

Chapter 1 : juvenile delinquency, Theories of

juvenile delinquency, theories of The topic of juvenile delinquency is a fertile area for construction of sociological theory. Three major sociological traditions, including structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism, and conflict theory, contribute to the explanation of delinquency.

Control theory provides an explanation for how behavior conforms to that which is generally expected in society. Some control theories emphasize the developmental processes during childhood by which internal constraints develop. Social control theories, however, focus primarily on external factors and the processes by which they become effective. Deviance and crime occur because of inadequate constraints. For social control theory, the underlying view of human nature includes the conception of free will, thereby giving offenders the capacity of choice, and responsibility for their behavior. As such, social control theory is aligned more with the classical school of criminology than with positivist or determinist perspectives. For the most part, social control theory postulates a shared value or belief in social norms. Even those who break laws or violate social norms are likely to share the general belief that those rules should be followed. Crime and deviance are considered predictable behaviors that society has not curtailed. Explaining conformity, particularly the process by which people are socialized to obey the rules, is the essence of social control theory. Thus, social control theory focuses on how the absence of close relationships with conventional others can free individuals from social constraints, thereby allowing them to engage in delinquency. Alternatively, other prominent criminological theories focus on how close relationships with delinquent peers or negative relationships with others can lead or compel individuals to commit delinquency. Origins of the Theory The first notions of social control theory may be found in the work of some of the Enlightenment thinkers and the classical school of criminology. One author, Thomas Hobbes, an English philosopher writing in the seventeenth century about the inherent tendency toward self-indulgence and evil that requires external restraint and the corresponding role of government, is frequently mentioned see Hobbes , first published in More often, the origin is connected to Emile Durkheim, the prolific French writer who many consider the founder of sociology and structural functionalism. In addition to explaining the condition of anomie that results from a breakdown in social norms, Durkheim also offered crime and deviance as social facts, present in all societies Durkheim , originally published in In his view, crime serves the function of identifying boundaries for behavior, which are recognized collectively in communities and reinforced by negative societal reactions. Social order is thereby maintained by the process of being socialized to avoid disapproval associated with deviant acts. This process also is the means by which boundaries are altered and social change occurs. Rules of the sociological method. Translated by Sarah A. Solovay and John H. Edited by George E. First published in Copyright renewed in Translated by John A. Spaulding and George Simpson. First published in as Le Suicide: First translated by Marcel Mauss. Translated by Everett K. Wilson and Herman Schnurer. Leviathan, or, The matter, forme and power of a commonwealth, ecclesiasticall and civil. Edited by Michael Oakeshott.

*Trait theory relies on the idea that delinquents show biological and physiological similarities to our primitive ancestors, the textbook *The Juvenile Delinquency* written by Siegel and Welsh describe it as "savage throwbacks of an earlier stage of human evolution.*

Over time, several schools of thought have developed. There were three main schools of thought in early criminological theory spanning the period from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century: Classical, Positivist, and Chicago. These schools of thought were superseded by several contemporary paradigms of criminology, such as the sub-culture, control, strain, labeling, critical criminology, cultural criminology, postmodern criminology, feminist criminology and others discussed below. The neutrality of this article is disputed. Relevant discussion may be found on the talk page. Please do not remove this message until conditions to do so are met. January The Classical school arose in the mid-nineteenth century and has its basis in utilitarian philosophy. Cesare Beccaria, [3] author of *On Crimes and Punishments* (1764), Jeremy Bentham inventor of the panopticon, and other philosophers in this school argued: It ignores the possibility of irrationality and unconscious drives as motivators. This school developed during a major reform in penology, when society began designing prisons for the sake of extreme punishment. This period also saw many legal reforms, the French Revolution, and the development of the legal system in the United States. Philosophers within this school applied the scientific method to study human behavior. Positivism comprises three segments: Enrico Ferri, a student of Lombroso, believed social as well as biological factors played a role, and believed criminals should not be held responsible when factors causing their criminality were beyond their control. Adolphe Quetelet used data and statistical analysis to study the relationship between crime and sociological factors. He found age, gender, poverty, education, and alcohol consumption were important factors to crime. Rawson used crime statistics to suggest a link between population density and crime rates, with crowded cities producing more crime. Differential association subcultural [edit] People learn crime through association. This theory was advocated by Edwin Sutherland. Interacting with antisocial peers is a major cause. Reinforcing criminal behavior makes it chronic. Where there are criminal subcultures, many individuals learn crime, and crime rates swell in those areas. Park, Ernest Burgess, and other urban sociologists at the University of Chicago. In the 1920s, Park and Burgess identified five concentric zones that often exist as cities grow, including the "zone of transition", which was identified as the most volatile and subject to disorder. Shaw focused on juvenile delinquents, finding that they were concentrated in the zone of transition. Chicago school sociologists adopted a social ecology approach to studying cities and postulated that urban neighborhoods with high levels of poverty often experience breakdown in the social structure and institutions such as family and schools. This results in social disorganization, which reduces the ability of these institutions to control behavior and creates an environment ripe for deviant behavior. Other researchers suggested an added social-psychological link. Edwin Sutherland suggested that people learn criminal behavior from older, more experienced criminals with whom they may associate. Theoretical perspectives used in criminology include psychoanalysis, functionalism, interactionism, Marxism, econometrics, systems theory, postmodernism, genetics, neuropsychology, evolutionary psychology, etc. Social structure theories[edit] This theory is applied to a variety of approaches within the bases of criminology in particular and in sociology more generally as a conflict theory or structural conflict perspective in sociology and sociology of crime. As this perspective is itself broad enough, embracing as it does a diversity of positions. Shaw of the Chicago School. These groups have different values to the social norm. These neighborhoods also tend to have high population heterogeneity. Social ecology[edit] Since the 1960s, social ecology studies have built on the social disorganization theories. Many studies have found that crime rates are associated with poverty, disorder, high numbers of abandoned buildings, and other signs of community deterioration. William Julius Wilson suggested a poverty "concentration effect", which may cause neighborhoods to be isolated from the mainstream of society and become prone to violence. Strain theory sociology Strain theory, also known as Mertonian Anomie, advanced by American sociologist Robert Merton, suggests that mainstream culture,

especially in the United States, is saturated with dreams of opportunity, freedom, and prosperity” as Merton put it, the American Dream. Most people buy into this dream, and it becomes a powerful cultural and psychological motivator. Merton also used the term anomie, but it meant something slightly different for him than it did for Durkheim. Merton saw the term as meaning a dichotomy between what society expected of its citizens and what those citizens could actually achieve. Therefore, if the social structure of opportunities is unequal and prevents the majority from realizing the dream, some of those dejected will turn to illegitimate means crime in order to realize it. Others will retreat or drop out into deviant subcultures such as gang members, or what he calls " hobos ". Robert Agnew developed this theory further to include types of strain which were not derived from financial constraints. This is known as general strain theory ". Criminal acts may result when youths conform to norms of the deviant subculture. A further study by the Chicago school looked at gangs and the influence of the interaction of gang leaders under the observation of adults. Control theories[edit] Another approach is made by the social bond or social control theory. Instead of looking for factors that make people become criminal, these theories try to explain why people do not become criminal. Travis Hirschi identified four main characteristics: On the other hand, if these factors are not present, a person is more likely to become a criminal. Hirschi expanded on this theory with the idea that a person with low self control is more likely to become criminal. As opposed to most criminology theories, these do not look at why people commit crime but rather why they do not commit crime. Someone wants a big yacht but does not have the means to buy one. If the person cannot exert self-control, he or she might try to get the yacht or the means for it in an illegal way, whereas someone with high self-control will more likely either wait, deny themselves of what want or seek an intelligent intermediate solution, such as joining a yacht club to use a yacht by group consolidation of resources without violating social norms. For families of low socio-economic status, a factor that distinguishes families with delinquent children, from those who are not delinquent, is the control exerted by parents or chaperonage. Social network analysis[edit].

