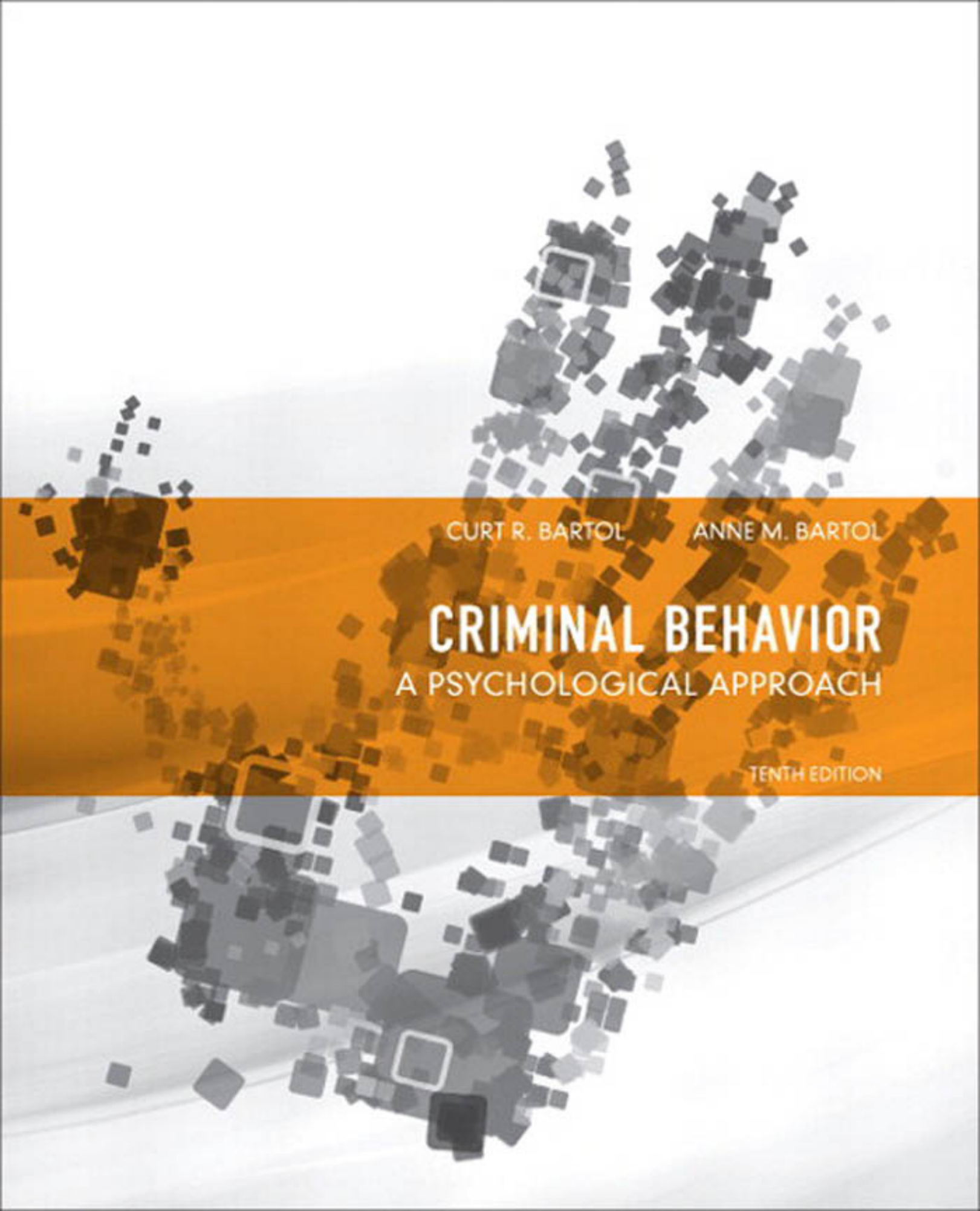
CURT R. BARTOL
ANNE M. BARTOL
CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR
A PSYCHOLOGICAL APPROACH
TENTH EDITION

Tenth Edition

Criminal Behavior

A Psychological Approach

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Tenth Edition

Criminal Behavior

A Psychological Approach

Curt R. Bartol

Anne M. Bartol

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To Kai, who never ceases to wonder, to create, and to care.

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PREFACE

C*riminal Behavior: A Psychosocial Approach* is a textbook about crime from a psychological perspective. More specifically, this text portrays the criminal offender as embedded in and continually influenced by multiple systems within the psychosocial environment. We believe that meaningful theory, well-executed research, and skillful application of knowledge to the "crime problem" require an understanding of the many levels of events that influence a person's life course—from the individual to the individual's family, peers, schools, neighborhoods, community, culture, and society as a whole.

