and was designed to appeal to Americans who were unhappy and frightened by rising drug use among young people and increasingly liberal attitudes toward drugs and sex.

Nixon convened a special commission³⁹ to examine federal marijuana policy and provide guidance on what to do about marijuana. Despite that commission recommending widespread decriminalization of marijuana, Nixon placed marijuana into the most dangerous category of illicit drugs—Schedule I—alongside heroin and cocaine. Nixon also got “tough on crime” by enhancing mandatory minimum sentences and passing legislation allowing police to conduct “no-knock” searches of homes and businesses.

Despite these changes, the progressive idea of rehabilitation remained the dominant punishment philosophy in America through much of the 1970s. However, rehabilitation was not universally supported. Some detractors considered it expensive, ineffective and too “soft” an approach for dealing with criminal behavior. Publication of the Martinson study in 1974, which reviewed rehabilitative programs across the U.S., led some to conclude “nothing works”

with respect to rehabilitative programming and criminal offending. This conclusion, which vastly oversimplified the Martinson report's findings, helped erode support for rehabilitation in the U.S. and contributed to the redefinition of both crime and punishment in the 1980s as an individual level problem whose solution lay in "tough" crime control policies.

Ronald Reagan's ascendance to the White House in the early 1980s solidified the power and influence of the "New Right"—an extremely conservative branch of the Republican party that helped get Reagan elected. Sociologists Craig Reinerman and Harry G. Levine describe the moral stance and political impact of the New Right:

[they] set about to impose what they called "traditional family values" on public policy and philosophy. This . . . New Right felt increasingly threatened by . . . modernist values, behaviors, and cultural practices—particularly . . . forms of 1960s hedonism . . . sex outside marriage and . . . illicit drugs . . . Once in office, Reagan . . . attempted to restructure public policy according to radically conservative ideology. Through the lens of this ideology, most social problems appeared to be simply the consequences of individual moral choices.⁴⁰

In the 1980s, crimes, including illegal drug use, were politicized by both Republicans and Democrats.^{41,42} The outcome of the politicization of crime and rise of ultra-conservative crime ideology was: (1) a redefinition of problems like crime and drug use as individual, rather than social, problems, and (2) the development of new, harsh criminal justice policies to deal with those problems.

Thus, in the context of the 1980s, the causes of crime were increasingly divorced from larger structural factors like unemployment and poverty. In the discourse that emerged, criminal behavior became the exclusive product of bad personal decisions or moral failings. The solution pitched to deal with crime, public disorder, and drug issues was thus to get tougher, not softer, on criminals, with the idea being that harsher punishments and "tough love" would show criminals the error of their ways, cause them to reform, and also deter other people from committing similar acts. Politicians on both sides of the political aisle embraced this rationale and supported policies that aligned with it. The mass media further supported the view of crime as an individual-level problem and the American public was swayed toward that line of thinking as well.⁴³

Every phase of the criminal justice system was impacted by this logic. Even the election of democratic president Bill Clinton in 1992 did little to alter the course of criminal justice policy in America. Under Clinton's reign, the multi-billion dollar wars on drugs and crime escalated further. Clinton's Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act garrisoned the nation while three-strikes laws underlined the ideology of locking people up and throwing away the key.

As a result of the many ideological and policy changes accruing since the 1970s, the American criminal justice system has gotten tougher on crime and criminals. Below we preview just a few of the impacts policy reforms and tough-on-crime laws have had on the various phases of the criminal justice system.

Impacts on law enforcement

In terms of law enforcement, getting tough on crime and waging a war on drugs necessitated a massive increase in the number of law enforcement officers in America. For example, in the mid-1980s⁴⁴ there were approximately 344,000 state and local law enforcement officers and an additional 54,000 federal agents. In 2013,⁴⁵ there were more than 1.2 million law enforcement officers at the local, state, and federal levels. President Clinton's **Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act** alone led to the hiring of 100,000 new officers.

