

Syllabus

Course Overview

Crime and criminal behavior are of great interest to the public. They are often depicted in movies, become the storyline for popular shows, are detailed in magazines, and are translated into best-selling books.

Criminal behavior is a prominent domain of study in the field of psychology. Psychologists and threat assessment professionals (a large leading group of specialized and cross-trained, educated, law enforcement or psychological experts specializing in topics from stalking, dignitary and VIP protection, serial offenders, active shooters, shooter teams, and lone-wolf assailants, and those specializing in pre-, during-, and post-offender communications, dissection of written communications, offender manifestos, et cetera) attempt to explain this behavior as well as develop preventative measures to avoid future offenses.

The psychology of crime is a subdivision of the broad field of forensic psychology. Forensic psychology is one of the forensic sciences. This course focuses on forensic psychology, criminal justice, and the psychological theories through which you will develop a more thorough conceptualization of crime and violence. This course will help you to assess the likelihood of possible future manifestation of such criminal behavior in individuals and groups of different gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic characteristics, and various other relevant factors. You will also increase your ability to understand how the criminal justice system utilizes and responds to these psychological constructs.

You will begin by examining some of the theories and factors deemed causal in criminal and violent behavior. There is an age-old debate on whether human behavior, specifically violent and criminal behavior, is a product of nature or nurture. This course explores the research conducted in these areas regarding genetic and environmental factors.

You will study and discuss several of the more consistent characteristics and patterns that have higher correlations with criminal behavior. You will also cover various psychological disorders associated with criminal behavior and examine some relevant forensic psychological assessment tools. You will look at criminal behavior assessments and various risk factors associated with criminal behavior or aggression as well as review violent crime, property crime, sexual crime, and other crimes of victimization. You will apply psychological theory and concepts to specific cases as well as further examine the roles and duties of a forensic psychologist working in conjunction with the justice systems.

Course Competencies

(Read Only)

To successfully complete this course, you will be expected to:

- 1 Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- 2 Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- 3 Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- 4 Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- 5 Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.
- 6 Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for this course.

Syllabus >> Course Materials

Required

The materials listed below are required to complete the learning activities in this course.

Library

The following required readings are provided in the Capella University Library or linked directly in this course. To find specific readings by journal or book title, use [Journal and Book Locator](#). Refer to the [Journal and Book Locator library guide](#) to learn how to use this tool.

- Abbey, A., & Jacques-Tiura, A. J. (2011). Sexual assault perpetrators' tactics: Associations with their personal characteristics and aspects of the incident. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 26(14), 2866–2889. doi:10.1177/0886260510390955
- American Psychiatric Association. (2013). Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders (5th ed.). Arlington, VA: Author.
- Anckarsater, H., Radovic, S., Svennerlind, C., Hoglund, P., & Radovic, F. (2009). Mental disorder is a cause of a crime: The cornerstone of forensic psychiatry. *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, 32(6), 342–347.
- Bartol, C. R., & Bartol, A. M. (2017). *Criminal behavior: A psychological approach* (11th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Beardslee, W. R., Chien, P. L., & Bell, C. C. (2011). Prevention of mental disorders, substance abuse, and problem behaviors: A developmental perspective. *Psychiatric Services*, 62(3), 247–254. doi:10.1176/ps.62.3.pss6203_0247

- Boutwell, B. B., Menard, S., Barnes, J. C., Beaver, K. M., Armstrong, T. A., & Boisvert, D. (2014). The role of gene-gene interaction in the prediction of criminal behavior. *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, 55(3), 483–488.
- Brown, D. L. (2007, December 13). Money aside, what were they thinking? *The Washington Post*.
- Buitelaar, J. K., Smeets, K. C., Herpers, P., Scheepers, F., Glennon, J., Rommelse, N. N. J. (2013). Conduct disorders. *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, 22(Suppl. 1), S49–S54.
- Canter, D. (2000). Offender profiling and criminal differentiation. *Legal and Criminological Psychology*, 5(1), 23–46.
- Cottee, S., & Hayward, K. (2011). Terrorist (e)motives: The existential attractions of terrorism. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 34(12), 963–986.
- da Silva, T., Woodhams, J., & Harkins, L. (2015). Multiple perpetrator rape: A critical review of existing explanatory theories. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 25, 150–158.
- De Gregorio, E. (2011). Dynamics of a robbery: Criminological aspects, security issues and prevention – An exploratory study. *Police Practice & Research*, 12(3), 253–264.
- Ellis, L., & Hoskin, A. W. (2015). The evolutionary neuroandrogenic theory of criminal behavior expanded. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 24, 61–74.
- Ferrell, J. (1995). Culture, crime, and cultural criminology. *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture*, 3(2), 25–42.
- Gasque, G. (2016). Seven glimpses into the emotional brain. *PLoS Biology*, 14(12).
- Gibson, G. (2005, April 17). Oklahoma City: 10 years later: War on homegrown terrorism proceeding with quiet urgency: The focus is on foreigners, but experts say the domestic threat is still strong. *The Sun* [Baltimore].
- Glenn, A. L., & Raine, A. (2014). Neurocriminology: Implications for the punishment, prediction and prevention of criminal behaviour. *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, 15(1), 54–63.
- Grubb, A. (2010). Modern day hostage (crisis) negotiation: The evolution of an art form within the policing arena. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 15(5), 341–348.
- Hansen, M. (1997). Finding the root causes: Some see solutions to crime in 'nature vs. nurture' studies. *ABA Journal*, 83(7), 20–21.
- Harris-Mckoy, D., & Cui, M. (2013). Parental control, adolescent delinquency, and young adult criminal behavior. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 22(6), 836–843.
- Henggeler, S. W., & Sheidow, A. J. (2003). Conduct disorder and delinquency. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 29(4), 505–522.
- Hyman, R. (2004). Medea of suburbia: Andrea Yates, maternal infanticide, and the insanity defense. *Women's Studies Quarterly*, 32(3/4), 192–210.
- Kjeldal, S-E. (2004). Susan Smith and her children: A reasoning dialectic. *Critical Criminology*, 12(3), 265–284.
- Lankford, A. (2014). Précis of the myth of martyrdom: What really drives suicide bombers, rampage shooters, and other self-destructive killers. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 37(4), 351–362.
- *Los Angeles Times*. (1991, July 30). Accused mass slayer confesses to murders of three more men: Milwaukee police say Jeffrey L. Dahmer now admits 15 total killings. They plan a search for victims today.
- Martens, W. H. J. (2011). Sadism linked to loneliness: Psychodynamic dimensions of the sadistic serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer. *Psychoanalytic Review*, 98(4), 493–514.
- McLellan, F. (2006). Mental health and justice: The case of Andrea Yates. *The Lancet*, 368(9551), 1951–1954.
- McNeeley, S., & Wilcox, P. (2015). The code of the street and violent versus property crime victimization. *Violence and Victims*, 30(6), 1049–1067.
- Meloy, R. J., & Yakeley, J. (2014). The violent true believer as a "lone wolf" – Psychoanalytic perspectives on terrorism. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 32(3), 347–365. doi:10.1002/bsl.2109
- Miller, L. (2014). Serial killers: I. Subtypes, patterns, and motives. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 19(1), 1–11.
- Mitchell, I. J., & Beech, A. R. (2011). Towards a neurological model of offending. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 31(5), 872–882.
- Montoya, E., Terburg, D., Bos, P., & Honk, J. (2011). Testosterone, cortisol, and serotonin as key regulators of social aggression: A review of theoretical perspectives. *Motivation and Emotion*, 36(1), 65–73.
- *News Journal* [Mansfield, Ohio]. (2018, October 14). Issue 1 favors addiction treatment over jail time.
- Nordstrom, B. R., & Dackis, C. A. (2011). Drugs and crime. *The Journal of Psychiatry & Law*, 39(4), 663–687. doi:10.1177/009318531103900407
- Paquette, M. (2002). This is insane. *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, 38(3), 77–78.
- Peterson, J. K., Skeem, J., Kennealy, P., Bray, B., & Zvonkovic, A. (2014). How often and how consistently do symptoms directly precede criminal behavior among offenders with mental illness? *Law and Human Behavior*, 38(5), 439–449.
- Post, J. M., McGinnis, C., & Moody, K. (2014). The changing face of terrorism in the 21st century: The communications revolution and the virtual community of hatred. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 32(3), 306–334. doi:10.1002/bsl.2123
- Ronel, N. (2011). Criminal behavior, criminal mind: Being caught in a "criminal spin". *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 55(8), 1208–1233.
- Saborsky, A. L., & Ramsland, K. (2013). Distance diagnosis: Can we really tell whether Dahmer had Asperger's disorder? *Forensic Examiner*, 22(2), 42–48.
- Simons, R. L., & Burt, C. H. (2011). Learning to be bad: Adverse social conditions, social schemas, and crime. *Criminology*, 49(2), 553–598.
- Susan Smith, a modern mother: Reflections on the destiny of children at the end of childhood. *Critical Quarterly*, 39(3), 28–41.
- Sweeten, G., Piquero, A. R., & Steinberg, L. (2013). Age and the explanation of crime, revisited. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 42(6), 921–938.
- University of Sheffield Learning Media Unit (Producer). (1997). Disorders due to psychoactive substance abuse [Video]. Films on Demand.
- Van Dorn, R., Volavka, J., & Johnson, N. (2012). Mental disorder and violence: Is there a relationship beyond substance use? *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, 47(3), 487–503.
- Vinkers, D. J., Beurs, E., Barendregt, M., Rinne, T., & Hoek, H. W. (2011). The relationship between mental disorders and different types of crime. *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, 21(5), 307–320. doi:10.1002/cbm.819
- Vogel, M. (2014). Mental illness and criminal behavior. *Sociology Compass*, 8(4), 337–346.

- Ó Ciardha, C., & Ward, T. (2013). Theories of cognitive distortions in sexual offending: What the current research tells us. *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, 14(1), 5–21.

External Resource

Please note that URLs change frequently. While the URLs were current when this course was designed, some may no longer be valid. If you cannot access a specific link, contact your instructor for an alternative URL. Permissions for the following links have been either granted or deemed appropriate for educational use at the time of course publication.

- Ackerman, M. (2014, June 10). Drug court judge "Scary Mary" whips offenders into shape. *The Fix*. Retrieved from <https://www.thefix.com/content/drug-court-judge-scary-mary-whips-offenders-shape>
- Altemeyer, B. (2006). The authoritarians. Retrieved from <http://theauthoritarians.org/Downloads/TheAuthoritarians.pdf>
- California Coalition Against Sexual Assault. (2010). What is the influence of pornography on rape? Retrieved from <http://www.calcasa.org/2010/03/what-is-the-influence-of-pornography-on-rape/>
- Counter Terrorism Guide. (n.d.). Terrorism history. Retrieved from <http://www.nctc.gov/site/index.html>
- Counter Terrorism Guide. (n.d.). Terrorist groups. Retrieved from <http://www.nctc.gov/site/groups.html>
- DomesticViolenceServices.com. (n.d.). Rape myths and facts. Retrieved from http://www.domesticviolenceservices.com/rapemythsandfacts.html?_sm_auiVVs6Wp5V061f
- Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2014). Serial killers – Part 7: The FBI and Jeffrey Dahmer. Retrieved from <https://www.fbi.gov/news/stories/serial-killers-part-7-jeffrey-dahmer>
- Friedman, S. H., & Resnick, P. J. (2007). Child murder by mothers: Patterns and prevention. *World Psychiatry*, 6(3), 137–141. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2174580/>
- Garamone, J. (2016, September 15). 9/11 drove change in intelligence community, NSA chief says. *DOD News*. Retrieved from <https://www.defense.gov/Explore/News/Article/Article/945544/911-drove-change-in-intelligence-community-nsa-chief-says/>
- Gross, T. (2013). Criminologist believes violent behavior is biological. *NPR*. Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org/2013/05/01/180096559/criminologist-believes-violent-behavior-is-biological>
- National Counterterrorism Center. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nctc.gov/index.html>
- National Human Genome Research Institute. (n.d.). Nature vs. nurture in the criminal justice system. Retrieved from <http://www.genome.gov/25019899>
- Smith, B. (n.d.). A look at terrorist behavior: How they prepare, where they strike. National Institute of Justice. Retrieved from <http://nij.gov/journals/260/Pages/terrorist-behavior.aspx>
- U. S. Department of State. (2012). Terrorism designations FAQs. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/07/194808.htm>
- U. S. Department of State. (n.d.). Bureau of Counterterrorism. Retrieved from <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/index.htm>

Suggested

The following materials are recommended to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course, but they are aligned to course activities and assessments and are highly recommended for your use.

Optional

The following optional materials are offered to provide you with a better understanding of the topics in this course. These materials are not required to complete the course.

Library

The following optional readings may be available in the Capella University Library. To find specific readings by journal or book title, use Journal and Book Locator. Refer to the Journal and Book Locator library guide to learn how to use this tool. If the full text is not available, you may be able to request a copy through the Interlibrary Loan service.

- Agnich, L. E. (2015). A comparative analysis of attempted and completed school-based mass murder attacks. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 40(1), 1–22.
- Bondü, R., & Beier, S. (2014). Two of a kind? Differences and similarities of attacks in schools and in institutes of higher education. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 30(2), 253–271.
- Brown, S. L., Gottschall, S., & Bennell, C. (2015). Criminal behavior. In B. L. Cutler, & P. A. Zapf (Eds.), *APA handbook of forensic psychology: Vol. 1. Individual and situational influences in criminal and civil contexts* (pp. 219–256). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Butler, A. C. (2013). Child sexual assault: Risk factors for girls. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 37(9), 643–652.
- Cook, C. L., & Fox, K. A. (2011). Fear of property crime: Examining the effects of victimization, vicarious victimization, and perceived risk. *Violence and Victims*, 26(5), 684–700.