We do not consider all offenders psychologically flawed, and only some are mentally disordered. Many offenders do have substance abuse problems, and these may co-occur with mental disorders. However, offenders as a group are not mentally disordered, although some become so as a result of their incarceration. In addition, emotionally healthy people break the law, and sometimes emotionally healthy people end up on probation or in jails and prisons. Like earlier editions of this text, this edition too views the offender as existing on a continuum, ranging from the occasional offender who offends at some point during the life course, usually during adolescence, to the serious, repetitive offender who usually begins his or her criminal career at a very early age, or the one-time, serious offender.

In recent years, the psychological study of crime has taken a decidedly developmental approach, while retaining its interest in cognitive-based explanations for antisocial behavior. Scholars from various academic disciplines have engaged in pathways-to-crime research, for example. A very common conclusion is that there are multiple pathways to criminal offending; some begin to offend very early while others begin offending in adulthood. In addition, a variety of risk factors enable antisocial behavior, and protective factors insulate the individual from such behavior. The pathways approach does not always focus on psychological factors, but it coexists very well with psychological theories of child and adolescent development. In addition to developmental and cognitive research, much contemporary work is focusing on biopsychology and crime, or the way in which a range of genetic and biological factors may affect one's behavior.

Thus, the book reviews the contemporary research, theory, and practice concerning the psychology of crime as comprehensively and accurately as possible. The basic organization of the text continues to run from the broad, theoretical aspects of crime in the first half of the book to specific offense categories in the second. The early chapters discuss individual and social risk factors, developmental principles, and the psychology of aggression, including its biological basis. We include a complete chapter on psychopathy, because it is arguably one of the most heavily researched topics in the psychology of crime.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

The tenth edition was completed with the help of extensive reviews of the previous edition. The most significant changes reflect recent theoretical developments in criminology as well as the ongoing research on the psychology of crime. Every chapter includes updated citations. We have retained the 16-chapter structure used in the ninth edition. However, some topics have been deleted and others added, as we explain below.

- We have provided more coverage of contemporary antisocial behavior, including bullying, cyberbullying, and cyberstalking. Proposed legislation relating to these social problems is covered, as well as research on the effects of bullying and stalking.

- New sections have been added to almost every chapter. For example, we have expanded on such topics as home invasion, identity theft, synthetic marijuana, callous-unemotional traits, general theory of aggression, the I-cubed theory of aggression, behavior genetics, three-path model of sexual offenders, stereotypical child abductions, cybercrime, and the dynamic cascade model.
- We have added a significant amount of material about Laurence Steinberg's theory of adolescent development, one of the most provocative and heuristic theories in delinquency today.
- We have greatly expanded and reorganized the sections on the five types of profiling, and added sections on sexual assault victimization factors and Internet-facilitated sexual offending.
- The book includes updated examples and illustrations of the crimes and concepts being discussed, but retains illustrations of past events that reflect many of the psychological concepts discussed (e.g., hostage taking, school shootings, sniper events). Over half of the illustrations used refer to recent events, such as the fatal and nonfatal shootings in Tucson, mass killings in Norway, and child abductions.
- Nine boxes have been added to the book. They highlight contemporary concerns such as bias crimes, identity theft, bullying, and child pornography on the Internet.
- Reference to the revised *DSM* (*DSM-5*) is made at various points in the book, particularly in Chapter 8. Because *DSM-5* changes are only proposed at this point, we have retained the *DSM-IV* categories and definitions when relevant. However, readers are reminded to be aware that changes are proposed, including changes to the diagnoses relevant to the material presented.

In addition to the above-mentioned changes in this edition, readers familiar with previous recent editions of the text may want to take note of the following:

- As in the ninth edition, there is less information on the juvenile justice process and the history of juvenile justice, and there is little delinquency material in Chapter 1.
- Also as in the ninth edition, we do not discuss psychologically relevant issues relating to prisons and jails, such as overcrowding, violence, and conditions of confinement. Nevertheless, in light of their importance, we hope professors will find a way to incorporate these topics in their course content.
- Reviewers often ask for fewer statistics. We recognize the limits of statistical data but believe they cannot be ignored. We reduced statistics significantly in the ninth edition; in this edition, we have updated them and shifted some to tables. Students wanting more data should know where to obtain them from the sources provided.
- We removed the section on public order offenses, including prostitution, exhibitionism, voyeurism, and gambling, among others. We have included expanded material on human trafficking and integrated it into the chapter on sexual offending.
- Material on sexual predators now focuses on legislation aimed at preventing sex crimes; it is included in a box in Chapter 12. It is important to emphasize though that sexual predators are often not clinically mentally disordered.