Chapter 3 : Juvenile Justice: Juvenile Delinquency Theories

Theories That Explain the Correlates & Causes of Delinquency. No single theoretical orientation can adequately explain the multiple variables and factors that cause delinquent behavior, so a number of criminologists have taken the best parts of different theories and combined them in a single general or integrated theory.

There is general agreement that behavior, including antisocial and delinquent behavior, is the result of a complex interplay of individual biological and genetic factors and environmental factors, starting during fetal development and continuing throughout life Bock and Goode. Clearly, genes affect biological development, but there is no biological development without environmental input. Thus, both biology and environment influence behavior. Many children reach adulthood without involvement in serious delinquent behavior, even in the face of multiple risks. Although risk factors may help identify which children are most in need of preventive interventions, they cannot identify which particular children will become serious or chronic offenders. It has long been known that most adult criminals were involved in delinquent behavior as children and adolescents; most delinquent children and adolescents, however, do not grow up to be adult criminals Robins. Similarly, most serious, chronically delinquent children and adolescents experience a number of risk factors at various levels, but most children and adolescents with risk factors do not become serious, chronic delinquents. Furthermore, any individual factor contributes only a small part to the increase in risk. It is, however, widely recognized that the more risk factors a child or adolescent experiences, the higher their risk for delinquent behavior. Page 67 Share Cite Suggested Citation: Juvenile Crime, Juvenile Justice. The National Academies Press. Some studies focus on behavior that meets diagnostic criteria for conduct disorder or other antisocial behavior disorders; others look at aggressive behavior, or lying, or shoplifting; still others rely on juvenile court referral or arrest as the outcome of interest. Furthermore, different risk factors and different outcomes may be more salient at some stages of child and adolescent development than at others. Much of the literature that has examined risk factors for delinquency is based on longitudinal studies, primarily of white males. Some of the samples were specifically chosen from high-risk environments. Care must be taken in generalizing this literature to girls and minorities and to general populations. Nevertheless, over the past 20 years, much has been learned about risks for antisocial and delinquent behavior. This chapter is not meant to be a comprehensive overview of all the literature on risk factors. Rather it focuses on factors that are most relevant to prevention efforts. For reviews of risk factor literature, see, for example, Hawkins et al. The chapter discusses risk factors for offending, beginning with risks at the individual level, including biological, psychological, behavioral, and cognitive factors. Social-level risk factors are discussed next; these include family and peer relationships. Finally, community-level risk factors, including school and neighborhood attributes, are examined. Although individual, social, and community-level factors interact, each level is discussed separately for clarity. These individual factors include age, gender, complications during pregnancy and delivery, impulsivity, aggressiveness, and substance use. Some factors operate before birth prenatal or close to, during, and shortly after birth perinatal ; some can be identified in early childhood; and other factors may not be evident until late childhood or during adolescence. To fully appreciate the development of these individual characteristics and their relations to delinquency, one needs to study the development of the individual in interaction with the environment. In order to simplify presentation of the research, however, this section deals only with individual factors. Age Studies of criminal activity by age consistently find that rates of offending begin to rise in preadolescence or early adolescence, reach a peak in Page 68 Share Cite Suggested Citation: Some lawbreaking experience at some time during adolescence is nearly universal in American children, although much of this behavior is reasonably mild and temporary. Although the exact age of onset, peak, and age of desistance varies by offense, the general pattern has been remarkably consistent over time, in different countries, and for official and self-reported data. For example, Farrington , a , in a longitudinal study of a sample of boys in London the Cambridge Longitudinal Study , found an eightfold increase in the number of different boys convicted of delinquent behavior from age 10 to age 17, followed by a decrease to a quarter of the maximum level by age The number of self-reported

offenses in the same sample also peaked between ages 15 and 18, then dropped sharply by age 19. In a longitudinal study of boys in inner-city Pittsburgh just over half the sample was black and just under half was white, the percentage of boys who self-reported serious delinquent behavior rose from 5 percent at age 6 to about 18 percent for whites and 27 percent for blacks at age 16 Loeber et al. A longitudinal study of a representative sample from high-risk neighborhoods in Denver also found a growth in the self-reported prevalence of serious violence from age 10 through late adolescence Kelley et al. Females in the Denver sample exhibited a peak in serious violence in midadolescence, but prevalence continued to increase through age 19 for the boys. The study is continuing to follow these boys to see if their prevalence drops in early adulthood. Much research has concentrated on the onset of delinquency, examining risk factors for onset, and differences between those who begin offending early prior to adolescence versus those who begin offending in midadolescence. There have been suggestions that early-onset delinquents are more likely than later-onset delinquents to be more serious and persistent offenders e. There is evidence, however, that predictors associated with onset do not predict persistence particularly well Farrington and Hawkins, There are also important problems with the choice of statistical models to create categories of developmental trajectories Nagin and Tremblay, Research by Nagin and Tremblay found no evidence of late-onset physical aggression. Physical aggression was highest at age 6 the earliest age for which data were collected for this study and declined into adolescence. The available data on very young children indicates that frequency of physical aggression reaches a peak around age 2 and then slowly declines up to adolescence Restoin et al. Page 69 Share Cite Suggested Citation: Sampson and Laub found that marital attachment and job stability significantly reduced deviant behavior in adulthood. Farrington and West found that offenders and nonoffenders were equally likely to get married, but those who got married and lived with their spouse decreased their offending more than those who remained single or who did not live with their spouse. They also found that offending increased after separation from a spouse. Similarly, Horney et al. Within marriages, only good marriages predicted reduction in crime, and these had an increasing effect over time Laub et al. Warr also found that offending decreased after marriage but attributed the decrease to a reduction in the time spent with peers and a reduction in the number of deviant peers following marriage rather than to increased attachment to conventional society through marriage. Brannigan points out that crime is highest when males have the fewest resources, and it lasts longest in those with the fewest investments in society job, wife, children. Crime is not an effective strategy for getting resources. There is evidence that chronic offenders gain fewer resources than nonoffenders, after the adolescent period Moffitt, The evidence for desistance in girls is not clear. One review of the literature suggests that 25 to 50 percent of antisocial girls commit crimes as adults Pajer, There is also some evidence that women are less likely to be recidivists, and that they end their criminal careers earlier than men Kelley et al. However, the sexes appear to become more similar with time in rates of all but violent crimes. There is a suggestion that women who persist in crime past adolescence may be more disturbed than men who persist Jordan et al. Prenatal and Perinatal Factors Several studies have found an association between prenatal and perinatal complications and later delinquent or criminal behavior Kandel et Page 70 Share Cite Suggested Citation: Prenatal and perinatal risk factors represent a host of latent and manifest conditions that influence subsequent development. Under the heading of prenatal factors, one finds a broad variety of conditions that occurs before birth through the seventh month of gestation Kopp and Krakow, Similarly, perinatal factors include conditions as varied as apnea of prematurity poor breathing to severe respiratory distress syndrome. The former condition is relatively benign, while the latter is often life-threatening. Although they are risk factors, low birthweight and premature birth do not necessarily presage problems in development. Prenatal and perinatal risk factors may compromise the nervous system, creating vulnerabilities in the child that can lead to abnormal behavior. Children with prenatal and perinatal complications who live in impoverished, deviant, or abusive environments face added difficulties. According to three major large-scale, long-term studies: These and other studies have been unable to identify specific mechanisms to account for the fact that the number of prenatal and perinatal abnormalities tend to correlate with the probability that a child will become a criminal. In addition to the lack of specificity regarding the predictors and the mechanisms of risk, similar measures predict learning disabilities, mental retardation, minimal brain dysfunction, and others