How law enforcement agencies operated changed, with zero tolerance and public order policing strategies rising to prominence, backed by arguments of sociologists and criminologists and ideas like Broken Windows Theory⁴⁶ (see chapter 5). The result: more arrests, especially for minor crimes like drug possession and public intoxication.⁴⁷

For many law enforcement agencies the emphasis on cracking down on low-level crimes served as a mandate to more intensely police particular communities, and particular groups of people—often communities and people of color—where issues of disorder, crime, and drugs were often most pronounced. Thus, one effect of 1980s policies on law enforcement was to concentrate the police focus on urban, low-income minority communities, thus exacerbating racial tensions between the public and police. Another effect of having to rapidly increase the number of law enforcement officers to meet the new mission of law enforcement was that hiring standards and personnel quality declined. Also, in harshly cracking down on drugs and crime, new opportunities opened up for police officers to engage in drug-related misconduct and corruption.

Impacts on courts and corrections

Prior to the 1980s, judges presiding over criminal court cases were able to exercise their discretion when handing out sentences to convicted criminals thanks to indeterminate sentencing policies, which allowed judges to tailor punishments to fit both the specific crime and the particular criminal.⁴⁸ Judicial discretion exercised through indeterminate sentencing structures generally allowed for flexible sentences that could meet the dual goals of punishment and rehabilitation. Discretionary parole, where inmates could be released early from prison even for violent crimes like assault and murder, was frequently utilized.⁴⁹

The dominant punishment philosophy in America prior to the 1980s was rehabilitation.⁵⁰ In the 1960s and 1970s, correctional officials, politicians, researchers, and the public embraced the notion that the primary goal of

incarceration should be to rehabilitate the criminal offender and ensure their successful reintegration back into society. Rehabilitation entailed attending closely to the individual needs of each offender by providing therapy, medication, and other forms of medical or mental health treatment (including for drug addiction), as well as helping the offender build work-related skills, and improve their literacy and education. Unsurprisingly, rehabilitation aligned well with indeterminate sentencing structures and the use of discretionary parole. Throughout the 1970s, researchers argued that America was moving ever further away from extensive incarceration.⁵¹ Indeed, the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals argued in a 1973 report⁵² that America should not build adult jails or prisons and should close as many existing ones as was feasible because “incarceration had achieved nothing but a shocking record of failure.”

As the political and social climate shifted in the 1980s, extant court and correctional practices—like indeterminate sentencing, discretionary parole, and rehabilitation—came under attack for being too “soft” on crime and criminals. Proponents of those methods were accused of coddling criminals and ignoring the plight of victims, the community, and research which allegedly showed that those programs were ineffective.⁵³ Politicians, the media, and the public clamored for harsher court and correctional policies that would solve America’s crime problems.

The Comprehensive Crime Control Act passed by Congress in 1984,⁵⁴ went a long way toward meeting these demands by instituting a host of criminal justice system reforms. Among many things, the 1984 CCA included the Sentencing Reform Act, which abolished parole for federal prisoners sentenced after 1987 for violating any federal criminal statute, including drug possession or trafficking. Across America, states also began abolishing or significantly curtailing the use of discretionary parole, including Iowa, Maine, Louisiana, Pennsylvania, and South Dakota.⁵⁵ Also, many states and the federal government replaced indeterminate sentencing structures with fixed, determinate ones that took away even more judicial discretion. Alongside the rise of determinate sentences were mandatory minimum sentences, which set a minimum amount of time to be served for a particular offense and truth-in-sentencing policies, which required that “offenders serve a substantial portion of their prison sentence”⁵⁶ before being released.

The impact of all of these policy changes—from those impacting law enforcement, to courts and correctional systems—can be visualized by picturing a fishing net used for trawling. Those nets typically have a large opening at one end and a small opening at the other, and are pulled through the water to capture fish or shrimp or whatever might be swimming along. The 1980s criminal justice policy reforms functioned much like a trawler’s fishing net. Reforms intended to get tougher on crime and criminals increasingly widened one end of the net, thus drawing more and more people into the criminal justice system. At the same time, many of those policy changes, especially those targeting the courts and corrections, continuously narrowed the opening at the

other end, ensuring that while more people were being drawn into the criminal justice system, fewer and fewer would be getting out.