- Cooke, D. J., & Michie, C. (1999). Psychopathy across cultures: North America and Scotland compared. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 108*(1), 58–68.
- de Groot, J., Abrahamse, W., & Vincent, S. (2013). Thou shalt not steal: Effects of normative cues on attitudes towards theft. *Psychology, 4*(4), 438–444.
- DeLisi, M., Dansby, T., Peters, D., Vaughn, M., Shook, J., & Hochstetler, A. (2014). Fledgling psychopathic features and pathological delinquency: New evidence. *American Journal of Criminal Justice, 39*(3), 411–424.
- Dolnik, A., & Pilch, R. (2003). The Moscow theater hostage crisis: The perpetrators, their tactics, and the Russian response. *International Negotiation, 8*(3), 577–611.
- Donahue, T. J. (2013). Terrorism, moral conceptions, and moral innocence. *Philosophical Forum, 44*(4), 413–435.
- Fella, G., & Gallipoli, G. (2014). Education and crime over the life cycle. *Review of Economic Studies, 81*(4), 1484–1517.
- Fink, B., & Trivers, R. (2014). Cognitive simplicity and self-deception are crucial in martyrdom and suicide terrorism. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 37*(4), 366–367.
- Forsman, M., Lichtenstein, P., Andershed, H., & Larsson, H. (2008). Genetic effects explain the stability of psychopathic personality from mid- to late adolescence. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 117*(3), 606–617.
- Frederick, T. J., McCarthy, B., & Hagan, J. (2013). Perceived danger and offending: Exploring the links between violent victimization and street crime. *Violence and Victims, 28*(1), 16–35.
- Gordon, R. A., Rowe, H. L., Pardini, D., Loeber, R., White, H. R., & Farrington, D. P. (2014). Serious delinquency and gang participation: Combining and specializing in drug selling, theft, and violence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence, 24*(2), 235–251.
- Greenall, P. V. (2012). Understanding sexual homicide. *Journal of Sexual Aggression, 18*(3), 338–354. doi:10.1080/13552600.2011.596287
- Gurian, E. A. (2015, August 5). Reframing serial murder within empirical research offending and adjudication patterns of male, female, and partnered serial killers. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*.
- Horney, J. (2005). An alternative psychology of criminal behavior. *Criminology, 44*(1).
- Hutton, E. L., & Woodworth, M. (2014). Violent female youth: An examination of instrumental violence, psychopathy, and offense characteristics. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law, 32*(1), 121–134.
- Ibabe, I., Jaureguizar, J., & Bentler, P. M. (2013). Risk factors for child-to-parent violence. *Journal of Family Violence, 28*(5), 523–534.
- Ishikawa, S. S., Raine, A., Lencz, T., Bihle, S., & Lacasse, L. (2001). Autonomic stress reactivity and executive functions in successful and unsuccessful criminal psychopaths from the community. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 110*(3), 423–432.
- Kerr, M., Van Zalk, M., & Stattin, H. (2012). Psychopathic traits moderate peer influence on adolescent delinquency. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 53*(8), 826–835.
- Liang, W., & Chikritzh, T. (2015). Examining the relationship between heavy alcohol use and assaults: With adjustment for the effects of unmeasured confounders. *Biomed Research International, 2015*, 1–10.
- Lyre, R. B., Eid, J., Larsson, G., & Ranstorp, M. (2011). Terrorism as a process: A critical review of Moghaddam's 'staircase to terrorism'. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology, 52*(6), 609–616.
- Machin, S., Marie, O., & Vujić, S. (2011). The crime reducing effect of education. *Economic Journal, 121*(552), 463–484.
- Markowitz, F. E. (2011). Mental illness, crime, and violence: Risk, context, and social control. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 16*(1), 36–44.
- Miller, L. (2013). Sexual offenses against children: Patterns and motives. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 18*(5), 506–519.
- Moskalenko, S., & McCauley, C. (2011). The psychology of lone-wolf terrorism. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly, 24*(2), 115–126.
- Mouilso, E. R., & Calhoun, K. S. (2013). The role of rape myth acceptance and psychopathy in sexual assault perpetration. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 22*(2), 159–174.
- Nunes, K. L., Hermann, C. A., & Ratcliffe, K. (2013). Implicit and explicit attitudes toward rape are associated with sexual aggression. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 28*(13), 2657–2675.
- O'Leary, K. D., Tintle, N., & Bromet, E. (2014). Risk factors for physical violence against partners in the U.S. *Psychology of Violence, 4*(1), 65–77.
- Ornstein, A. (2012). Mass murder and the individual: Psychoanalytic reflections on perpetrators and their victims. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy, 62*(1), 1–20.
- Phillips, E. M. (2011). Pain, suffering, and humiliation: The systemization of violence in kidnapping for ransom. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma, 20*(8), 845–869.
- Portnoy, J., Chen, F. R., & Raine, A. (2013). Biological protective factors for antisocial and criminal behavior. *Journal of Criminal Justice, 41*(5), 292–299.
- Ragatz, L. L., Fremouw, W., & Baker, E. (2012). The psychological profile of white-collar offenders' demographics, criminal thinking, psychopathic traits, and psychopathology. *Criminal Justice and Behavior, 39*(7), 978–997.
- Ray, L. (2014). Shame and the city -- 'Looting', emotions and social structure. *Sociological Review Monograph, 62*(1), 117–136.
- Rocque, M. (2012). Exploring school rampage shootings: Research, theory, and policy. *The Social Science Journal, 49*(3), 304–313.
- Sansone, R. A., Chang, J., Jewell, B., & Sellbom, M. (2011). Relationships among shoplifting, compulsive buying, and borderline personality symptomatology. *Innovations in Clinical Neuroscience, 8*(7), 10–11.
- Schept, J., Wall, T., & Brisman, A. (2015). Building, staffing, and insulating: An architecture of criminological complicity in the school-to-prison pipeline. *Social Justice, 41*(4), 96–115.
- Simi, P., Bubolz, B. F., & Hardman, A. (2013). Military experience, identity discrepancies, and far right terrorism: An exploratory analysis. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism, 36*(8), 654–671.
- Thomsen, L., Obaidi, M., Sheehy-Skeffington, J., Kteily, N., & Sidanius, J. (2014). Individual differences in relational motives interact with the political context to produce terrorism and terrorism-support. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences, 37*(4), 377–378.
- Tittle, C. R., Antonaccio, O., & Botchkovar, E. (2012). Social learning, reinforcement and crime: Evidence from three European cities. *Social Forces, 90*(3), 863–890.

- Topalli, V., Jacques, S., & Wright, R. (2015). "It takes skills to take a car": Perceptual and procedural expertise in carjacking. *Aggression and Violent Behavior, 20*, 19–25.
- van der Linden, D., Dunkel, C. S., Beaver, K. M., & Louwen, M. (2015). The unusual suspect: The general factor of personality (GFP), life history theory, and delinquent behavior. *Evolutionary Behavioral Sciences, 9*(3), 145–160.
- Vaske, J., Boisvert, D., & Wright, J. P. (2012). Genetic and environmental contributions to the relationship between violent victimization and criminal behavior. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 27*(16), 3213–3235.
- Vaske, J., Wright, J. P., Boisvert, D., & Beaver, K. M. (2011). Gender, genetic risk, and criminal behavior. *Psychiatry research, 185*(3), 376–381.
- Vitacco, M. J., Neumann, C. S., & Jackson, R. L. (2005). Testing a four-factor model of psychopathy and its association with ethnicity, gender, intelligence, and violence. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 73*(3), 466–476.
- Walters, G. D. (2012). Substance abuse and criminal thinking: Testing the countervailing, mediation, and specificity hypotheses. *Law and Human Behavior, 36*(6), 506–512.
- Walters, G. D. (2014). Continuous versus categorical models of delinquency risk. *American Journal of Criminal Justice, 39*(3), 395–410.

Unit 1 >> Crime and Criminal Behavior

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

This unit addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

This unit begins with an introduction to crime and criminal behavior. In this unit, you will explore how crime is defined, measured, and classified.

Measuring crime can be a difficult process. By its very nature, crime is something that often goes undetected. Law enforcement has developed a variety of techniques to track crime, such as police reports and victim reports. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) uses its Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program for tracking crime; it reports crime across multiple domains.

All crime reporting and tracking systems categorize crime and have certain limitations. Measuring crime involves tracking statistics such as demographic information and moderator variables related to the crimes. Moderator variables are any third variable in a correlation that affects the relationship between the first two variables. For example, we may find that gender is related to violent crime with a higher percentage of males engaging in violent behavior. However, a moderator variable would be age, with the highest percentage of violent offenders being below the age of 30.

It is essential to develop a framework of definitions of a crime and how they are generally derived and established in the criminal justice realm. It is also imperative to study the etiology (development or progression) of the types of psychological behaviors, symptoms, or manifestations from a psychological perspective. For psychological purposes, the legal definition of the crime is not as essential in providing services, since establishing guilt or innocence is not generally a primary responsibility of the types of services or interventions the psychological provider provides.

As we see in many legal cases, there is a difference between the crime committed and the eventual charges that the offender may face due to plea bargaining, evaluation of available evidence, or even the strength of prosecution of one offense versus another. For this course, you will focus primarily on the offender that commits criminal acts that are not generally explained as *happenstance*, but instead are indicative of a pattern of personality characteristics or behaviors.

It is a difficult task for the psychological provider to suggest there may be a consistent enough demonstration of behaviors, including emotional regulation that is indicative or predictive of criminal behaviors. There are several assessment instruments that are components of evaluating personality characteristics (MMPI – Minnesota Multi-Phasic Personality Inventory and MCMI – Millon Clinical Multi-Axial Inventory), cognitive/aptitude performance levels (WAIS – Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scales, WISC – Wechsler Intelligence Scales for Children, and DAS – Differential Ability Scales), competency

to stand trial (MacCAT – CA-MacArthur Competence Assessment Tool and JACI – Juvenile Adjudicative Competence Interview) and adaptive skills (Vineland, ABAS – Adaptive Behavior Assessment System and BASC – Behavior Assessment Scales for Children).

These instruments are only components of the thorough assessment the psychologist may conduct, and from these battery of tools, there are patterns of diagnostic *profiles* that become associated with certain types of behaviors or emotions such as violent, psychotic, malingering, self-harm, affective (depression or bipolar), social competency, and degree of executive functioning.

In general, these assessment instruments or the results of the evaluation are not considered in determining if or when a crime has occurred or what the specific charges will be for the offender. We want to always be cognizant that there are multiple factors and dynamics involved in how a crime is defined.

Learning Activities

u01s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your *Criminal Behavior* text to complete the following:

- Read Chapter 1, "Introduction to Criminal Behavior," pages 1–29.
- Read Chapter 2, "Origins of Criminal Behavior: Developmental Risk Factors," pages 30–56.

Use the Capella University Library to complete the following:

- Read Harris-Mckoy and Cui's 2013 article, "Parental Control, Adolescent Delinquency, and Young Adult Criminal Behavior," from *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, volume 22, issue 6, pages 836–843.
- Read Ronel's 2011 article, "Criminal Behavior, Criminal Mind Being Caught in a 'Criminal Spin'," from *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, volume 55, issue 8, pages 1208–1233.
- Read Gasque's 2016 article, "Seven Glimpses Into the Emotional Brain," from *PLoS Biology* volume 14, issue 12.

Optional – Readings

You may choose to read the following:

- Canter, D. (2000). Offender profiling and criminal differentiation. *Legal and Criminological Psychology*, 5(1), 23–46.
- Cooke, D. J., & Michie, C. (1999). Psychopathy across cultures: North America and Scotland compared. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 108(1), 58–68.
- Brown, S. L., Gottschall, S., & Bennell, C. (2015). Criminal behavior. In B. L. Cutler, & P. A. Zapf (Eds.), *APA handbook of forensic psychology: Vol. 1. Individual and situational influences in criminal and civil contexts* (pp. 219–256). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Ferrell, J. (1995). Culture, crime, and cultural criminology. *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture*, 3(2), 25–42.
- van der Linden, D., Dunkel, C. S., Beaver, K. M., & Louwen, M. (2015). The unusual suspect: The general factor of personality (GFP), life history theory, and delinquent behavior. *Evolutionary Behavioral Sciences*, 9(3), 145–160.
- Vitacco, M. J., Neumann, C. S., & Jackson, R. L. (2005). Testing a four-factor model of psychopathy and its association with ethnicity, gender, intelligence, and violence. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 73(3), 466–476.

u01d1 - Culture of Crime

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.

Introduction

As we study criminal behavior and precipitating factors, we must first try to establish a *standard* of how we define what is criminal.

From a psychological perspective, we do not really focus on the specific definition of a crime, but instead put our efforts into understanding the symptoms the person experiences that, in turn, result in the criminal behavior. Forensic psychologists evaluate for personality characteristics and leave defining

crime to the criminal justice system. In psychology, we see significant variances in how different cultural factors contribute to how they define what is considered to be deviant behaviors.

The use of various psychological tests and interviews can assist the courts in determining whether an individual's psychological state warrants consideration as to an individual's mental health at the time the crime was committed and whether such mental state had a direct effect on crime committed. In this course, you will identify and discuss certain crimes such as homicide, domestic violence, victimology, terrorism, and economic type crimes. So it is important that, as a western society such as the United States, we start with a clear insight into the specific elements of specific crimes and how they are viewed and defined.

Jeff Ferrell had this view of crime back in 1995:

Criminal behavior is, more often than not, subcultural behavior. From the interactionist criminology of the Chicago School and Edwin Sutherland to the subcultural theories of Cohen, Cloward and Ohlin, and others, criminologists have long acknowledged that actions and identities labelled "criminal" are typically generated within the boundaries of deviant and criminal subcultures. In this sense, much of what we take to be crime is essentially collective behavior; whether carried out by one person or many, particular criminal acts are often organized within and instigated by subcultural groups. Though the boundaries may remain ill-defined, and the membership may shift in gross numbers and level of commitment, these subcultures constitute definitive human associations for those who participate in them. Biker, hustler, Blood and Crip, pimp and prostitute—all name subcultural networks as much as individual identities. (p. 26)

Instructions

In your main post:

- Explain your understanding of Ferrel's statement, "Criminal behavior is, more often than not, subcultural behavior."
- Describe your reaction to this statement. Does it fit with your own personal opinion or perspective about what crime is? Explain why or why not.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 2: Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
 - Describe your reaction to Ferrel's statement, "Criminal behavior is, more often than not, subcultural behavior." Does it fit with your own personal opinion or perspective about what crime is?
- Competency 3: Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
 - Explain your understanding of Ferrel's statement.

Reference

Ferrell, J. (1995). Culture, crime, and cultural criminology. *Journal of Criminal Justice and Popular Culture*, 3(2), 25–42.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

For example, do you agree with your peers' description of what Ferrel's statement means? Why or why not? Compare your reaction to the statement with that of your peers. Explain where you see similarities and differences.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

u01d2 - Offender Profiling and Criminal Inferences

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.

Introduction

Forensic psychology addresses scientific questions about criminal actions, where the understanding of the actions leads to inferences about offender characteristics. Canter (2000) introduced the radex of criminality, the combination of quantitative and qualitative aspects of a crime. In addition, these quantitative and qualitative characteristics are viewed through the prism of development and change over time. The radex can be applied to any criminal behavior.

One of the most important investigative events of the last century was the creation of behavioral analysis units (BAUs) by the FBI. There are three BAUs. They are known not because of their ability to solve serial murders but because of their creation of a database, the Violent Criminal Apprehension Program (ViCAP), on which criminal justice professionals around the country and even the world have relied ever since.

Offender character assessment is the derivation of inferences about a criminal from evidentiary and psychological aspects of the crimes he or she has committed. For this process to move beyond deduction based on personal opinion and supposition to an evidence-based science, a number of aspects of criminal activity need to be examined, analyzed, and categorized. The notion of a hierarchy of criminal differentiation is introduced to highlight the need to search for consistencies and variations at many levels of that hierarchy. However, current research indicates that the key distinctions are those that differentiate, within classes of crime, between offences and between offenders. This also leads to the hypothesis of a circular ordering of criminal actions, analogous to the color circle, a *radex*.

The radex model, tested using multi-dimensional scaling (MDS) procedures, allows specific hypotheses to be developed about important constituents of criminal differentiation:

- Saliency: MDS analyses reveal the importance of the frequency of criminal actions as the basis on which the significance of those actions can be established.
- Models of differentiation: The research reviewed mainly supports distinctions between criminals in terms of the forms of their transactions with their explicit or implicit victims.
- Consistency: Offenders have been shown to exhibit similar patterns of action on different occasions. The most reliable examples of this currently are in studies of the spatial behavior of criminals.
- Inference: Under limited conditions, it is possible to show associations between the characteristics of offenders and the thematic focus of their crimes.

In general, these results provide support for models of thematic consistency that link the dominant themes in an offender's crimes to characteristic aspects of his or her lifestyle and offending history.

We never analyze anything in isolation but compare new information to the existing knowledge about similar past and parallel events. Both psychological evaluations and crime investigations follow this pattern of determining what a criminal is and what a crime is. That is what the radex model addresses.

Instructions

In your main post:

- Analyze the different components of the radex model of criminal differentiation, looking at expressive and instrumental criminal conduct against person and property on a continuum of increasing seriousness.
- Include in your analysis a summary of the domains and a critique of how they can be or cannot be useful for forensic psychology and for criminal justice professionals. What are the limitations you see in relying on this approach?

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 1: Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
 - Analyze the different components of the radex model of criminal differentiation.
- Competency 2: Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
 - Summarize the domains of the radex model and critique how they can be or cannot be useful for forensic psychology and for criminal justice professionals.

Reference

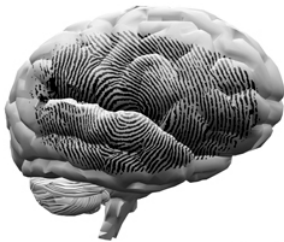
Canter, D. (2000). Offender profiling and criminal differentiation. *Legal and Criminological Psychology*, 5(1), 23–46.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Unit 2 >> Biological Origins of Criminal Behavior

Introduction



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Competencies Addressed in This Unit

This unit addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction: My Biology Made Me Do It!

This unit focuses on the biological origins of criminal behavior. You will examine the contributions of biological factors, such as genetics, temperament, physical attributes, and neurophysiological mechanisms to criminal behavior, focusing on human aggression and violent behavior. This particular area of research has been a topic of debate because findings were often deemed unscientific. A variety of psycho-biological theoretical models have been developed to explain aggression and criminal behavior.

You will also focus on how genetic determinants interact with various environmental factors (nature versus nurture argument) and how they may indicate some *predisposition* or higher incidence rates for more deviant-type behaviors or result in individuals having higher engagement in violent or antisocial behavior. Extensive research has been conducted in this area using samples of identical and fraternal twins. This research has helped psychologists delineate environmental causes versus genetic causes of crime and aggression.

If criminal behavior has a biological cause, that would have certain implications for eradicating crime. In this unit, you will review some of the early biological theories of crime and then turn to modern biological approaches. Twin studies and adoption studies are techniques used to separate the genetic influences from environmental influences. Research has also examined brain functioning. It is possible that some areas of the brain may account for, or at least contribute to, criminal behavior.

As technology progresses, the biological approach to understanding crime will continue to yield useful discoveries. However, most people believe that crime has multiple causes, including psychological and sociological, and it is unlikely that one specific cause will be identified.

Violence and Aggression

In this unit, you will also cover various psychological and legal definitions of violence and aggression.

Types of Aggression

The definition of aggression is rather complex and based on factors related to the individual, the culture, and the situation. What qualifies as aggression differs from person to person. Aggression has been defined as a physical or verbal attack to cause harm, physically or socially, to another individual. It is an emotional state that many humans describe as a feeling of anger, or perhaps even hatred, with the accompanying desire to inflict harm or injury.