Towbin, An association between perinatal risk factors and violent offending is particularly strong among offenders whose parents are mentally ill or very poor Raine et al. Most measures indicate that males are more likely to commit crimes. They are also more vulnerable to prenatal and perinatal stress, as is shown through studies of negative outcomes, including death Davis and Emory, ; Emory et al. Hyperactivity, attention problems, and impulsiveness in children have been found to be associated with delinquency. These behaviors can be assessed very early in life and are associated with certain prenatal and perinatal histories DiPietro et al. For example, exposure to environmental toxins, such as prenatal lead exposure at very low levels, tends to adversely affect neonatal motor and attentional performance Emory et al. Hyperactivity and aggression are associated with prenatal alcohol exposure Brown et al. Prenatal exposure to alcohol, cocaine, heroin, and nicotine appear to have similar effects. Each tends to be associated with hyperactivity, attention deficit, and impulsiveness Karr-Morse and Wiley, However, the ability to predict behavior at later ages in adolescence and adulthood from such traits early in life is not yet known. Aggressive behavior is nevertheless one of the more stable dimensions, and significant stability may be seen from toddlerhood to adulthood Tremblay, The social behaviors that developmentalists study during childhood can be divided into two broad categories: Prosocial behaviors include helping, sharing, and cooperation, while antisocial behaviors include different forms of oppositional and aggressive behavior. The development of empathy, guilt feelings, social cognition, and moral reasoning are generally considered important emotional and cognitive correlates of social development. Impulsivity and hyperactivity have both been associated with later antisocial behavior Rutter et al. The social behavior characteristics that best predict delinquent behavior, however, are physical aggression and oppositionality Lahey et al. Most children start manifesting these behaviors between the end of the first and second years. The peak level in frequency of physical aggression is generally reached between 24 and 36 months, an age at which the consequences of the aggression are generally relatively minor Goodenough, ; Sand, ; Tremblay et al. By entry into kindergarten, the majority of children have learned to use other means than physical aggression to get what they want and to solve conflicts. Those who have not learned, who are oppositional and show few prosocial behaviors toward peers, are at high risk of being rejected by their peers, of failing in school, and eventually of getting involved in serious delinquency Farrington and Wikstrom, ; Huesmann et al. Page 72 Share Cite Suggested Citation: A number of longitudinal studies have shown that children who are behaviorally inhibited shy, anxious are less at risk of juvenile delinquency, while children who tend to be fearless, those who are impulsive, and those who have difficulty delaying gratification are more at risk of delinquent behavior Blumstein et al. A large number of studies report that delinquents have a lower verbal IQ compared with nondelinquents, as well as lower school achievement Fergusson and Horwood, ; Maguin and Loeber, ; Moffitt, Antisocial youth also tend to show cognitive deficits in the areas of executive functions 1 Moffitt et al. The association between cognitive deficits and delinquency remains after controlling for social class and race Moffitt, ; Lynam et al. Few studies, however, have assessed cognitive functioning during the preschool years or followed the children into adolescence to understand the long-term link between early cognitive deficits and juvenile delinquency. Stattin and Klackenber-Larsson found that the association between poor early language performance and later criminal behavior remained significant even after controlling for socioeconomic status. Epidemiological studies have found a correlation between language delay and aggressive behavior Richman et al.

Chapter 4 : Juvenile delinquency - Wikipedia

The topic of juvenile delinquency is a fertile area for construction of sociological theory. Three major sociological traditions, including structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism, and conflict theory, contribute to the explanation of delinquency. Much of the work in this area seeks to.

Their primary concern was not so much to explain criminal behavior but to develop a legal system by which the punishment would fit the crime. According to classical theory, crime is explained as a free will, voluntary choice. Persons commit crime simply because they made a rational decision to do so. It was assumed that because crime was a rational choice, criminal offenders could be deterred by punishment. Classical theory has thus been referred to as a utilitarian approach to crime. Explanations of crime as a rational choice are popular and widely supported by law enforcement, lawmakers, and academic disciplines such as the economics of crime, political science, and law see, e. Thus, as more homes are unoccupied due to more persons employed and fewer neighbors, family members, or relatives looking after them, they are more likely to be targeted by unemployed teens or young adults. Felson described how the growth and social changes in cities, neighborhoods, and schools have increased the likelihood of crime occurring. Evidence suggests that a lot of juvenile crime reflects rational choice, especially when youth perceive that their chances of being caught are low; and even if caught, many are well aware that the punishment for juvenile crime is often much less than for comparable crimes committed by adults. Ronald Akers questioned whether offenders really make rational decisions to commit crime based on knowledge of the law and possible punishments; and whether their decision was made in the absence of any situational factors that tend to influence crime. Certainly, many crimes reflect rational choices of persons, and this holds true especially for so-called white-collar crimes often committed by persons in workplace situations that pose relatively little risk of detection, conviction, or punishment. Strain Theories Strain theory is a social structure theory. Persons with little formal education and few economic resources are denied the ability to acquire the goals of American society, thus producing a sense of alienation, hopelessness, and frustration. Merton claimed that this sense of anomie often leads to attaining socially desired goals through criminal or delinquent means. Social disorganization leads to uncertainty, confusion, and shifting moral values, referred to as anomie or normlessness. Conditions of anomie exist when the rule of law is weakened and becomes powerless to maintain social control. Strain Theory emphasizes that most people share similar values, goals, and aspirations; but many people do not have an equal ability or the means to achieve those goals, such as economic or social success. The strain and frustration resulting from blocked opportunities increase the likelihood that some individuals will use deviant and illegitimate means to achieve their goals. Strain and social disorganization are similar because they emphasize the relationship between social variables such as poverty, economic opportunity, and available goods and services to crime and delinquency. Strain is more common among lower-class persons, who live in inner-city urban areas that are characterized more by social problems and crime. Strain theory has been expanded and further developed by other criminologists. Agnew identified three sources of strain: Strain caused by the removal of positively valued stimuli from the individual. Strain as the presentation of negative stimuli, such as child abuse and neglect, physical punishment, family and peer conflict, stressful life conditions, school failure, and criminal victimization see Agnew, , p. The theory helps to explain how stressful incidents and sources of strain in the life course influence patterns of offending. There is ample research support for the general strain theory. Social Process Theories Social process explanations of delinquency focus not on societal structures but on social interactions between individuals and environmental influences that may lead to delinquent behavior. Differential association theory holds that delinquency is a learned behavior as youth interact closely with other deviant youth. Control theory is a social process explanation that focuses on social bonds that reduce the risk of delinquent involvement. According to control theory, delinquency is more likely among youth who lack social bonds and positive social interactions among parents and peers. Differential association theory was developed by Edwin Sutherland, who believed that delinquency is learned behavior as youths interact with each other. Criminal behavior is learned. Criminal behavior is learned in interaction with other persons in a

