

Media and Crime Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



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SAMPLE

Questions

- 1. What combination of forces has resulted in young people experiencing extended infantilization?**
 - A. Social media influences**
 - B. Economic pressures**
 - C. All of the above**
 - D. Parental control**
- 2. What event is considered the most compelling postmodern media "performance" according to the authors?**
 - A. The 2008 financial crisis**
 - B. The Moon landing**
 - C. 9/11**
 - D. The fall of the Berlin Wall**
- 3. What role do visual images play in crime and justice narratives?**
 - A. They hinder understanding of the issues**
 - B. They primarily entertain rather than inform**
 - C. They shape public perception and sentiment**
 - D. They only reflect historical crime data**
- 4. Cesare Lombroso is known for studying the bodies of which type of individuals?**
 - A. Psychopaths**
 - B. Executed criminals**
 - C. Political prisoners**
 - D. Victims of crime**
- 5. According to Foucault, what does panoptic surveillance primarily target?**
 - A. The body**
 - B. The environment**
 - C. The soul**
 - D. The mind**

- 6. What is the main focus of media influence on crime?**
- A. The portrayal and representation of crime and criminals in media outlets**
 - B. The effectiveness of law enforcement in reducing crime**
 - C. The role of community in preventing crime**
 - D. The historical context of crime rates**
- 7. What is a potential negative effect of sensational crime reporting?**
- A. It may promote informed community discussions**
 - B. It can lead to desensitization towards real crime**
 - C. It encourages justice reforms**
 - D. It focuses on rehabilitation success stories**
- 8. How do crime dramas and documentaries differ in their representation of crime?**
- A. Dramas often provide factual accounts, while documentaries fictionalize events**
 - B. Dramas often fictionalize and condense events for entertainment, while documentaries aim to provide factual accounts**
 - C. They both present the same information in different formats**
 - D. Dramas focus solely on historical accuracy, while documentaries exaggerate facts**
- 9. What theory suggests that media coverage amplifies public fear of crime?**
- A. The Social Learning Theory**
 - B. The Spiral of Silence Theory**
 - C. The Cultivation Theory**
 - D. The Framing Theory**
- 10. Which group is typically not seen as contemporary moral crusaders?**
- A. Nonprofits**
 - B. Public**
 - C. Government agencies**
 - D. Religious organizations**

Answers

SAMPLE

1. C
2. C
3. C
4. B
5. C
6. A
7. B
8. B
9. B
10. B

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Explanations

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1. What combination of forces has resulted in young people experiencing extended infantilization?

- A. Social media influences**
- B. Economic pressures**
- C. All of the above**
- D. Parental control**

The combination of social media influences, economic pressures, and parental control contributes to the phenomenon of extended infantilization among young people. Social media plays a significant role by often promoting messages that encourage youth to maintain a carefree, playful persona, which can trivialize adult responsibilities and roles. The curated nature of social media makes it challenging for young people to transition into adulthood when they are continuously exposed to content that emphasizes youthfulness rather than maturity. Economic pressures also factor into this dynamic. Many young individuals face rising costs of living, student debt, and job market challenges that can delay their ability to achieve traditional markers of adulthood—such as buying a home, starting a family, or establishing a stable career. This economic context can lead to a prolonged dependency on parental figures and an extended period of youth-oriented culture. Parental control further compounds this situation. Many parents today are more involved in their children's lives, sometimes to the point of overprotection, which can inhibit the development of independence and self-reliance in young adults. This nurturing approach, while often well-intentioned, might inadvertently reinforce a delay in taking on adult responsibilities. Together, these forces create an environment where young people may find it easier to remain in a state of youthful dependency,

2. What event is considered the most compelling postmodern media "performance" according to the authors?

- A. The 2008 financial crisis**
- B. The Moon landing**
- C. 9/11**
- D. The fall of the Berlin Wall**

The event considered the most compelling postmodern media "performance" is 9/11 due to its profound impact on the way media is consumed and understood in contemporary society. The attacks on September 11, 2001, not only resulted in immediate, unprecedented media coverage—often described as a real-time event broadcast to millions worldwide—but they also transformed the nature of news reporting and the public's relationship with media. On that day, the world witnessed a highly produced narrative, where television screens became the focal point for millions, shaping perceptions and realities as the events unfolded. This convergence of media and real-world terror illustrated the potency of media in constructing narratives and influencing public opinion. The immediacy of the broadcast, the visual spectacle of the towers collapsing, and the integration of expert commentary created a performance-like atmosphere, highlighting how media can frame massive sociopolitical events. Furthermore, the aftermath of 9/11 saw a shift in media priorities, with an emphasis on security, terrorism, and nationalism. This pivotal moment not only affected how events are reported but also how audiences engage with media content, marking it as a defining example of postmodern performance in media.