The above represent only a few of the many changes made in this edition.

INSTRUCTOR RESOURCES

- Instructor's Manual
- MyTest
- PowerPoint Lecture Presentation

To access supplementary materials online, instructors need to request an instructor access code. Go to www.pearsonhighered.com/irc, where you can register for an instructor access code. Within forty-eight hours of registering you will receive a confirming e-mail including an instructor access code. Once you have received your code, locate your text in the online catalog and click on the Instructor Resources button on the left side of the catalog product page. Select a supplement and a log in page will appear. Once you have logged in, you can access instructor material for all Prentice Hall textbooks.

Criminal Behavior is designed to be a core text in undergraduate and graduate courses in criminal behavior, criminology, the psychology of crime, crime and delinquency, and forensic psychology. The material contained in this book was classroom-tested for over thirty years. Its emphasis on psychological theory and concepts makes it distinctive from other fine textbooks on crime, which are more sociologically based. The book's major goal is to encourage an appreciation of the many complex issues surrounding criminal behavior by citing relevant, contemporary research. Reviewers sometimes maintain that the text is too complex and should be stripped to its essentials; although we understand their concerns, we have resisted a more simplistic treatment. As one reviewer commented, "There is a lot of material in here, but my students and I adapt." Another wrote, "Better more than too little." Crime is complex, and simple explanations should be avoided. If, after studying the text with an open mind, the reader puts it down seeking additional information, and if the reader has developed an avid interest in discovering better answers, then this text will have served its purpose well.

Once again, we have benefited from the encouragement and help of many individuals. We cherish our main sources of emotional support—Gina and Jim; Ian and Soraya; and Kai, Madeleine, Darya, and Shannon. We are awed by their goodness, their sense of humor, the love they display, and their many accomplishments. On the professional side, we are most grateful to the production staff at Pearson Education/Prentice Hall, particularly Project Manager Jessica Sykes, and Assistant Editor of Criminal Justice Tiffany Bitzel. We appreciate as well the good work of Project Manager Abinaya Rajendran, from Integra-PDY. Finally, we wish to thank the following professors and scholars who reviewed the ninth edition and provided many helpful suggestions for improvement: Mike Butera, Bellevue University; Herb Stock, Naugatuck Valley Community College; Corajean A. Gregory, Mott Community College; Edward C. Keane, Ph.D., Housatonic Community College; Jane Younglove, California State University, Stanislaus; Tomasina L. Cook, Erie Community College; Jennifer Younkin, Old Dominion University; J. Michael Dwyer, Gulf Coast Community College; and Deborah Jean Harding, Ph. D., Amarillo College.

Curt R. Bartol
Anne M. Bartol

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1

Introduction to Criminal Behavior

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- Define criminal behavior and juvenile delinquency.
- Stress that such behavior has multiple causes, manifestations, and developmental pathways.
- Introduce various theories that may help explain crime.
- Identify the different perspectives of human nature that underlie the theoretical development and research of criminal behavior.
- Emphasize that the study of criminal behavior and delinquency, from a psychological perspective, has shifted from a personality focus toward a more cognitive and developmental focus.
- Introduce the reader to the various measurements of criminal and delinquent behavior.

Crime intrigues people. Sometimes it attracts us, sometimes it repels us, and occasionally, it does both at once. It can amuse, as when we hear about capers that *presumably* do not harm anyone. However, even those who are cheered on in their attempts to evade the law leave victims in their wake. Colton Harris-Moore, called "the barefoot bandit" because he occasionally left prints of his bare feet at the scenes of his crimes, was arrested in 2010 after a two-year crime spree that included burglaries and vehicle thefts, even crossing international borders. Harris-Moore, who began his illegal activities as a juvenile, was sentenced to six and a half years in federal prison in January 2012. While his crimes were being investigated, "fan clubs" emerged on the Internet, and well-wishers expressed hopes that he would never be caught. His victims lost property, suffered emotional distress, and faced numerous inconveniences that accompany being victims of a crime. Crime harms.

Crime can frighten, particularly if we believe that what happened to one victim might happen to us or those we love. Crime can also anger, as when a beloved community member is brutally killed, a child is subjected to heinous abuse, or individuals have been deprived of their life savings by fraudulent schemes.

What is crime? Legally, it is defined as conduct or failure to act in violation of the law forbidding or commanding it, and for which a range of possible penalties exist upon conviction. Criminal behavior, then, is behavior in violation of the criminal code. To be convicted of crime, a person must have acted intentionally and without justification or excuse. For example, even an intentional killing may be justified under certain circumstances, as in defense of one's life. Although there is a very narrow range of offenses that do not require criminal intent (called strict liability offenses), the vast majority of crime requires it. Obviously, this legal definition encompasses a great variety of acts, ranging from murder to petty offenses.

