

SEVENTH EDITION



# Research Methods

FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND CRIMINOLOGY

Michael G. Maxfield Earl R. Babbie

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# Research Methods for CRIMINAL JUSTICE and CRIMINOLOGY

SEVENTH EDITION

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***Research Methods for Criminal Justice  
and Criminology, Seventh Edition***  
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Probability

df	.99	.98	.95	.90	.80	.70	.50
1	.03157	.03628	.00393	.0158	.0642	.148	.455
2	.0201	.0404	.103	.211	.446	.713	1.386
3	.115	.185	.352	.584	1.005	1.424	2.366
4	.297	.429	.711	1.064	1.649	2.195	3.357
5	.554	.752	1.145	1.610	2.343	3.000	4.351
6	.872	1.134	1.635	2.204	3.070	3.828	5.348
7	1.239	1.564	2.167	2.833	3.822	4.671	6.346
8	1.646	2.032	2.733	3.490	4.594	5.528	7.344
9	2.088	2.532	3.325	4.168	5.380	6.393	8.343
10	2.558	3.059	3.940	4.865	6.179	7.267	9.342
11	3.053	3.609	4.575	5.578	6.989	8.148	10.341
12	3.571	4.178	5.226	6.304	7.807	9.034	11.340
13	4.107	4.765	5.892	7.042	8.634	9.926	12.340
14	4.660	5.368	6.571	7.790	9.467	10.821	13.339
15	5.229	5.985	7.261	8.547	10.307	11.721	14.339
16	5.812	6.614	7.962	9.312	11.152	12.624	15.338
17	6.408	7.255	8.672	10.085	12.002	13.531	16.338
18	7.015	7.906	9.390	10.865	12.857	14.440	17.338
19	7.633	8.567	10.117	11.651	13.716	15.352	18.338
20	8.260	9.237	10.851	12.443	14.578	16.266	19.337
21	8.897	9.915	11.591	13.240	15.445	17.182	20.337
22	9.542	10.600	12.338	14.041	16.314	18.101	21.337
23	10.196	11.293	13.091	14.848	17.187	19.021	22.337
24	10.856	11.992	13.848	15.659	18.062	19.943	23.337
25	11.524	12.697	14.611	16.473	18.940	20.867	24.337
26	12.198	13.409	15.379	17.292	19.820	21.792	25.336
27	12.879	14.125	16.151	18.114	20.703	22.719	26.336
28	13.565	14.847	16.928	18.939	21.588	23.647	27.336
29	14.256	15.574	17.708	19.768	22.475	24.577	28.336
30	14.953	16.306	18.493	20.599	23.364	25.508	29.336

For larger values of df, the expression  $\chi^2 = 2z^2 - 2df - 1$  may be used as a normal deviate with unit variance, remembering that the probability of  $\chi^2$  corresponds with that of a single tail of the normal curve.

Probability							
df	.30	.20	.10	.05	.02	.01	.001
1	1.074	1.642	2.706	3.841	5.412	6.635	10.827
2	2.408	3.219	4.605	5.991	7.824	9.210	13.815
3	3.665	4.642	6.251	7.815	9.837	11.341	16.268
4	4.878	5.989	7.779	9.488	11.668	13.277	18.465
5	6.064	7.289	9.236	11.070	13.388	15.086	20.517
6	7.231	8.558	10.645	12.592	15.033	16.812	22.457
7	8.383	9.803	12.017	14.067	16.622	18.475	24.322
8	9.524	11.030	13.362	15.507	18.168	20.090	29.125
9	10.656	12.242	14.684	16.919	19.679	21.666	27.877
10	11.781	13.442	15.987	18.307	21.161	23.209	29.588
11	12.899	14.631	17.275	19.675	22.618	24.725	31.264
12	14.011	15.812	18.549	21.026	24.054	26.217	32.909
13	15.119	16.985	19.812	22.362	25.472	27.688	34.528
14	16.222	18.151	21.064	23.685	26.873	29.141	36.123
15	17.322	19.311	22.307	24.996	28.259	30.578	37.697
16	18.441	20.465	23.542	26.296	29.633	32.000	39.252
17	19.551	21.615	24.769	27.587	30.995	33.409	40.790
18	20.601	22.760	25.989	28.869	32.346	34.805	42.312
19	21.689	23.900	27.204	30.144	33.687	36.191	43.820
20	22.775	25.038	28.412	31.410	35.020	37.566	45.315
21	23.858	26.171	29.615	32.671	36.343	38.932	46.797
22	24.939	27.301	30.813	33.924	37.659	40.289	48.268
23	26.018	28.429	32.007	35.172	38.968	41.638	49.728
24	27.096	29.553	33.196	36.415	40.270	42.980	51.179
25	28.172	30.675	34.382	37.652	41.566	44.314	52.620
26	29.246	31.795	35.563	38.885	42.856	45.642	54.052
27	30.319	32.912	36.741	40.113	44.140	46.963	55.476
28	31.391	34.027	37.916	41.337	45.419	48.278	56.893
29	32.461	35.139	39.087	42.557	46.693	49.588	58.302
30	33.530	36.250	40.256	43.773	47.962	50.892	59.703