3. What role do visual images play in crime and justice narratives?

- A. They hinder understanding of the issues**
- B. They primarily entertain rather than inform**
- C. They shape public perception and sentiment**
- D. They only reflect historical crime data**

Visual images are powerful tools in shaping public perception and sentiment regarding crime and justice narratives. They can evoke emotional responses, highlight certain aspects of crime, and influence how audiences interpret events. For instance, images shown in news coverage can create a sense of urgency or fear, suggest particular narratives about the nature of crime, and even impact attitudes toward specific groups associated with criminal activity. This shaping of perception extends to the community's views on criminal justice policies and the overall safety of their environment. In contrast, visual images do not merely entertain or distract from the issues; rather, they play a significant role in conveying information and framing discussions about crime. They provide context and can enhance understanding, though they can also oversimplify complex narratives. Additionally, while images may reflect historical trends, their main function in the present context is to influence how crime and justice are perceived today, rather than merely recounting past data.

4. Cesare Lombroso is known for studying the bodies of which type of individuals?

- A. Psychopaths**
- B. Executed criminals**
- C. Political prisoners**
- D. Victims of crime**

Cesare Lombroso is recognized for his contributions to criminology, particularly through his theory of the "born criminal." He studied executed criminals' bodies to uncover physical characteristics that he believed indicated a predisposition to criminal behavior. Lombroso argued that certain biological traits could be associated with criminality, proposing that these traits were a result of atavism—the idea that criminals were evolutionary throwbacks to more primitive humans. By examining the physical attributes of executed criminals, Lombroso aimed to identify specific features that he thought could be used to classify individuals as criminals based on their anatomy. This perspective laid the groundwork for later studies on the relationship between biology and criminal behavior, making his focus on executed criminals a foundational aspect of his work.

5. According to Foucault, what does panoptic surveillance primarily target?

- A. The body**
- B. The environment**
- C. The soul**
- D. The mind**

Foucault's concept of panoptic surveillance, derived from his analysis of Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon design, primarily targets the soul. This notion reflects a power structure that seeks to control individuals not just through physical means but by instilling a sense of self-regulation and internalized discipline. In this surveillance model, individuals are aware that they may be watched at any moment, which leads them to monitor their own behaviors, thoughts, and moral standings. The panopticon fosters a kind of psychological control where the external gaze prompts individuals to govern their own actions in accordance with societal norms and expectations, shaping their very sense of self or "soul." The focus is on the internalization of power and the way individuals come to regulate their own behaviors because they feel they are constantly being observed, thus intertwining surveillance with moral and ethical self-policing. In contrast, the other options, while they may relate to various aspects of control or governance, do not capture the full depth of Foucault's argument regarding panoptic surveillance. The body might be subject to physical control, the environment can be monitored or manipulated, and the mind might be influenced, but the soul represents the core aspect of identity and self-regulation that Foucault highlighted.

6. What is the main focus of media influence on crime?

- A. The portrayal and representation of crime and criminals in media outlets**
- B. The effectiveness of law enforcement in reducing crime**
- C. The role of community in preventing crime**
- D. The historical context of crime rates**

The primary focus of media influence on crime is centered around the portrayal and representation of crime and criminals in media outlets. This encompasses how crime events are depicted in news reports, television shows, films, and other media platforms. Such portrayals can shape public perceptions of crime, influence attitudes toward law enforcement, affect policy discussions, and even alter individuals' fears and understanding of safety. Media representation can overemphasize certain types of crime, such as violent crime, leading the public to perceive crime rates as higher than they actually are. This misrepresentation can also contribute to stereotypes and stigmatization of particular communities or groups. Furthermore, the impact of sensationalized narratives can drive public discussions about crime and justice, influencing everything from political agendas to community fears and even the behavior of potential offenders. By examining the intricate relationship between media portrayals and public perception, scholars and practitioners can gain deeper insights into the broader societal implications of media influence on crime and criminal justice policy. This understanding is essential for developing responsible media practices and informed community responses to crime issues.