process of communication. The principal part of the learning of criminal behavior occurs within intimate personal groups. When criminal behavior is learned, the learning includes a techniques of committing the crime; and b the specific direction of motives, drives, rationalizations, and attitudes. The specific direction of the motives and drives is learned from definitions of the legal codes as favorable or unfavorable. A person becomes delinquent because of an excess of definitions favorable to violation of law over definitions unfavorable to violation of law. This is the principle of differential association. Differential association may vary in frequency, duration, priority, and intensity. The process of learning criminal behavior by association with criminal and anticriminal patterns involves all of the mechanisms that are involved in any other learning. While criminal behavior is an expression of general needs and values, it is not explained by those general needs and values since noncriminal behavior is an expression of the same needs and values. It is difficult to argue against a theory that maintains crime is learned like other behaviors. This explanation also has a positive appeal as it holds that youth are changeable and can be taught prosocial behavior. Delinquency prevention efforts may be effective when they are directed at reducing the criminal influence among groups of antisocial youths. Burgess and Akers reformulated the differential association theory according to operant conditioning principles, and Akers further developed an explanation of deviant behavior according to a social learning approach. Sociological Theories Sociological explanations of delinquency emphasize social influences on individuals caused by the structure of society, societal change, social disorganization, subcultural differences, and social processes that influence behavior. Social structure theories claim that forces such as social disorganization, status frustration, and cultural deviance lead lower-class youths to become involved in delinquent behavior. Social process explanations of delinquency focus not on societal structures but on social interactions between individuals and social group influences that lead to delinquency. Social reaction theories focus more on how society, social institutions, and government officials react to crime and delinquency than on why offenders commit crime. Developmental or life-course explanations attempt to account for differences between offenders who begin offending at an early age and continue offending, and those who begin in adolescence and grow out of it. Intersectional theories take into account different interpenetrating social dynamics, such as those that involve race, class, and gender. Ultimately, for juvenile justice researchers and practitioners, the best theory is one that recommends policies, programs, and strategies for effective crime reduction and delinquency prevention. Critical Criminology The critical criminology movement began in the early s Taylor, et al. Today, a host of perspectives are associated with critical criminology: Crime, the law, and punishment of crime are viewed as connected to a system of social inequality that furnishes the means and mechanisms that produce and perpetuate inequality. Critical Criminology was typified and in many ways established by the work of Jock Young, whose interests spanned the sociology of crime and deviance, including radical, critical, and cultural criminology; left realism; moral panics; and social bulimia. According to his colleague, David Brotherton, Young focused on the multitude of lenses that individuals use to view the world, and the way that certain types of people are excluded from these views Brotherton This work critiqued criminological theories by considering the effect that structural inequalities within capitalist societies have on crime and deviance. Although the authors did not intend for The New Criminology to blaze the trail for Marxist criminologists, the global success of the book did just that. Feminist Theories Most criminological research and theories to explain delinquency are based on boys, so criminologists developed new theories to explain gender differences in delinquency. Feminists contend that previous perspectives in criminology have bee gendered in such a way as to ignore the gendered experiences of women and to assume the experience of men is normal. Feminist theorists are in this respect engaged in a project to bring a gendered dimension to criminological theory. In some cases, they are engaged in the project to bring to criminological theory insights to be gained from an understanding of taking a particular standpoint; that is, the use of knowledge gained through methods designed to reveal the experience of the real lives of women. That is, it is as silent on the experience of black women as it is biased as male criminology in its ignorance of the experience of women. Criminology, claim these writers, is sexist and racist and that both errors need to be corrected. Discussion Questions What might Social Learning theories tell us about what happens when juveniles exposed to different social problems drugs, violence, poverty are put into a containment facility together? How might we

use Routine Activity Theory to explain a convenience store robbery remember the 3 variables "available target, the absence of surveillance, and a motivated perpetrator? Think of similar situations that you were in, where you decided to steal or not steal something. Why or why not? What made the difference in your decision? How might the fact that we live in a violent society that is perpetually at war contribute to the problem of youth delinquency and violence?

III. Major Theories of Juvenile Delinquency. Any idea about the causes, extent, and correlates of juvenile delinquency is essentially a theory, such as equating juvenile delinquency with sin and violating God's law.

A theory is a systematic arrangement of facts with respect to some real or hypothetical laws. According to Freda Adler, Gerhard O. Mueller and William S. Laufer a theory is a coherent group of propositions used as principles in explaining or accounting for known facts or phenomena. Left Realism Theory, Feminist Theory, and The oldest field is criminal anthropology, founded by the father of the modern criminology, Cesare Lombroso³, in He was one of the first exponents of the positive approach to explain crime. Positivism meaning a search for the causes of crime using scientific method, as opposed to the classical approach⁴, which relies upon free will as well as the main cause of crime. Historically, theories of the biochemistry type, have tried to establish the biological inferiority of the criminals, but modern bio criminology simply says that heredity and body organs dysfunction produce a predisposition towards crime. Bio criminology is the 3 Cesare Lombroso was born in the year AD. He was a doctor or physician by profession. He served much of his career in the Italian Army which gave him ample opportunity to study the physical characteristics of soldiers convicted and executed for criminal offences. He is known as father of Criminology. In Italy Lombroso was studying the cadavers of the executed criminals in an effort to scientifically determine whether law violators were physically different from people of conventional values and behaviour. These criminogenetic people have inherited physical problems that impel them into a life of crime; ii that criminals suffer from atavistic anomalies ,physically they are throwbacks to more primitive times when people were savages. In addition he compared criminals behaviour to that of the mentally ill and those suffering some forms of epilepsy. He said that criminogenetic traits can be acquired through indirect heredity from a degenerate family with frequent cases of insanity, deafness, syphilis, epilepsy and alcoholism among its members. Direct heredity, being related to a family of criminals, is the second primary cause of crime in addition to heredity, environmental conditions can promote crime, alcoholism, lack of education, temperature swings hot temperatures were related to violent crime , and imitation of well publicized crimes. Later he added criminalod, i. They are drawn in to crime by their greed and the desire for easy wealth and then become enmeshed in its clutches. They are the pick pockets swindlers, con men, and smugglers that plague society. He also identified the insane criminal who commits impulsive, obscene and cruel acts. Criminal by passion may kill for family honour. Siegel, Criminology, 2nd ed. Mueller, and William S. That gap is not enough to notice, but it might make them more impulsive and foolhardy, and even smart people with high IQ are vulnerable to folly. Other psycho-criminologists focus on personality disorders, like the psychopaths⁶, sociopaths and antisocial personalities. Hence it si also called Chicago School sociology. Ecology is the study of relationship between and organism and its environment, and this type of theory explains crime by the disorganized eco areas where people live rather than buy the kind of people who live there. The only two things to do are: Robert Merton is the author of Strain Theory. He believes that there is a serious relationship between poverty and crime. His theory suggests that if you are poor you are more likely to commit crimes and become a criminal. He feels that there are institutionalized paths to happiness in our society. He believes in a society of equilibrium where goals are equal to means. A society of disequilibrium would be would be adaptation. Quotient means proportion, measure, amount, share, or percentage. Individuals who accept socially approved goals, but not necessarily the socially approved means. Those who reject socially approved goals and the means for acquiring them. People who buy into system of socially approved goals and the means for acquiring them. Merton believes that the drug users are in this category. People who negate socially approved goals and means by creating a new system of acceptable goals and means. The cause or reason for strain is the economic goal blockage. Etiology is the systematic study of causes or reasons for crime. To remove this strain the policy makers should adopt the policy of providing increased opportunities. Strain theory is a criminological theory positing tht a gap between culturally approved goals and legitimate means of achieving them causes frustration which leads to criminal behaviour. Differential Association Theory is a theory of criminality. It is