Source: We are grateful to the Literary Executor of the late Sir Ronald A. Fisher, F.R.S., to Dr. Frank Yates, F.R.S., and to Longman Group Ltd., London, for permission to reprint Table IV from their book Statistical Tables for Biological, Agricultural, and Medical Research (6th Edition, 1974).

# Dedication

To Max Jacob Fauth and Laine Ellen Fauth  
To Suzanne Babbie

One of my<sup>1</sup> most oddly rewarding teaching experiences took place not in the classroom but on the streets of downtown Indianapolis. On my way to a meeting with staff from the Indiana Department of Correction, I recognized a student from the previous semester's research methods class. Ryan was seated on a shaded bench, clipboard in hand, watching pedestrians make their way down the sidewalk. After we had exchanged greetings, I learned that Ryan had landed a summer internship with the city's planning department and was currently at work conducting a study of pedestrian traffic.

"Ha!" I exclaimed, recalling student complaints about how research methods are not relevant (what I have since referred to as "Ryan's lament"). "And you whined about how you were never going to use the stuff we talked about in class." Ryan responded that the systematic study of pedestrians was interesting, and he admitted that some course topics did, in fact, relate to his work as an intern. He also said something about not really knowing what actual research involved until he began his current project. Ryan remained attentive to people passing by while we chatted for a few minutes. I was pleased to see that he was a careful observer, applying some of the skills he had learned in my course only a few weeks after the semester's end.

Later, thinking more about the encounter, I recognized the need to change my approach to teaching the course. Ryan clearly enjoyed his experience in doing research, but had not recognized how much fun research could be until leaving the classroom. As a result, I restructured the course to involve students more actively in the research process. I resolved to be more diligent in linking fundamental concepts of research methods to a broad spectrum of examples, and to show students how they, like Ryan, could apply systematic inquiry and observation techniques to a wide variety of situations in criminal justice and other policy areas.

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<sup>1</sup>In this Preface, the first-person singular refers to Michael Maxfield, while the first-person plural refers to Michael Maxfield and Earl Babbie.

## Goals and Objectives

Criminal justice has always been a fascinating topic for students, partly because it is the stuff of news stories, fiction, and much popular entertainment. Criminal justice research goes behind and beyond the headlines to address important questions of *who*, *what*, *why*, and *how*. *Who* is involved as offender, victim, and justice professional? *What* is the nature and frequency of different kinds of crime and disorder problems? *What* new problems are emerging? *Why* are incidents happening in particular places? *Why* are offenders involved in particular patterns of behavior? *How* are different kinds of offenses committed? *How* should justice agencies prevent and respond to problems of crime and safety?

Our primary goal in writing this edition is unchanged: to help students learn how to conduct research to answer these and related questions. Toward that end, certain principles have guided our revision of each edition of this text. Our intent is to:

- provide a careful description of the varied options for doing research in criminal justice.
- clarify and demystify what is traditionally a challenging subject for students at all levels.
- illustrate research methods with examples that are informative and interesting.
- incorporate new approaches that reflect methodological developments in the field.
- emphasize the application of criminal justice research to real-world problems and justice policy examples.
- bridge the gap between authors, instructors, and students by drawing on examples of our own research, especially that conducted with student colleagues.

When I began collaborating with Earl Babbie to produce this textbook, I joined a colleague whose writing embodied my efforts to engage students in the learning process. Earl's classic text, *The Practice of Social Research*, has always been an enviable model of clarity—generating student interest while presenting a rigorous treatment of social science research methods. We have sought to convey



something of the excitement of doing research that Ryan discovered as he observed pedestrians in downtown Indianapolis.