7. What is a potential negative effect of sensational crime reporting?

- A. It may promote informed community discussions**
- B. It can lead to desensitization towards real crime**
- C. It encourages justice reforms**
- D. It focuses on rehabilitation success stories**

The potential negative effect of sensational crime reporting lies in its ability to lead to desensitization towards real crime. When media coverage becomes sensationalized, it often emphasizes extreme or violent aspects of crime while potentially sensationalizing or exaggerating the facts. This can create a distorted perception of crime as an everyday occurrence, leading audiences to become numb or indifferent to its seriousness and impact. Over time, consistent exposure to sensationalized crime stories may cause the public to react with less empathy or concern when faced with real crime situations. As the audience gets desensitized, their understanding of the consequences of crime may diminish, resulting in a reduced emotional and social response towards actual victims and criminal behavior. This phenomenon can have widespread implications for community safety and the public's engagement with criminal justice issues.

8. How do crime dramas and documentaries differ in their representation of crime?

- A. Dramas often provide factual accounts, while documentaries fictionalize events**
- B. Dramas often fictionalize and condense events for entertainment, while documentaries aim to provide factual accounts**
- C. They both present the same information in different formats**
- D. Dramas focus solely on historical accuracy, while documentaries exaggerate facts**

Dramas and documentaries serve distinct purposes and thus represent crime in fundamentally different ways. Dramas often take creative liberties, fictionalizing and condensing real events to enhance narrative engagement and appeal to an audience seeking entertainment. These narratives may prioritize plot twists, character development, and emotional arcs over strict adherence to factual accuracy, allowing for a more dramatic presentation of crime. On the other hand, documentaries are focused on delivering factual accounts. They aim to inform viewers about real events, often using interviews, archival footage, and expert commentary to provide a thorough understanding of a crime. Their primary goal is to educate and provide insights based on actual occurrences, while maintaining a commitment to the truth of the matter. This distinction highlights the contrasting approaches of the two genres: dramatic narratives prioritize storytelling and entertainment, while documentaries emphasize factual representation and educational value. In this context, the correct answer effectively captures their differing representations of crime in media.

9. What theory suggests that media coverage amplifies public fear of crime?

- A. The Social Learning Theory**
- B. The Spiral of Silence Theory**
- C. The Cultivation Theory**
- D. The Framing Theory**

The Spiral of Silence Theory is relevant in understanding how media coverage can amplify public fear of crime. This theory posits that individuals are less likely to express their opinions if they perceive that their views are in the minority. In the context of media representation, if crime stories dominate the news cycle, those who feel fearful or concerned about crime may become increasingly silent due to the media portrayal that suggests crime is pervasive. Consequently, this creates a feedback loop where the media's focus on crime generates heightened worry, while simultaneously discouraging open discourse about differing perspectives or levels of fear. In this way, the Spiral of Silence Theory sheds light on how sensationalized or prevalent media coverage of crime can lead to a collective feeling of anxiety in the public, thereby amplifying fears rather than accurately reflecting the statistical realities of crime rates. This amplification can skew public perception, making crime seem more widespread and threatening than it might actually be.

10. Which group is typically not seen as contemporary moral crusaders?

- A. Nonprofits**
- B. Public**
- C. Government agencies**
- D. Religious organizations**

The group most commonly not viewed as contemporary moral crusaders is the public. While the public can play a significant role in shaping societal norms and values, they often react to moral issues rather than initiate them. Instead of actively campaigning for moral causes, the public typically reflects the moral sentiments of the various organizations and leaders within society. In contrast, nonprofits often advocate for social change and champion moral causes, focusing on issues like poverty, injustice, and equality. Government agencies may also engage in moral crusades through policies and regulations that aim to uphold specific ethical standards and societal norms. Religious organizations frequently take strong stances on moral issues as part of their mission and are known for leading movements advocating for particular values or ethical perspectives. Thus, the public, while influential, is not typically seen in the same proactive light as the other groups.