While interest in crime has always been high, understanding why it occurs and what to do about it has always been a problem. Public officials, politicians, "experts," and many people in the general public continue to offer simple and incomplete solutions for obliterating crime: more police officers on the streets, video cameras and state-of-the-art surveillance equipment, street lights, sturdy locks, self-defense classes, stiff penalties, speedy imprisonment, or capital punishment. Some of these approaches may be effective in the short term, but the overall problem of crime persists. As in most areas of human behavior, there is no shortage of experts and opinions, but there are few all-encompassing and effective solutions.

Our inability to prevent crime is partly because we have trouble understanding criminal behavior and identifying its many causes. Because crime is complex, explanations of crime require complicated, involved answers. Psychological research indicates that most people have limited tolerance for complexity and ambiguity. People apparently want simple, straightforward answers, no matter how complex the issue. Parents become impatient when psychologists answer questions about child rearing by saying, "It depends"—on the situation, on the parents' reactions to it, on any number of possible influences. This preference for simplicity helps to explain the popularity of do-it-yourself, 100-easy-ways-to-a-better-life books. Today, the preference for simplicity is aided by the vast array of information available on the Internet. Search engines provide instant access to a multitude of both reputable and questionable sources. The discerning student is well served by this information explosion; he or she can find up-to-date research on virtually all topics covered in this book, for example. However, many people acquire information—but not necessarily knowledge—by clicking links, entering chat rooms, reading blogs, and following friends and "friends" who may or may not be providing legitimate data. Thus, the selective and careful use of information technology is a critical skill for all students to acquire.

This text presents criminal behavior as a vastly complex, sometimes difficult-to-understand phenomenon. Readers looking for simple solutions will have to reorient their thinking, set the text aside, or read it in dismay. There is no all-encompassing psychological explanation for crime, any more than there is a sociological, anthropological, psychiatric, economic, or historic one. In fact, it is unlikely that sociology, psychology, or any other discipline can formulate basic "truths" about crime without help from other disciplines and well-designed research. Criminology needs all the interdisciplinary help it can get to explain and control criminal behavior. An integration of the data, theories, and general viewpoints of each discipline is crucial. To review accurately and adequately the plethora of studies and theories from each relevant discipline is far beyond the scope of this text, however. Our focus is the *psychological perspective,* although other viewpoints are also described.

Our primary goal is to review and integrate recent scholarship and research in the psychology of crime, compare it with traditional approaches, and discuss strategies that have been offered to prevent and modify criminal behavior. We cannot begin to accomplish this task

without first calling attention to philosophical questions that underlie any study of human behavior, including criminal behavior.

THEORIES OF CRIME

In everyday conversation, the term *theory* is used loosely. It may refer to personal experiences, observations, traditional beliefs, a set of opinions, or a collection of abstract thoughts. Almost everyone has personal theories about human behavior, and these extend to criminal behavior. To illustrate, some people have a personal theory that the world is a just place, where one gets what one deserves. "Just-worlders" believe that things just do not happen to people without a reason that is closely related to their own actions; for example, individuals who experience financial difficulties probably brought these on themselves. In 2008–2009, when many homeowners in the United States were facing foreclosure because they could not afford high mortgage payments, a just-worlder would be likely to say this was more their own fault than the fault of bank officers who enticed them into paying high interest rates. Just-worlders also believe good people are ultimately rewarded and bad people are ultimately punished. If you work hard and honestly, good things will happen to you. Laziness and dishonesty, on the other hand, will lead to limited success and potential poverty. In reference to crime, just-worlders may believe that burglary victims did not protect their property sufficiently or that battered spouses must have provoked their beatings, especially if there is no other available reason for explaining such behaviors.

The above beliefs represent individual theories or assumptions about how the world works. However, psychologists have also developed a somewhat more elaborate scientific theory based on just-world ideas and developed a scale to measure one's just-world orientation (Lerner, 1980; Lerner & Miller, 1978). A variety of hypotheses—sometimes discussed under the umbrella term **just-world hypothesis**—have been proposed and tested. For example, just-worlders have been hypothesized and shown to favor capital punishment and to hold politically conservative views. Interestingly, the most recent research on just-world theory has also identified two tracks: belief in a general just-world—described above—and belief in a personal just-world (Dalbert, 1999; Sutton & Douglas, 2005). Belief in a personal just-world ("I usually get what I deserve") is considered adaptive and helpful in coping with dire circumstances in one's life. For example, Dalbert and Filke (2007) found that prisoners with a high personal just-world orientation evaluated their prison experiences more positively and reported better overall well-being than those without such an orientation.

