

# SOLUTIONS MANUAL

## RESEARCH METHODS FOR CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND CRIMINOLOGY

Fifth Edition



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## **CHAPTER 2: Theory and Criminal Justice Research**

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

After reading this chapter your students should be able to complete the following objectives.

- Students should be able to know the relationship between theory and observation.
- Students should be able to identify a theory and give examples of research spawned by that theory.
- One should be able to identify the two logical systems as they relate to social science theory.
- Students should be able to give examples that illustrate deductive and inductive logic.
- This chapter should introduce the terms that are commonly used in the study of theories and theory construction.
- Be able to differentiate between objectivity and subjectivity.
- Understand and be able to tell the difference between a theory and a paradigm.
- Be able to identify the manner in which policy responds to paradigms.
- Be able to discuss the relationship between theory, research and public policy.
- Be able to discuss how research lead to policy and how policy can use research for change and understanding
- Be familiar with the ecological theories and their importance to the field of criminal justice.

### **CHAPTER SUMMARY:**

This chapter is designed to introduce the student to ways of scientific thinking and an overview of the social scientific approach to the field of criminal justice research. The link between theory and research is identified with attention being given to the manner in which social science theory is created and its application in criminal justice. Key terms are introduced that will allow the student to converse in social scientific language. Ecological theories are used to explain crime prevention policy which illustrates the relationship between theory, research, and public policy.

## **CHAPTER OUTLINE:**

- I. Introduction to Theory and Criminal Justice Research
  - A. The creation of social science theory
    1. Terms used in theory construction
    2. The traditional model of science
      - a. Main elements of the traditional model
      - b. Examples of the traditional model: The “Chicago School”
  - B. Two logical systems
    1. Deductive logic
    2. Inductive logic
    3. Inductive theory and criminal justice policy
    4. The graphic contrast
  - C. Theory, research and public policy
    1. The relationship between theory, research and policy
    2. Criminological evolution: Ecological theory and crime prevention policy

## **KEY TERMS:**

Theory (p. 31)	Operationalization (p. 34)
Observation (p. 35)	Social disorganization (p. 47)
Hypothesis testing (p. 37)	Deductive logic (p. 37)
Inductive logic (p. 39)	Grounded theory (p. 39)
Concepts (p. 31)	Variables (p. 32)
Statements (p. 32)	Objectivity (p. 32)
Subjectivity (p. 32)	Hypothesis (p. 32)
Paradigm (p. 32)	Paradigm shift (p. 33)
Ecological theories (p. 47)	Situational crime prevention (p. 48)
Propositions (p. 32)	Intersubjective agreement (p. 32)
Axioms (p. 32)	Risk heterogeneity (p. 39)
Event dependency (p. 40)	Contagion (p. 40)

## **CLASS DISCUSSION EXERCISES:**

1. Bring a journal article to class for students to read. Break students down into groups and have them answer the following questions:
  - a. What is the theory used in the article?
  - b. Identify the variables used in the article.
  - c. Does the article test a hypothesis? If so, explain it.
  - d. Is the research applied in nature?

Have each group select a spokesperson and then compare answers between groups.

2. Ask students to find relevant items (journal articles, newspaper or magazine articles) that portray a theory and a paradigm.
3. Have students bring a law or public policy to class. Discuss how the law or policy has roots in theory and research. Ask the class if they have any suggestions for further research that may clarify or update the law or policy.
4. Start with a well known theory and have students discuss how they think this theory developed. Then have them decide if deduction or induction was used.

### **LECTURE SUGGESTIONS:**

1. Show a video in class from the History Channel or Arts & Entertainment dealing with crime and criminals. (There are great series on both of these networks that would be instructive and most videos are less than \$30.) After viewing the piece, discuss the following with students:
  - a. What could explain the behavior exhibited in the video?
  - b. Have them identify a theory and/or paradigm that may explain what they saw.
  - c. Have students develop a hypothesis based upon the video that could be tested.
  - d. Could their hypothesis be used in applied research?
  - e. Ask students to identify policy implications of what they have seen.
2. Ask students to identify as many different explanations of crime as they can. Discuss which of these explanations has caused or could cause a paradigm shift. Discuss the policy implications associated with paradigm shifts. Include in the discussion the areas of education, punishment, law enforcement tactics, rehabilitation, etc.
3. Select a theory to be discussed in class. Ask students what the paradigm is that represents that theory. Follow up by asking if they can identify other theories that may come from that paradigm.
4. Discuss a new criminal law that has been enacted in your state. Tell your students who introduced that bill and identify the political party, race and gender of the legislator who introduced the bill. Then ask the students to suggest theories that may have been the basis for the bill based upon its content and the demographics of the person who introduced the bill.

## **Web Exercises for Chapter 2**

The companion web site for *Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology* includes web links to pages that expand on or illustrate different topics covered in this chapter. To ensure that you always have access to live, correct Web links for the Web sites referenced in the following exercises, we provide the necessary links on the companion Web site for *Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology* at

<http://www.thomsonedu.com/criminaljustice/maxfield>. Once at the companion Web site, select this specific chapter, click on “Chapter Resources,” then click on “Web Links.”