## Organization of the Text

The seventh edition of *Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology* has 14 chapters:

- Chapter 1, “Crime, Criminal Justice, and Scientific Inquiry,” introduces research methods. Material in this chapter describes how social scientific inquiry differs from other ways of learning things. This chapter also advises students on how to select research topics, conduct a literature review, and write a research proposal.
- Chapter 2, “Foundations of Criminal Justice Research,” summarizes principles of social science research and examines different general approaches to research. This chapter also describes the important role of theory in all research. We dispel myths about theory by describing it as a logical guide to scientific inquiry. Examples illustrate how theory drives applied and basic research.
- Chapter 3, “Ethics and Criminal Justice Research,” examines how research has the potential to harm subjects and the obligations of researchers to minimize the risk of such harm. Examples illustrate the range of ethical issues in justice research and steps researchers take to address them.
- Chapter 4, “General Issues in Research Design,” describes basic features of all research studies that have to be considered when planning a research project.
- Chapter 5, “Concepts, Operationalization, and Measurement,” considers this central topic in criminal justice research. All research requires some sort of measurement, and this chapter examines key elements of this important topic.
- Chapter 6, “Measuring Crime,” focuses on a central dependent and independent variable in criminal justice research. This provides an in-depth example of measurement more generally, while describing different ways crime is measured and why the various measures are necessary.
- Chapter 7, “Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs,” examines how we plan research that has explanatory and applied purposes. Research design involves a collection of building blocks that can be combined in different ways. We emphasize the flexibility of research designs, drawing on interesting and creative examples.
- Chapter 8, “Sampling,” describes approaches to selecting subjects for research. We cover the two general categories of probability and nonprobability sampling, describing different subtypes in each category. The basics of probability theory are introduced as key principles underlying sampling and statistical significance.
- Chapter 9, “Survey Research,” explores traditional survey research and other types of interviewing. Changes in technology continue to affect how surveys are conducted.
- Chapter 10, “Qualitative Interviewing,” is new to this edition. The chapter describes different applications of qualitative and specialized interviewing. Earl and I are pleased that Amber Horning has joined us in this chapter, drawing on her own work and research by others to examine this family of data gathering techniques.
- Chapter 11, “Field Observation,” includes discussion of traditional approaches as well as structured environmental surveys. Examples illustrate the use of the different approaches.
- Chapter 12, “Agency Records, Content Analysis, and Secondary Data,” covers data extracted from administrative records as well as data series regularly collected by researchers and government agencies. Examples illustrate the wide range of research opportunities supported by data from different secondary sources.
- Chapter 13, “Evaluation Research and Problem Analysis,” focuses on applied research that aims to improve criminal justice policy. The chapter describes how problem analysis is increasingly used in justice agencies to reduce crime and related problems.



- Chapter 14, “Interpreting Data,” introduces data analysis techniques widely used in criminal justice research. Descriptive and explanatory approaches are explained and illustrated with examples.

## What’s New in This Edition

In preparing this seventh edition, we stayed with what has proven to be a popular formula, but also responded to suggestions from several people—reviewers, colleagues, and instructors—who used earlier editions.

### Qualitative Research

Many reviewers and instructors who use the book have suggested expanded coverage of qualitative research techniques. While we have always included qualitative methods in our discussion of how to do research, a new chapter offers more depth in specialized interviewing and related field techniques. With contributions from Amber Horning, a PhD student at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, we present a new chapter on qualitative interviewing. Amber draws heavily on her own research studying pimps and other sex workers, mostly in New York City. Her work is fascinating and creative, offering excellent examples of how to do field work on sensitive topics with elusive subjects.

Amber’s contributions also supplement our discussion of focus groups in criminological research, a topic Earl and I previously included in the chapter on survey research. What results is a new chapter that provides especially useful insights in doing field research on people engaged in illegal activities. Amber Horning’s work also illustrates creative approaches to sampling and learning about hidden populations.

We are pleased that Amber Horning has joined us for this edition for many reasons. Among these is our continuing effort to include examples of student research. Amber’s work involves extensive field presence in an urban environment; we feel she has conveyed much of that experience very nicely.

### Opening Vignettes

In the previous edition, we introduced opening vignettes that presented examples of research topics covered in each chapter. Many of these drew on my recent research with former colleague Ronald Clarke, in collaboration with graduate students at Rutgers University. This edition offers new vignettes for several chapters. We have linked these more explicitly with chapter themes and tried to add timely topics that will interest students. Other opening vignettes describe research by former Rutgers students or research on topics of recent popular interest.

