What is criminology?

- The study of crime/deviance (from a socio/socio-legal perspective)
  - Theories explaining crime
  - Criminal activities
  - Criminals
  - Victims
  - Individual/social/governmental reaction to crime
  - Harms & crime consequences
  - Crime prevention & control
  - The effectiveness of anti-crime policies
  - Policing
...web science?

- Cyberspace
  - New opportunities, challenges and risks for
    - Offenders
    - Victims
    - Law enforcement
    - Private sector, NGOs, security experts, tech companies
  - New possibilities for researching crime online (cybercrime, Internet-facilitated crime)
EXAMPLE

How the web is affecting drug trafficking practices

• What kinds of criminal opportunities the Internet offers for drug trafficking to occur?

• How these opportunities affect the organization of drug trafficking?

• What are the main challenges for law enforcement to better prevent/control/mitigate this criminal activity?
• Opportunities (communicative, informational, managerial, organizational&relational, promotional&marketing, persuasive&ploy align-building, targeting, technical, countermeasures)

• Transnationality, legal loopholes

• Cyber-hotspots (surface+deep web)

• Actors (as retailers/segmentation of the market)

• Relationships with clients

• Trust

• Buyers' awareness/ social perception
Law enforcement perception/policing

- Nationality
  - Different experiences
  - Online monitoring is something "new"
  - Building experience as they go

- Ranking/generation

- New criminal opportunities = new vulnerabilities = new dynamics of social and institutional control

- Traditional policing online: occasional, complicated, costly. Lack of: culture, expertise, resources; vastness of cyberspace
• Also new opportunities for intelligence gathering
  • Surveillance?
    • Profiling, intelligence-led searches
  • Substantial+procedural rules for gathering and handling the data
  • More responsibility to informal/alternative ways of social control. Challenge!
  • Research-informed practices, self-policing
  • How to be proactive?
Researching crime online

• The web is also a source of data for academic research
  
• Manual collection of online traces (e.g., virtual ethnography)

• Automatic collection of online traces (mirroring, monitoring, leaks e.g. web crawlers)

• Technological challenges + ethical considerations