1). The third discussion question is, how prevalent is research in the media? To answer this question, I want everyone to find one news item on internet FROM THIS WEEK that has to do with research, any kind of research. Post the link on this board and write your opinion of the article which will count as your original posting. Now, choose one other person's link, read the article, and comment on the story; this will count as your response posting.

There is a major research debate going on right now in criminal justice about the role of theory in research.  Some individuals argue that theory is necessary for good research while others argue that data can be analyzed without a theoretical framework and without damaging the validity of the research.  Oftentimes, this is referred to as data mining.  In these situations, researchers will look for relationships in data (relationships between different variables) regardless of a theoretical reason to do so.

2. Thinking about this debate, what is the role of theory in social science research? Does research need to be guided by theory, or can we just look for relationships between things without a theoretical framework? Explain your reasoning!

Remember, this is a current debate in criminal justice research. I'm not looking for a 'right or wrong' answer. I'm looking for good logic and reasoning as to why you answer the way you do and how you see the role of theory in research.