

Crime and the process of solving crimes criminology essay



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Crime analysis is a systematic process that investigators go through to help solve crimes that are similar to one another by location and specific details about the certain crime committed. Crime analysis helps to solve crimes because if the same person is committing the same crime over and over again, it is easier for law enforcement to recognize where the criminal is going to strike next. There are three different approaches to crime analysis and these are tactical crime analysis, strategic, and administrative.

In today's Criminal Justice world, there are thousands of criminal that do the same crime over and over again and do the exact same thing every single time. To help solve these crimes there is an up and coming field in Criminal Justice that helps solve these crimes and it is called Crime Analysis. Crime analysis is the examination and studying of crime patterns in certain locations that will aid in the identifying and prosecution of the suspects. There are three ways to determine crime analysis and they are tactical, strategic, and administrative. Crime analysts are always busy in what they do because they have to keep up with the current trends and patterns of crime to determine when the next crime will occur and stop it from happening. This paper will discuss the process of which crime analysts go through, as well as the three different types of crime analysis, how it will help the future of police departments by predicting when the next crime is about to occur, and this paper will also discuss the jobs in this up and coming field of crime analysis.

The process of figuring out numerous crime trends and similarities in a given location can be quite difficult at times. Therefore, there is a series of steps that a crime analyst runs through to try and determine the patterns of the

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same crime happening every night or every weekend in a close diameter of one another. In the first process, that is when the data is all collected from other sources by gathering the crime details, eyewitness reports, and as well as the police operations. With all of the information, it gets entered into numerous databases so other municipal police organizations can recover the information if the same crime is occurring in their neighborhood as well.

In the second process, the analyst sits down and actually recovers all of the information and tries to put crimes together through patterns, trends, and the location of where the crime occurred. In this process the analyst will determine the who, what, when, where, and how, of the crimes being committed so they can conclude specific details to the police officers to keep an eye on certain people and/or locations. With the specific details of certain crimes that could be linked to one another, that is when the information is put on bulletins throughout the different departments. Then after this, the administration is contacted and the police will also inform the public as well. By informing the public of a murderer in the community for example, people will be more alert to certain people who look suspicious and the public can also watch out more when the police officers cannot.

The next step in crime analysis is most likely the most important step for police departments and their employees. At this step of the process, the crime analyst has a lot of information about specific re-occurrences of a crime in an area. With that information the crime analyst will brainstorm different ideas to help seize the suspect while the suspect is committing the same crime again through the crime analyst studying. They do this by surveillance of the area, decoys or traps that the criminal will get themselves

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carried into, or if the department is able to, by putting more police officers in that area to stop the crime from happening again. The last step of this process is to study all of the facts and eyewitness reports to stop that specific crime from occurring in that area ever again.

There are three different ways that crime analyst can go about to determine crime trends and similarities in a specific situation. The three are tactical, strategic, and administrative. “ Crime Analysis supports a number of department functions including patrol deployment, special operations, and tactical units, investigations, planning and research, crime prevention, and administrative services (budgeting and program planning)”(Gottlieb, 1994, Pg. #1). When the crime analyst comes across an upcoming trend in a community there are numerous factors to affect the crime from taking place. Some of these factors include, but not limited to, is the overall geographical location of where the crimes are being committed, such as the poverty level of the community, the population, and as well as cultural factors such as religious characteristics. Other geographical factors include the climate of the community, for example during the Winter months of New York, the crime rates may decrease in result to the colder weather. In contrast to the warmer months of Summer, the crime rates will increase due to more people on the streets. One of the biggest factors to studying crime analysis is the effective strength of the police department and their employees. If the community’s police administration is not as effective and harsh punishments, the criminals will suppose that they can get away with anything they want to do. Another important factor is how the citizens of the community react to the crimes being committed because if they are concerned with the crime

problems occurring, then they will not be a part of the Neighborhood Watch when the police officers are not there 24/7 to monitor the streets.

Tactical crime analysis is the most concerned type of crime analysis because it deals with the worst of the worst crimes that is an immediate threat to the public, such as murder, rape, robbery, and burglary. The crime analyst will put together the trends by eyewitness accounts, the weapon used, the suspect's physical description, and many other similarities to put into account for determining the suspect of the crimes committed. Then during this type of crime analysis the police officers will be more alert to certain people who resemble the suspect's description and the administration will have more police officers in that particular area to stop the crime from occurring again. At the tactical level of crime analysis it also includes identifying suspects and linking the crimes together. In this phase is where the information that was processed in the strategic step is now being used to solve the crimes that have been happening over and over again in one particular area. The tactical analysis is most useful towards the investigators and patrol officers so they can keep an open eye out for suspicious activity in a certain area with specific problem that has been happening. At the tactical level of analysis they also use information for outside agencies to aid them in finding the suspects. The use of outside information from other agencies is very useful in crime analysis because if the same crime is happening in another county or state, the crime analyst can link the crimes together by similarities of the who, what, when, where, and how of the crimes committed. The Crime Analysis Unit in the city of Tempe, Arizona said that, "Tactical information links offender and modus operandi information from a

number of offenses in an attempt to provide investigative leads, help solve crime, and clear cases after apprehension and arrests” (Wong, 2009, Pg. #1). Without the tactical analysis the crimes that have been re-occurring in an area would not be able to be solved as quickly if it were not for this very important step in crime analysis.