based upon the principle that an individual becomes delinquent because of an excess of definitions learned that are favourable to violation of law over definitions learned that are unfavourable to violation of law. Barlow says that the theory of differential association as a whole consists of nine statements or propositions: The major objections against this theory are: Ray Jeffrey has raised many questions concerning Differential Association Theory, for example, if criminality is learned it must first exist; what accounts for that first criminal act? How are crimes of passion to be explained? How do we account for criminal behaviour in people who have had no prior contact with criminal and other attitudes? Rose Boston, Houghton Mifflin, pp. Cressey, Epidemiology and individual Conduct: A case from Criminology. Pacific Sociological Review 3 pp. A person, he argues, pursues criminal behaviour to the extent that he identifies himself with real or imaginary persons from whose perspective his criminal behaviour seems acceptable. During the course of interaction the individual selects persons with whom to identify and these serve as behaviour models. But this selection also occurs in context other than the immediate groups to which an individual belongs. Hence Glaser acknowledges what Sutherland did not: It was Robert Burgess and Ronald Akers who restated the theory as under: There are seven aspects of this Reinforcement Theory of Criminal Behaviour: The book is recommended to be thoroughly studied to develop a scientific approach to legal subjects. The most difficult subject has been explained in this book in a very simple and lucid manner. I would recommend this book to all my students as further study and also as a reference book. Control theory has pretty much dominated the criminological landscape since It studies how effective bonding with such authority figures translates into bonding with society, hence keeping people out of trouble with the law. It is Travis Hirschi who is scholar in the field of crime and juvenile delinquency as well as other areas who has advanced numerous theories. One of his theories is the Social Control Theory which is an illegal behaviour that occurs within the moment, not planned. Also Self Control Theory which is any behaviour that uses force or fraud in pursuit of self interest. Both are similar theories that attempt to explain juvenile delinquency and suggest all people are naturally bad. Hirschi believes that youth in particular who use drugs and commit crime do it because they lack self control. For these theories to play out in an effective manner, self control would need to work before social control can work. Hirschi believes that who ever is the most conformist in society, not necessarily the smartest, will have the most self-control. Hirschi says that too much autonomy is not a good thing when dealing with interpersonal relationship among children. The propounder saw that criminals were underdogs who initially did something out of the ordinary and then got swept up in a huge, government sponsored labelling or shunning reaction. The theory argues that anyone facing such an overwhelming, negative labelling social reaction will eventually become more like the label because that is the only way out for their identity formation. It points out that sometimes its best to do nothing for minor offending , and that there are few re-integrative rituals designed to help people fit back into their communities. Labelling Theory is a theory that explains deviance in terms of the process by which a person acquires a negative identity, such as addict or ex-con and is forced to suffer the consequences of outcast status. These kinds of dog-eat-dog theories also have their origins in the decade These theories are characterized by the study of power and powerlessness. Radical Theories These theories also have their origin in the decade They involve Marxists critiques of capitalist society which allows things to exist like millions of billionaires and millionaires while the vast majority of people live in poverty or just get by. Such fundamental economic disparities reflect basic contradictions in the way work is organized in to demoralizing, brutalizing, and oppressive conditions. Crime is seen as a reflection of class struggle, a kind of primitive rebellion with criminals behaving as resells without a clue. Only through praxis i. Radical Criminology is a criminological perspective that studies the relationship between economic disparity and crime, avers that crime is the result of struggle between owners of capital and workers for the distribution of power and resources, and posits that crime will disappear only when capital is abolished. It wants the police to have more power in protecting poor people, but on the other hand, does not want the police to be invasive or intrusive. It suggests that the solution to crime is to create more caring, mutually dependent communities and strive for inner rebirth or spiritual rejuvenation inner peace. The central concept is patriarchy, or male domination, as the main cause of crime. Feminists also tend to call for more attention to female points of view. It tends to focus upon how stereotypical words, thoughts and conceptions

limit our understanding and how crime develops from feelings of being disconnected and dehumanized. It advocates replacing our current legal system with informal social controls such as group and neighbourhood tribunals. All human beings have been created from Adam who was made of clay. The potentials in mankind is of both kinds, good and evil. God is pleased with good behaviour and displeased with evil behaviour. There are limits of God, which must be observed.

Chapter 6 : Developmental Theories Of Crime And Delinquency - Google Books

Theories of Delinquency is a comprehensive survey of the theoretical approaches towards understanding delinquent behavior. Donald Shoemaker aptly presents all major individualistic and sociological theories in a standard format with basic assumptions, important concepts, and critical evaluations.

Three major sociological traditions, including structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism, and conflict theory, contribute to the explanation of delinquency. Much of the work in this area seeks to explain why officially recorded delinquency is concentrated in the lower class, or in what is today more often called the underclass. This entry considers the most prominent theories of delinquency under the theoretical rubrics noted above. These theories focus on institutions, such as the family and school, that socialize individuals to conform their behavior to values of the surrounding society and on the ways in which these institutions can fail in this task. Wide agreement or consensus is assumed about which behaviors are valued and disvalued in society. The question structural-functional theories try to answer is: Why do many individuals during their adolescence behave in ways that challenge this consensus? That is, why do many adolescents violate behavioral norms that nearly all of us are assumed to hold in common? To Durkheim, this term meant an absence of social regulation, or normlessness. Merton, revived the concept to describe the consequences of a faulty relationship between goals and the legitimate means of attaining them. Merton emphasized two features of social and cultural structure: Merton argued that in our society success goals are widely shared, while the means or opportunities for attaining them are not. Since members of the lower- or underclass are assumed to be most affected by the disparity between the goals and the means of attaining success, this class is expected to have a higher rate of delinquent behavior. Merton outlined a number of ways individuals adapt when faced with inadequate means of attaining their goals. Among these, innovation revolves substituting illegitimate for legitimate means to goal attainment; it is the resort to this adaptation that is thought to account for much theft among adolescents from the underclass. Group-based adaptations to the failure to attain success goals involve the delinquent subculture. Cohen suggests that children of the underclass, and potential members of a delinquent subculture, first experience a failure to achieve when they enter school. When assessed against a "middle-class measuring rod," these children are often found lacking. A result is a growing sense of "status frustration. The delinquent subculture therefore emerges as an alternative set of criteria or values that underclass adolescents can meet. Cohen argues that these subcultural values represent a complete repudiation of middle-class standards: The result, according to Cohen, is a delinquent subculture that is "nonutilitarian, malicious, and negativistic" – an inversion, of middle-class values. Yet this is only one possible type of subcultural reaction to the frustration of failure. As we see next, many subcultural responses are elaborated in the theoretical tradition of structural functionalism. Cloward and Ohlin argue that to understand the different forms that delinquent and ultimately criminal behavior can take, we must consider the different types of illegitimate opportunities available to those who seek a way out of the underclass and where these opportunities lead. Different types of community settings produce different subcultural responses. Cloward and Ohlin suggest that three types of responses predominate, each one leading to its own respective subculture: The stable criminal subculture offers, as its name suggests, the most promising albeit still illegitimate prospects for upward economic mobility. According to Cloward and Ohlin, this subculture can emerge only when there is some coordination between those in legitimate and in illegitimate roles – for example, between politicians or police and the underworld. One pictures the old-style political machine, with protection provided for preferred types of illegal enterprise. Only in such circumstances can stable patterns be established, allowing opportunities for advancement from adolescent to adult levels of the criminal underworld. When legitimate and illegitimate opportunity structures are linked in this way, the streets become safe for crime, and reliable upward-mobility routes can emerge for aspiring criminals. Violence and conflict, on the other hand, disrupt both legitimate and illegitimate enterprise. When both types of enterprises coexist, violence is restrained. However, in the "disorganized slum," where these spheres of activity are not linked, violence can reign uncontrolled. Cloward and Ohlin see these types of communities as producing a conflict