Scientific theories like the above are based on logic and research, but they vary widely in complexity. A scientific theory is "a set of interrelated constructs (concepts), definitions, and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables, with the purpose of explaining and predicting the phenomena" (Kerlinger, 1973, p. 9). A scientific theory of crime, therefore, should provide a general explanation that encompasses and *systematically* connects many different social, economic, and psychological variables to criminal behavior, and it should be supported by well-executed research. Moreover, the terms in any scientific theory must be as precise as possible, their meaning and usage clear and unambiguous, so that it can be meaningfully tested by observation and analysis. The process of theory testing is called **theory verification**. If the theory is not verified—indeed, if any of its propositions is not verified—the end result is falsification (Popper, 1968). For example, a theory that includes the proposition that all sex offenders were sexually abused as children would be falsified as soon as one nonabused sex offender was encountered.

The primary purpose of theories of crime is to identify the causes or precursors of criminal behavior. Some theories are broad and encompassing, whereas others are narrow and specific. Basically, theories of criminal behavior are summary statements of a collection of research findings. Perhaps more importantly, they provide direction for further research. If one component of a theory is falsified or not supported, the theory is not necessarily rejected outright, however. It can be modified and retested. In addition, each theory of crime has implications for policy or decisions made by society to prevent crime.

Theories of crime have been around for centuries. During the eighteenth century, the Italian philosopher Cesare Beccaria (1738–1794) developed a theory that human behavior is fundamentally driven by a choice made by weighing the amount of pleasure gained against the amount of pain or punishment expected. Beccaria argued that in order to reduce or stop criminal offending in any given society, the punishment should be swift, certain, and severe enough to deter people from the criminal (pleasure-seeking) act. If people realized in advance that severe punishment would be forthcoming, and coming soon, regardless of their social status or privileges, they would choose not to engage in illegal behavior. This theoretical thinking, which emphasizes free will as the hallmark of human behavior, has become known as **classical theory**. Both criminal and civil law are rooted in the theory that individuals are masters of their fate, the possessors of free will and freedom of choice. As one federal appellate court put it, "our jurisprudence . . . while not oblivious to deterministic components, ultimately rests on a premise of freedom of will" (*U.S. v. Brawner*, 1972, p. 995). It should be noted that many crime-prevention approaches are consistent with classical theory, or in its modern form, **deterrence theory** (Nagin, 2007). For example, surveillance cameras on the streets and harsh sentences assume that individuals choose to commit crime but may be persuaded not to under the threat of being discovered or being punished with long prison time.

Another thread of theoretical thought is called **positivist theory**, which is closely aligned with the idea of determinism. It is the theory that antecedents—prior experiences or influences—determine present behavior. According to this line of theoretical thinking, human behavior is governed by causal laws, and free will is undermined. In its extreme form, determinism asserts that all behavior is determined by antecedent events and that all human behavior, therefore, is fundamentally lawful. "Lawful" in this context refers to predictability and not the laws established by society. Many contemporary theories of criminology are positivist because they search for causes beyond free will.

In summary, the classical view of crime and delinquency holds that the decision to violate the law is largely a result of free will. The positivist or deterministic perspective argues that most criminal behavior is a result of social, psychological, and even biological influences. It does not deny the importance of free will, and it does not maintain that individuals should not be held responsible for their actions. However, it maintains that these actions can be explained by more than "free will." This latter perspective, then, seeks to identify causes, predict and prevent criminal behavior, and rehabilitate (or habilitate) offenders.

Theoretical Perspectives on Human Nature

All theories of crime have underlying assumptions about or perspectives on human nature. Three major ones can be identified. The **conformity perspective** views humans as creatures of conformity who want to do the "right" thing. To a large extent, this assumption represents the foundation of the humanistic perspectives in psychology. Human beings are basically "good" people trying to live to their fullest potential.

An excellent example of the conformity perspective in criminology is **strain theory**, which originated in the work of Robert K. Merton (1957) and continues today in the theory of Robert Agnew (1992, 2006) and his followers. Merton's original strain theory argued that humans are fundamentally conforming beings who are strongly influenced by the values and attitudes of the society in which they live. In short, most members of a given society desire what the other members of the society desire. In many societies and cultures, the accumulation of wealth or status is all important, representing symbols that all members should strive for. Unfortunately, access to these goals is not equally available. While some have the education, social network, personal contacts, and family influence to attain them, others are deprived of the opportunity. Thus, Merton's strain theory predicted that crime and delinquency would occur when there is a perceived discrepancy between the materialistic values and goals cherished and held in high esteem by a society and the availability of the legitimate means for reaching these goals. Under these conditions, a strain between the goals of wealth and power and the means for reaching them develops. Groups and individuals experiencing a high level of this strain are forced to decide whether to violate norms and laws to attain some of this sought-after wealth or power, or give up on their dream and go through the motions, withdraw, or rebel. Note that, although the original strain theory was formulated on American society, it can be applied on a global basis.