Even today, the American criminal justice system and American society are grappling with the consequences of tough on crime and War on Drugs policies; the War on Drugs continues to cost taxpayers \$26 billion per year.⁵⁷ Policy changes led directly to America's current standing as the nation with the highest incarceration rate in the world. The vast majority of prisoners are incarcerated for relatively minor offenses, especially drug possession.⁵⁸ In our nation's effort to solve the crime problem through tougher law enforcement and sentencing, some individuals have received 25-year-to-life sentences for such innocuous acts like stealing VHS tapes or spare tires thanks to three-strikes laws. Current controversies over police misconduct, corruption, and excessive use of force can also be linked to the legacy of the 1980s, when law enforcement agencies across the nation lowered or relaxed their hiring and training standards. Thus, it is imperative that every student of criminology and criminal justice recognizes the importance of historical events taking place over the last five decades. Those events have shaped the study of crime and the practice of criminal justice in our present society.

SUMMARY

How do we define crime?

Four perspectives offer us different ideas on the nature of crime: the legalist perspective defines crime as behavior that violates criminal codes and statutes; the political perspective views crime as socially constructed behavior; the psychological perspective sees crime as maladaptive behavior; and finally, the sociological perspective defines crime as any behavior that threatens the social order. A comprehensive definition sees crime as human behavior that we interpret as violating society's norms for a specific time and place, and that must be controlled and prevented by legal decree.

What is deviance?

Deviance is behavior that violates society's standards of conduct or social norms, which range from folkways, non-binding social conventions; to mores, strong convictions about certain behaviors; taboos, which define socially offensive acts that are informally forbidden; and laws, written decrees with formal sanctions. It is in this last category of social norms—laws—that crime and deviance overlap.

When is crime deviant and deviant behavior criminal?

All crime is not deviant, and all deviant acts are not criminal. Because crime and deviance are both products of social interpretation, what is criminal can vary according to time, place, and individual or group. Certain types of behavior that society deems important to regulate and control through formal intervention are subject to law, the extreme form of social approval.

What is criminology?

We define criminology as the scientific study of the incidence and forms of crime and criminal behavior, its causes and consequences, as well as social reaction, control, and prevention. Academics, researchers, and policy analysts who study crime, criminals, and criminal behavior, are called criminologists.

Does the popular image of crime measure up to reality?

The popular image of crime is derived from media portrayals of violent criminal acts that suggest these are the most urgent and pressing social problems facing our society today. In reality, anyone can commit a crime, and crimes such as shoplifting and burglary are far more common than murder, rape, and other crimes sensationalized in the media.

How does criminology guide our study of crime?

Criminology helps us think critically about crime, criminal justice, and social control by offering various theories that expand our understanding of the nature and extent of criminal behavior.

How does criminology influence social policy?

Criminology shapes the course of crime control policies and procedures through scientific research findings that address the complex issues related to crime and crime causation.

CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

1. How far can the government go to ensure domestic peace and tranquility? What individual rights would you give up in exchange for the goal of public order and social conformity? Which would you retain under any circumstances?
2. Assuming we don't all agree on major social issues such as the legalization of marijuana, government surveillance of social media, and the right to bear arms, how does society come up with rules and regulations that define these controversial subjects? What if your instructor allowed the class to come up with the rules defining classroom attendance, course requirements, and grading procedures? How would you reach a decision? Whose interests would become the standard of conduct?
3. If you asked your family, friends, neighbors, or co-workers, "what is crime?" what definition would they give? What examples of criminal activities would they use? How is their description shaped by the popular image of crime? How does it measure up to the reality we know about crime?
4. Policy makers want to know whether fear of punishment will deter crime. You are the expert whose opinion will serve as the foundation for a shift in crime control strategies for repeat offenders. Where do you begin your

efforts toward gaining a scientific understanding of this subject that would effectively guide policy makers toward creating the proper legislation? What questions do you ask, and how do you go about answering them?

E-RESOURCES

More information on the effects of media violence on children and youth can be accessed at National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center website at <http://www.aacap.org/Default.aspx>.

Visit the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) website at <http://www.aclu.org/> for further information and debates on individual rights and personal freedoms.

For a discussion of both sides of the argument on criminalizing euthanasia, visit <http://www.religioustolerance.org/euthanas.htm>.

Further information on the various segments of the criminological enterprise, can be found on the National Criminal Justice Reference Service website at <http://www.ncjrs.gov/>.

Details about criminology academic organizations and professional associations can be accessed at <http://www.cybrary.info/>.

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