subculture. A result of this disorganization is the prevalence of adolescent street gangs and their violent activities, making the streets unsafe for more profitable crime. The retreatist subculture includes adolescents who fail in their efforts in both the legitimate and illegitimate opportunity structures. These "double failures" are destined for drug abuse and other forms of escape. However, another important variant of structural-functional theory argued that the most important cause of delinquency was not a strain between goals and means but rather a relative absence of goals, values, commitments, and other sources of social control. The earliest North American efforts to explain crime and delinquency in terms of social control focused on the absence of social bonds at the community level. Entire neighborhoods were seen as being socially disorganized, as lacking the cohesion and constraint that could prevent crime and delinquency. This work began in the late 1930s, when Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay, sought to identify areas of Chicago that were experiencing social disorganization. They explored the process that characterized these communities. What they found were indications of what they assumed to be social disorganization—truancy, tuberculosis, infant mortality, mental disorder, economic dependency, adult crime, and juvenile delinquency. In Chicago, the rates of these conditions were highest in the slums near the city center; they diminished in areas farther away from the center. Since these problems were assumed to be contrary to the shared values of area inhabitants, they were taken as indications that these areas were unable to realize the goals of their residents. In other words, they were taken as indicators of social disorganization. Shaw and McKay also attempted to determine the sorts of community characteristics that were correlated with delinquency so that they could infer from these characteristics what the central components of social disorganization were and how they caused delinquency. Three types of correlates were identified: The implication was that poverty, high residential mobility, and ethnic heterogeneity led to a weakening of social bonds or controls and, in turn, to high rates of delinquency. All of this was being said of the neighborhoods Shaw and McKay studied; it was left to later theories to spell out the meaning of weakened neighborhood bonds or controls for individuals. At the level of individuals, to have neither goals nor means is to be uncommitted and thus uncontrolled. Hirschi has argued that the absence of control is all that really is required to explain much delinquent behavior. There are other types of controls besides commitment to conformity that may also operate: Hirschi argues that delinquent behavior is inversely related to the presence of these controls. Alternatively, as these controls accumulate, so too does conformity. According to control theory, the more committed, attached, involved, and believing individuals are, the greater is their bond to society. In each of the theories that we have considered thus far, values or beliefs play some role in causing delinquency. It is argued that the presence of success goals or values without the means to obtain them can produce deviant behavior, as can the absence of these goals or values in the first place. It is an emphasis on these values, and the role of the school and family in transmitting them, that ties the structural-functional theories together. The assumption, of course, is that these meanings and definitions, these symbolic variations, affect behavior. Early versions of symbolic-interactionist theories focused on how adolescents acquired these meanings and definitions from others, especially peers; more recently, theorists have focused on the role of official control agencies, especially the police and courts, in imposing these meanings and definitions on adolescents. The significance of this difference in focus will become apparent as we consider the development of the symbolic-interactionist tradition. Edwin Sutherland, anticipated an emphasis of the symbolic-interactionist perspective with his early use of the concept of differential association. This concept referred not only to associations among people but also, and perhaps even more important, to associations among ideas. He argued that people violate laws only when they define such behavior as acceptable and that there is an explicit connection between people and their ideas that is, definitions. So, for example, delinquent behavior is "learned in association with those who define such behavior favorably and in isolation from those who define it unfavorably," and this behavior occurs when "the weight of the favorable definitions exceeds the weight of the unfavorable definitions. Their argument is based in part on the observation that underclass delinquents, like white-collar criminals, usually exhibit guilt or shame when detected violating the law. Sutherland had argued that individuals become white-collar criminals because they are immersed with their colleagues in a business ideology that defines illegal business practices as acceptable. Sykes and Matza argue that the delinquent, much like the white-collar criminal, drifts into a

deviant lifestyle through a subtle process of justification. Sykes and Matza list four of these neutralization techniques: A question lingered, however: Why are these delinquencies of the underclass more frequently made the subjects of official condemnation? Franklin Tannenbaum anticipated a theoretical answer to this question. He pointed out that some aspects of juvenile delinquency—the play, adventure, and excitement—are a normal part of teenage street life and that, later in their lives, many nostalgically identify these activities as an important part of their adolescence. But others see such activities as a nuisance or as threatening, so they summon the police. He suggests that there is a gradual shift from defining specific acts as evil to defining the individual as evil. Tannenbaum goes on to argue that this dramatization may play a greater role in creating the criminal than any other experience. The problem is that individuals thus singled out may begin to think of themselves as the type of people who do such things—that is, as delinquents. From this viewpoint, efforts to reform or deter delinquent behavior create more problems than they solve. For example, Lemert suggests the terms primary deviance and secondary deviance to distinguish between acts that occur before and after the societal response. Acts of primary deviance are those that precede a social or legal response. The societal response has, from this viewpoint, succeeded only in confirming the individual in a deviant role; for example, by potentially making adolescent delinquents into adult criminals through the punitive reactions of the police, courts, and others. In the end, symbolic interactionists do not insist that all or even most delinquent behavior is caused by officially imposed labels. Being labeled delinquent is thought, rather, to create special problems for the adolescents involved, often increasing the likelihood that this and related kinds of delinquent behavior will be repeated. The point is that not only the actor but also reactors participate in creating the meanings and definitions that generate delinquency. The symbolic interactionists note that poor are more likely than the rich to get caught up in this process. This point is further emphasized in conflict theories. For example, conflict theories have focused on the role of dominant societal groups in imposing legal labels on members of subordinate societal groups. The fact that subcultural groups typically are also subordinate groups ties this work to earlier theoretical traditions discussed above. An Early Group-Conflict Theory. George Vold was the first North American sociologist to write explicitly about a group-conflict theory of delinquency. He began with the assumption that criminality involves both human behavior acts and the judgments or definitions laws, customs, or mores of others as to whether specific behaviors are appropriate and acceptable or inappropriate and disreputable. Of the two components, Vold regarded judgments and definitions as more significant. His salient interest was in how groups impose their value judgments by defining the behaviors of others as illegal. Vold regarded delinquency as a "minority group" behavior. For example, he argues that "the juvenile gang. In this struggle, the police are seen as representing and defending the values of the adult world, while the gang seeks the symbolic and material advantages not permitted it under the adult code.

Chapter 7 : Theories of Crime

Another theory about juvenile delinquency is the subculture theory. In , Albert Cohen developed the subculture theory, which is a culmination of several of his theories.

In Depth Tutorials and Information juvenile delinquency, Theories of The topic of juvenile delinquency is a fertile area for construction of sociological theory. Three major sociological traditions, including structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism, and conflict theory, contribute to the explanation of delinquency. Much of the work in this area seeks to explain why officially recorded delinquency is concentrated in the lower class, or in what is today more often called the underclass. This entry considers the most prominent theories of delinquency under the theoretical rubrics noted above. These theories focus on institutions, such as the family and school, that socialize individuals to conform their behavior to values of the surrounding society and on the ways in which these institutions can fail in this task. Wide agreement or consensus is assumed about which behaviors are valued and disvalued in society. The question structural-functional theories try to answer is: Why do many individuals during their adolescence behave in ways that challenge this consensus? That is, why do many adolescents violate behavioral norms that nearly all of us are assumed to hold in common? To Durkheim, this term meant an absence of social regulation, or normlessness. Merton , revived the concept to describe the consequences of a faulty relationship between goals and the legitimate means of attaining them. Merton emphasized two features of social and cultural structure: Merton argued that in our society success goals are widely shared, while the means of or opportunities for attaining them are not. Since members of the lower- or underclass are assumed to be most affected by the disparity between the goals and the means of attaining success, this class is expected to have a higher rate of delinquent behavior. Merton outlined a number of ways individuals adapt when faced with inadequate means of attaining their goals. Among these, innovation revolves substituting illegitimate for legitimate means to goal attainment; it is the resort to this adaptation that is thought to account for much theft among adolescents from the underclass. Group-based adaptations to the failure to attain success goals involve the delinquent subculture. Cohen suggests that children of the underclass, and potential members of a delinquent subculture, first experience a failure to achieve when they enter school. The delinquent subculture therefore emerges as an alternative set of criteria or values that underclass adolescents can meet. Cohen argues that these subcultural values represent a complete repudiation of middle-class standards: Yet this is only one possible type of subcultural reaction to the frustration of failure. As we see next, many subcultural responses are elaborated in the theoretical tradition of structural functionalism. Cloward and Ohlin argue that to understand the different forms that delinquent and ultimately criminal behavior can take, we must consider the different types of illegitimate opportunities available to those who seek a way out of the underclass and where these opportunities lead. Different types of community settings produce different subcultural responses. Cloward and Ohlin suggest that three types of responses predominate, each one leading to its own respective subculture: The stable criminal subculture offers, as its name suggests, the most promising albeit still illegitimate prospects for upward economic mobility. According to Cloward and Ohlin, this subculture can emerge only when there is some coordination between those in legitimate and in illegitimate roles—for example, between politicians or police and the underworld. One pictures the old-style political machine, with protection provided for preferred types of illegal enterprise. Only in such circumstances can stable patterns be established, allowing opportunities for advancement from adolescent to adult levels of the criminal underworld. When legitimate and illegitimate opportunity structures are linked in this way, the streets become safe for crime, and reliable upward-mobility routes can emerge for aspiring criminals. Violence and conflict, on the other hand, disrupt both legitimate and illegitimate enterprise. When both types of enterprises coexist, violence is restrained. Cloward and Ohlin see these types of communities as producing a conflict subculture. A result of this disorganization is the prevalence of adolescent street gangs and their violent activities, making the streets unsafe for more profitable crime. The retreatist subculture includes adolescents who fail in their efforts in both the legitimate and illegitimate opportunity structures. However, another important variant of structural-functional theory argued