In more recent years, strain theorists have emphasized that crimes of the rich and powerful also can be explained by strain theory. Even though these individuals have greater access to the legitimate means of reaching goals, they have a continuing need to accumulate even greater wealth and power and maintain their privileged status in society (Messner & Rosenfeld, 1994).

In developing his General Strain Theory (1992), Agnew used the word *strain* in a slightly different way, seeing strains as events and conditions that are disliked by individuals. The inability to achieve one's goals was only one such condition; others were losing something of value, or being treated negatively by others (2006). General Strain Theory, which has attracted much research and commentary, is continually being tested and evaluated; the point we make here is that it remains under the umbrella of a strain theory, representative of the conformity perspective on human nature.

A second perspective—the **nonconformist perspective**—assumes that human beings are basically undisciplined creatures who, without the constraints of the rules and regulations of a given society, would flout society's conventions and commit crime indiscriminately. This perspective sees humans as fundamentally "unruly" and deviant, needing to be held in check. For example, the biological and neurobiological theories discussed in Chapter 3 identify genetic or other biological features or deficiencies in some individuals that predispose them to antisocial behavior like aggressive actions. Another good illustration of the nonconformist perspective is Travis Hirschi's (1969) social control theory, which is discussed in several chapters. **Social control theory** contends that crime and delinquency occur when an individual's ties to the conventional order or normative standards are weak or largely nonexistent. In other words, the socialization that usually holds one's basic human nature in check is incomplete or faulty. This position perceives human nature as fundamentally "bad," "antisocial," or at least "imperfect." These innate tendencies must be *controlled* by society. Years after developing social control theory, Hirschi teamed with Michael Gottfredson to develop a **General Theory of Crime** (GTC; Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). This theory, one of the most prominent in criminology today, suggests that a deficit of self-control or self-regulation is the key factor in explaining crime and delinquency.

The third perspective—the **learning perspective**—sees human beings as born neutral (neither inherently conforming nor unruly). This perspective argues that humans learn virtually all their behavior, beliefs, and tendencies from the social environment. The learning

perspective is exemplified most comprehensively by **social learning theory**, to be a main topic in Chapter 4, and Edwin H. Sutherland's (1947) **differential association theory**. Social learning theory emphasizes such concepts as imitation of models and reinforcements one gains from one's behavior. According to differential association theory, criminal behavior is learned, as is all social behavior, through social interactions with other people. It is not the result of emotional disturbance, mental illness, or innate qualities of "goodness" or "badness." Rather, people learn to be criminal as a result of messages they get from others who were also taught to be criminal. Consequently, an excess of "messages" favorable to law violation over unfavorable messages promotes criminal activity. The conventional wisdom that bad company promotes bad behavior, therefore, finds validity in differential association theory. **Table 1-1** summarizes these three perspectives and provides examples of each.

From the mid-twentieth century to the present, many criminologists have embraced a developmental approach, viewing crime and other antisocial activity as behavior that begins in early childhood and proceeds to and sometimes through one's adult years. Developmental criminology cannot be placed firmly in any of the above three categories, although it would seem to be most at home in the learning perspective. Nevertheless, aspects of each perspective can be detected in the research and writing of developmental criminologists (e.g., Le Blanc & Loeber, 1998; Moffitt, 1993a, b; Patterson, 1982). We discuss these theories in some detail in Chapter 6.

Another way of looking at human nature is the **difference-in-degree** and the **difference-in-kind** perspective. The difference-in-degree perspective holds that human beings may be placed along a continuum consisting of all the animals in the known universe. According to this perspective, humans are intimately tied to their animal ancestry in important and significant ways. For example, this perspective might argue that human aggression and violence is a result of innate, biological needs to obtain sufficient food supplies, territory, status, or mates. In many ways, this approach is similar to the nonconformist point of view. In recent years, some criminologists have emphasized the importance of biological influences on behavior, not as exclusive determinants of behavior but rather as factors that should be taken into consideration (DeLisi, 2009).