The two classifications of aggression you will focus on are instrumental and hostile.

The goal of instrumental aggression is to attain something externally, such as status, reward, or money, without intentionally harming others. The goal of hostile aggression is to cause suffering, and therefore, it is mostly associated with violent crime, such as rape. The manifestations of each type of aggression are typically direct, indirect, or verbal.

Other classifications with similar defining features include affective and predatory aggression. Affective aggression is characterized by total loss of control or inhibition, which is most common in response to frustration or threat. On the other hand, predatory aggression, such as instrumental aggression, is goal-directed and has a purpose. A human example of predatory aggression is how some serial murderer may be described as *cold-blooded* in nature.

Some psychologists argue that aggression is programmed into our genes. For example, evolutionary psychologists, including Duntley and Buss (2004), posit that men are aggressive because it helps them reproduce. The motivation to survive and succeed is debatable given the genetic or innate basis of these drives.

Undoubtedly, human violence and aggression stem from many sources. Through this course, you will explore various theories that will provide a better understanding of how numerous factors may contribute to the development of the criminal mind. In addition, it is key that you understand some of the more common biological explanations of impulse control deficits and violent tendencies that drive aggressive acts.

To have the most comprehensive understanding of aggression, you will explore the biology of aggression and delve deeper into the psychological causes of it throughout the other units.

Biological studies and research on aggression have been controversial and a topic of debate. Most of the criticism focuses on the emphasis that is placed on brain mechanisms or genetics. As a result, there is concern that other origins of violence may be overlooked. There is also concern that with a focus on biological causes of aggression, it will lead to a new type of eugenics (sterilization or castration of people with undesirable characteristics) to control it. On the other hand, if we are able to identify the biological problems related to aggression, it is possible that it could be addressed and treated. This could result in a decrease in crime rates and violence and the quality of life for these violent persons could be significantly improved.

More biologically based causes of aggression have related directly to brain dysfunction and structures. Aggression is most commonly linked to parts of the brain known as the amygdala, which is responsible for mediating emotions, and the hippocampus, which is associated with memory. Both of these parts of the brain have been deemed as causal in violent behavior when either is stimulated. This means that there are biological predispositions or causes—such as brain structure abnormalities and impaired neural functioning—that are related to an individual's inclination toward aggressive behavior. Functioning and structural neuroimaging techniques such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) have contributed to emerging methods to further examine brain irregularities and specific neural bases of violent and criminal behavior.

Research on various brain structures has suggested that structural abnormalities have been noted in violent offenders. Some evidence has more consistently suggested that violent individuals have abnormalities in the frontal and temporal limbic regions (Wood & Liossi, 2006). Irregularities in the frontal lobe, which mediates emotions, inhibition, motor activity, and general social activity, have also been linked to increased displays of aggression. It is important to also recognize that there is no definitive evidence that one structure can cause one violent act.

The most basic neurobiological mechanisms of violence may be mediated by brain chemicals known as neurotransmitters. An excess or deficiency of these various brain chemicals influences behavior in a variety of ways, including the increased propensity toward violent behavior. More specifically, aggression has been found to be the direct result of low levels of serotonin and high levels of testosterone (Montoya, Terburg, Bos, & van Honk, 2011). In addition, dopamine and norepinephrine are known to potentiate violent or aggressive responses.

While considering the various neurochemicals that seem integral in the commission of violence, it is helpful to recognize that attempts have been made to remedy these imbalances through the introduction of medication. It is noteworthy that no particular class of drugs has been deemed effective in treating violent or aggressive behavior. Mood stabilizers (such as Depakote and lithium) or antipsychotic medication (such as Risperdal) is commonly prescribed to treat agitation or aggression in civil and forensic psychiatric populations.

References

- Duntley, J. D., & Buss, D. M. (2004). The evolution of evil. In A. G. Miller (Ed.), *The social psychology of good and evil*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Montoya, E. R., Terburg, D., Bos, P. A., & van Honk, J. (2012). Testosterone, cortisol, and serotonin as key regulators of social aggression: A review and theoretical perspective. *Motivation and Emotion*, 36(1), 65–73.
- Wood, R. L., & Liossi, C. (2006). Neuropsychological and neurobehavioral correlates of aggression following traumatic brain injury. *The Journal of Neuropsychiatry and Clinical Neurosciences*, 18(3), 333–341.

Learning Activities

u02s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your *Criminal Behavior* text to complete the following:

- Read Chapter 3, "Origins of Criminal Behavior: Biological Factors," pages 57–78.
- Read Chapter 5, "Human Aggression and Violence," pages 106–137.

Review the [*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*](#), (5th ed., *DSM-5*) in preparation for the assignment in this unit.

Use the Capella library to complete the following:

- Read Mitchell and Beech's 2011 article, "[Towards a Neurological Model of Offending](#)," from *Clinical Psychology Review*, volume 31, issue 5, pages 872–882.
- Read Boutwell, et al.'s 2014 article, "[The Role of Gene-Gene Interaction in the Prediction of Criminal Behavior](#)," from *Comprehensive Psychiatry*, volume 55, issue 3, pages 483–488.
- Read Ellis and Hoskin's 2015 article, "[The Evolutionary Neuroandrogenic Theory of Criminal Behavior Expanded](#)," from *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, volume 24, pages 61–74.
- Read Glenn and Raine's 2014 article, "[Neurocriminology: Implications for the Punishment, Prediction and Prevention of Criminal Behaviour](#)," from *Nature Reviews Neuroscience*, volume 15, issue 1, pages 54–63.

Use the Internet to read Gross's 2013 article, "[Criminologist Believes Violent Behavior Is Biological](#)," from *NPR*.

Media

Click [Case Study: Jason's Story](#) to view the presentation. You will use this media in this unit's assignment.

Optional – Readings

You may choose to read the following:

- Montoya, E., Terburg, D., Bos, P., & Honk, J. (2011). Testosterone, cortisol, and serotonin as key regulators of social aggression: A review of theoretical perspectives. *Motivation and Emotion*, 36(1), 65–73.
- Horney, J. (2005). An alternative psychology of criminal behavior. *Criminology*, 44(1).
- Forsman, M., Lichtenstein, P., Andershed, H., & Larsson, H. (2008). Genetic effects explain the stability of psychopathic personality from mid- to late adolescence. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 117(3), 606–617.
- Ishikawa, S. S., Raine, A., Lencz, T., Bihle, S., & Lacasse, L. (2001). Autonomic stress reactivity and executive functions in successful and unsuccessful criminal psychopaths from the community. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*, 110(3), 423–432.
- Vaske, J., Boisvert, D., & Wright, J. P. (2012). Genetic and environmental contributions to the relationship between violent victimization and criminal behavior. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 27(16), 3213–3235.
- Vaske, J., Wright, J. P., Boisvert, D., & Beaver, K. M. (2011). Gender, genetic risk, and criminal behavior. *Psychiatry research*, 185(3), 376–381.
- Portnoy, J., Chen, F. R., & Raine, A. (2013). Biological protective factors for antisocial and criminal behavior. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 41(5), 292–299.

u02a1 - Born or Made That Way? Jason Case Study

Competencies Addressed in This Assignment

This assignment addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

In this assignment, you will be using the *DSM-5* (link given in the resources), which provides descriptions of psychiatric conditions, including criteria for determining whether a condition exists and treatment recommendations, as well as other details.

Note: You may review the document *Accessing the DSM-5 and the Mental Measurement Yearbook* (given in the resources) to understand how to access the *DSM-5* in the Capella library.

You will view several conditions in the *DSM-5* (listed below) and you will begin to formulate your own perspective on whether it is *nature* or *nurture* at the heart of the criminal behavior. Is criminal behavior the result of how we are raised or how we are wired neurologically or biologically? You may also want to consider why people in identical situations or factors do not generally display identical behaviors or reactions.

For this assignment, you will review the media Jason's Case Study as a focus, as you start to develop your own premises of how you would explain criminal behavior. There is no wrong or right answer in terms of which of the disorders you choose. Your success will be determined by how well you are applying the basic components of the disorder you choose.

Instructions

After reviewing the media Jason's Case Study, access the *DSM-5* and read about the following:

- **Affective disorder.** For example, depressive and bipolar disorders. Is Jason's difficulty self-regulating, a biological condition, or a learned behavior?
- **Substance abuse.** For example, is Jason's drug use indicative of a disease model or is it socially influenced?
- **Anxiety.** For example, is Jason dealing with a neurochemical or hormonal imbalance, or is it a learned behavior or a behavior modification, or is there some secondary gain for Jason?
- **Psychotic disorders.** For example, does Jason experience thought distortion or difficulty with reality testing?

In your paper:

- Analyze the case study in terms of the psychology described in the *DSM-5*. **Note:** Choose *only one of the disorders* listed that you think is most closely related to Jason's case. Through your analysis of Jason's case study and your reading in the *DSM-5*, describe how he meets the criteria of the disorder you have chosen. Remember, a disorder is based on time, duration, intensity, and the degree to which it interferes with everyday functioning (social, interpersonal, work, and patterns in relationships) and not just the observable behavior.
- Determine social factors (for example, parenting styles, rejection by loved ones, lack of limits, et cetera) that impact Jason's behavior (for example, his bullying, lying, and drug use).
- Describe what you have found in the case that is relevant for a court case for either the defense or the prosecution. Without considering establishing competency or sanity, reflect on the implications of what you have seen in the *DSM-5* and the case study in terms of criminal justice for Jason.

Be sure you review the Born or Made That Way? Jason Case Study Scoring Guide to ensure that you have met all the criteria for this assignment.

Other Requirements

Your paper should meet the following requirements:

- **Written communication:** Written communication is free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **APA formatting:** Resources and citations are formatted according to current APA style and formatting guidelines.
- **Length of paper:** 3–4 typed, double-spaced pages, not including the title page or the references page.
- **References:** A minimum of three references.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.
- **SafeAssign:** Use the SafeAssign Draft option to check your writing and ensure that you have paraphrased, quoted, and cited your sources appropriately. Run a SafeAssign report, saving your paper as a draft. Based on your SafeAssign results, make any necessary changes to your paper before submitting your assignment.

Submit your final work to the Unit 2 Assignment 1 link in Unit 2 for grading. Give proper attribution to sources with APA format.

Note: Your instructor may also use the Writing Feedback Tool to provide feedback on your writing. In the tool, click the linked resources for helpful writing information.

Course Resources

[Accessing the DSM-5 and the Mental Measurements Yearbook](#)

[Case Study: Jason's Story | Transcript](#)

[APA Style and Format](#)

[Writing Feedback Tool](#)

[Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders](#)

[SafeAssign](#)

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.

Introduction

The statement "Brain damage can cause aggressive behavior" raises the question of whether a violent offender, who is assessed to have any type of disinhibiting traumatic brain injury, is criminally responsible for his or her actions. As the public struggles with understanding the *why* of a crime, it becomes even more difficult when they are asked to *forgive* or accept less criminal responsibility for the cognitively impaired criminal.

The court system is full of cases where part of the defense was specifically focused on the offenders having less capacity to *self-regulate* their behaviors due to some type of brain dysfunction. However, it is rare that even when there is clear evidence of a significant impairment to their reasoning that the offender is found not responsible for some aspect of the crime. This may strike some as *unfair*. For example, epilepsy is also a brain dysfunction or neurological disorder but we do not expect people with epilepsy to not have seizures.

In the case of a person who has a permanent neurological disorder, how do we keep the public safe without discriminating against the damage implications such as impaired executive functioning, poor linear reasoning, or even inconsistent emotional regulation? Do we hold people accountable for their behavior when they have a physical condition? If they have a disorder that impinges on other people's rights, do we see them as accountable or in need of treatment or some combination of both? These questions are posed every day in real-world legal cases and answered by psychologists and neuropsychologists trained in forensic evaluation. It is a dynamic that criminal justice professionals have to account for as they develop their strategy for trial or disposition planning.

Instructions

In your main post:

- Determine if medical or neuro-psychological testimony should be allowed in court, keeping in mind that there is no clear correlation between a type of brain damage and the type or level of criminal behavior.
- Describe your position on how to accommodate for psychologically or biologically determined *aggressive tendencies* in the criminal justice domains, including trials.

Support your opinions with professional and scholarly resources.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 2: Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
 - Determine if medical or neuro-psychological testimony should be allowed in court.
 - Describe your position on how to accommodate for psychologically or biologically determined *aggressive tendencies* in the criminal justice domains including trials.
- Competency 4: Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
 - Support your opinions with scholarly resources.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

This unit addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

In this unit, you will continue to explore the nature-versus-nurture debate. You will explore the developmental, psychological, and environmental factors related to violence and offending.

You will also look at the risk factors that manifest during growth and maturation of an individual. You will discuss factors such as abuse, neglect, and maltreatment that affect the incidence of criminal and violent behavior.

You will explore specific environmental factors considered causal in criminal offending and aggression. You will also examine situational factors, such as exposure to domestic violence, parental offending, and learning theories, to determine whether they can cause criminal offending and aggression. In addition, you will discuss peer offending and rejection, which are factors identified as causes of violent or criminal behavior.

You will also explore the different protective factors that mitigate the risk of engaging in aggressive behavior. Some of these protective factors are school achievement, strong family relationships, and a non-delinquent peer group, but it is important to indicate these are not exhaustive in nature or scope when determining relevant variables of criminal behaviors.

Learning Activities

u03s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your *Criminal Behavior* text to read Chapter 4, "Origins of Criminal Behavior: Learning and Situational Factors," pages 79–105.

Use the Capella library to complete the following:

- Read Hansen's 1997 article, "[Finding the Root Causes: Some See Solutions to Crime in 'Nature Vs. Nurture' Studies](#)," from *ABA Journal*, volume 83, issue 7, pages 20–21.
- Read Simons and Burt's 2011 article, "[Learning to Be Bad: Adverse Social Conditions, Social Schemas, and Crime](#)," from *Criminology*, volume 49, issue 2, pages 553–598.
- Read Sweeten, Piquero, and Steinberg's 2013 article, "[Age and the Explanation of Crime, Revisited](#)," from *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, volume 42, issue 6, pages 921–938.

Use the Internet to read the article "[Nature Vs. Nurture in the Criminal Justice System](#)" from National Human Genome Research Institute.

Optional – Readings

You may choose to read the following:

- Machin, S., Marie, O., & Vujić, S. (2011). The crime reducing effect of education. *Economic Journal*, 121(552), 463–484.
- Tittle, C. R., Antonaccio, O., & Botchkovar, E. (2012). Social learning, reinforcement and crime: Evidence from three European cities. *Social Forces*, 90(3), 863–890.
- Fella, G., & Gallipoli, G. (2014). Education and crime over the life cycle. *Review of Economic Studies*, 81(4), 1484–1517.

- Schept, J., Wall, T., & Brisman, A. (2015). Building, staffing, and insulating: An architecture of criminological complicity in the school-to-prison pipeline. *Social Justice*, 41(4), 96–115.

u03d1 - Genetics and Environment

Competency Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.

Introduction

The evolution of biology, especially genetics, has provided scientific evidence of the need for a paradigm shift when considering the variables that can contribute to the *resiliency* an individual may have when exposed to environmental factors. The gene DRD4 is associated with the personality trait of *novelty seeking* and this gene is considered an indicator of ADHD. We see numerous research studies that introduce the prevalence of ADHD-type symptoms being related to criminal behaviors.

Psychology research has limited information about scientifically based correlations between any specific environmental factor that results in criminal behavior. We often confuse correlation with causation. This means that because two things happen with one following the other, we may think one caused the other, which may or may not be true. Does thunder cause lightening, or does lightening cause thunder, or do they co-occur for some other reason? An example from human behavior is that research has shown that a large percentage of people who sexually abuse were victims of sexual abuse themselves; however, only a small percentage of individuals who are sexually abused as children will sexually abuse someone else. Confusing the distinction between these two different pieces of information, people often mistakenly believe that most children who are sexually abused will abuse, which is not accurate.

Instructions

In your main post:

- Discuss if psychological character assessment should be based on the development of pathology or on the manifestation of symptoms, referencing the unit readings and other resources.
- Discuss your opinion on using genetics in a criminal case. Support your position with reputable research.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 4: Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
 - Support your opinion on the use of genetics in a criminal case with reputable research.
 - Discuss if psychological character assessment should be based on the development of pathology or on the manifestation of symptoms.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

u03q1 - Quiz 1

This multiple-choice quiz will gauge your understanding of the material presented in the first three units. The quiz provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate your mastery of the following course competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.