that the most important cause of delinquency was not a strain between goals and means but rather a relative absence of goals, values, commitments, and other sources of social control. The earliest North American efforts to explain crime and delinquency in terms of social control focused on the absence of social bonds at the community level. Entire neighborhoods were seen as being socially disorganized, as lacking the cohesion and constraint that could prevent crime and delinquency. This work began in the late 1890s, when Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay, sought to identify areas of Chicago that were experiencing social disorganization. They explored the process that characterized these communities. What they found were indications of what they assumed to be social disorganization—truncity, tuberculosis, infant mortality, mental disorder, economic dependency, adult crime, and juvenile delinquency. In Chicago, the rates of these conditions were highest in the slums near the city center; they diminished in areas farther away from the center. Since these problems were assumed to be contrary to the shared values of area inhabitants, they were taken as indications that these areas were unable to realize the goals of their residents. In other words, they were taken as indicators of social disorganization. Shaw and McKay also attempted to determine the sorts of community characteristics that were correlated with delinquency so that they could infer from these characteristics what the central components of social disorganization were and how they caused delinquency. Three types of correlates were identified: The implication was that poverty, high residential mobility, and ethnic heterogeneity led to a weakening of social bonds or controls and, in turn, to high rates of delinquency. All of this was being said of the neighborhoods Shaw and McKay studied; it was left to later theories to spell out the meaning of weakened neighborhood bonds or controls for individuals. At the level of individuals, to have neither goals nor means is to be uncommitted and thus uncontrolled. Hirschi has argued that the absence of control is all that really is required to explain much delinquent behavior. There are other types of controls besides commitment to conformity that may also operate: Hirschi argues that delinquent behavior is inversely related to the presence of these controls. Alternatively, as these controls accumulate, so too does conformity. According to control theory, the more committed, attached, involved, and believing individuals are, the greater is their bond to society. In each of the theories that we have considered thus far, values or beliefs play some role in causing delinquency. It is argued that the presence of success goals or values without the means to obtain them can produce deviant behavior, as can the absence of these goals or values in the first place. It is an emphasis on these values, and the role of the school and family in transmitting them, that ties the structural-functional theories together. The assumption, of course, is that these meanings and definitions, these symbolic variations, affect behavior. Early versions of symbolic-interactionist theories focused on how adolescents acquired these meanings and definitions from others, especially peers; more recently, theorists have focused on the role of official control agencies, especially the police and courts, in imposing these meanings and definitions on adolescents. The significance of this difference in focus will become apparent as we consider the development of the symbolic-interactionist tradition. Edwin Sutherland, anticipated an emphasis of the symbolic-interactionist perspective with his early use of the concept of differential association. This concept referred not only to associations among people but also, and perhaps even more important, to associations among ideas. He argued that people violate laws only when they define such behavior as acceptable and that there is an explicit connection between people and their ideas that is, definitions. Their argument is based in part on the observation that underclass delinquents, like white-collar criminals, usually exhibit guilt or shame when detected violating the law. Sutherland had argued that individuals become white-collar criminals because they are immersed with their colleagues in a business ideology that defines illegal business practices as acceptable. Sykes and Matza argue that the delinquent, much like the white-collar criminal, drifts into a deviant lifestyle through a subtle process of justification. Sykes and Matza list four of these neutralization techniques: A question lingered, however: Why are these delinquencies of the underclass more frequently made the subjects of official condemnation? Franklin Tannenbaum anticipated a theoretical answer to this question. He pointed out that some aspects of juvenile delinquency—the play, adventure, and excitement—are a normal part of teenage street life and that, later in their lives, many nostalgically identify these activities as an important part of their adolescence. But others see such activities as a nuisance or as threatening, so they summon the police. He suggests that there is a gradual shift from defining specific acts as evil to defining the

individual as evil. Tannenbaum goes on to argue that this dramatization may play a greater role in creating the criminal than any other experience. The problem is that individuals thus singled out may begin to think of themselves as the type of people who do such things—that is, as delinquents. From this viewpoint, efforts to reform or deter delinquent behavior create more problems than they solve. For example, Lemert suggests the terms primary deviance and secondary deviance to distinguish between acts that occur before and after the societal response. Acts of primary deviance are those that precede a social or legal response. The societal response has, from this viewpoint, succeeded only in confirming the individual in a deviant role; for example, by potentially making adolescent delinquents into adult criminals through the punitive reactions of the police, courts, and others. In the end, symbolic interactionists do not insist that all or even most delinquent behavior is caused by officially imposed labels. Being labeled delinquent is thought, rather, to create special problems for the adolescents involved, often increasing the likelihood that this and related kinds of delinquent behavior will be repeated. The point is that not only the actor but also reactors participate in creating the meanings and definitions that generate delinquency. The symbolic interactionists note that poor are more likely than the rich to get caught up in this process. This point is further emphasized in conflict theories. For example, conflict theories have focused on the role of dominant societal groups in imposing legal labels on members of subordinate societal groups. The fact that subcultural groups typically are also subordinate groups ties this work to earlier theoretical traditions discussed above. An Early Group-Conflict Theory. George Vold was the first North American sociologist to write explicitly about a group-conflict theory of delinquency. He began with the assumption that criminality involves both human behavior acts and the judgments or definitions laws, customs, or mores of others as to whether specific behaviors are appropriate and acceptable or inappropriate and disreputable. Of the two components, Vold regarded judgments and definitions as more significant. His salient interest was in how groups impose their value judgments by defining the behaviors of others as illegal. In this struggle, the police are seen as representing and defending the values of the adult world, while the gang seeks the symbolic and material advantages not permitted it under the adult code. At root, Vold argues, the problem is one of intergenerational value conflict, with adults prevailing through their control of the legal process. A Theory of Legal Bureaucracy. According to this viewpoint, determining which groups in society will experience more delinquency than others may be largely a matter of deciding which laws will be enforced. Chambliss and Seidman observe that in modern, complex, stratified societies such as our own, we assign the task of resolving such issues to bureaucratically structured agencies such as the police. The result is to mobilize what might be called the primary principle of legal bureaucracy. According to this principle, laws will be enforced when enforcement serves the interests of social control agencies and their officials; and laws will not be enforced when enforcement is likely to cause organizational strain. In other words, the primary principle of legal bureaucracy involves maximizing organizational gains while minimizing organizational strains.

