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CRIMINOLOGY

The Core

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*This book is dedicated to my children,
Julie, Andrew, and Eric Siegel and
Rachel Macy, to my wife, Therese J.
Libby, and to my new son-in-law, Jason
Macy, aka "Mace Danger"*

Preface

Michael McDermott walked into his place of employment, an Internet consulting company in suburban Wakefield, Massachusetts, on December 26, 2000, and shot and killed seven of his coworkers. As is typical of such cases, investigators learned that McDermott was a troubled man who had been hospitalized at least three times for severe depression. Yet, despite this history of instability, he was able to obtain and keep a state firearms identification card and legally buy at stores in Massachusetts at least three of the four guns he used. He was able to buy the guns despite the fact that state law prohibits people who have been involuntarily confined to a mental institution from obtaining a license to buy any type of firearm and federal law prohibits them from buying a handgun. His parents have said Mr. McDermott was still under the care of a psychiatrist and taking antidepressant medication at the time of the shooting. Should people such as McDermott be prohibited from owning guns? Or does this restrict the right to bear arms?

Events such as the Wakefield shootings remind us of the great impact crime, law, and justice have on the American psyche. The media seem incapable of ever losing interest in notorious killers, serial murderers, drug lords, and sex criminals. It is not surprising, then, that many Americans are more concerned about crime than almost any other social problem. Most of us are worried about becoming the victims of violent crime, having our houses broken into or our cars stolen. We alter our behaviors to limit the risk of victimization and question whether legal punishment alone can control criminal offenders. We watch movies about law firms, clients, fugitives, and stone-cold killers. We are shocked at graphic accounts of drive-by shootings, police brutality, and prison riots.

I, too, have had a life-long interest in crime, law, and justice. Why do people behave the way they do? What causes one person to become violent and anti-social, while another channels his or her energy into work, school, and family? Why are some adolescents able to resist the “temptation of the streets” and become law-abiding citizens, while others join gangs and enter a criminal career? Conversely, what accounts for the behavior of the multimillionaire who cheats on his or her taxes or engages in fraudulent schemes? The former has nothing yet is able to resist crime; the latter has everything and falls prey to crime’s lure.

I have been able to channel this interest into a career as a teacher of criminology. My goal in writing this text is to help students generate the same interest in criminology that has sustained me during my thirty years in college teaching. What could be more important or fascinating than a field of study that deals with such wide-ranging topics as the motivation for mass murder, the effects of violent media on young people, drug abuse, and organized crime? Criminology is a dynamic field, changing constantly with the release of major research studies, Supreme Court rulings, and governmental policy. Its dynamism and diversity make it an important and engrossing area of study.

One reason that the study of criminology is so important is that debates continue over the nature and extent of crime and the causes and prevention of criminality. Some view criminals as society’s victims who are forced to violate the law because of poverty and the lack of opportunity. Others view aggressive, antisocial behavior as a product of mental and physical abnormalities, present at birth or soon after, which are stable over the life course. Still another view is that crime is a function of the rational choice of greedy, selfish people who can only be deterred though the threat of harsh punishments.

Because interest in crime and justice is so great and so timely, this text is designed to review these ongoing issues and cover the field of criminology in an organized and comprehensive manner. It is meant as a broad overview of the field, designed to whet the reader’s appetite and encourage further and more in-depth exploration.

Goals and Objectives

Criminology: The Core has been carefully structured to cover relevant material in a comprehensive, balanced, and objective fashion. Every attempt has been made to make the presentation of material interesting and contemporary. No single political or theoretical position dominates the text; instead, the many diverse views that are contained within criminology and characterize its interdisciplinary nature are presented. While the text includes analysis of the most important scholarly works and scientific research reports, it also includes a great deal of topical information on recent cases and events, such as the brutal dragging death of James Byrd by white supremacists in Jasper, Texas, as well as the case of Thomas Junta, a 42-year-old truck driver who on July 5, 2000, beat his son's hockey coach to death after they had a disagreement about the coach's ability to control the game.

My primary goals in writing this text are as follows:

1. To provide students with a thorough knowledge of criminology in a brief format
2. To be as thorough and up to date as possible
3. To be objective and unbiased
4. To describe current theories, crime types, and methods of social control, and analyze their strengths and weaknesses

Topic Areas

Criminology: The Core is a concise yet thorough introduction to this fascinating field. It is divided into four main sections or topic areas.