Just as the running example throughout the chapters sums up many topics described in each chapter, the opening vignette introduces key issues. This serves two purposes. First, we think the vignettes present examples that will be inherently interesting to students and draw them into the material covered in each chapter. Second, the vignettes can be points of departure for class discussion. For example, the new opening vignette in Chapter 3 draws on Amber Horning’s research by examining ethical questions that emerge in a study of active sex workers. In Chapter 8, we included a new box keyed to results from different polls in the 2012 presidential election.

### Expanded Examples of Student Research

Reviewers and colleagues have commented favorably on the use of examples from student research in earlier editions, a feature that serves multiple purposes. First, it amplifies what some colleagues call the “over-the-shoulder” tone of the text, in which readers feel they are experiencing more than simply words on a printed page. Second, student research examples embody the kind of collaborative supervision that exists between graduate students and faculty. Third, although I have great familiarity with the details of my students’ work, such details are rarely described in published articles. Being able to report them adds behind-the-scenes information not readily available elsewhere. Finally, Earl and I believe the examples presented here are topical and inherently

interesting to readers. Among the examples in this edition are projects that address terrorism, sex workers, human trafficking, sex offenders, and crime at bus stops. The first four are well-known topics, whereas the last is an example of a seemingly humble problem that will be meaningful to most people living in large urban areas.

We have also made specific changes in each chapter of the text:

- **Chapter 1**, on the advice of reviewers, has been extensively revised to provide an overview of criminal justice research the way it is commonly taught. Basic principles of social science research are revised and moved to Chapters 2 and 4. Chapter 1 then presents material on how to plan research and how to write a research proposal. This includes guidance on how to conduct a literature review. Chapter 1 now better reflects what most instructors do in the first class or two.
- **Chapter 2** covers many of the basic principles of criminal justice research previously discussed in Chapter 1. This works rather well, as it integrates our consideration of criminal justice theory with other foundations of research.
- **Chapter 3** updates material on the institutional review boards that oversee the protection of human subjects in the course of social science research. We have also revised some discussion of ethical questions that stem from working with active offenders.
- **Chapter 4** offers a more streamlined treatment of three important principles for designing social science research: causation, units of analysis, and the time dimension. This was partly facilitated by moving the section on how to design a research project to Chapter 1.
- **Chapter 5** begins with a new opening vignette on different ways to measure neighborhood characteristics. *Ecometrics*, a term coined by Sampson and Raudenbush, has attracted more attention from criminal justice researchers. Our vignette draws on research by Shuryo Fujita to describe how high-resolution images available on the Internet provide low-cost alternatives to developing certain kinds of measures. We have also reorganized some discussion on conceptualization in response to comments from reviewers and colleagues who have used earlier editions of the book.
- **Chapter 6** presents an updated and streamlined description of the National Incident-Based Reporting System, as more researchers are now using this measure of crime. We updated our consideration of other crime measures to reflect changes in how victim and self-report surveys are conducted.
- **Chapter 7** includes new material on the increased use of experimental designs in criminal justice research.
- **Chapter 8** updates the continuing changes in technology that require new approaches to sampling, especially the growth in wireless-only households. At the same time, social media and web-based samples become more generalizable as Internet use approaches saturation for many groups. A new table has been added to illustrate nonprobability sampling. Finally, we moved additional discussion of snowball sampling to this chapter where we think it flows more clearly.
- **Chapter 9** streamlines discussion of in-person interviewing. Coverage of mail surveys is cut back to reflect the decline of that form of administration. However, we update information on computer-based self-administration. The chapter is shorter because specialized interviewing and focus groups are now in Amber Horning's chapter.
- **Chapter 10**, "Qualitative Interviewing," is new to this edition.
- **Chapter 11** presents a new box by Shuryo Fujita to demonstrate probability sampling for observations. Dr. Fujita's dissertation randomly sampled street blocks and used Internet-based photographs to observe conditions of streets and housing. We consider other ways of making different types of observations, partly linking to Chapter 10's treatment of qualitative research techniques.
- **Chapter 12** updates references to existing data that can be used in secondary analysis.
- **Chapter 13** further updates the section on problem analysis that was introduced in the

fifth edition. We comment on the growth of evidence-based justice policy.