Chapter 8 : Theories of Delinquency - Donald J. Shoemaker - Oxford University Press

Routine activity theory, developed by Marcus Felson and Lawrence Cohen, draws upon control theories and explains crime in terms of crime opportunities that occur in everyday life. A crime opportunity requires that elements converge in time and place including a motivated offender, suitable target or victim, and lack of a capable guardian. [43].

Sociological Theories - Strain Theory Why do people engage in crime according to strain theory? They experience strain or stress, they become upset, and they sometimes engage in crime as a result. They may engage in crime to reduce or escape from the strain they are experiencing. For example, they may engage in violence to end harassment from others, they may steal to reduce financial problems, or they may run away from home to escape. Crime Causation: Sociological Theories - Social Learning Theory Why do people engage in crime according to social learning theory? They learn to engage in crime, primarily through their association with others. They are reinforced for crime, they learn beliefs that are favorable to crime, and they are exposed to criminal models. As a consequence, they come to view crime as something that is desirable or at least justifiable in certain situations. The primary Crime Causation: Sociological Theories - Control Theory Strain and social learning theorists ask, Why do people engage in crime? They then focus on the factors that push or entice people into committing criminal acts. Control theorists, however, begin with a rather different question. They ask, Why do people conform? Unlike strain and social learning theorists, control theorists take crime for granted. They argue that all people have needs and desires Crime Causation: Sociological Theories - Labeling Theory The above theories examine how the social environment causes individuals to engage in crime, but they typically devote little attention to the official reaction to crime, that is, to the reaction of the police and other official agencies. Labeling theory focuses on the official reaction to crime and makes a rather counterintuitive argument regarding the causes of crime. According to labeling theory Crime Causation: Sociological Theories - Social Disorganization Theory The leading sociological theories focus on the immediate social environment, like the family, peer group, and school. And they are most concerned with explaining why some individuals are more likely to engage in crime than others. Much recent theoretical work, however, has also focused on the larger social environment, especially the community and the total society. This work usually attempts to Crime Causation: Sociological Theories - Critical Theories Critical theories also try to explain group differences in crime rates in terms of the larger social environment; some focus on class differences, some on gender differences, and some on societal differences in crime. Several versions of critical theory exist, but all explain crime in terms of group differences in power. Marxist theories argue that those who own the means of production Crime Causation: Sociological Theories - Situations Conducive To Crime The above theories focus on the factors that create a general willingness or predisposition to engage in crime, locating such factors in the immediate and larger social environment. People who are disposed to crime generally commit more crime than those who are not. But even the most predisposed people do not commit crime all of the time. In fact, they obey the law in most situations. Several theories Crime Causation: Sociological Theories - Integrated Theories Several theorists have attempted to combine certain of the above theories in an effort to create integrated theories of crime. The most prominent of these integrations are those of Terence P. Thornberry and Delbert S. Sociological Theories - The Future Of Crime Theories Sociologists continue to refine existing theories and develop new theories of crime, including integrated theories of crime e. Sociologists, however, are coming to recognize that it is not possible to explain crime solely in terms of the immediate social environment. Psychological Theories - Family Influences, Individual Influences, More Comprehensive Theories, Conclusions, Bibliography Citing this material Please include a link to this page if you have found this material useful for research or writing a related article. Content on this website is from high-quality, licensed material originally published in print form. Paste the link into your website, email, or any other HTML document.

Chapter 9 : Social Control Theory - Criminology - Oxford Bibliographies

Theories of Delinquency provides a comprehensive survey of major theoretical approaches to the understanding of delinquent behavior. It includes discussions and evaluations of all major individualistic and sociological theories, presenting each theory in a standard format with basic assumptions, important concepts, and evaluations of the research connected with the theories.

Once an individual associates him or herself with criminal behavior they are labeled by their community and expected to reoffend. Society now looks at these juveniles and wonder why it is that these children are behaving in such matter. It has been clear by now what Juvenile Delinquency is and how it affects society. A juvenile is a youth teen ranging from as young as 9 years old till the age of 18 who engage in illegal criminal behavior. Defining delinquency is not the hard part, figuring out the reasons why adolescents commit crimes is. The study of juvenile delinquency is important because it provides us with trustworthy and reliable theories that can help with understanding the motives of juveniles. These theories fall under three categories, biological, sociological and psychological Biological Theory considers delinquent behavior as predisposed and revolves around the idea that children are born to be criminals. Cesare Lombroso is credited for creating the major biological theory called Positivism. His theory states that individuals whom grow up committing crimes have inherited biochemical and genetic factors. Lombroso also states that criminals tend to have certain facial features that are considered a predisposition to commit crime such as a flattened nose and supernumerary teeth. Another criminalist, Sheldon, found that different body types made individuals behave differently. For example, he believed that mesomorphs were more likely to commit crimes because they were athletic, as opposed to the physic of an endomorph, a fat person Champion, Contemporary biological theories include the Biosocial Theory which states that both adolescent thought and behavior have biological and social bases Siegel and Welsh, This theory uses genetics and social environment to determine whether or not a child will become delinquent. While childhood behavior has a lot to do with a poor environment, disrupted socialization or inadequate parenting the biosocial theory presents the fact that we must also take into consideration their genes, because that is what ultimately makes everyone unique and makes all individuals react to their environment differently. For example, a kid with a pathological trait such as a disability, an abnormal personality, brain damage or low IQ may be at high risk for committing crime. This risk is then increased by environmental stressors such as failure in school, bad parenting, substance abuse and delinquent peers. There are many major social factors that are believed to cause or affect delinquent behavior such as social relations, community conditions, and level of violence, poverty, and racial disparity. All of these factors play a huge role in the way adolescents see their lives and help them turn to delinquent behavior. There are numerous amounts of sociological theories that can describe different ways a child can become delinquent. Here are some of the ones that are most important. Social Disorganization theory is when a community reduces the chances of advancement for the children. For example, schools have high dropout rates, high levels of graffiti, high poverty levels and so on. Residents in these areas experience conflict and despair and as a result they turn to antisocial behavior. Cultural Deviance theories explain that due to the draining lifestyle of kids living in deteriorated neighborhoods they turn to social isolation and delinquent behavior. These behavior explained in cultural deviance create subcultures such as gangs and cults in which these adolescents join to feel accepted, loved and a part of a group. When a society is creating conflict for a youth to achieve success, these teen experience status frustrations because they are not allowed to reach goals set by the larger society. Siegel and Welsh, Two major types of theories include Psychodynamic theory and Social Learning theory. The Id is the drive for immediate gratification and can explain delinquency acts such as shoplifting or burglary. The ego is the realization of real life and helps control the Id. Superego develops through interactions with parents and other responsible adults and develops the conscience of moral rules. This psychodynamic approach states that traumatic experiences during early childhood can prevent the ego and superego from developing properly, therefore leaving the Id with greater power Champion, Social Learning theory is also a major theory that implies that criminal behavior is learned through close relations with others,

it asserts that children are born good but learned to be bad. This theory states that all people have the potential to become criminals because modern society presents many opportunities for illegal activity but one has the choice to not engage. If a child is raised in a clean community that has strong morals and if that child has positive role models at home and in the community, he or she is more likely to grow up achieving her goals. Opposing that scenario, when you have a child growing up in a poor neighborhood where he or she is surrounded by gangs, drugs and violence every day, it is very likely that this child will grow up committing crimes. McDavid and McCandless, Once these theories have been carefully analyzed, applying them to our juveniles in a case by case scenario can help deter and keep our children from choosing a life of criminal behavior. The Juvenile Justice System: Delinquency, Processing, and the Law. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall Inc. Theory, Practice, and Law.