Read the following instructions and parameters before taking the quiz:

- There is no time limit to complete the quiz.
- You must take and submit the quiz in this unit.
- You can access the quiz to preview the questions.
- As you answer the questions, be sure they are saved as you go. You will be able to submit the quiz only once. Once you have saved your answers and are ready to finish, click **Save and Submit**.
- There are 100 total points possible. Each question is worth 5 points. Each quiz in the course is worth 5 percent of your total grade. There are three quizzes accounting for 15 percent of your grade.
- Click **Save and Submit** on your quiz to receive credit. The quiz is scored automatically, and your score and the correct answers will be accessible to you after the quiz is completed and recorded. To review the correct answers, go to My Grades and click on the title of the quiz and then click on your score.

Click the linked quiz title to access the quiz. If you have any issues with the quiz, contact your instructor.

Unit 4 >> Juvenile Delinquency

Introduction



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Competencies Addressed in This Unit

This unit addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 5:** Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

Diagnostically, several disorders have been linked to criminal behavior in juveniles as well as adults. Some of these disorders are oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), and conduct disorder (CD). In this unit, you will cover the various trajectories of criminal offending and different types of offenders such as life-course-persistent offenders and adolescent-limited offenders. You will review factors related to childhood and adolescent antisocial behavior.

The unit activities will encourage you to think beyond the criteria of the diagnoses and consider how the diagnoses may impact forensic psychological interventions or criminal justice processes. For example, you will discuss which diagnoses may affect court sentencing or the recommendation for treatment.

Will They Grow Out of It?

A history of violent behavior or delinquency is one of the most powerful predictors of future violence and has been consistently demonstrated in the literature in this area. In males, antisocial behavior such as stealing, smoking, selling drugs, and property destruction are all associated with subsequent violent behavior (Hawkins, Herrenkohl, Farrington, Brewer, Catalano, & Harachi, 1998). A longstanding pattern of antisocial behavior and previous arrests for delinquent acts increase the likelihood of future violent behavior.

Peer Delinquency and Rejection

Research has demonstrated stable, positive results between associating with delinquent or negative peers during adolescence and later violence (Lipsey & Derzon, 1998). Steinberg's (1987) study of 865 adolescent school students assessed the relationship between single-parent status and susceptibility to delinquent peer pressure gauged by presentation of various hypothetical dilemmas involving antisocial behavior. Even after controlling for race, sex, and socioeconomic status variables, the results indicated that adolescents with single-parent status were far more susceptible to negative peer influence when deciding to engage in antisocial activities.

Although peers may contribute to an adolescent's likelihood of engaging in violent behavior during adolescence, the influence of friends fades and is less relevant in predicting chronic, life-course offenders who begin aggression earlier in life. Research shows that adolescents who associate with a positive peer group with disapproval of delinquent behavior are actually less likely to commit a sexual offense (Elliot, 1994). Thus, it seems that a negative or positive peer group can greatly influence individual behavior.

Similarly, a delinquent peer group may influence the propensity toward criminal behavior in an adolescent. Gang membership may be one of the most concerning factors in regard to peer influence on behavior. Research has demonstrated that gang membership alone is associated with violent and serious offending in juvenile populations. According to the National Gang Intelligence Center (2011), gangs may be responsible for 48–90 percent of several other offense classes.

On the other hand, peer rejection can seemingly be just as problematic as gang affiliation. Findings from a variety of sources, including peers, teachers, and direct observation, point to aggression as a major factor related to peer rejection. The strongest correlate of peer rejection, particularly in males, is aggression (Coie, Dodge, Terry, & Wright, 1991).

Childhood History of Maltreatment

Possibly, the most damaging family risk factor of all is parental abuse or neglect. Even when gauging by conservative estimates of the prevalence of child abuse or neglect, there is indication that it is a pervasive issue. Experience of or exposure to child abuse or neglect has extensive consequences for children, including increased risk for aggressive behavior.

Child maltreatment, violence within the home, and separation from parents all seem to increase the risk of violent offending. Widom (1989) posited that abuse and neglect are risk factors for later violence as well as recognized that the degree of risk depends on the type of abuse. Her study revealed that adults who were physically abused as children were slightly more likely to commit a violent offense; however, those who had been neglected were even more likely to commit violence during adolescence and adulthood. Later research replicated the same findings (Maxfield, Weiler, & Widom, 2000).

Parental Caregiver Criminality

The impact the family has on a child is undeniable. Thus, in this particular area of research, parental criminality is not surprisingly another factor influencing their children's likelihood of following in the same footsteps. Research within this area has examined the environmental as well as biological factors that contribute to parental and caregiver criminality and influence. Moffitt (1993) was one of the earlier researchers to examine the relationship between the biological components in the impact of parental criminality on children's violent behavior. After a thorough review of 5,659 Danish male adoptees with noncriminal adoptive parents and records of their biological parents, it was determined that adult children with criminal parents were no more likely to be registered for a violent offense than those with noncriminal biological parents. This, being one of the most extensive studies in this particular domain, possibly supports that the influence could be more environmental than biological. Nonetheless, the research in this area is lacking and should be an area of further exploration in an effort for there to be a more thorough recognition of the genetic-versus-environment influence on the propensity toward crime and aggression.

Parental incarceration and subsequent separation between parents and children is a significant risk factor for later juvenile offending. Furthermore, these youth may grow up in or be exposed to an environment that is tolerant, or even supportive, of criminal behavior. Not surprisingly, research has demonstrated that the impacts of separation from a parent consequent to imprisonment resulted in a pattern of delinquency in youth throughout life and was predictive of later diagnosis of antisocial personality disorder in adulthood (Murrey & Farrington, 2005). Risk factors included:

- Peer delinquency.
- Poor school achievement.
- Childhood maltreatment.
- Exposure to violence within the home.
- History of violence.
- Early violent offending.
- Early caregiver disruption.
- Poor parental management.

Protective factors included:

- Prosocial involvement.
- Strong social support.
- Strong attachments and bonds.
- Strong commitment to school.
- Resilient personality.
- Positive attitude toward intervention and authority.

References

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Learning Activities

u04s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your *Criminal Behavior* text to read Chapter 6, "Juvenile Delinquency," pages 138–173.

Use the Capella library to complete the following. These are research articles on conduct disorder.

- Read Buitelaar, et al.'s 2013 article, "Conduct Disorders," from *European Child & Adolescent Psychiatry*, volume 22, supplement 1, pages S49–S54.
- Read Henggeler and Sheidow's 2003 article, "Conduct Disorder and Delinquency," from *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, volume 29, issue 4, pages 505–522.
- Read Anckarsater, Radovic, Svennerlind, Hoglund, and Radovic's 2009 article, "Mental Disorder Is a Cause of a Crime: The Cornerstone of Forensic Psychiatry," from *International Journal of Law and Psychiatry*, volume 32, issue 6, pages 342–347.

Assignment – Preparation

In preparation for the unit assignment, read the descriptions of the various assessments or tests used in the area of conduct disorder in the Mental Measurements Yearbook (MMY). Search for the following:

- Conduct Disorder Scale.
- Adolescent Symptom Inventory – 4.
- Behavior Dimensions Scale.

Review the document [Accessing the DSM-5 and the Mental Measurement Yearbook](#) to understand how to access these resources in the Capella library. You may also review the library guide [Database Guide: Mental Measurements Yearbook](#) to understand using MMY.

Discussion – Preparation

The unit discussion is about violence in media. In preparation, use the Capella library and the Internet to select and read at least two recognized (within the field of psychology or criminal justice) articles to support your position on media violence.

Optional – Readings

You may choose to read the following:

- Kerr, M., Van Zalk, M., & Stattin, H. (2012). Psychopathic traits moderate peer influence on adolescent delinquency. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 53(8), 826–835.
- Hutton, E. L., & Woodworth, M. (2014). Violent female youth: An examination of instrumental violence, psychopathy, and offense characteristics. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 32(1), 121–134.
- DeLisi, M., Dansby, T., Peters, D., Vaughn, M., Shook, J., & Hochstetler, A. (2014). Fledgling psychopathic features and pathological delinquency: New evidence. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 39(3), 411–424.
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u04a1 - Mental Measures for Juvenile Offenders

Competencies Addressed in This Assignment

This assignment addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 5:** Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

DSM-5 is a standard diagnostic tool for psychiatric disorders. It contains three main sections: "DSM-5 Basics," "Diagnostic Criteria and Codes," and "Emerging Measures and Models." The complete DSM archive (I–IV) plus eight reference books and four psychiatric journals are also available in the Capella library. *DSM-5* is used by health professionals, social workers, and forensic and legal specialists to diagnose and classify mental disorders, providing concise and explicit criteria.

The Mental Measurements Yearbook (MMY) is a comprehensive guide to over 2,000 testing instruments in the areas of psychology, education, business, and leadership. Entries include publisher, test purpose, price, edited reviews, and purchase information, if available. It also contains additional information on reliability (getting the same results each time), validity (testing appropriate things), norming data, and scoring and reporting services. Foreign language versions of MMY are also available.

The MMY database is best used for exploration of tests and survey instruments. If you are researching tests for a course assignment, such as this one, the MMY is an excellent research tool.

Note: You may review the document [Accessing the DSM-5 and the Mental Measurement Yearbook](#) (given in the resources) to understand how to access these resources in the Capella library.

Instructions

For the assignment, create a 9–12-slide PowerPoint presentation for a group of trainee mental health professionals and legal representatives. In your presentation, explain three different measures that might be used to determine an appropriate diagnosis for a juvenile offender. The possible diagnoses are:

- ADHD.
- Oppositional defiance.
- Conduct disorder.

You may see overlap in the measures you examine but be sure your rationale addresses why a particular measure supports your choice for the specific disorder.

- Access the *DSM-5* and find the criteria for each one of the disorders.
- Access the MMY and find a measure that you would use for each of the disorders.
- Include the following for each measure in your presentation:
 - A brief description of the disorder (based on *DSM-5* but in your own words).
 - A description of the measure (based on the MMY but in your own words). Include primary audience, purpose, how the measure is administered, what it measures, and what its strengths and limitations are.
 - A rationale for your choice.

Be sure to use one slide to succinctly deliver each of the three main points. Put your notes or explanatory and expanded information for each of the main points using the following option:

- In a separate Word document. Label each set of notes in the Word document with the number and title of the slide to which the notes refer.
Important: Be sure to submit this document also to the assignment area.

Be sure you review the Mental Measures for Juvenile Offenders Scoring Guide to ensure that you have met all the criteria for this assignment.

Other Requirements

Your assignment should meet the following requirements:

- **Written communication:** Written communication is free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **APA formatting:** Resources and citations are formatted according to current APA style and formatting guidelines.
- **Length of presentation:** 9–12 slides, not including the title slide, the references slide, or the notes slides.
- **References:** A minimum of three references.
- **SafeAssign:** Use the SafeAssign Draft option to check your writing and ensure that you have paraphrased, quoted, and cited your sources appropriately. Run a SafeAssign report, saving your paper as a draft. Based on your SafeAssign results, make any necessary changes to your paper before submitting your assignment.

Provide in-text citations on your slides for the sources, and a reference slide at the end of the presentation.

Note: Your instructor may also use the Writing Feedback Tool to provide feedback on your writing. In the tool, click the linked resources for helpful writing information.

Course Resources

[Accessing the DSM-5 and the Mental Measurements Yearbook](#)

[APA Style and Format](#)

[Writing Feedback Tool](#)

[Database Guide: Mental Measurements Yearbook](#)

[Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders](#)

[SafeAssign](#)

u04d1 - Violence in Media

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.

Introduction

The impact of the media on violence is an area of ongoing debate. This media includes, but is not limited to, video games, movies, and news reporting. The debate focuses on the way media influences or promotes the general acceptance of violent behavior in society, including the focus on long-term psychological effects that violent media may have on the development of children. One group may argue that violence in media needs to be censored while another group may argue that censorship is a means to mask other possible causes of violent behavior.

Instructions

Using the Capella library resources and the Internet, select and read at least two recognized (within the field of psychology or criminal justice) articles to support your position on media violence.

In your main post:

- Analyze the impact of multiple media on violence in society.
- Examine whether violence in media promotes the normalization of aggression, the desensitization to violence, the committing of violent acts, or a lack of empathy in children and perhaps even adults. Why or why not?
- List any psychological or social theories that support your position.
- Discuss how violence in media impacts, involves, and is relevant to the criminal justice system and the determining of dispositions.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 1: Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
 - List any psychological or social theories that support your position.
 - Discuss how violence in media impacts, involves, and is relevant to the criminal justice system and the determining of dispositions.
- Competency 3: Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
 - Analyze the impact of multiple media on violence in society.
 - Examine whether violence in media promotes the normalization of aggression, the desensitization to violence, the committing of violent acts, or a lack of empathy in children and perhaps even adults. Why or why not?
- Competency 4: Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
 - Select and read at least two recognized (within the field of psychology or criminal justice) articles to support your position on media violence.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

Unit 5 >> Mental Disorders and Crime

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

This unit addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 5:** Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

In this unit, you will look closely at the relationships between mental disorders and crime. This unit covers material central to the work of forensic professionals and the challenges of the criminal justice systems to interact and process these individuals with mental disorders. You will increase your knowledge of mental illness to help you to develop an understanding of the complex relationships among mental illness, criminal behavior, and the criminal justice system. You will have the opportunity to debunk myths surrounding the insanity plea (criminal responsibility) and mental illness. You will examine the relationship between mental illness and violent behavior and the ability to assess and possibly even *predict* future dangerous behavior.

One of the biggest needs and challenges involves identifying and differentiating the diagnostic and legally defined offender categories that are commonly assessed in forensic psychological services practice, including *DSM-5* Axis I and Axis II disorders, organic syndromes, mental disorders, levels of dangerousness, likelihood of recidivism, and pre-release inmates and patients.

You will begin by exploring the construct of psychopathology and how it relates to criminal activity and antisocial personality disorder. This unit covers the prevalence of psychopathy and the traits associated with it.

It is estimated that individuals falling in the category of psychopaths make up less than one percent of the U.S. population (Hare & Neuman, 2009). Despite this estimation, you will discuss the importance of studying these individuals. You will also study research findings examining the disproportionate rate of serious, violent, and criminal offenses committed by psychopathic individuals. You will explore gender, racial, and ethnic differences applicable to the construct of psychopathy.

You will examine in depth the relationship between mental illness and crime, with a focus on risk assessment and recidivism. You will also review how various mental disorders manifest in behaviors that range from innocuous conduct to severe and dangerous conduct. While psychotic and delusional killers are often depicted in the media, it is critical to be able to separate isolated events as well as distinguish between fact and fiction. A great percentage of those with mental disorders are not violent although severe and persistent mental illness is a risk factor for violent behavior. The presence of a comorbid substance abuse disorder and any past history of violent behavior are also risk factors for aggressive behavior.

You will explore mental illness and how it affects an individual's competency to stand trial and whether he or she is culpable enough for the crime committed. The success rates for the insanity defense are quite low. However, there have been a few sensational cases such as those of John Hinckley and Andrea Yates—cases in which both defendants were found not guilty by reason of insanity. Considering this, you will discuss the varied standards and tests employed across the United States to determine insanity. The discussions will typically center on three broad models—the M'Naghten rule, the Brawner rule, and the Durham rule.

General Deficit Syndromes and Criminal Responsibility

You have been exploring the question of criminal responsibility and by now you may have also thought about factors or psychiatric conditions that may render a person incompetent to stand trial. You will explore this aspect in detail in this unit's assigned readings and activities.

There are three major classes of conditions that may impact criminal responsibility. The first class of conditions is related to impaired reality testing that is consequent to the individual's altered mental status related to the experience of psychotic symptoms. Psychotic symptoms may be related to a diagnosis of a psychotic spectrum disorder such as schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, or psychosis secondary to a medical condition.

The second class of conditions relates to the possibility of the offender having a history of unremarkable or normal cognitive functioning at some point in his or her life, though, during the time of commission of the alleged criminal act, the behavior may have been influenced by neurological disease or impairment. These types of diseases may result in cognitive deterioration, impulsivity, and impaired judgment. Such neurological impairment may be the result of dementia or sustained traumatic brain injury (TBI).

The third class that may raise questions of criminal responsibility is related to mental retardation. The focus on violence within the population of developmentally disabled individuals is a major area of interest. This is because of the marked rates of mental retardation in death-row inmates charged with violent crimes, higher rates of conviction in this population, and decreased likelihood of parole (Denney & Sullivan, 2008).

Mental retardation is often defined by an intellectual quotient (IQ) score of 70 or below as well as assessed deficits in adaptive functioning. In addition, these disabilities must also have originated before the age of 18. The disabilities caused by mental retardation manifest as problems with attention, planning, memory, and judgment. Individuals with retardation suffer cognitive deficits that impair emotional regulation, hinder restraint, and cause diminished capacity to consider alternate courses of action (Fellner, 2001). According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) (2009), mental retardation is disproportionately evidenced in death-row inmates, and this a significant concern due to the high rates of wrongful convictions subsequent

to false confessions, which is a product of the above-noted deficits. However, on the other side, the rates of aggression in institutionalized individuals diagnosed with various developmental disabilities are not uncommon.