Part 1 provides a framework for studying criminology. The first chapter defines the field and discusses its most basic concepts: the definition of crime, the component areas of criminology, the history of criminology, criminological research methods, the concept of criminal law, and the ethical issues that confront the field. Chapter 2 covers the nature, extent, and patterns of crime. Chapter 3 is devoted to the concept of victimization, including the nature of victims, theories of victimization, and programs designed to help crime victims.

Part 2 contains six chapters that cover criminological theory: Why do people behave the way they do? These views include choice (Chapter 4), biology and psychology (Chapter 5), structure and culture (Chapter 6), social process and socialization (Chapter 7), social conflict (Chapter 8), and latent trait and human development (Chapter 9).

Part 3 is devoted to the major forms of criminal behavior. The chapters in this section cover violent crime (Chapter 10), common theft offenses (Chapter 11), white-collar and organized crimes (Chapter 12), and public order crimes, including sex offenses and substance abuse (Chapter 13).

Part 4 contains a single chapter that describes the criminal justice system (Chapter 14). This chapter provides an overview of the entire justice system, including the process of justice, the major organizations that make up the justice system, and concepts and perspectives of justice.

Key Features

This text contains a full array of pedagogical features and boxes (accompanied by critical thinking questions and links to *InfoTrac College Edition*) that help students analyze material in greater depth.

- **The Criminological Enterprise** reviews important issues in criminology. For example, in Chapter 2, a box titled "Explaining Crime Trends" discusses the social and political factors that cause crime rates to rise and fall.

- **Policy and Practice in Criminology** shows how criminological ideas and research can be put into action. For example, in Chapter 8, the box titled “Restorative Justice in the Community” discusses how humanistic measures are now being used to reduce criminality.
- **Race, Culture, Gender, and Criminology** examines diversity issues. In Chapter 14, for example, there is an in-depth discussion on how race influences sentencing in criminal courts.
- **Connections** help link the material to other areas covered in the book. For example, a Connections box in Chapter 11 shows how efforts to control theft offenses are linked to the choice theory of crime discussed in Chapter 4.
- **Checkpoints** are concept summaries appearing at strategic points throughout each chapter that continually reinforce learning.
- **Find It on InfoTrac College Edition** gives students added experience using the Internet and doing Web-based research.
- A **running glossary** in the margins ensures that students understand words and concepts as they are introduced.
- **Thinking Like a Criminologist**, at the end of each chapter, presents a challenging question or issue that students must use their criminological knowledge to answer or confront. Applying the information learned in the text will help students begin to “think like criminologists.”

Supplements

A number of supplements are provided by Wadsworth to help instructors use *Criminology: The Core* in their courses and to aid students in preparing for exams. These include:

- Instructor’s Manual** The manual includes lecture outlines, discussion topics, student activities, Internet connections, media resources, and testing suggestions that will help time-pressed teachers more effectively communicate with their students and also strengthen the coverage of course material. Each chapter has multiple-choice and true/false test items, as well as sample essay questions.
- Student Study Guide** An extensive student study guide has been developed for this edition. Because students learn in different ways, a variety of pedagogical aids are included in the guide to help them. Each chapter is outlined, major terms are defined, and summaries and sample tests are provided.
- Criminology 2002:
A Microsoft® PowerPoint®
Presentation Tool** This one-stop presentation tool—designed to make it easy to assemble, edit, publish, and present custom lectures for your course—features hundreds of slides from the textbook.
- Criminology Transparency
Acetates** To help bring key concepts of the text to the classroom, 50 full-color transparency masters for overhead projection are available in our Criminology transparency package. These transparencies help instructors to fully discuss concepts and research findings with students.

ExamView® This computerized testing software helps instructors create and customize exams in minutes. Instructors can easily edit and import their own questions and graphics, change test layouts, and reorganize questions. This software also offers the ability to test and grade online. It is available for both Windows and Macintosh.

Web Tutor™ on WebCT and Blackboard

Designed specifically for *Criminology: The Core*, Web Tutor is an online resource that gives both instructors and students a virtual environment that is rich with study and communication tools. For instructors, Web Tutor can provide virtual office hours, post syllabi, set up threaded discussions, and track student progress. Web Tutor can also be customized in a variety of ways, such as uploading images and other resources and adding Web links to create customized practice materials. For students, Web Tutor offers real-time access to many study aids, including flash cards, practice quizzes, online tutorials, and Web links.