- **Chapter 13** updates crime data in certain examples. We have also reworked some of the descriptive statistics discussion. The chapter-opening vignette updates National Crime Victimization Survey data on another hot-button topic—identity theft.

## Learning Tools

To make this book more accessible to students with a range of interests and abilities, we have included learning tools in each chapter:

- **Learning Objectives** Chapters open with learning objectives that are keyed to the summaries presented later in each chapter. This feature will help students pull material together as they read through and review each chapter.
- **Marginal Key Terms** This edition includes marginal key terms accompanied by brief definitions. These marginal key terms are a subset of those pulled together at the end of each chapter, which in turn are defined fully in the glossary.
- **Chapter Summary** Adapted from different sections in earlier editions, chapter summaries are keyed to the learning objectives that open each chapter.

## Ancillary Materials

A number of supplements are provided by Cengage Learning to help instructors use *Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology* in their courses and to help students prepare for exams. Supplements are available to qualified adopters. Please consult your local sales representative for details.

**Instructor's Resource Manual with Test Bank by Todd Scott of Schoolcraft College.** The manual includes learning objectives, key terms, a detailed chapter outline, a chapter summary, lesson plans, discussion topics, student activities, "What If" scenarios, media tools, a sample syllabus, and an expanded test bank with almost twice as many questions as the prior edition. The learning

objectives are correlated with the discussion topics, student activities, and media tools. Each chapter's test bank contains questions in multiple-choice, true/false, completion, essay, and **new critical thinking formats**, with a full answer key. The test bank is coded to the learning objectives that appear in the main text, and includes the section in the main text where the answers can be found. **Finally, each question in the test bank has been carefully reviewed by experienced criminal justice instructors for quality, accuracy, and content coverage.** Our Instructor Approved seal, which appears on the front cover, is our assurance that you are working with an assessment and grading resource of the highest caliber. The manual is available for download on the password-protected website and can also be obtained by emailing your local Cengage Learning representative.

**Cengage Learning Testing by Wesley Jennings of University of South Florida.** Powered by Cognero, the accompanying assessment tool is a flexible, online system that allows you to:

- import, edit, and manipulate test bank content from the Maxfield/Babbie test bank or elsewhere, including your own favorite test questions
- create ideal assessments with your choice of 15 question types (including true/false, multiple choice, opinion scale/Likert, and essay)
- create multiple test versions in an instant using drop-down menus and familiar, intuitive tools that take you through content creation and management with ease
- deliver tests from your LMS, your classroom, or wherever you want—plus, import and export content into other systems as needed.

**PowerPoint Lecture Slides by Tina Freiburger of University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee.** These handy Microsoft PowerPoint slides, which outline the chapters of the main text in a classroom-ready presentation, will help you in making your lectures engaging and in reaching your visually oriented students. The presentations are available for download on the password-protected website and can also be obtained by emailing your local Cengage Learning representative.

**Cengage Learning Video Program (Courtesy BBC, CNN, and more)** CNN videos feature short, high-interest clips from current news events as well as historic raw footage going back 30 years. CBS and BBC clips feature footage from nightly news broadcasts and specials to *CBS News Special Reports*, *CBS Sunday Morning*, *60 Minutes*, and more. Taken together, the brief videos offer the perfect discussion starters for your classes, enriching lectures and providing students with a new lens through which to view the past and present, one that will greatly enhance their knowledge and understanding of significant events and open up to them new dimensions in learning.

**CourseMate Companion Website** Cengage Learning's Criminal Justice CourseMate brings course concepts to life with interactive learning, study, and exam preparation tools that support the printed textbook. Each chapter opens with a brief, learning-objective-based pretest that students can use to quiz themselves in advance of reading the assignment and to identify those chapter outcomes that may be especially challenging for them personally. CourseMate also includes an integrated eBook, post-reading quizzes that are mapped to chapter learning objectives, and a first-of-its-kind tool that monitors student engagement in the course. The accompanying instructor website offers access to password-protected resources such as an electronic version of the instructor's manual and PowerPoint slides.

**Careers in Criminal Justice Website** *Can be bundled with this text at no additional charge.* Featuring plenty of self-exploration and profiling activities, the interactive Careers in Criminal Justice website helps students investigate and focus on the criminal justice career choices that are right for them. Includes interest assessment, video testimonials from career professionals, resume and interview tips, and links for reference.

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