Examples of Conditions Impacting Criminal Responsibility

Schizophrenia is a psychiatric diagnosis often thought to be a psychiatric disorder associated with violence. Higher rates of violence have been demonstrated by individuals diagnosed with schizophrenia when compared to the general population, though most people diagnosed with this disorder never commit a criminal or violent act. Torrey (1994) found that the prior violence, treatment noncompliance, and a history of substance abuse or dependence increase risk of future violence. Research has demonstrated that there is an association between higher rates of violence and the experience of the positive symptoms of schizophrenia, which include paranoia or persecutory delusions and hallucinations (Swanson, et al., 2006). A diagnosis of schizophrenia alone does not indicate that an individual would not be found criminally responsible.

Dementia is another condition that could mitigate responsibility as it is an acquired condition, which results in an overall decline in an individual's functioning. Demented patients are elderly and display memory difficulties, personality changes, and other cognitive decline. It has been associated with higher rates of aggression, though these acts often appear disorganized or confused acting out rather than a volitional act of violence. Alzheimer's disease, for example, is a diagnosis in this category associated with higher rates of violence.

References

- American Civil Liberties Union. (2009). Mental illness and the death penalty. Retrieved from https://www.aclu.org/files/pdfs/capital/mental_illness_may2009.pdf
- Denney, R. L., & Sullivan, J. P. (2008). *Clinical neuropsychology in the criminal forensic setting*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Fellner, J. (2001). Beyond reason: Executing persons with mental retardation. *Human Rights*, 28(3), 9.
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- Swanson, J. W., Swartz, M. S., Van Dorn, R. A., Elbogen, E. B., Wagner, H. R., Rosenheck, R. A., . . . Lieberman, J. A. (2006). A national study of violent behavior in persons with schizophrenia. *Archives of General Psychiatry*, 63, 490–499.
- Torrey, E. F. (1994). Violent behavior by individuals with serious mental illness. *Hospital & Community Psychiatry*, 45(7), 653–662.

Learning Activities

u05s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your *Criminal Behavior* text to complete the following:

- Read Chapter 7, "Criminal Psychopathology," pages 174–209.
- Read Chapter 8, "Crime and Mental Disorders," pages 210–245.

Use the Capella library to complete the following:

- Read Peterson, Skeem, Kennealy, Bray, and Zvonkovic's 2014 article, "How Often and How Consistently Do Symptoms Directly Precede Criminal Behavior Among Offenders With Mental Illness?," from *Law and Human Behavior*, volume 38, issue 5, pages 439–449.
- Read Vogel's 2014 article, "Mental Illness and Criminal Behavior," from *Sociology Compass*, volume 8, issue 4, pages 337–346.

Optional – Readings

You may choose to read the following:

- Markowitz, F. E. (2011). Mental illness, crime, and violence: Risk, context, and social control. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 16(1), 36–44.
- Ragatz, L. L., Fremouw, W., & Baker, E. (2012). The psychological profile of white-collar offenders' demographics, criminal thinking, psychopathic traits, and psychopathology. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 39(7), 978–997.

u05d1 - Stinkin' Thinkin' - Thought Disorders

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 5:** Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.

Introduction

By early adulthood, most people have some consistent explanations or interpretations of the world around them and their place in it. In many cases, our friends, family, or spouses might say they know the way we would react to a situation based on our previous thoughts or reactions to similar situations. This does not mean we are rigid in our thinking, but it does suggest there are established patterns to how we view our world. This can include religion, politics, parenting, education, and criminal justice. In this discussion, you will investigate the psychological theories related to these consistent thinking styles and if they have a place in determining pathology or criminal justice processes.

In the psychological realm, there is a predominant premise that cognition (thoughts or interpretations) following an event or incident is the cause of an emotional reaction or response, which in turn initiates the behaviors of the person. The theory is generally referred to as cognitive behavioral theory (CBT) or rationale emotive behavioral theory (REBT), but it has been under constant *mutation* and adaptation to encompass additional factors such as physiological arousal or altered states of consciousness prior to the event or incident. This approach is often at the core of the interventions and treatments to remediate deviant behavior through reframing the way the offender interprets his or her environment. If the person does not think a negative thought in response to an event, then it is less probable that he or she will have a negative reaction and in turn even less probable that he or she will act in an aggressive or criminal way.

Instructions

In your main post:

- Do some research about these theories (CBT or REBT), and in a chart form, address the strengths and weaknesses of the theories when trying to understand, explain, and even predict criminal behaviors.
- Include the limitations or shortcomings of relying on the theories of CBT or REBT to build a defense for a criminal case involving violence.
- Discuss one or two possible assessment instruments or procedures that may support or negate the premises of these theories in explaining deviant behavior involving violence. For this part of the discussion, search the MMY to find specific assessment tools. **Helpful hint:** Search using keywords *cognitive* and *emotive*.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 2: Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
 - Address limitations or shortcomings of relying on the theories of CBT or REBT to build a prosecution or defense for a criminal case involving violence.
- Competency 4: Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
 - Research theories and address the strengths and weaknesses of the theories when trying to understand, explain, and even predict criminal behaviors.
- Competency 5: Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.
 - Discuss possible assessment instruments or procedures that may support or negate the premises of these theories in explaining deviant behavior involving violence.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

Accessing the DSM-5 and the Mental Measurements Yearbook

u05q1 - Quiz 2

This multiple-choice quiz will gauge your understanding of the material presented in Units 4 and 5. The quiz provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate your mastery of the following course competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.

Read the following instructions and parameters before taking the quiz:

- There is no time limit to complete the quiz.
- You must take and submit the quiz in this unit.
- You can access the quiz to preview the questions.
- As you answer the questions, be sure they are saved as you go. You will be able to submit the quiz only once. Once you have saved your answers and are ready to finish, click **Save and Submit**.
- There are 100 total points possible. Each question is worth 5 points. Each quiz in the course is worth 5 percent of your total grade. There are three quizzes accounting for 15 percent of your grade.
- Click **Save and Submit** on your quiz to receive credit. The quiz is scored automatically, and your score and the correct answers will be accessible to you after the quiz is completed and recorded. To review the correct answers, go to My Grades and click on the title of the quiz and then click on your score.

Click the linked quiz title to access the quiz. If you have any issues with the quiz, contact your instructor.

Unit 6 >> Does Violence Have a Personality?

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

This unit addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 5:** Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

This unit explores the types of personality characteristics associated with murder or homicide. Forensic professionals want to separate unintentional homicides and crime-of-opportunity homicides (presented itself only because the offender was committing another crime at the time) from psychologically motivated crimes of murder. There are several categories that certain killings fit into, and you will explore what differentiates manslaughter (can be either a felony or a misdemeanor depending on the act the offender was committing at the time the death resulted) from spree killing, or mass murder from serial killings.

This unit also addresses the issue of domestic violence. Domestic violence (recently many states are separating the distinctions of family violence or domestic violence) is defined as violence among family members or individuals who are living together. This accounts for nearly 20 percent of all violent crimes against women, and physical violence is estimated to occur in 4–5 million relationships each year in the United States. However, estimates of domestic violence are frequently considered to reveal only the tip of the iceberg due to underreporting, poor record keeping, and disagreement about what should be included as incidents of domestic violence. Despite the difficulty with determining the prevalence of domestic violence, all mental health experts agree that it is a serious problem with long-lasting, detrimental consequences, as well as complicated criminal and civil proceedings.

Serial Murderers

The serial murderer is likely the most sensationalized of all types of offenders, even though such an offender is probably the least understood and least common. The most common defining characteristics of this group of offenders are related to the number of homicides (incidents), the victim profile, and time (frequency or other patterns). To be characterized as a serial murder, there should be at least three victims, three or more incidents, and a noted emotional cool-down period (Culhane, 2011).

In addition, the Protection of Children From Sexual Predator Act of 1998, which was passed by the U.S. Congress, also gives the following definition (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2008):

The term 'serial killings' means a series of three or more killings, not less than one of which was committed within the United States, having common characteristics such as to suggest the reasonable possibility that the crimes were committed by the same actor or actors.

These criteria are important to distinguish within this group of violent offenders. For example, the number of incidents is crucial in delineating between serial and mass murderers. The cooling-off period is also a key criterion to distinguish between spree and serial killings. Other characteristics relevant to further understanding such a crime include motivation for the murder, relationship of the victim to the offender, and the specific locations of the offenses.

The etiology of a serial killer is rather a challenging topic. It appears that the causal factors underlying this violent group are a culmination of confounding variables in the biological and environmental domains as well as explained through the presence of personality traits.

Most taxonomies that classify serial killers are based on the underlying motivation for the homicide. It is quite evident that there is significant variation among serial killers. While some may kill for sex or are driven to humiliate or control their victims, others vary in their motivations. According to research, the sexually motivated serial murderer is of above average intelligence, likely has a history of animal abuse, leaves signatures at the crime scenes, typically displayed early aggression or criminal activity as a child, and, in many cases, grew up in a dysfunctional, abusive, or neglectful home environment (Hickey, 1997; Keppel & Burns, 2004).

Crime scene analysis has also influenced typology, which suggests that offenders may be further classified as organized or disorganized in their acts. This suggests that the offender's personality type and the presence of mental illness are also important factors to examine, as both influence these extreme acts of violence. Various serial-killer personality types, including antisocial, narcissistic, psychopathic, and paranoid, have been identified (Hare, 1993). Psychiatric diagnoses, including bipolar disorder, dissociative identity disorder, schizoid personality, as well as neurologic diagnoses such as temporal lobe epilepsy, have also been observed at higher rates in this dangerous population (Hickey, 1997).

After a review of much research on serial murderers, it is evident that grossly psychotic serial killers are atypical. An examination of serial killers by Aamodt, Moberg, Nash, Pendleton, Hommema, and Walker (2007) provides further evidence that despite the likelihood of serial murderers using the *not guilty by reason of insanity* (NGRI) defense in the United States, very few are successful. Furthermore, this suggests that most serial killers are not assessed to be impaired at the time of the commission of the homicides.

Acquitted NGRI Cases

Serial killers are a diverse group of violent offenders. While many serial killers throughout history have made unsuccessful attempts at NGRI plea, there are cases in which the defendants were successful. The following acquitted cases are a few examples of serial killers who were successful in their NGRI pleas:

- Nathan Trupp: He had a reported history of mental illness. He thought that he was on a "mission from God" and spent time stalking actor Michael Landon. He was charged with the murders of five people.
- Jane Toppan: She was charged with murder by poison of 31 victims who were known to her as well as the victims she cared for in her work as a nurse. She was deemed NGRI.
- Ed Gein: He was charged with the murders of at least 15 women whom he tortured, raped, and dismembered.
- Erno Soto: He had a known history of mental illness. He was known as Charlie Chop-off because of the genital mutilation and murders of five male, African-American children.

Criminal Personality Assessment – Obsolete or a *Lost Art*?

After examining the diverse traits of criminal offenders, specifically focusing on characteristics associated with particular offenses, you will further explore the domain of criminal characteristic assessment. Criminal personality assessment can be seen constantly on television. This may prompt you to think of the popular show *Criminal Minds*. Still, it begs to clarify the real meaning of being a criminal evaluator.

Criminal personality assessment is a forensic, behavioral procedure that is used often to assist police investigations. This term should not be confused with actuarial profiling, also known as racial profiling, which collates aggregate data of typical offenders. Nor should it be confused with the term psychological profiling, which is rooted more in the discipline of forensic psychology.

Criminal personality assessment has been a valuable tool used by law enforcement agencies nationwide, which started developing in the 1970s by the FBI. One of the paramount goals of criminal personality assessment is to produce a composite or profile of an unknown perpetrator to facilitate arrest and legal prosecution of the offender. However, criminal personality assessment is not useful, or even necessary, for all types of crime. Crimes that reveal aspects of the offender's personality or psychopathology through the crime scene display features of the murderer's personality and pattern that can be examined through an assessment. These aspects can be posturing the body, ritualistic activity, disembowelment, or something that signifies a fantasy is being acted out. Crime scenes that do not reveal information about the offender, such as in cases of robbery, property destruction, assault, or cases that have been deemed to have a drug-induced component of the criminal behavior, are those not appropriate for criminal personality assessment (McCann, 1992).

References

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Culhane, S. J. (2011). Self-reported psychopathology in a convicted serial killer. *Journal of Investigative Psychology & Offender Profiling*, 8(1), 1–21.

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Hare, R. D. (1993). *Without conscience: The disturbing world of the psychopaths among us*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Hickey, E. (1997). *Serial murderers and their victims* (2nd ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Keppel, R., & Birnes, W. (2004). *The psychology of serial killer investigations: The grisly business unit*. York, PA: Maple-Vale.

McCann, J. T. (1992) Criminal personality profiling in the investigation of violent crime: Recent advances and future directions. *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, 10, 475–481.

Learning Activities

u06s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your *Criminal Behavior* text to complete the following:

- Read Chapter 9, "Homicide, Assault, and Family Violence," pages 246–289.
- Read Chapter 10, "Multiple Murder (Mass, Serial), School, and Workplace Violence," pages 290–324.

Use the Capella library and the Internet to complete the following:

Note: You will use these articles to complete the second discussion in this unit.

- General article:
 - Read Friedman and Resnick's 2007 article, "Child Murder by Mothers: Patterns and Prevention," from *World Psychiatry*, volume 6, issue 3, pages 137–141.
 - Read Miller's 2014 article, "Serial Killers: I. Subtypes, Patterns, and Motives," from *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, volume 19, issue 1, pages 1–11.
- Susan Smith articles:
 - Read Kjeldal's 2004 article, "Susan Smith and Her Children: A Reasoning Dialectic," from *Critical Criminology*, volume 12, issue 3, pages 265–284.
 - Read Calligaris's 1997 article, "Susan Smith, a Modern Mother: Reflections on the Destiny of Children at the End of Childhood," from *Critical Quarterly*, volume 39, issue 3, pages 28–41.
- Jeffrey Dahmer articles:
 - Read Martens's 2011 article, "Sadism Linked to Loneliness: Psychodynamic Dimensions of the Sadistic Serial Killer Jeffrey Dahmer," from *Psychoanalytic Review*, volume 98, issue 4, pages 493–514.
 - Read Saborsky and Ramsland's 2013 article, "Distance Diagnosis: Can We Really Tell Whether Dahmer Had Asperger's Disorder?," from *Forensic Examiner*, volume 22, issue 2, pages 42–48.
 - Read the 2014 article, "Serial Killers – Part 7: The FBI and Jeffrey Dahmer," from The Federal Bureau of Investigation.
 - Read the *Los Angeles Times*' 1991 news report, "Accused Mass Slayer Confesses to Murders of Three More Men: Milwaukee Police Say Jeffrey L. Dahmer Now Admits 15 Total Killings. They Plan a Search for Victims Today."

- Andrea Yates articles:
 - Read McLellan's 2006 article, "[Mental Health and Justice: The Case of Andrea Yates](#)," from *The Lancet*, volume 368, issue 9551, pages 1951–1954.
 - Read Hyman's 2004 article, "[Medea of Suburbia: Andrea Yates, Maternal Infanticide, and the Insanity Defense](#)," from *Women's Studies Quarterly*, volume 32, issue 3, pages 192–210.
 - Read Paquette's 2002 article, "[This Is Insane!](#)," from *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, volume 38, issue 3, pages 77–78.

Optional – Readings

You may choose to read the following:

- Agnich, L. E. (2015). A comparative analysis of attempted and completed school-based mass murder attacks. *American Journal of Criminal Justice*, 40(1), 1–22.
- Bondü, R., & Beier, S. (2014). Two of a kind? Differences and similarities of attacks in schools and in institutes of higher education. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 30(2), 253–271.
- Gurian, E. A. (2015, August 5). Reframing serial murder within empirical research offending and adjudication patterns of male, female, and partnered serial killers. *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*.
- Ibabe, I., Jaureguizar, J., & Bentler, P. M. (2013). Risk factors for child-to-parent violence. *Journal of Family Violence*, 28(5), 523–534.
- O'Leary, K. D., Tintle, N., & Bromet, E. (2014). Risk factors for physical violence against partners in the U.S. *Psychology of Violence*, 4(1), 65–77.
- Ornstein, A. (2012). Mass murder and the individual: Psychoanalytic reflections on perpetrators and their victims. *International Journal of Group Psychotherapy*, 62(1), 1–20.
- Rocque, M. (2012). Exploring school rampage shootings: Research, theory, and policy. *The Social Science Journal*, 49(3), 304–313.

u06d1 - Intent or Motive

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.

