Criminology & Web Science

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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)

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