

CHAPTER 1  
Thinking Critically about Crime

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Which of the following is not included as a key component of the classic definition of criminology?
  - a. the breaking of laws
  - b. society's reaction to the breaking of laws
  - \*c. the effect on the victim of the breaking of laws
  - d. the making of laws
2. What is crime?
  - \*a. behavior that is prohibited by laws and has prescribed punishments
  - b. any behavior that is violent
  - c. standards of behavior intended to harm society and individuals
  - d. any behavior that is immoral
3. Who proposed the classic definition of criminology?
  - a. Robert Merton
  - b. Dennis Rader
  - c. Terrie Moffitt
  - \*d. Edwin Sutherland
4. What is deviance?
  - a. standards of behavior intended to harm society and individuals
  - b. behavior that is prohibited by laws and has prescribed punishments
  - \*c. behaviors that violate cultural norms, rules, or laws
  - d. any behavior that is violent
5. Which type of law governs private rights and settles disputes between citizens?
  - a. criminal
  - \*b. civil
  - c. political
  - d. social
6. This type of law is most important to ensuring that society is orderly and citizens feel safe.
  - \*a. criminal
  - b. civil
  - c. political
  - d. social
7. Which of the following is not a common social reaction to crime?
  - a. fear
  - b. disgust
  - c. fascination

\*d. All the answers are correct.

8. Which of the following is not a key reason why most members of society have a distorted or biased view of serial murderers?

a. Serial killings are sensational.

b. Our culture encourages the creation of instant celebrities.

c. The globalization of the media means that all offenses are locally reported.

\*d. Most people know someone who has been a victim of a serial killer.

9. What does the interdisciplinary nature of criminology refer to?

a. the effect of crime on all levels of society

\*b. the fact that criminology draws on other academic disciplines

c. the effect of crime on politics

d. the development of criminology as a professional academic discipline

10. These forces control how crime is defined and how criminal law works.

a. psychological

b. social

\*c. political

d. biological

11. Which of the following fields of study would apply to an attempt to understand how an offender determines that the reward obtained from selling drugs is worth the risk of getting caught by the police?

\*a. economics

b. law

c. political science

d. biology

12. These standards of behavior are intended to harm society and individuals.

a. pro-social

b. civil

\*c. antisocial

d. social

13. Because laws are made by people to control people, what are criminologists interested in?

a. how laws are made

b. what activities laws control

c. who laws control

\*d. All the answers are correct.

14. Which of the following fields of study would apply to an attempt to determine if offenders are in some way physically different from non-offenders?

a. political science

b. sociology

\*c. biology

d. economics

15. This field emerged to improve our understanding of the social problem of crime.

a. sociology

\*b. criminology

c. criminal justice

d. penology

16. This field emerged to improve our understanding of the social mechanisms for dealing with crime.

a. sociology

b. criminology

\*c. criminal justice

d. penology

17. What does recidivism refer to?

a. the ability of the criminal justice system to deter individuals from breaking the law

\*b. repeat offending

c. how offenders are punished

d. removing offenders from the criminal justice system prior to formal processing

Answer: b

18. Recidivism may be measured by all but which of the following?

a. rate of re-arrest

b. rate of reconviction

c. rate of re-incarceration

\*d. rate of release on probation

19. This theory focuses on ways to make lawbreaking so unattractive that offenders will decide not to break the law anymore.

\*a. deterrence

b. social disorganization

c. labeling

d. strain

20. What does "empirical validity" mean in terms of theory?

\*a. that a tool is measuring what it is designed to measure

b. that a theory explains a range of behavior

c. the economical use of words

d. that a theory is based on an ideology

21. A crime-prevention program that focuses on improving schools and providing jobs in a neighborhood so residents will be more invested in the community and less likely to break the law would be based on which of the following theories?

a. deterrence theory

\*b. social disorganization theory

- c. labeling theory
- d. strain theory

22. Which would labeling theory claim?

- a. If the consequences of breaking the law are sufficiently unattractive, people will not do it any more.
- b. Neighborhoods with transient, low-skilled, and alienated residents tend to have more crime.
- \*c. Identifying someone as an offender may damage his or her prospects for employment, emotional relationships, and so on.
- d. Juveniles who are never fully integrated into society are more likely to have criminal careers as adults.

23. Which of the following questions would be most likely to be asked by a criminologist, as opposed to a criminal justice practitioner?

- a. How can we prevent an offender from recidivating?
- b. How can we ensure inmate safety in a juvenile detention facility?
- \*c. Why do some offenders begin breaking the law early in life whereas others do not begin breaking the law until much later?
- d. What can we do to ensure greater professionalism among correctional staff?

24. What do white-collar offenses involve?

- a. some form of violent behavior
- b. offenses committed by middle-class offenders
- \*c. the offender's place of employment or business
- d. offenses which cannot result in incarceration

25. According to criminological research, which group comprises most offenders in the United States?

- \*a. young white males
- b. young black males
- c. older black males
- d. young females

26. Who developed strain theory?

- a. Terrie Moffitt
- b. Edwin Sutherland
- \*c. Robert Merton
- d. Steve W. Stephens

27. According to strain theory, what is strain similar to?

- \*a. stress
- b. labeling
- c. social conflict
- d. deterrence

28. According to Merton, some crime occurs because people feel worthless if they cannot meet

this goal of American society.

- a. getting a college education
- \*b. amassing material wealth
- c. getting elected to public office
- d. having a job

29. A major proposition of this theory is that crime is learned through the frequency, duration, priority, and intensity of interactions with significant people who provide definitions favorable to the violation of law.

- a. strain theory
- b. labeling theory
- c. conflict theory
- \*d. differential association theory

30. What do conflict theorists consider to be at the root of most crime?

- a. the bad choices of individuals
- b. disorganized neighborhoods
- c. genetics
- \*d. impoverishment

31. This type of crime consists of violent offenses and common property-related offenses such as theft, vandalism, and arson.

- a. white-collar crime
- b. civil crime
- c. statistical crime
- \*d. street crime

32. Traditionally, which of the following offenses has the criminal justice system treated most leniently?

- a. burglary
- b. robbery
- c. theft
- \*d. white-collar crime

33. According to conflict theorists, which is the defining difference between the treatment of street offenders and white-collar offenders?

- a. the violent nature of most street crime
- \*b. the lifestyle and social class of white-collar offenders
- c. the admiration police officers have for some street offenders
- d. the sex and race of street offenders

34. What can the development of criminological theory be used to do?

- a. develop policies to prevent crime
- b. diminish the effect of crime on victims
- c. construct a just response to crime
- \*d. all of the above

35. This is a statement or set of statements that explains a concept and that has withstood repeated tests and can be used to make inferences about other concepts.

- \*a. theory
- b. strain
- c. criminal law
- d. legislation

## ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. List and explain the three elements of Edwin Sutherland's classic definition of criminology. Why is each element important?
2. Explain why society's reaction to the breaking of laws is so complex. Do you think public interest in crime, even among people who have never personally been victimized, is a good thing? Explain your view.
3. Explain the similarities and differences between criminology and criminal justice. Do you think they are two separate disciplines that overlap or two aspects of the same field of study? Explain your opinion.
4. Explain why white-collar offenders tend to be more treated more leniently than street-crime offenders. Do you agree or disagree with way the criminal justice system has treated white-collar offenders? Explain your views. Why has our treatment of white-collar offenders changed in recent years?
5. Deterrence theory, labeling theory, and social disorganization theory all have the potential to reduce recidivism. For each of these theories, describe a social program based on the theory and explain how it would be expected to reduce recidivism.