TABLE 1-1 Perspectives of Human Nature

Perspectives of Behavior	Theory Example	Humans Are . . .
Conformity perspective	Strain Theory (Merton) General Strain Theory (Agnew)	Basically good; strongly influenced by the values and attitudes of society
Nonconformist perspective	Social Control Theory (Hirschi) Biological Theories of Crime General Theory of Crime	Basically undisciplined; individual's ties to social order are weak; innate tendencies must be controlled by society; individual lack of self-control
Learning perspective	Differential Association Theory (Sutherland) Social Learning Theory (Rotter, Bandura) Developmental Criminology	Born neutral; behavior is learned through social inter actions with other people; changes over the life span affect behavior

The rapidly developing field of evolutionary psychology generally subscribes to this approach as well. Evolutionary psychology claims that human cognitive and emotional processes have been selected in our evolutionary environment as devices for solving particular adaptive problems faced by the Pleistocene hunter-gatherers (Bereczkei, 2000; Buss & Shackelford, 1997). Evolutionary psychologists stress that Darwinian theory provides ultimate explanations of many types of antisocial behavior (Quinsey, Skilling, Lalumière, & Craig, 2004).

The difference-in-kind perspective, on the other hand, argues that humans are distinctly different from other animals—spiritually, psychologically, and mentally. Noteworthy neurobiologists and pioneer brain researchers, such as Sir John Eccles (Eccles & Robinson, 1984), Roger Sperry (1983), and Wilder Penfield (1975), have concluded that humans differ radically in kind from all other animals. According to the difference-in-kind viewpoint, we will understand crime better if we study and build theories based on those human qualities that differ significantly from subhuman features. Consequently, this perspective sees antisocial or criminal behavior as a unique human attribute generated primarily by human cognitive processes. A resurgence of interest in such concepts as religiosity, compassion, and empathy as they relate to criminality illustrates this perspective.

DISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES IN CRIMINOLOGY

Criminology is the multidisciplinary study of crime. Many disciplines are involved in the collection of knowledge about criminal action, including psychology, sociology, psychiatry, anthropology, biology, neurology, political science, and economics. Over the years, the study of crime has been dominated by three disciplines—sociology, psychology, and psychiatry—but other disciplines or subdisciplines, such as economics and the biological sciences, are becoming more actively involved.

Although our main concern in this text is with *psychological principles,* concepts, theory, and research relevant to criminal behavior, considerable attention is placed on the research knowledge of the other disciplines, particularly sociology, psychiatry, and biology. Again, criminology needs all the help it can get in its struggle to understand, explain, prevent, and change criminal behavior.

It is not easy to make sharp demarcations between disciplines, because they often overlap in focus and practice. For example, what distinguishes a given theory as sociological, psychological, or psychiatric is sometimes simply the stated professional affiliation of its proponent. The reader should also realize that condensing any major discipline into a few pages hardly does it justice. To obtain a more adequate overview, the interested reader should consult texts and articles within those disciplines. **Table 1-2** summarizes these disciplinary perspectives.

Sociological Criminology

Sociological criminology has a rich tradition in examining the relationships of demographic and group variables to crime. Variables such as age, race, gender, socioeconomic status, and ethnic-cultural affiliation have been shown to have significant relationships with certain categories and patterns of crimes. Sociological criminology, for example, has allowed us to conclude that young African American males from disadvantaged backgrounds are disproportionately overrepresented as both perpetrators and victims of homicide. Juveniles as a group are overrepresented in nonviolent property offenses. White males are overrepresented in political and corporate crimes. The many reasons for this are reflected in the various perspectives and research findings that are

TABLE 1-2 Major Perspectives in Criminology

Perspective	Influence	Focus
Sociological criminology	Sociology	Examines relationships of demographic and group variables to crime; focuses on groups and society as a whole and how they influence criminal activity
Psychological criminology	Psychology	Focuses on individual criminal behavior; the science of the behavior and mental processes of the criminal
Psychiatric criminology	Psychiatry	The contemporary perspective examines the interplay between psychobiological determinants of behavior and the social environment; traditional perspective looks for the unconscious and biological determinants of criminal behavior

covered in the book. Sociological criminology also probes the situational or environmental factors that are most conducive to criminal action, such as the time, place, kind of weapons used, and the circumstances surrounding the crime.

A major contribution of sociological criminology, however, is the attention it directs to topics that reflect unequal distribution of power in society. This often takes the form of examining how crime is defined and how laws are enforced. It also addresses the underlying social conditions that may encourage criminal behavior, such as inequities in educational and employment opportunities. Conflict theories in sociology are particularly influential in questioning how crime is defined, who is subject to punishment, and in attempting to draw attention to the crimes of the rich and powerful.

Psychological Criminology

Psychology is the science of behavior and mental processes. **Psychological criminology**, then, is the science of the behavior and mental processes of the person who commits crime. While sociological criminology focuses primarily on groups and society as a whole, and how they influence criminal activity, psychological criminology focuses on individual criminal behavior—how it is acquired, evoked, maintained, and modified.

