



# An Introduction to Crime and Crime Causation

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Crime Causation**

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*To my wife Sue,  
for her endless inspiration, motivation, and support and to my son  
Michael for his reminders of just what a thirsty young mind can  
dream, think, and achieve.*

*Robert*

*To Michael,  
for his love and support, and to my family. With love always.*

*Julie*

*To my partner,  
Dr. Elena Azaola, Senior Investigator, Centro de Investigaciones  
y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social, Mexico City,  
Mexico—she is a tireless advocate for human rights.*

*Cliff*

*To Carolyn Spence,  
Thanks Carolyn*

*Robert, Julie, and Cliff*

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# Preface

*An Introduction to Crime and Crime Causation* is designed to provide an understanding of issues involving the phenomena of crime. This book examines crime, the extent of it, and other facts in an attempt to educate the reader regarding the steps that need to be taken before a significant reduction in crime can occur. We also cover the major crime causation theories and some of the lesser-known ones that impact our society.

The three authors have different and distinct backgrounds, and therefore there are differences in their views on crime. These differences allow them opportunities to discuss and debate their differences. Their differences ensure that the various issues covered are examined from different viewpoints. Robert C. Winters (the lead author) is a former attorney and present professor of criminal justice. Julie L. Globokar is a sociologist and college professor. Cliff Roberson, a human behaviorist, is a professor emeritus of criminology and criminal justice.

The text matter is presented in a manner that is designed to enhance student learning. For example, the materials in Chapters 1 and 2 overlap to some extent. The two chapters could have been structured as one long chapter, but we decided that rather than start the book with a massive first chapter, it would be easier for readers to have the material divided into two smaller chapters. After the introductory material in Chapters 1 and 2, the text focuses on criminal causation theories. We have covered many of the current and popular theories, but no one book could cover the vast number of theories that exist today. The final chapters of the book discuss and examine the criminal justice system, the types of crime, specialized crimes involving governments and big business, and drugs.

Any corrections, suggestions for improvement, or comments should be forwarded to Cliff Roberson at [cliff.roberson@washburn.edu](mailto:cliff.roberson@washburn.edu).

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## *chapter one*

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# *An introduction to concepts involving crime and crime causation*

### *Chapter objectives*

After studying this chapter, the reader should be able to

- Discuss what constitutes criminal behavior
- Discuss who should be labeled as a criminal
- Define and explain the concepts of crime, criminal law, and criminology
- Provide descriptions and explanations of sources of crime data
- Describe the importance of crime data

### *Introduction*

This book is designed as a textbook on criminology. Criminology is the study of criminals, crime prevention, crime causation, and the social processes that shape the label of “criminal.” Criminologists work to identify the etiological variables related to criminal behavior.

The study of criminal behavior is exciting for numerous reasons, including the fact that it is an analysis of human nature, people, drama, and how human beings both create and solve problems.<sup>1</sup> Many of our current entertainment venues are centered on crime. Take a look at the list of the top 10 movies that played in your city last week. How many were based on crimes? In addition, crime-related industries are a significant economic force. How many individuals in today’s society have a job because of crime, including law enforcement personnel, correctional personnel, private security, and prison and jail construction companies? If all crime disappeared tomorrow and we no longer needed those occupations, how much of an impact would it have on unemployment?

To understand crime and criminology, we must first have a foundation regarding the criminal justice system. We refer to the criminal justice system as a “system,” but the term inaccurately implies that its various components are heavily interrelated, closely knit, and highly coordinated. In reality, it would be more accurate to refer to it as a nonsystem: Although each component plays an important role in society’s responses to crime, they each play a relatively independent role in the process. The criminal justice system is actually composed of three separate elements:

1. Law enforcement
2. Courts
3. Corrections

Not only does each of these components operate relatively independently, but in many cases, the orientation of the various elements within a local jurisdiction is in conflict with each other as to the main goals of the criminal justice system. Thus, the system can best