Introduction

Different from many of the crimes we cover, we see homicide or murder has the additional dynamic of determining intent or motive in addition to the details of the crime of homicide or murder. (In criminal justice, proof of motive is not a necessity to prove murder, it is helpful but, as far as prosecution goes, not necessarily required to obtain a conviction.)

For this discussion, you will research and then discuss how or why we would not as a *best practice* investigate and even evaluate the psychological variables involved in all these cases versus the court order or defense- or prosecution-generated referrals?

Instructions

In your main post:

- Compare and contrast what constitutes *pathological* and requiring evaluation versus *understood* and not requiring evaluation factors of this type of crime.
- Discuss the possibility that it might be detrimental having a forensic professional involved in these type of cases. Why or why not?
- Determine if the criminal justice system accounts for a crime that starts as domestic violence or assault and results in death differently from a crime when killing is the primary intent of the initial crime. Is your determination detrimental to the offender or to the protection of society?

Support your ideas with professional and scholarly resources.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 2: Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
 - Compare and contrast what constitutes *pathological* and requiring evaluation versus *understood* and not requiring evaluation factors of this type of crime.

- Discuss the possibility that it might be detrimental having a forensic professional involved in these type of cases. Why or why not?
- Competency 3: Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
 - Determine if the criminal justice system accounts for a crime that starts as domestic violence or assault and results in death differently from a crime when killing is the primary intent of the initial crime?
- Competency 4: Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
 - Support your ideas with professional and scholarly resources.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

u06d2 - Case Study of a Criminal Offender - Part 1

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 5:** Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.

Introduction

In this discussion, you will explore a case study of a well-known criminal offender and prepare for an assignment based on the same offender in the next unit. You may select a case from the following high-profile individuals:

- Susan Smith.
- Jeffrey Dahmer.
- Andrea Yates.

All three used the insanity defense. The unit readings include articles concerning all three offenders. Choose the offender you want to focus on and read the articles provided. Include the name of the offender you have chosen to discuss in your subject line of your main post.

Instructions

Research your selected case. In your main post:

- Describe briefly the charges against the individual.
- Discuss the psychological theories relevant to the case. For example, are there biological, developmental, or environmental factors that could be applied to his or her criminal behavior?
- Describe how psychological assessments or evaluations were used in the criminal proceedings.

Support your ideas with professional and scholarly resources.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 1: Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
 - Discuss the psychological theories relevant to the case. For example, are there biological, developmental, or environmental factors that could be applied to his or her criminal behavior?
- Competency 4: Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
 - Support your ideas with professional and scholarly resources.

- Competency 5: Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.
 - Describe how psychological assessments or evaluations were used in the criminal proceedings.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Be sure to reply to at least one learner who addressed a different criminal offender than the one you chose. All three offenders ended up with insanity defenses. Compare how the path taken by the defense in your choice was different from or similar to your peer's choice.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

Unit 7 >> Crimes of Control and Victimization

Introduction



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Competencies Addressed in This Unit

This unit addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

This unit focuses on crimes of control and victimization. Sex offenders and the crimes they commit are one of the more highly charged areas in the forensic psychology profession. There is a great deal of debate about the proper punishment, treatment, and subsequent incarceration of individuals who commit sex crimes. In this unit, you will learn about the assessment, criminal processing, and potential treatments of sex offenders as well as attitudes held by the public and professionals toward individuals charged with sex crimes.

It is important for the forensic professional to understand his or her personal beliefs and to have these beliefs informed by empirical data. This is particularly true when evaluating the pros and cons of the treatment of sex offenders.

Sex offenders are often viewed as a homogeneous group. However, in this unit, you will examine how varied they are in terms of the type and frequency of sexual activity as well as the offenses they commit. You will also explore the diverse personal attributes of sex offenders, including but not limited to, gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and age. You will review sexual crimes such as rape, voyeurism, and molestation. You will also examine the impact of pornography and exposure to sexually explicit information on the propensity for rape and other offenses. Rather than inaccurately classifying sexual offenders as a homogenous group, understanding the differences between such offenders is important to identify, treat, and predict behavior of those who may have a propensity toward this behavior. This will help decrease recidivism and sexual crime.

Sexual Offending, Child Molestation, and Pedophilia

In this unit, you will also examine the issue of sexual assault on children. Due to the nature of this crime and highly publicized cases, legislators have enacted laws requiring the registration of sex offenders. What do you think about some states enacting laws, termed sexually violent predator (SVP)

laws, that allow for the civil incarceration of individuals who are considered to be at risk for committing such crimes in the future? This unit also presents other forms of paraphilia, including exhibitionism, voyeurism, and fetishism.

Individuals who are deemed to be at the most significant risk of perpetrating molestation are typically classified as pedophiles and child molesters. The terms *child molester* and *pedophile* are often used interchangeably. Although there is overlap in the terms, there are also distinct differences between these two classifications indicating they are not interchangeable:

- Child molester is a term most commonly used to describe an individual who has had sexual contact with a child. This term is legally based on the definition of a child and the sexual act.
- Pedophile is a term applied to individuals who have a sexual interest in prepubescent children. However, it should be noted that this term is applied independent of actual behavior (American Psychiatric Association, 2000).

The most notable differences in both these terms are that there are pedophiles who never molest children and that there are child molesters who do not have a distinct ongoing sexual interest in children (Feelgood & Hoyer, 2008).

Pedophilia

There are a host of environmental and social factors that are related to pedophilia. Environmental stress has been one of the most commonly reported factors that increase the urge to offend against children (Hall & Hall, 2004). A history of being a victim of childhood sexual abuse is likely one of the most salient predictors of a tendency toward offending behavior. According to Chow and Choy (2002), 47–100 percent of female pedophilic offenders have been victims of sexual abuse. This phenomenon is often referred to as the victim-to-offender cycle.

Pedophiles generally tend to be male and have a preference for age range and sex of the child. Research categorizes male pedophiles by their attraction to only male children (homosexual pedophilia), female children (heterosexual pedophilia), or children from both sexes (bisexual pedophilia). Other variables that distinguish offenders also include specificity of sexual activity involved in perpetrated offenses.

An extensive body of research in the field of psychology has demonstrated that individuals diagnosed with pedophilia generally report feelings of inferiority, isolation, loneliness, internal dysphoria, low self-esteem, and emotional immaturity. Furthermore, there is an indication that they have difficulty with mature, age-appropriate interpersonal interactions, which is mostly related to their reduced assertiveness as well as increased levels of passive-aggressiveness and anger or hostility (Cohen & Galyner, 2002; Egan, Kavanagh, & Blair, 2005; Murray, 2000). It is important to further explore these common traits to accurately identify and treat potential offenders and to reduce risk of offending or recidivism.

Individuals who are diagnosed with pedophilia are also at a significantly higher rate diagnosed with a major psychiatric disorder or personality disorder. More specifically, these individuals are 60–80 percent more likely to be diagnosed with an affective illness and 50–60 percent more likely to be diagnosed with an anxiety disorder (Cohen & Galyner, 2002). Individuals diagnosed with pedophilia are also diagnosed with higher rates of personality disorders. Personality disorders are grouped into three separate clusters based on common characteristics:

- Cluster A personality disorders are marked by eccentric or odd behaviors, and include schizoid, paranoid, and schizotypal personality disorders.
- Cluster B disorders are characterized by erratic or dramatic behavior, and include antisocial, borderline, narcissistic, and histrionic personality disorders.
- Cluster C disorders are distinguished by fearful and anxious behavior, and include obsessive-compulsive, dependent, and avoidant personality disorders. Approximately 43 percent of pedophiles are diagnosed with cluster C personality disorders, 33 percent are diagnosed with cluster B personality disorders, and 18 percent are diagnosed with cluster A personality disorders (Cohen & Galyner, 2002).

Further understanding of diagnostic comorbidities and traits of these individuals is also key in recognizing propensity toward sexual offending and recidivism. Research has suggested the need for accurate diagnosis and intervention as it has been shown that almost 40 percent of child molesters who were later diagnosed with pedophilia had perpetrated against or molested a child by the time they were 15 years old (Abel & Harlow, 2001). In addition, recognition and diagnosis of pedophilia is critical since pedophilic child molesters, on average, commit ten times more sexual acts against youth than nonpedophilic offenders (Hall & Hall, 2004).

Rape

In the most general of terms, rape is forced or unwanted sexual intercourse. The varied definitions of rape hinder general classification of rape offenses nationwide. Despite this, it appears that the minimum rape criterion for most law enforcement agencies is vaginal penetration; although, half of the agencies require both force and penetration.

Overall, it appears that the United States has the highest occurrence of rapes in the world. According to the FBI reports (2005), in 2004, there were approximately 94,635 rapes in the United States that were classified as forcible. What is even more concerning is that these rates are likely underestimated due to issues with the definition of rape. In addition, this number could also be underestimated as many rapes go unreported due to the ordeal faced by victims when they report the offense to authorities.

The FBI's review of rapist characteristics suggests that demographically, rapists tend to be male and young with nearly half being under the age of 25 years old. They are usually people who have never been married as well as are unemployed. This group of individuals also tends to have a high rate of recidivism and a propensity toward substance abuse. Finally, it is noteworthy that most rapists are actually the victim's intimate partner (FBI, 2005). Furthermore, rapists tend to externalize the causes of their behavior, and at times, even blame the victim.

Be sure to review the assigned chapter readings to explore this topic more in depth in terms of rape classification, offender traits, victim traits, psychological effects on the victim, and underlying motivation toward commission of rape. In addition, review common rape myths detailed within this unit.

References

- Abel, G. G., & Harlow, N. (2001). *The stop child molestation book*. Bloomington, IN: Xlibris.
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- Cohen, L. J., & Galyekar, I. I. (2002). Clinical features of pedophilia and implications for treatment. *Journal of Psychiatric Practice*, 8(5), 276–289.
- Egan, V., Kavanagh, B., & Blair, M. (2005). Sexual offenders against children: The influence of personality and obsessionality on cognitive distortions. *Sexual Abuse: A Journal of Research and Treatment*, 17(3), 223–240.
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- Murray, J. B. (2000). Psychological profile of pedophiles and child molesters. *Journal of Psychology*, 134(2), 211–224.

Learning Activities

u07s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your *Criminal Behavior* text to complete the following:

- Read Chapter 12, "Sexual Assault," pages 349–374.
- Read Chapter 13, "Sexual Assault of Children and Youth," pages 375–405.

Use the Capella library to complete the following:

- Read Abbey and Jacques-Tiura's 2011 article, "[Sexual Assault Perpetrators' Tactics: Associations With Their Personal Characteristics and Aspects of the Incident](#)," from *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, volume 26, issue 14, pages 2866–2889.
- Read Ó Ciardha and Ward's 2013 article, "[Theories of Cognitive Distortions in Sexual Offending: What the Current Research Tells Us](#)," from *Trauma, Violence, & Abuse*, volume 14, issue 1, pages 5–21.
- Read da Silva, Woodhams, and Harkins's 2015 article, "[Multiple Perpetrator Rape: A Critical Review of Existing Explanatory Theories](#)," from *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, volume 25, pages 150–158.

Use the Internet to complete the following:

- Read the article "[Rape Myths and Facts](#)" from DomesticViolenceServices.com.
- Read the 2010 article, "[What Is the Influence of Pornography on Rape?](#)," from California Coalition Against Sexual Assault. You will use this article in this unit's discussion.

Optional – Readings

You may choose to read the following:

- Butler, A. C. (2013). Child sexual assault: Risk factors for girls. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 37(9), 643–652.
- Greenall, P. V. (2012). Understanding sexual homicide. *Journal of Sexual Aggression*, 18(3), 338–354.
- Miller, L. (2013). Sexual offenses against children: Patterns and motives. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 18(5), 506–519.
- Mouilso, E. R., & Calhoun, K. S. (2013). The role of rape myth acceptance and psychopathy in sexual assault perpetration. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 22(2), 159–174.
- Nunes, K. L., Hermann, C. A., & Ratcliffe, K. (2013). Implicit and explicit attitudes toward rape are associated with sexual aggression. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 28(13), 2657–2675.

u07a1 - Case Study of a Criminal Offender - Part 2

Competencies Addressed in This Assignment

This assignment addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 5:** Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

In this assignment, you will continue your examination of one of the following high-profile criminal cases (which you began in the second discussion in Unit 6):

- Susan Smith.
- Jeffrey Dahmer.
- Andrea Yates.

In this assignment, the focus moves to the fact that all three used the insanity defense. One of the key aspects of these criminal cases involves the inclusion of psychological evaluations or diagnoses used during the criminal justice process.

Also, in this assignment, you will apply the facts as you have learned them from various resources to reach your own conclusions about the verdicts of these trials.

Instruction

In your paper:

- Analyze how psychological assessments or evaluations were used in the criminal proceedings.
- Describe your reaction to the court verdict and if you agree or disagree with the final disposition. If you agree, make sure that you thoroughly defend that position. If you do not agree, include what you believe would be the appropriate verdict and use appropriate critical reasoning.
- Support your agreement or disagreement with examples from the offender's history, referring to course materials as well as a minimum of two external sources beyond the assigned articles. You may use journal articles, books, credible Web sites, and newspaper articles to support your explanation.

Be sure you review the Case Study of a Criminal Offender – Part 2 Scoring Guide to ensure that you have met all the criteria for this assignment.

Additional Requirements

Your paper should meet the following requirements:

- **Written communication:** Written communication is free of errors that detract from the overall message.
- **APA formatting:** Resources and citations are formatted according to current APA style and formatting standards.
- **References:** A minimum of three references.
- **Length of paper:** 4–6 typed, double-spaced pages.
- **Font and font size:** Times New Roman, 12 point.
- **SafeAssign:** Use the SafeAssign Draft option to check your writing and ensure that you have paraphrased, quoted, and cited your sources appropriately. Run a SafeAssign report, saving your paper as a draft. Based on your SafeAssign results, make any necessary changes to your paper before submitting your assignment.

Submit to the Unit 7 Assignment 1 link in Unit 7 for grading. Give proper attribution to sources with APA format.

Note: Your instructor may also use the Writing Feedback Tool to provide feedback on your writing. In the tool, click the linked resources for helpful writing information.

Course Resources

[APA Style and Format](#)

[Writing Feedback Tool](#)

u07d1 - Pornography and Rape

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

A long-standing question in the field of psychology concerns the relationship between exposure to sexually explicit material like pornography and criminal behavior.

Over the last 10 years, the access and exposure to sexually rich content via the Internet, television, movies, video games, and reading materials has grown exponentially. But the question that arises involves the impact on the psychological development of the person and the potential for increases in sexually deviant behaviors that might lead someone to commit sexually based offenses. One of the most significant controversies focuses on the impact that pornography has on an individual's propensity to commit rape.

There is a lot of psychological research addressing the personality characteristics of a sexual offender and there are multiple theories focusing on the impact of watching sexual content and if it results in sexual acting out behaviors. Is there a direct relationship between pornography and rape? Do sexually deviant individuals seek out sexual content and then act out? How about the non-sexual deviant who was not interested in or specifically seeking sexually explicit content, but was involuntarily exposed and then acted out in a sexually deviant way?

There is no significant correlational evidence that exposure to sexually explicit material results in sexual acting out, but we do see a correlation between people that did sexually act out with having previous exposure to sexual content.

For this discussion, read the article, "What Is the Influence of Pornography on Rape?" The article provides abstracts and links to two articles that reach opposite conclusions on the influence of pornography on rape. You may also find other resources to support your own conclusions.

Instructions

In your main post:

- Provide an argument for a correlation between pornography and rape.
- Provide an argument against a correlation between pornography and rape.
- State which position presented in the two articles is accurate in your opinion. Explain the evidence you see in the article that supports your determination on whether or not there is a correlation between pornography and rape.
- Articulate the advantages and disadvantages of the regulation of sexually explicit materials and whether regulation is necessary.

Support your ideas with scholarly resources.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 2: Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
 - Articulate the advantages and disadvantages of the regulation of sexually explicit materials and whether regulation is necessary.
- Competency 3: Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
 - Discuss arguments for and against a correlation between pornography and rape.
- Competency 4: Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
 - Explain evidence that supports your determination on whether or not there is a correlation between pornography and rape.
- Competency 6: Communicate effectively in a professional manner.
 - Support your ideas with scholarly resources.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

[What Is the Influence of Pornography on Rape?](#)

Unit 8 >> Substance Abuse

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

This unit addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 5:** Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

This unit addresses how substance abuse has a part in the commission of various crimes, but the challenge involves distinguishing if the use of substance is the crime, if being under the influence of substances contributed to the crime, or if substance abuse is a symptom of another psychological condition.

The assigned chapter readings will discuss how various types of drugs (stimulant, tranquilizer, and hallucinogens) impact enough of the physiology and the psychological functioning of the user, including:

- Reasoning.
- Executive functioning.
- Managing lowered inhibition.
- Managing increased impulsivity.
- Regulating heightened arousal.