In the psychology of crime, both social and personality influences on criminal behavior are considered, along with the mental processes that mediate that behavior. Personality refers to all the biological influences, psychological traits, and cognitive features of the human being that psychologists have identified as important in the mediation and control of behavior. Recently, psychological criminology has shifted its focus to a more *cognitive*, *neuropsychological*, and *developmental* approach to the study of criminal behavior, although interest in personality differences among offenders continues. **Cognitions** refer to the attitudes, beliefs, values, and thoughts that a person holds about the social environment, interrelations, human nature, and himself or herself. In serious criminal offenders, these cognitions are often distorted. Beliefs that children must be severely physically disciplined or that victims are not really hurt by burglary are good examples of cognitions that may lead to criminal activity. Prejudice is also a cognition that involves distortions of social reality. They include erroneous generalizations and oversimplification about others. Hate or bias crimes—highlighted in **Box 1-1**—are generally rooted in prejudice and cognitive distortions held by perpetrators. Serial rapists also distort social reality to the point where they may assault

BOX 1-1

Hate or Bias Crimes

Crimes committed against individuals out of bias, hatred, or racial and ethnic prejudice are nothing new; they are well documented in the history of virtually every nation. What is relatively new in the United States is the effort to keep track of such crimes and impose harsh penalties on those who commit them.

Toward the end of the twentieth century, the U.S. Congress and many states began to address the crucial problem of crimes—especially violent crimes—committed out of hatred, prejudice, or bias against someone because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. Eventually, characteristics such as gender, physical or mental disability, advanced age, or military status were added to the list of protected categories. Laws were passed requiring the gathering of statistics on these offenses and/or allowing enhanced sentences for someone convicted of a hate or bias crime. The first such federal law, the **Hate Crime Statistics Act** of 1990, required the collection of data on violent attacks, intimidation, arson, or property damage that are directed at people because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. The law was amended in 1994 to include crimes motivated by bias against persons with disabilities, and in late 2009 to include crimes of prejudice based on gender or gender identity (Langton & Planty, 2011). The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) also asks respondents whether they have been victims of hate crimes.

A victim of a hate crime may be a person, a business, or an institution, but hate crimes against individuals receive the most attention. These crimes often have long-term psychological and social repercussions that are extremely destructive to victims and their families. During the 1990s, race-related and sexual identity–related crimes were the most likely to be publicized.

Two horrendous instances were the Texas killings of James Byrd Jr. and Matthew Shepard. Byrd, a 49-year-old African American man, was walking home from a family party when he was offered a ride by three white men, all of them known white supremacists. The men—Lawrence Russell Brewer, John William King, and Shawn Berry—drove Byrd to a remote dirt road where they severely beat him. Then Byrd was chained to their pickup truck by the ankles and dragged along the road, which tore his body to pieces. Brewer and King have since been executed; Berry was spared the death penalty but given a life sentence. Shepard, a young gay university student in Wyoming, was kidnapped, beaten, tied to a fencepost, and left to die. He was found, hospitalized in a comatose state, and died shortly thereafter. The two men responsible for his death, Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson, are serving terms of life imprisonment without parole.

Since the attacks of September 11, 2001, people of Arab or Muslim descent, or anyone with a "Middle Eastern look" (Rabrenovic, 2007), have increasingly been victims of hate crimes (Hendricks, Ortiz, Sugie, & Miller, 2007). In the most recent UCR statistics, 47.3 percent of bias-motivated crimes had a racial bias, 19.3 percent were motivated by sexual orientation bias, and 12.8 percent by bias against ethnicity or national origin. The remainder was motivated by religious bias (20%) or disability (0.6%) (see **Figure 1-2** at page 21.).

Relatedly, the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) recently reported significant increases in hate groups in the United States. Hate groups are those whose beliefs or practices attack or malign an entire class of people, such as immigrants or members of a given race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. The activities of hate groups are not necessarily criminal; in fact, they are more likely to involve rallies, marches, meetings, and distributing leaflets rather than perpetrating violence. Nevertheless, their message is disturbing, and individual members of those groups have engaged in serious crimes. The gunman who opened fire in a Sikh Temple in Wisconsin in August 2012, killing six people and wounding others, was associated with a neo-Nazi skinhead group. The SPLC identified 602 hate groups in the year 2000; by 2011, the number had increased to 1,018 (www.splcenter.org).

In a recent publication on hate crime victimizations from 2003 to 2009, derived from both NCVS and UCR data, Langton and Planty (2011) report the following:

- More than 4 in 5 hate crime victimizations involved violence; about 23 percent were serious violent crimes.
- In about 37 percent of violent hate crimes the offender knew the victim; in violent nonhate crimes, half of all victims knew the offender.

(*continued*)