The next type of crime analysis is the strategic analysis. “ Strategic crime analysis is the study of crime problems and other police-oriented issues to determine long-term patterns of activity as well as to evaluate police responses and organizational procedures” (Boba, 2005. Pg. #15). Strategic analysis’ main concern is to seek solutions to on-going crime problems in a certain location. They do this by gathering all of the information of trends, suspects, and crime and link them together to make a result of the similarities of the crimes committed. The strategic analyst gathers information together to find unusual crime trends and police reports from all different seasons to see if there are any similarities with the suspect’s physical description and the crimes committed. They also match the demands for police officers in a certain location. If the crime level is very high they will conduct more officers on foot and also in patrol cars to try and eliminate the problems before they turn into more larger and more dangerous crimes. The strategic analyst will also decrease the number of officers in a certain location if the crime statistics show that there is not many crimes being committed there, they will move some of those officers to where the help is really needed.

The last type of studying crime analysis is called administrative crime analysis. The administrative crime analysis’ main goal is to relate the <https://assignbuster.com/crime-and-the-process-of-solving-crimes-criminology-essay/>

information that has been made in the previous step and relay that information to the police chief and other administrative level officers, and as well as the community because they need to be informed if there is a serious crime issue in their neighborhood. They like to inform the public about crime patterns because the Neighborhood Watch is the police's best way to collect information such as the physical description of the suspect. The administrative analysis will also inform the local schools around the community to have a look-out of suspicious activities happening around the school. They also need to keep the police officers from each shift informed of the new information gathered day by day so if some information has been changed recently they will be fully up to date with the information of the crime patterns and suspects in that particular area. A lot of the administrative analyst's job is to put all of the information gathered into databases so not only can their jurisdiction have the information, but all of the surrounding jurisdictions and states as well.

They will also make reports of their crime statistics in their community to the Uniform Crime Reports to the Federal Bureau of Investigations every month and every year to make statistics about the Part I and Part II offenses in their community and relate them to other agencies in their state and other states as well. With all of the information gathered at this type of crime analysis, the administrative analysis also goes out to the public and performs speeches and presentations on the crime reports to the police administration, including the Chief, Lieutenants, Captains, and others. They can also make speeches to the citizens of the community and other agencies as well. The reasoning for the speeches and presentations is for the

economic sense of the crime analysis agency because that is how they receive grants through governmental funding or from the community funding money to the crime analysis agency.

After the crime analyst studies and looks over the information of crime trends in their community, it is time to try and solve the crimes committed and also to try and stop other crimes from happening. A very good way to determine crime trends is by using a Geographic Information System (GIS) to be used in crime mapping. The GIS overlaps other databases around the community to get more information for the crime trends by getting useful information from other community information such as the pawnshops for burglaries. Another positive attribute to the GIS is that anyone with the Internet can see where most of the serious crimes are occurring in a particular community. For example, if a family with small children is looking to move and they find out that there is an inclination of sex offenders or rape in that community, they will know beforehand. An excellent website that shows the different crime trends in a community is www.spotcrime.com.

The tactical crime analyst is the form of crime analysis that mostly uses the crime mapping for their information that they have collected. By using crime maps they can discover the crime trends that are not as noticeable that are just collected through crime reports. The crime maps examine a specific location and mark where the crimes have been committed and if there is any similarities between all of the crimes committed. The maps also help the police officers formulate strategies to aid in the detainment of the suspects.

One very effective way they also solve crimes through crime mapping is call

Problem-Oriented Policing or POP. POP is a police strategy that involved the <https://assignbuster.com/crime-and-the-process-of-solving-crimes-criminology-essay/>

identification and analysis of specific crime trends and problems that puts the community in disarray. POP and crime analysis go hand-in-hand because POP looks at the repeated incidents in the same community with related similarities with the crimes and that the crimes are harmful to both the police and the community as well. Although POP and crime analysis is not completely the same, the big different between the two is that POP is trying to figure out the problems in the community by solving the crimes more quickly and effectiveness. While crime analyst goes in depth with their information and they look at crime trends as a whole and not as one problem in a community.