White-Collar Crimes and Other Types of Crime

An early study by Collins and Schmidt (1993) sought to examine the validity of personality scales, biodata, and integrity tests, which found that there are in fact significant psychological differences between white-collar offenders and nonoffenders, with the most distinguishing difference found in the construct of social consciousness. Other research determined that the personality types—the disagreeable, the positive extrovert, and the neurotic—as having a distinct tendency toward commission of economic crime (Alalehto, 2003). More recent research has demonstrated that traits of agreeableness,

conscientiousness, and emotional stability were significantly and negatively correlated with unethical Internet behavior (Karim, Zamzuri, & Nor, 2008). Thus, we would wonder if these same traits are applicable to unethical behavior in other environments.

White-collar crime appears to be quite clearly a multifaceted problem. In the study of the offenders that commit white-collar offenses, we must consider a list of sundry factors, including society, organization traits, individual characteristics, culture, and motivation. Studying the factor of personality also remains a valuable facet deserving more focus in the literature in addition to these other variables.

Do differences in personality and other traits impact the propensity for individuals with the same education, opportunities, occupational title, and competence to commit economic crimes? While we have examined many facets of violent crime and offenders, nonviolent crime is also an area of interest and study within the field of psychology.

Pioneering criminologist Donald Sutherland was the first individual to identify and coin the term white-collar crime, which he initially described as crime committed by an individual of a high social status and respected through his or her occupational work (Sutherland, 1949). White-collar crime is currently defined as nonviolent crime committed for financial gain by means of deception (Blickle, Schlegel, Fassbender, & Klein, 2006). Sutherland's differential association theory ignored the impact of personality as a factor contributing to crime but offered an explanation that this nonviolent criminal behavior is learned through interactions and associations with others.

Recently, there has been more focus on white-collar crimes as more and more cases, publicized by the media, involving high-profile executives who were previously viewed as pillars of success, including Bernie Madoff, Martha Stewart, Ken Lay, and Bernard Ebbers, are being uncovered. As we examine these cases, there is opportunity to reconsider other factors, such as personality, which contribute to commission or tendency toward criminal behavior. This is a growing, and still limited, area of research with most studies examining the big five personality factors model.

References

- Aalehto, T. (2003). Economic crime: Does personality matter? *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 47(3), 335–355.
- Blickle, G., Schlegel, A., Fassbender, P., & Klein, U. (2006). Some personality correlates of business white-collar crime. *Applied Psychology*, 55(2), 220–233.
- Collins, J. M., & Schmidt, F. L. (1993). Personality, integrity, and white collar crime: A construct. *Personnel Psychology*, 46(2), 295–311.
- Karim, N. S. A., Zamzuri, N. H. A., & Nor, Y. M. (2008). Exploring the relationship between Internet ethics in university students and the big five model of personality. *Computers and Education*, 53(1), 86–93.
- Sutherland, E. H. (1949). *White collar crime*. New York, NY: Dryden Press.

Learning Activities

u08s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your *Criminal Behavior* text to read Chapter 16, "Substance Abuse," pages 473–506.

Use the Capella library to complete the following:

- Read Beardslee, Chien, and Bell's 2011 article, "[Prevention of Mental Disorders, Substance Abuse, and Problem Behaviors: A Developmental Perspective](#)," from *Psychiatric Services*, volume 62, issue 3, pages 247–254.
- Read Nordstrom and Dackis's 2011 article, "[Drugs and Crime](#)," from *The Journal of Psychiatry & Law*, volume 39, issue 4, pages 663–687.
- Read Van Dorn, Volavka, and Johnson's 2012 article, "[Mental Disorder and Violence: Is There a Relationship Beyond Substance Use?](#)," from *Social Psychiatry and Psychiatric Epidemiology*, volume 47, issue 3, pages 487–503. You will use this article in the first discussion in this unit.
- Read Vinkers, Beurs, Barendregt, Rinne, and Hoek's 2011 article, "[The Relationship Between Mental Disorders and Different Types of Crime](#)," from *Criminal Behaviour and Mental Health*, volume 21, issue 5, pages 307–320. You will use this article in the first discussion in this unit.

Discussion Prep

- Read the *News Journal's* 2018 editorial, "[Issue 1 Favors Addiction Treatment Over Jail Time](#)."
- Read Ackerman's 2014 article, "[Drug Court Judge 'Scary Mary' Whips Offenders Into Shape](#)" from *The Fix*.

These readings will form the basis for the second discussion in this unit.

Films on Demand Video

- Click [Disorders Due to Psychoactive Substance Abuse](#) to view a video purchased through Films Media Group for use in this Capella course. Any distribution of video content or associated links is prohibited.

Optional – Readings

You may choose to read the following:

- Liang, W., & Chikritzhs, T. (2015). Examining the relationship between heavy alcohol use and assaults: With adjustment for the effects of unmeasured confounders. *Biomed Research International*, 2015, 1–10.
- Walters, G. D. (2012). Substance abuse and criminal thinking: Testing the countervailing, mediation, and specificity hypotheses. *Law and Human Behavior*, 36(6), 506–512.

u08d1 - Personality Types and Type of Substance Abuse

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 5:** Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.

Introduction

As we study the relationships between psychology, personality, and criminal or deviant behavior, we want to always keep in mind that the *chicken-and-the-egg* debate is present when we try to determine if drugs caused a behavior or if the personality caused drug use. In the criminal justice process, the coexistence of crime and drugs is prevalent, but from the psychological perspective, we might see some consistent behaviors from certain personality types or even disorders.

An example might be the person with bipolar disorder, while in a manic state, displays impulsivity, sensation-seeking, and impaired judgment related to safety and even their own mortality. When we consider what type of substances this type of personality might seek or abuse, we might see some *understandable* choices like things that will help maintain their heightened state of arousal.

We have seen through this course that certain psychological or biological conditions are capable of being deemed the cause for criminal behavior, even resulting in competency or sanity concerns.

Substance abuse evaluations are one of the interesting dynamics in forensic psychology, because in most cases, the assessment takes place days, weeks, or even months after the crime.

For this discussion, you will use information from two of the articles in the studies for this unit—Van Dorn, Volavka, and Johnson's 2012 article, "Mental Disorder and Violence: Is There a Relationship Beyond Substance Use?," and Vinkers, Beurs, Barendregt, Rinne, and Hoek's 2011 article, "The Relationship Between Mental Disorders and Different Types of Crime."

Instructions

In your main post:

- Describe the relationship between personality types or personality disorders and a *drug of choice*. Does the research you found support that there is or is not a relationship between personality characteristics and a preferred drug of choice?
- Identify if there are legal implications, such as the types of charges, the legal precedent for the charges, and foundational case law, for these types of correlations.
- Discuss your perspective on the forensic assessment tool and whether it is useful for the criminal justice process.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 2: Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
 - Identify legal implications, such as the types of charges, the legal precedent for the charges, and foundational case law, for these types of correlations.
- Competency 4: Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
 - Describe the relationship between personality types or personality disorders and a *drug of choice*.
- Competency 5: Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.

- Discuss your perspective on the forensic assessment tool and whether it is useful for the criminal justice process.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

[Mental Disorder and Violence: Is There a Relationship Beyond Substance Use?](#)

[The Relationship Between Mental Disorders and Different Types of Crime](#)

u08d2 - Substance Abuse - Is It a Disease?

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.

Introduction

Research on drug addiction makes it plain it is a disease. At the same time, possession of the drugs is illegal and therefore a crime. As drug addictions rise and convictions for drug use and other drug-related crimes lead to prison overcrowding, what is the solution?

In preparation for this discussion, review the videos from this unit's studies and Chapter 16 of your course text. In this chapter, you will read about the tripartite conceptual model proposed by Paul Goldstein (1985). Goldstein identifies three main types of drug-related crime: (1) psychopharmacologically driven crime, (2) systemic crime, and (3) economically compulsive crime.

Instructions

In your main post:

- Provide two specific examples of the behaviors of criminals that may be associated with an offender's substance abuse.
- Identify each example as one of the tripartite conceptual model types of drug-related crimes.
- Explain whether the criminals in your examples should be sent to a regular court and be jailed or sent to drug court and receive treatment.

Support your decisions with professional and scholarly resources.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 1: Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
 - Identify each example as one of the tripartite conceptual model types of drug-related crimes.
- Competency 2: Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
 - Provide two specific examples of the behaviors of criminals that may be associated with an offender's substance abuse.
- Competency 3: Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
 - Explain whether the criminals in your examples should be sent to a regular court and be jailed or sent to drug court and receive treatment.
- Competency 4: Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
 - Support your decisions with professional and scholarly resources.

Reference

Goldstein, P. J. (1985). The drugs-violence nexus: A tri-partite conceptual framework. *Journal of Drug Issues*, 15, 493–450.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

[Disorders Due to Psychoactive Substance Abuse \[Video\]](#)

[Issue 1 Favors Addiction Treatment Over Jail Time](#)

[Drug Court Judge "Scary Mary" Whips Offenders Into Shape](#)

Unit 9 >> Property and Violent Economic Crime

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

This unit addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 5:** Explain mental health testing and standards applicable in criminal courts.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

This unit will look at property crimes as well as violent economic crimes. Property crimes are defined as theft crimes, such as burglary, shoplifting, and the stealing of automobiles, in which there is no threat of force to the victim. The government includes arson as a property crime. (In criminal justice, arson can also be categorized as a paraphilia, since there is destruction to property.)

Have you ever been the victim of a crime such as burglary or auto theft? There are over 10 million property crimes committed in the United States annually at an estimated cost of approximately 16 billion dollars. Property crime criminals also have the highest recidivism rates among offenders. Finally, nearly 20 percent of the property crimes are committed by individuals under the age of 18.

Property crime includes, among others, shoplifting, larceny, burglary, arson, and motor vehicle theft. You will learn about Sykes' concept of relative deprivation, which involves the psychological distance that people perceive between what they currently have and what they can realistically attain. You will examine cybercrime, such as cyber stalking and identity theft, as well as white-collar crimes including larceny, bribery, extortion, and fraud. You will also examine the motives behind these crimes, including the psychological motives as well as those related to material gain.

Violent economic crimes include robbery, car-jacking, hostage-taking offenses, and bombings. A relatively new category of crime is cybercrime. Cybercrime is defined as any illegal act that involves a computer. This includes illegal gambling on the Internet, use of stolen information from data files, hacking into computer systems, transmission of pornography, disruption of computer systems, copyright violations, and Internet fraud. Recent developments in cybercrime also include cyberstalking and cyberbullying. It is anticipated that these crimes will increase in nature and complexity as the use of the Internet becomes more common. Indeed, many social networks are attempting to identify sexual predators that may prey upon adolescents using the Internet for social networking. The anonymity of the Internet may reduce the usual social constraints against unwanted advances or threatening behavior. Individuals who may not normally engage in such behavior may be more prone to do so due to the lack of face-to-face confrontation. Very little is known in the area of cybercrime concerning such things as deterrence or the psychological consequences for victims.

Learning Activities

u09s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your *Criminal Behavior* text to complete the following:

- Read Chapter 14, "Property Crime," from pages 406–440.
- Read Chapter 15, "Violent Economic Crimes," 441–472.

Use the Capella library to complete the following:

- Read Brown's 2007 article, "[Money Aside, What Were They Thinking?](#)," from *The Washington Post*. You will use this article for the discussion in this unit.
- Read McNeeley and Wilcox's 2015 article, "[The Code of the Street and Violent Versus Property Crime Victimization](#)," from *Violence and Victims*, volume 30, issue 6, pages 1049–1067.
- Read De Gregorio's 2011 article, "[Dynamics of a Robbery: Criminological Aspects, Security Issues and Prevention – An Exploratory Study](#)," from *Police Practice & Research*, volume 12, issue 3, pages 253–264.
- Read Grubb's 2010 article, "[Modern Day Hostage \(Crisis\) Negotiation: The Evolution of an Art Form Within the Policing Arena](#)," from *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, volume 15, issue 5, pages 341–348.

Media

Click [Property and Violent Economic Crime](#) to view the media. You will use this media to complete this unit's assignment.

Optional – Readings

You may choose to read the following:

- Property crimes:
 - Cook, C. L., & Fox, K. A. (2011). Fear of property crime: Examining the effects of victimization, vicarious victimization, and perceived risk. *Violence and Victims*, 26(5), 684–700.
 - de Groot, J., Abrahamse, W., & Vincent, S. (2013). Thou shalt not steal: Effects of normative cues on attitudes towards theft. *Psychology*, 4(4), 438–444.
 - Sansone, R. A., Chang, J., Jewell, B., & Sellbom, M. (2011). Relationships among shoplifting, compulsive buying, and borderline personality symptomatology. *Innovations In Clinical Neuroscience*, 8(7), 10–11.
- Violent economic crimes:
 - Dolnik, A., & Pilch, R. (2003). The Moscow theater hostage crisis: The perpetrators, their tactics, and the Russian response. *International Negotiation*, 8(3), 577–611.
 - Frederick, T. J., McCarthy, B., & Hagan, J. (2013). Perceived danger and offending: Exploring the links between violent victimization and street crime. *Violence and Victims*, 28(1), 16–35.
 - Gordon, R. A., Rowe, H. L., Pardini, D., Loeber, R., White, H. R., & Farrington, D. P. (2014). Serious delinquency and gang participation: Combining and specializing in drug selling, theft, and violence. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 24(2), 235–251.
 - Phillips, E. M. (2011). Pain, suffering, and humiliation: The systemization of violence in kidnapping for ransom. *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, 20(8), 845–869.
 - Ray, L. (2014). Shame and the city – 'Looting', emotions and social structure. *Sociological Review Monograph*, 62(1), 117–136.
 - Topalli, V., Jacques, S., & Wright, R. (2015). "It takes skills to take a car": Perceptual and procedural expertise in carjacking. *Aggression and Violent Behavior*, 20, 19–25.

Competencies Addressed in This Assignment

This assignment addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction for Property and Violent Economic Crimes

Property crime is perhaps far more important than violent crime in the lives of most of us. Much property crime is also referred to as economic crime, because it is primarily carried out for the purpose of improving one's economic status. A very large majority of the general population is victimized in a variety of ways by such crime. If we are not victimized directly, then the prices of retail goods are certainly affected by shoplifting, cybercrime, and employee theft. Insurance rates are influenced by crimes such as auto theft and burglary. Corporate crime, a topic rarely addressed in the psychological literature, can threaten public health and safety, limit employment opportunities, and siphon public money away from human services and into corporate coffers.

We look at the psychological effects on victims, who may experience not only stress and fear but also a sense of a trust being violated. There are very few studies on the perpetrators of these crimes. However, psychological assessment experts have become involved in this area, noting that offenders try to communicate to both victims and police investigators. Personality assessment is simply not limited to the serial killer or rapist, but is potentially useful for solving burglaries, robberies, and arsons. One of the main psychological themes centers on the ways property or economic offenders minimize, neutralize, deny, and justify their actions to themselves and others. Perceived control of the environment is a secondary theme, and is characteristic of many economic offenders.

Violent economic crimes either involve violent acts or have the potential of doing great physical harm to the victims. Most robberies do not result in serious physical harm, but a robbery gone awry can end in death. The psychological damage to the victim, whether or not physical harm occurs, can be great. Research on robbery suggests it is quite different from what is typically portrayed in media accounts. Most bank robbers, for example, are amateurs, and their crimes are not well planned. Likewise, street robberies are rarely planned; the opportunity presents itself and the perpetrator strikes. Street robbers typically want money or goods and are not likely to harm if victims do not resist.

Instructions

For this assignment, do your work right in the Property and Violent Economic Crime media, reviewing resources provided there and writing your notes in the Notebook, which you will eventually print out in PDF format and submit as your assignment. Be sure to read the Deliverable Instructions below.

- Review the Property and Violent Economic Crime media.
- Use the resources available in the media. Feel free to find other resources outside the media that you find relevant.
- Record your answers to the following questions in the Notebook:
 - Why is it important to establish whether it is an instrumental or expressive situation before an intervention takes place? What psychological motivation is likely to be present for the expressive hostage taker?
 - How does the Stockholm syndrome differ from the London syndrome? Use two research articles as the foundation for your explanation and provide links to the articles.
 - How is the behavior of offenders influenced by societal factors, such as economic recession? Find and refer to a news article, providing a link, on a violent economic crime, such as bank robbery, theft, embezzlement, et cetera, and answer the question.

Be sure you review the Property and Violent Economic Crimes – Notebook Scoring Guide to ensure that you have met all the criteria for this assignment.

Deliverable Instructions

Explore and examine the resources available to you in the Property and Violent Economic Crime media.

- Use the Notebook to record the answers you find and the notes you take on the questions asked. You will be able to add, change, and edit your work in the Notebook.
- Print out the Notebook into a PDF file.
- Save it to your own files with your name, renaming the file to include your full name.
- Submit the file as your assignment.