Web Site for *Criminology: The Core*

This text-specific Web site, located at <http://cj.wadsworth.com>, offers a variety of online resources for students and instructors. Students can enhance their learning experience with book-specific and chapter-based resources. Web links, periodicals, and InfoTrac College Edition offer valuable and reliable sources for researching specific topics. Projects and quizzing activities provide immediate feedback and can be emailed to instructors. Online homework assignments integrate Web site research with textbook activities. Student study tips provide a well-developed guide to encourage student success. Instructor downloads and Web links for professionals offer an array of resources for curriculum development.

CNN Today Videos: Criminology, Vol. I, Criminology, Vol. II, Criminology, Vol. III, Criminology, Vol. IV

Exclusively from Wadsworth/Thomson Learning, the *CNN Today Video Series* offers compelling videos that feature current news footage from the Cable News Network's comprehensive archives. Criminology Volumes I through IV each provide a collection of two- to eight-minute clips on hot topics in criminology such as children who murder, the insanity defense, hate crimes, cyber terrorism, and much more. Available to qualified adopters, these videotapes are great lecture launchers as well as classroom discussion pieces.

The Wadsworth Criminal Justice Video Library

The Wadsworth Criminal Justice Video Library offers an exciting collection of videos to enrich lectures. Qualified adopters may select from a wide variety of professionally prepared videos covering various aspects of policing, corrections, and other areas of the criminal justice system. The selections include videos from *Films for the Humanities & Sciences*, *Court TV* videos that feature provocative one-hour court cases to illustrate seminal and high-profile cases in depth, *A&E American Justice Series* videos, *National Institute of Justice: Crime File* videos, *ABC News* videos, and *MPI Home Videos*.

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Students receive four months of real-time access to InfoTrac College Edition's online database of continuously updated, full-length articles from hundreds of journals and periodicals. By doing a simple keyword search, users can quickly generate a list of related articles, then select relevant articles to explore and print out for reference or further study.

**Crime Scenes: An
Interactive Criminal
Justice CD-ROM**

This highly visual and interactive program casts students as the decision makers in various roles as they explore all aspects of the criminal justice system. Exciting videos and supporting documents put students in the midst of a juvenile murder trial, a prostitution case that turns into manslaughter, and several other scenarios. This product received the gold medal in higher education and silver medal for video interface from *NewMedia Magazine's Invision Awards*.

Mind of a Killer CD-ROM

Based on Eric Hickey's book *Serial Murderers and Their Victims*, this award-winning CD-ROM offers viewers a look at the psyches of the world's most notorious killers. Students can view confessions of and interviews with serial killers, and they can examine famous cases through original video documentaries and news footage. Included are 3-D profiling simulations, which are extensive mapping systems that seek to find out what motivates these killers.

**Careers in Criminal
Justice Interactive CD-ROM**

This engaging self-exploration CD-ROM provides an interactive discovery of the wide range of careers in criminal justice. The self-assessment helps steer students to suitable careers based on their personal profile. Students can gather information on various careers from the job descriptions, salaries, employment requirements, sample tests, and video profiles of criminal justice professionals presented on this valuable tool.

**Seeking Employment in
Criminal Justice and
Related Fields**

Written by J. Scott Harr and Kären Hess, this practical book, now in its Third Edition, helps students develop a search strategy to find employment in criminal justice and related fields. Each chapter includes "insiders' views," written by individuals in the field and addressing promotions and career planning.

**Guide to Careers in
Criminal Justice**

This concise 60-page booklet provides a brief introduction to the exciting and diverse field of criminal justice. Students can learn about opportunities in law enforcement, courts, and corrections and how they can go about getting these jobs.

**Criminal Justice Internet
Investigator III**

This handy brochure lists the most useful criminal justice links on the World Wide Web. It includes the most popular criminal justice and criminology sites featuring online newsletters, grants and funding information, statistics, and more.

**Internet Guide for
Criminal Justice**

Developed by Daniel Kurland and Christina Polsenberg, this easy reference text helps newcomers as well as experienced Web surfers use the Internet for criminal justice research.

**Internet Activities for
Criminal Justice**

This 60-page booklet shows how to best utilize the Internet for research via searches and activities.

**Criminology:
An Introduction
Using MicroCase ExplorIt,
Fourth Edition**

This book features real data to help students examine major criminological theories such as social disorganization, deviant associations, and others. It has 12 one-hour exercises and five independent projects in all, covering dozens of topic areas and offering an exciting view of criminological research.

Acknowledgments

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Larry Siegel
Bedford, New Hampshire

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