ARTICLE SUMMARY EXAMPLE

This page provides an example of how to write your article summaries and critique them. Please follow this example in order to obtain a better score. Also note that when done correctly, it does not need to be more than a page or two in length.

Article Summary – Week 2

Smith, J. & Jones, D. (2008). The correlation between homicide and moon tides. *Journal of Mythical Criminology, 45,* 613-666.

I. Questions: Does the crime of murder fluctuate with the lunar cycle?

II. Design: The authors designed their research to examine the 2007 UCR murder rate in Houston, Texas with full moon, half moon, and no moon nights as based on the 2007 astronomical calendar for the state of Texas.

III. Results: Correlation analysis was conducted.
The authors found

A) a 0.667 correlation between murder no Moon nights.
B) Full Moon and Half Moon nights resulted in only 0.05 and 0.12 correlations respectively.

IV. Discussion: Based on these results, the authors concluded that murders are more likely to occur on moonless nights.

A) Contrary to popular myth, a full moon night does not result in more homicides. They suggested that this relationship may be due to the more extreme darkness in the streets, making it easier for murderers to escape into the night.

B) Suggestions:
1) The authors recommended more foot patrols on moonless nights.
2) They also suggested increased street lighting.

C) Limitations:
1) The authors acknowledged that the major limitation of the study was that it only examined Houston, Texas.
2) Only 12 months were sampled.
3) Also, they did not account for nights with heavy cloud cover that have masked a partial or full moon effect.

D) Further research:
1) They suggested further research to be conducted in other cities.
2) Repeat the study over a 5 year time period.

E) Critique:
I agree with the authors that crime may be influenced by the "darkness" effect. However, most murders occur indoors where the illumination of the moon would be less pronounced. I would recommend further research into the psychological effects on the

pull of the moon's gravity on our collected consciousness to see if it is related to crimes of passion as Dr. Messer predicted in 1780.

V. Generalizations: Criminal justice agencies or policy makers could use this information to:

A) Develop police tactics on moonless nights.

B) Perhaps city councils should institute a curfew on moonless nights.

C) However, a major limitation in generalizing this research to law enforcement practice is that correlations do not mean causation. The results could be explained in many other ways than the moon.

3 - **APPENDIX**: Attached is a copy of the article. More information about the journal can be found on www.mythicalcriminology.net.