



- > UNDERSTAND QUICKLY
- > REVISE EFFECTIVELY
- > TAKE EXAMS WITH CONFIDENCE

CRIMINOLOGY

NOEL CROSS

'Provides essential advice on examination technique and ways to maximise marks.'

Nigel Rourke, Lecturer in Criminology & Social Sciences, University of Cumbria

LawExpress

CRIMINOLOGY

3 WHO COMMITS CRIME?

- Identification of evidence which contradicts this view – for example, the Offender Index shows that only 5 percent of those convicted in court are children.
- Identification of other factors which might have a greater influence of who commits crime than age in terms of individual factors – for example, the Cambridge Study's focus on personality type and low IQ.
- Identification of other factors which might have a greater influence of who commits crime than age in terms of social factors – for example critical criminology's focus on the hidden relationship between wealth and crime
- Conclusions summarising the essay's arguments and explaining the essay's position on the claim in the question.



Make your answer stand out

- Be critical of the assertion that official statistics and research can tell us everything there is to know about who commits crime, in terms of knowledge about crime which is not committed because of poverty.
- When discussing particular self-report studies, show knowledge of how these studies were constructed, and don't be afraid to critique their methodological weaknesses.
- Pay particular attention to the strengths and weaknesses of the longitudinal Cambridge Study in terms of what it tells us about who commits crime and how much influence its risk-based and positivist assumptions have had (and should have had) on criminal justice policy in England and Wales.

READ TO IMPRESS

- Box, S. (1981) *Deviance, Reality and Society* (2nd edn) London: Holt, Rinehart and Wilson.
- Budd, T., Sharp, C. and Mayhew, P. (2005) *Offending in England and Wales: First results from the Crime and justice survey*, Home Office Research Study no. 275, London: Home Office.
- Flood-Page, C., Campbell, S., Harrington, V. and Miller, J. (2000) *Youth Crime: Findings from the 1998/99 youth lifestyles survey*, Home Office Research Study no. 209, London: Home Office.
- McAra, L. and McVie, S. (2010) 'Youth Crime and Justice: Key messages from the Edinburgh study of youth transitions and crime', *Criminal Justice and Criminology*, **10**(2): 179–209.
- Piquero, A.R, Farrington, D.P. and Blumstein, A. (2007), *Key Issues in Criminal Career Research: New analyses of the Cambridge study in delinquent development*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

www.pearsoned.co.uk/lawexpress



Go online to access more revision support, including quizzes to test your knowledge, sample questions with answer guidelines, podcasts you can download and more!

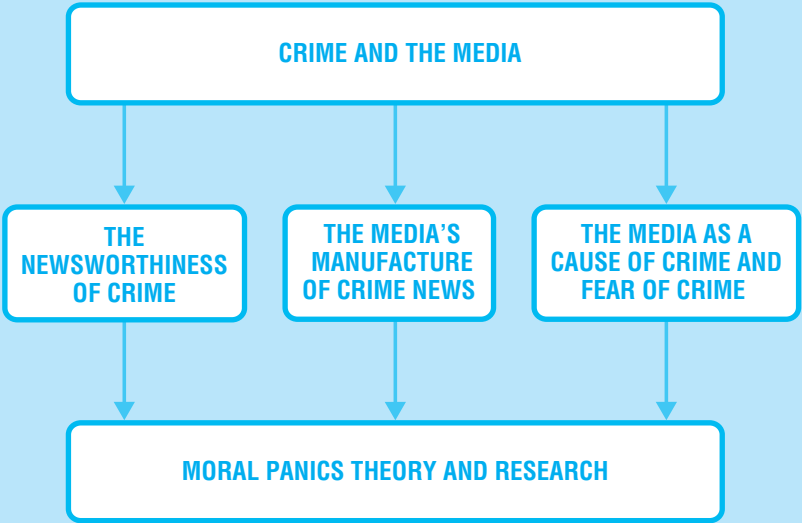
Crime and the media

Revision checklist

Essential points you should know:

- ☐ How (and how accurately) the different forms of media portray crime and offenders
- ☐ What is known about the effects of media images of crime and offenders as a cause of crime
- ☐ What is known about the effect of media images of crime and offenders as a cause of public fear of crime
- ☐ The idea of 'moral panics' and the evidence for their existence
- ☐ Differences in media coverage of different types of crime

 **Topic map**



■ Introduction

The extent, and accuracy, of the information which the media produce about crime is a vital area of criminological study.

The nature of media in today's society is more complex and diverse than ever before. Media information can now be sent around the world almost instantaneously and, as a result, is a constant presence in everyday life. More importantly for criminologists, the media are where many people derive what they know (or think they know) about the nature and extent of crime, and crime is an essential element of both factual and fictional media coverage.

ASSESSMENT ADVICE

Essay and exam questions on the media and crime can take a variety of forms, but several key themes can be identified. Firstly, there is the issue of how, and how accurately, the media represents the nature and extent of crime and whether the media's manufacturing of crime-related information represents particular social interests and/or marginalises certain social groups. Secondly, there is the question of whether the media is capable of actually causing crime (and fear of crime) through the ways in which it portrays different crime types, especially violence. The question of whether the media is capable of generating 'moral panics' about a particular crime-related topic is a variant of this topic. Thirdly, there is the issue of whether factual and fictional portrayals of crime in the media have the same impact on those who experience them.

■ Sample question

Could you answer this question? Below is a typical essay question that could arise on this topic. Guidelines on answering the question are included at the end of this chapter. Another sample question and guidance on tackling it can be found on the companion website.

ESSAY QUESTION

Critically discuss the view that criminology has proved that the media not only distorts the reality of crime, but is also capable of causing crime directly.