### **Critical Theory**

The American Society of Criminology Division of Critical Criminology is a resource for those interested in a class of theories associated with leftist ideology. Critical criminology treats crime largely as a political construct, and criminal justice agencies are viewed as instruments for maintaining political control. Critical criminology theories guide research and its interpretation.

[<http://www.critcrim.org/>]

### **Routine Activity Theory**

To learn more about routine activity theory, visit this web site, maintained by a crime prevention unit in the British Home Office. You'll find links to a few publications that draw heavily on routine activity theory.

[<http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/skills08.htm>]

### **Environmental Criminology**

Several sites offer resources based in environmental criminology. The Crime Prevention Service at Rutgers University is one example.

[<http://crimeprevention.rutgers.edu/index.htm>]

Principles associated with crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) underlie services available from the Vancouver Design Centre for CPTED.

[<http://www.designcentreforcpted.org/Pages/EnvCrim.html>]

One of the most fascinating spin-offs from CPTED is the Design Against Crime (DAC) Research Centre, based in England. Here you will find information and links about a variety of research projects and consumer goods featuring design-based crime prevention. For example, check out the chair designed to

protect against the theft of hand bags. Or visit the [karrysafe.com](http://www.karrysafe.com) site, where you can buy the high-security Karryfront screamer bag that provides: "Secure portable storage for all makes of laptop and accessories. Inbuilt anti-attack alarm will automatically start screaming if the bag is removed by force from your possession."

[<http://www.designagainstcrime.com/index.html>]

## **CHAPTER 2 –PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

### **NEW YORK'S SECRET? PURPOSEIVE ACTION**

As we saw in Chapter 1, findings from the Kansas City Preventive Patrol Experiment appeared to contradict a basic tenet of policing. Simply adding more police patrol officers, and even doubling the number on duty in experimental beats, had no discernible impact on reported crimes, arrests, and people's perceptions of crime problems. However, people commonly misstate these results, claiming that the Kansas City study found that the police have no impact on crime. A more accurate summary, though still something of an oversimplification, is this: *Undirected police patrol has little impact on crime*. One New York police officer put it this way: "Random patrol produces random results."

The most fundamental policing change introduced in New York City in the early 1990s was more direction, or purposive action. Police leaders guided patrol and other department units in two related ways. First, police activities were based on weekly analyses of current crime data, known as Compstat. Crime analysis in New York became the driving force behind monitoring crime problems in different areas and developing new police tactics to address them. Contrast *weekly* sessions, in which the previous week's crime reports in a city of over 7 million people were analyzed by the department's top commanders, to the more common *annual* review of a year's total crime figures. Compare this with one of the key research activities we have considered in this chapter—observation—and think about the difference between annual and weekly observations of crime data.

The second, and more interesting, way New York's police became more purposive was due to the influence of criminological theory. In recent writings, former Police Commissioner William Bratton (1998, 1999) describes how he was attracted to the logic of "broken windows," a theoretical perspective first described by James Q. Wilson and George Kelling (1982). Wilson and Kelling argued that serious crime was in part a product of low-level crime and disorder. If public drunkenness, rowdy groups of youths, and other signs of disorder were tolerated in a community, offenders would come to believe that they could get away with more serious offending.

How might this theory be useful to a police executive seeking to reduce crime through purposive action? As Bratton and others argue (Kelling and

Coles, 1996; Silverman, 1999), if police take action against the relatively minor problems of public drinking, prostitution, and other so called quality-of-life offenses, then declines in serious crime will follow. As chief of New York's Transit police in the early 1990s, Bratton demanded stricter enforcement against quality-of-life offenses on the city's subway, along with other minor crimes unique to the subway, such as fare evasion. Sharp declines in serious crime on subway trains and platforms followed. After becoming commissioner of police, Bratton again called for stricter enforcement against minor offenses, and again rates of serious crime fell throughout the city.

This example illustrates deductive reasoning by police commanders in New York. But police also develop theories of action inductively. In fact, Hans Toch and J. Douglas Grant (1991) refer to police as street-level social scientists whose job routinely calls for action research. Police observe problems and patterns, develop a tentative explanation for them, and then either propose or take some action in response. That's grounded theory —police action grounded in the inductive accumulation of observations.

In the New York case, the police executive used a compelling theory to develop strategies and tactics for attacking crime in New York. This was purposive action. Empirical results—for example, the number of homicides fell from around 1500 in 1994 to 584 in 2002—seemed to support the theory's predictions. So, not only do we have sharp declines in crime following changes in police actions, we also have a social science theory on which those police actions were based.

Does this prove that crime really went down because of police action? Or does it prove the validity of broken windows theory? Such questions raise issues of cause and effect, which are discussed in Chapter 4.