Additional Requirements

Your paper should meet the following requirements:

- **Written communication:** Written communication is free of errors that detract from the overall message.

- **APA formatting:** Resources and citations are formatted according to current APA style and formatting standards.
- **References:** A minimum of three references.
- **Length of paper:** 1–2 Notebook pages for each question plus references.
- **SafeAssign:** Use the SafeAssign Draft option to check your writing and ensure that you have paraphrased, quoted, and cited your sources appropriately. Run a SafeAssign report, saving your paper as a draft. Based on your SafeAssign results, make any necessary changes to your paper before submitting your assignment.

Submit your PDF file for grading.

Course Resources

Property and Violent Economic Crime | Transcript

[APA Style and Format](#)

[SafeAssign](#)

u09d1 - What Were They Thinking?

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.

Introduction

In this unit, you will discuss economic crimes, and initially you may think of the criminal that *scams* people out of their money, but we see there are also crimes that the individual may do that also directly impacts his or her immediate family.

The essential characteristics of economic crime include:

- Deviant behavior that violates economic criminal law.
- Crime that is primarily not directed against individual interest, but against individual sectors of economy.
- Crime that causes physical, psychological, social, economic, and immaterial damage.
- Misuse of trust and power.

Some forms and examples of economic crime are:

- Disregard of employment protection.
- Unfair trading practices.
- Economic fraud.
- Unjustified commercialization of medical treatment.

The various forms of appearance of economic crimes include:

- Consumer credit fraud.
- Insolvency fraud.
- Computer crime.

Brown's 2007 article, "Money Aside, What Were They Thinking?," in this unit's studies introduces you to several economic offenders and some of the background of their crimes. As you read about economic crimes and the ripple effect these crimes have on the individual, the family, the community, and even the society, look for psychological patterns or similarities in their presentations.

Instructions

In your main post:

- Discuss whether being socially responsible is impractical if crime pays. Use a summary of the main premise of the article to support your answer.

- Analyze the motivation of the people highlighted in the article. Were their motivations any different from things we all see or face?
- Identify the most likely psychological personality for this type of crime. Describe characteristics of the chosen psychological personality. Are there enough consistent characteristics exhibited by offenders to develop a disorder category?

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 1: Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
 - Analyze the motivation of the people highlighted in the article.
- Competency 2: Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
 - Indicate if there a psychological personality for this type of crime.
 - Describe characteristics of the chosen psychological personality.
 - Assess the characteristics in terms of their applicability to a disorder category.
- Competency 3: Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
 - Discuss whether being socially responsible is impractical if crime pays.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

[Money Aside, What Were They Thinking?](#)

Unit 10 >> Terrorism

Introduction



Competencies Addressed in This Unit

This unit addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
- **Competency 6:** Communicate effectively in a professional manner.

Introduction

This unit examines the threat of domestic and international terrorism. You will also study the psychological assessments of terrorists and how they are processed in the criminal justice system, including the additional variables (cultural and religious) that may impact the manner and scope of how they are treated and tried by the legal system.

On April 19, 1995, the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building was bombed in downtown Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. The blast took 168 lives and injured 853 people. The deceased, including 19 children, ranged in age from 3 months to 73 years. Timothy McVeigh had parked a Ryder rental truck loaded with a 7000 pounds ammonium nitrate and diesel fuel (ANFO) bomb beneath the windows of the daycare center located on the second floor of the building. McVeigh had visited the daycare earlier on the morning of the bombing. When arrested, McVeigh was wearing a T-shirt with the slogan, "The tree of liberty must be refreshed time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants," a quote from Thomas Jefferson. Following his arrest and guilty plea, and sentence to death, McVeigh willfully waived all of his rights of appeal and requested he be executed as soon as possible. He was executed by lethal injection on June 11, 2001.

On September 11, 2001, two hijacked planes crashed into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, one into the south tower and one into the north tower, a third hijacked plane crashed into the Pentagon in Alexandria, Virginia, and a fourth plane crashed into a field in Stonycreek Township, Pennsylvania, after passengers attempted to retake control of the plane from the terrorists. The death toll reached 2,998, mostly civilians representing over 80 countries.

These two deadly terrorist attacks illustrate the complicated nature of terrorism. Many think of terrorism as an international threat from abroad. However, domestic terrorism has historically been more of a threat to the United States than international terror threats. The FBI estimates that approximately 75 percent of all terrorist acts in the United States between 1980 and 2000 were domestic acts of terrorism. Why do terrorists attack innocent civilians? What leads terrorists to sacrifice their own lives?

Psychology of Terrorism

The assigned chapter in this unit addresses the psychological context of terrorism and presents psychological typologies or assessments of terrorists. Understanding the motives of terrorists and their recruitment strategies assists law enforcement in apprehending terrorists and in disrupting the recruitment of individuals willing to kill innocent victims.

Multiple psychological explanations for terrorism have been considered, for example:

- Frustration-aggression hypothesis: This theory describes terrorist behavior as a response to frustrated attempts to affect change in social, political, or even personal goals.
- Narcissism-aggression or rage hypothesis: This theory describes terrorist behavior as a form of narcissistic rage, which means that the offender or group is using terrorism as an overreaction to being unable to get the power and control they feel they deserve.
 - It has been found in research there are two psychological characteristics that fit both narcissistic and terrorist individuals: externalization (individuals place the blame for problems outside of themselves) and splitting (a failure of the individual's self-concept to integrate the good and bad parts of themselves and who will then blame the bad things on an external enemy). It is important to note that neither of these characteristics affects intelligence.
- Mental illness: It would be easy to say that terrorists are mentally ill. How else can they resort to such violence for what seems like irrational reasons to us? However, there is no evidence or research to suggest that mental illness can be used as an explanation of their behavior. It may explain specific individuals' behavior such as Ted Kaczynski, but cannot be used in any generalizable form. Note that after his attorney attempted to use the insanity defense, Kaczynski rejected his attorneys' plea. A court-appointed psychiatrist diagnosed Kaczynski as suffering from paranoid schizophrenia, but declared him competent to stand trial.
 - However, most terrorists do not suffer from mental illness. Most terror acts are motivated by extremist beliefs, be they personal, religious, or political. Associating terror, terrorism, or terrorists to mental illness and psychopathy is to marginalize the reality and actuality relative to the causation for their acts.
- Personality disorders: Psychological research does indicate that many terrorists do show attributes of the antisocial personality disorder.
 - There are some differences in the psychopathic group versus the terrorist group, namely the identification with a group while most psychopaths will not have such connections. However, some highlights that both groups share are social alienation, hostility, arrogance, and a tendency to dehumanize others.

There are many other psychological explanations, and there is no doubt that more will come in the future in response to new events.

Learning Activities

u10s1 - Studies

Readings

Use your *Criminal Behavior* text to read Chapter 11, "Psychology of Terrorism," pages 326–347.

Use the Capella library to complete the following:

- Read Cottee and Hayward's 2011 article, "Terrorist (E)motives: The Existential Attractions of Terrorism," from *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, volume 34, issue 12, pages 963–986.
- Read Lankford's 2014 article, "Précis of the Myth of Martyrdom: What Really Drives Suicide Bombers, Rampage Shooters, and Other Self-Destructive Killers," from *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, volume 37, issue 4, pages 351–362.

- Read Post, McGinnis, and Moody's 2014 article, "[The Changing Face of Terrorism in the 21st Century: The Communications Revolution and the Virtual Community of Hatred](#)," from *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, volume 32, issue 3, pages 306–334.
- Read Meloy and Yakeley's 2014 article, "[The Violent True Believer As a 'Lone Wolf' – Psychoanalytic Perspectives on Terrorism](#)," from *Behavioral Sciences & the Law*, volume 32, issue 3, pages 347–365.
- Read Gibson's 2005 article, "[Oklahoma City: 10 Years Later: War on Homegrown Terrorism Proceeding With Quiet Urgency: The Focus Is on Foreigners, but Experts Say the Domestic Threat Is Still Strong](#)," from *The Sun*.

Use the Internet to complete the following:

- Access Altemeyer's 2006 article, "[The Authoritarians](#)." Take the survey that starts on page 10 of this article. You will use your experience with this survey in the first discussion in this unit.
- Read Smith's article, "[A Look at Terrorist Behavior: How They Prepare, Where They Strike](#)," from National Institute of Justice.
- Read Garamone's 2016 article, "[9/11 Drove Change in Intelligence Community, NSA Chief Says](#)," from *DOD News*.
- Browse [Bureau of Counterterrorism](#) from U.S. Department of State.
- Browse [National Counterterrorism Center](#).
- Read the 2012 fact sheet, "[Terrorism Designations FAQs](#)," from U.S. Department of State.
- Explore "[Terrorist Groups](#)" from *Counter Terrorism Guide*.
- Explore "[Terrorism History](#)" from *Counter Terrorism Guide*.

Optional – Readings

You may choose to read the following:

- Donahue, T. J. (2013). Terrorism, moral conceptions, and moral innocence. *Philosophical Forum*, 44(4), 413–435.
- Fink, B., & Trivers, R. (2014). Cognitive simplicity and self-deception are crucial in martyrdom and suicide terrorism. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 37(4), 366–367.
- Lyre, R. B., Eid, J., Larsson, G., & Ranstorp, M. (2011). Terrorism as a process: A critical review of Moghaddam's 'staircase to terrorism'. *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, 52(6), 609–616.
- Moskalenko, S., & McCauley, C. (2011). The psychology of lone-wolf terrorism. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 24(2), 115–126.
- Simi, P., Bubolz, B. F., & Hardman, A. (2013). Military experience, identity discrepancies, and far right terrorism: An exploratory analysis. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 36(8), 654–671.
- Thomsen, L., Obaidi, M., Sheehy-Skeffington, J., Kteily, N., & Sidanius, J. (2014). Individual differences in relational motives interact with the political context to produce terrorism and terrorism-support. *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 37(4), 377–378.

u10d1 - Terroristic Behavior

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.

Introduction

The phrase right wing in right-wing authoritarianism does not necessarily refer to someone's politics, but to psychological preferences and personality. It means that the person tends to follow the established conventions and authorities in society. In theory, the authorities could have either right-wing or left-wing political views.

The terminology of authoritarianism, right-wing authoritarianism, and authoritarian personality tend to be used interchangeably by psychologists, though inclusion of the term *personality* may indicate a psychodynamic interpretation consistent with the original formulation of the theory.

Right-wing authoritarianism is defined by three attitudinal and behavioral clusters which correlate together:

- Authoritarian submission: A high degree of submissiveness to the authorities who are perceived to be established and legitimate in the society in which one lives.
- Authoritarian aggression: A general aggressiveness directed against deviants, outgroups, and other people that are perceived to be targets according to established authorities.
- Conventionalism: A high degree of adherence to the traditions and social norms that are perceived to be endorsed by society and its established authorities, and a belief that others in one's society should also be required to adhere to these norms.

Instructions

In your main post:

- Discuss whether you would consider the type of information gathered from using the Altemeyer authoritarian test (Altemeyer, 2006) useful in determining motivations of terrorists, considering what you have learned about terroristic behavior from the assigned unit readings.
- Provide justification for your viewpoint, using assigned readings or other professional and scholarly resources you find.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 1: Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
 - Discuss whether the type of information gathered from using the Altemeyer authoritarian test is useful in determining motivations of terrorists.
- Competency 4: Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
 - Provide justification for your viewpoint, using assigned readings or other professional and scholarly resources.

Reference

Altemeyer, B. (2006). The authoritarians. Retrieved from <http://theauthoritarians.org/Downloads/TheAuthoritarians.pdf>

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

[The Authoritarians](#)

u10d2 - Criminal Behavior As Terrorist Actions

Competencies Addressed in This Discussion

This discussion addresses the following competencies:

- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
- **Competency 4:** Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.

Introduction

In this discussion, you will explore motivations behind a person's decision to utilize terror as a weapon. You will discuss the criminal nature of mass violence incidents that have occurred within the United States and the related terror these incidents created and how our criminal and civil legal systems process these type of cases. Many of these motivations or intents can be categorized into four sub-types—left-wing, right-wing, single issue, and international. The intent of these behaviors is when the psychologist focuses on the *why* factors to increase our understanding of what type of variables may contribute or increase probability of these crimes.

Some examples of self-initiated extremist offenders who have committed these acts resulting in terror are Ted Kaczynski, Christopher Dormer, Timothy McVeigh, Erik Harris, Seung-Hui Cho, Charles Whitman, and the Tsarnaev brothers, among many others.

When responding to these types of incidents the criminal justice system is more focused initially on the threat assessment aspect of the crime having been committed and less interest in what lead up to the crime. However, once the injured have been attended to and the scene rendered safe, the law enforcement function of evidence collection, locating witnesses, and following up on leads that lead back to the causation of the crime are fulfilled.

Here, we reflect on both a comprehensive picture of the offender and the role they viewed their victims as playing in their act and how the victims view themselves as targets of such acts. The National Institute of Justice has conducted studies to determine patterns for each group and characteristics that

overlap between the categories. One of the resources for this discussion is an article that sums up the studies—"A Look at Terrorist Behavior: How They Prepare, Where They Strike" from National Institute of Justice. Just keep in mind the differences between established terror organizations and their use of terror and individuals who create an environment of terror as a direct result of incidences of mass violence that they create.

Other resources for this discussion are the Bureau of Counterterrorism and the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). This type of research will often answer your socioeconomic questions relative to an individual's participation or motivation to participate in these extremist organizations. The left navigation bar on Bureau of Counterterrorism Web site leads to many interesting items that you may want to use for this discussion.

Choose a terrorist organization as the basis for your discussion. You may choose any terrorist organization but be assured that you will find plenty of information by searching the U.S. Department of State Web site for any of these:

- Al-Qaeda.
- Boko Haram.
- ISIL (Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant).
- ISIS (Islamic State in Iraq and Syria or Islamic State of Iraq and al-Sham).
- The Haqqani Network.

Instructions

In your main post:

- Identify your chosen organization.
- Provide a description of who you think a typical member terrorist may be with regard to gender, race, age, and socioeconomic status. Check out the profiles you will see on the NCTC site for specific details on known terrorists.
- Describe the use of forensic assessment information, penalties, burden of proof, and key players when a terrorist is recognized as a criminal in our legal system. For insight on this issue, you might want to search this question, "What happens to terrorists in our legal system?"
- Explain your ideas on the causes of this criminal behavior using the unit readings. Justify your answers by integrating at least two different psychological theories into your explanation.

Support your work with professional and scholarly resources.

Discussion Objectives

The competencies addressed in this discussion are supported by discussion objectives, as follows:

- Competency 2: Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
 - Describe the use of forensic assessment information, penalties, burden of proof, and key players when a terrorist is recognized as a criminal in our legal system.
- Competency 3: Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.
 - Provide a description of who you think a typical member terrorist may be with regard to gender, race, age, and socioeconomic status.
 - Explain your ideas on the causes of terroristic criminal behavior, including at least two psychological theories.
- Competency 4: Apply scholarly research findings to topics in criminal psychology.
 - Support your work with professional and scholarly resources.

Response Guidelines

After completing your main post, respond to at least two other learners' posts during the discussion week. Please note that to earn full credit for your discussion, you must participate on two separate days and make a minimum of one post on each of those two days. Comment on themes raised in the posts and pose questions to move the discussion forward.

Course Resources

Psychology Undergraduate Discussion Scoring Guide

[A Look at Terrorist Behavior: How They Prepare, Where They Strike](#)

[Bureau of Counterterrorism](#)

[National Counterterrorism Center](#)

[Terrorism Designations FAQs](#)

[Terrorism History](#)

u10q1 - Quiz 3

This multiple-choice quiz will gauge your understanding of the material presented in the Units 6–10. The quiz provides an opportunity for you to demonstrate your mastery of the following course competencies:

- **Competency 1:** Apply theoretical perspectives to motives for criminal behavior.
- **Competency 2:** Analyze the relationship between criminal psychology and criminal law.
- **Competency 3:** Analyze the relationship between society and criminal behavior.

Read the following instructions and parameters before taking the quiz:

- There is no time limit to complete the quiz.
- You must take and submit the quiz in this unit.
- You can access the quiz to preview the questions.
- As you answer the questions, be sure they are saved as you go. You will be able to submit the quiz only once. Once you have saved your answers and are ready to finish, click **Save and Submit**.
- There are 100 total points possible. Each question is worth 5 points. Each quiz in the course is worth 5 percent of your total grade. There are three quizzes accounting for 15 percent of your grade.
- Click **Save and Submit** on your quiz to receive credit. The quiz is scored automatically, and your score and the correct answers will be accessible to you after the quiz is completed and recorded. To review the correct answers, go to My Grades and click on the title of the quiz and then click on your score.

Click the linked quiz title to access the quiz. If you have any issues with the quiz, contact your instructor.