

READINGS IN CRIMINOLOGY

STUDY GUIDE

Judson R. Landis
Thomas M. Kando

Readings in Criminology

Study Guide

Judson R. Landis and Thomas M. Kando
California State University



KENDALL/HUNT PUBLISHING COMPANY
4050 Westmark Drive Dubuque, Iowa 52002

Copyright © 1995 by Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company

ISBN 0-7872-1097-8

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or otherwise, without prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Printed in the United States of America
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Introduction

This student guide has been prepared to accompany *Readiness in Criminology*. In putting together the collection of articles, we have tried to present a user-friendly anthology which will stimulate the students' interest in the subject matter and generate lively dialogue and discussion of major issues in criminology and criminal justice.

We, the editors, have been teaching a variety of sociology and criminal justice courses, including juvenile delinquency, criminology, deviance, social problems, violence and terrorism. The anthology reflects the way in which we organize our courses. We spend considerable time in class discussing important and emotionally charged issues, among them: the causes of crime, capital punishment, gun control.

The readings are drawn largely from popular sources, and they represent different and sometimes conflicting viewpoints.

The study questions are intended to help you focus on key points in the articles and prepare for exams. The questions can be used to discuss issues and implications in the articles. They will also help you to relate these readings to the other books used in class and especially to the lectures.

We hope that this study guide will help you in understanding the articles in the reader and the other material taught in the course.

Contents

Introduction iv

I	Measuring and Defining Crime	1
II	The Causes of Crime	5
III	The Police and the Courts	13
IV	Prisons and Other Punishment	17
V	Capital Punishment	25
VI	Gun Control	29
VII	White Collar Crime	33
VIII	Juvenile Delinquency	37
IX	International Crime	41

3. Is crime in California increasing or decreasing according to Hill's article? Why are the demographics of crime important?

4. "Place priority on prevention and early intervention" says Hill. Why? What point is she making?

Name _____ Date _____

5. Moynihan suggests three ways in which the process of redefinition occurs. Define and explain.

6. What is the “Durkheim constant?” What is its meaning and relevance?

Name _____ Date _____

STUDY QUESTIONS

SECTION II The Causes of Crime

1. If some people are genetically predisposed to violent behavior, should society excuse their actions? If we do, what kind of message would this send?

2. What are some of the possible consequences of the genetic legitimization of violence?

3. When someone's genes predispose them to violent behavior, does this force them to do anything? Does it mean that they lack the free will to make decisions?

4. Would the genetic argument be weakened by those who carry the violent gene, but don't commit violent crimes?

Name _____ Date _____

5. What do you think would be society's reaction to a biological link to crime? Would we be quick to embrace it, or would we approach it cautiously? Choose a side and list some reasons to support your conclusion.

6. Should we wait to take action against those identified as being criminal or violent until they do something wrong? If we do, what then is the use of this information? Structure an argument for either side.

7. What would a biological explanation of crime really enable us to do? Could we head off crime by drugging or institutionalizing individuals identified as being potentially criminal or violent? Why or why not?
8. List a number of your own characteristics. Now try to assess their origin— are they (B)iological (I was born this way), or (E)nvironmental (this was a product of my life experiences)?

11. What are some possible explanations for the decline in the crime rate during times of recession? Why does the crime rate rise in times of economic growth? Do these explanations support each other?
12. Is it possible to link non-property crimes to economic recession or growth? Why or why not?

Name _____ Date _____

13. The article by Rubinstein states that weak families and our inability as a culture to restrain our impulses are the true causes of crime. What is it about our culture that causes or contributes to this? It is mentioned that there was a low incidence of crime among the Chinese in 1965. What differences can you think of between the two cultures which might explain the differing rates of crime?
14. Dilulio states that the vast majority of violent crime is intraracial. What do you think is the significance of this?

15. DiIulio lists three things government can do to curb violence. What problems do you see with these in theory as well as in implementation?

16. DiIulio takes the position that there is little racial discrimination in the criminal justice system. Can you think of points in the criminal justice system where racism could occur and which might not be readily apparent?