

**GRADUATE QUALIFYING EXAMINATION**

**CRIME, LAW, AND DEVIANCE**

**August 2002**

**PART I: THEORY**

This section of the examination samples your knowledge of a major theoretical approaches and concerns within the specialization of crime, law, and deviance. Select any one (1) of the two questions below and answer as thoroughly and specifically as possible within the space and time allotted. All questions require specific citations to literature as illustrations and specifications of your response.

1. Discuss the current state of the strain theory of delinquency/crime today. How does generalized strain theory relate to, and differ from, classical strain theory in criminology? What are some recent significant empirical studies that recently have evaluated strain theory and what are their findings? Do you think this is a viable theoretical perspective that should be further developed and applied? Give reasons. Are there empirical and/or theoretical developments in other areas of sociology that are, or could prove to be, useful in addressing the concerns and problems of strain theory?

2. What is the state of deterrence theory with respect to the explanation of crime rates and the guidance of social policy? Take the following problem as a point of departure. Crime rates in the U.S. steadily declined nationwide in the mid-to-late 1990s, especially in certain locations like New York City. Is this due to deterrence? Or is it due to other factors? Have any other criminological theories/research been used as a guide to police and criminal justice officials with respect to engineering the recent declines? What studies have addressed these questions and how have they been applied? Are there empirical and/or theoretical developments in other areas of sociology that are, or could prove to be, useful in addressing the concerns and problems of deterrence theory?

**PART II: METHODS**

This section of the examination consists of two questions about methodological considerations in this area. Answer one (1) of the questions below.

1. Recent years have seen advances in the development of mathematical/statistical approaches to the modeling of delinquent/criminal careers, especially state-dependence, population heterogeneity, and latent class Poisson regression models. These modeling approaches have

enabled researchers to address the age-crime debate and the control theory versus life course perspectives thereon. Describe these developments and their empirical applications. Have these empirical applications produced substantive results that have implications for the development of theories about crime over the life course and if so how?

2. The National Crime Victimization Surveys and the FBI Uniform Crime Reports are two different data bases for the study of crime prevalence and trends therein the U.S. Describe these two data sources and their strengths and weaknesses. Illustrate your points by reference to specific research studies that have used one or the other data source and/or made comparisons.

### **PART III: SUBSTANTIVE PROBLEMS**

This section consists of two substantive problems for you to discuss. Answer one (1) of the questions below and respond as specifically as possible.

1. Recent research has applied multi-level statistical models to further the macro-micro integration of the crime opportunity /routine activity theory of individual and household victimization risk and fear of crime with the neighborhood social disorganization theory of how community-level factors affect crime rates. Describe the theoretical traditions on which this work builds, how it advances their theoretical integration, and the empirical status of the work. How might this line of work be further extended? Are there possible connections with work on neighborhood contextual effects on the development of delinquent/criminal careers?

2. A good deal of theorizing and empirical research has addressed the subject of women and crime in recent decades. Describe the major theoretical perspectives that have been developed and some important empirical studies that have evaluated them. Have these theories and studies advanced our knowledge?