Although many cases might not have a lot of information for the crime analyst to look over and attempt to solve the case, there is another obstacle to overcome and that is the time in which it takes scientist to study the amounts of evidence that is collected at the crime scene. Some other obstacles that they must overcome is because of the “CSI Effect”. This effect is because of the “CSI” drama series that every case has substantial amount of evidence and at the end of the show, there is always someone guilty. This is not the case in real life, the crime analyst has to go through every single piece of evidence thoroughly and this may take days, weeks, months, or even years to get all of the facts correct. Although this may seem like a very easy job to acquire, it is not that easy all of the time. When the crime analyst sends out evidence to be tested for suspects, this process could take a very long time due to the enormous amount of other evidence from thousands of other cases that is needed to be tested for numerous reasons. From the Nebraska State Crime Lab, the Forensic scientist stated

that, “ In 2009, the DNA section worked 251 cases with 347 assignments that included 1, 800 pieces of evidence, she said. In February of this year, the lab had six casework DNA analysts, two of whom were in training, and one database analyst”(Kindschuh). This example just goes to show that with the large amounts of evidence being sent to crime labs all around the country and the lack of personnel and employees; it will be difficult to solve these crime patterns in a timely fashion. Because of this problem, it may take crime analysis many years to figure out the crime patterns for one particular city, if this city is a very large one. For smaller towns and cities, it may be easier to collect and test evidence because there might not be as much evidence that is needed for testing. So, the job performance of a crime analyst can become very difficult at times for waiting on evidence to come back from the lab to solve crimes. But the best part of being a crime analyst is the after effect of solving crimes that have been tormenting a specific area for a long period of time and being able to put the criminal behind bars for their wrongful acts.

Since crime analysis is an up-and-coming field in the Criminal Justice system, there is a lot of schooling and training courses that have to be met before becoming a crime analyst. Not all departments hire crime analyst to do their in-depth process on the trends of crimes in their community, due to the size of their department or jurisdiction. Some jurisdictions are too small to coordinate and run such a wealthy and demanding field of criminal justice; so most of the crime analysis' jobs are in major metropolitan areas where the population is large and there is large and there is a large amount of crime occurring to determine different trends to go along with the suspects.

Although some of the large agencies that have crime analyst, most of them are not sworn in officers, the majority of them now are sworn in civilians that do not need all of the requirements that a sworn in officer would need. Since almost every agency has their own rules and restrictions to whom they hire, there is a general amount of similarities between them with schooling and the minimum requirements. To become a crime analyst they need at least a four-year degree or Bachelor's Degree majoring in Criminal Justice, Statistics, Business, Public Administration, or any other field closely related to these. With all of the schooling requirements set, they will also need to have a Department of Justice Crime Analysis Certificate. Another requirement is at least two years minimum of operational experience in any criminal justice setting. After all of the experience in schooling, the training, the courses, and the completion of the certificate and required hours the crime analyst can start searching for an occupation. " Indeed. com reports that the average salary for crime analysis is \$57, 000. Our research found that crime analyst salaries range from \$28, 000 to well over \$66, 000 a year depending on experience, education, location, and related factors" (Legal-Criminal-Justice-Schools, Pg. #1). The amount of salary someone earns is all determined on how much schooling and experience someone has who wants to become a crime analyst. Obviously the more schooling and more experience someone has to offer, the better chances of getting a job and the more salary pay they will earn in their department.

This paper discussed the up-and-coming field in the Criminal Justice system known as crime analysis. Crime analysis is a very useful strategy in a large metropolitan area to determine trends and similarities in crimes that have

been occurring every day, or every week. The crimes that have been committed might have committed at the same time of day or night, with the same weapon, or stolen a specific item from parked cars in a mall parking lot. With just that information the crime analyst can conclude that they need to have more patrol officers at the mall at a certain time of day to determine who has been breaking into the cars and stealing those specific items and why. The use of crime maps is a very distinctive and descriptive way of determining crime trends because instead of just looking at crime reports, it is clearly stated on a map of the community. The crime analysis unit is made up of three different sections and they do their own part in cracking down the individual or individuals that have been troubling the neighborhood. The three sections are the tactical unit, the strategic unit, and the administrative unit. In the tactical unit their main goal is to gather up as much information as possible to settle on a time, place, and hopefully a suspect of the re-occurring crimes. The strategic unit is using the information from the tactical unit and putting it into perspective and figuring out where the police officers need to be increased or decreased in numbers in a large community. The administrative unit sends out all of the information to their own department as well as the surrounding agencies and also to the Uniform Crime Reports for the FBI. In conclusion, without the crime analysis unit in large jurisdictions, it would be very difficult to determine the crime trends in a community and prosecute the criminals for their wrongful actions.

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