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RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORY

Stuart Henry and
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Recent Developments in Criminological Theory

Toward Disciplinary Diversity and Theoretical Integration

Edited by

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Preface to the Second Series

The first series of the International Library of Criminology, Criminal Justice and Penology has established itself as a major research resource by bringing together the most significant journal essays in contemporary criminology, criminal justice and penology. The series made available to researchers, teachers and students an extensive range of essays which are indispensable for obtaining an overview of the latest theories and findings in this fast-changing subject. Indeed the rapid growth of interesting scholarly work in the field has created a demand for a second series which, like the first, consists of volumes dealing with criminological schools and theories as well as with approaches to particular areas of crime, criminal justice and penology. Each volume is edited by a recognized authority who has selected twenty or so of the best journal essays in the field of their special competence and provided an informative introduction giving a summary of the field and the relevance of the essays chosen. The original pagination is retained for ease of reference.

The difficulties of keeping on top of the steadily growing literature in criminology are complicated by the many disciplines from which its theories and findings are drawn (sociology, law, sociology of law, psychology, psychiatry, philosophy and economics are the most obvious). The development of new specialisms with their own journals (policing, victimology, mediation) as well as the debates between rival schools of thought (feminist criminology, left realism, critical criminology, abolitionism, etc.) make it necessary to provide overviews that offer syntheses of the state of the art.

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Introduction

Criminological theory, once limited to the realm of sociology, with disparagingly acknowledged contributions from anthropology, biology and psychology, has, since the late twentieth century, become self-consciously multidisciplinary; moreover, since 1989 it has flirted with the idea of theoretical integration if not fully fledged interdisciplinarity. In a 1987 article on 'The State of Criminological Theory', sociologist Jack Gibbs described the field as having gone through twenty years of ferment and he lamented that 'criminological theories will remain defective until criminologists adopt formal theory construction' (Gibbs, 1987, p. 821). Of course that did not happen. Instead, the ferment continued for another twenty years, producing a profusion of different theoretical explanations for crime, only some of which have been, or are able to be, substantially tested. Criminological theory has mushroomed, not only in the USA and Europe but also worldwide, made easier by the advent of the Internet. One indication of that growth is the rapid expansion of textbooks on criminological theory.

Whereas in the mid-twentieth century there was merely a handful of classics by sociologists Edwin Sutherland, George Vold, and Don Gibbons, criminological theory textbooks now abound. In 2000, the late Richard A. Wright declared the 1990s to be criminology's 'golden era of theorizing', and he noted that the Renaissance of theory had been chronicled by a 'plethora of criminology texts' (Wright, 2000, p. 179). By 2008, over twenty criminological theory textbooks were available (see Table 1 below), many in multiple editions, and this does not include introductory criminology texts, many of which are substantially devoted to theory.

Table 1: Recent Criminological Theory Texts

Author	Title	Publisher	Edition	Year
Akers, Ronald L. and Sellers, Christine S.	*Criminological Theories: Introduction, Evaluation, and Application*	Roxbury	4th	2004
Anderson, James	*Criminological Theories: Understanding Crime in America*	University Press of America	1st	2003
Bohm, Robert M.	*Primer on Crime and Delinquency Theory*	Wadsworth	2nd	2001
Botta, John J.	*Criminological Theories and Theorists: An American Social Perspective on Crime*	1st Books Library	1st	2004
Burke, Roger Hopkins	*An Introduction to Criminological Theory*	Willan	2nd	2005
Cao, Liqun	*Major Criminological Theories: Concepts and Measurement*	Wadsworth	1st	2004
Cordella, Peter and Siegel, Larry	*Readings in Contemporary Criminological Theory*	Northeastern University Press	1st	1996

Cote, Suzette	*Criminological Theories: Bridging the Past to the Future*	Sage	1st	2002
Cullen, Francis T. and Agnew, Robert	*Criminological Theory: Past to Present, Essential Readings*	Roxbury	3rd	2006
Cullen, Frances T., Wright, John Paul and Blevins, Kristie R.	*Taking Stock: The Status of Criminological Theory*	Transaction	1st	2006
Einstadter, Werner and Henry, Stuart	*Criminological Theory: Analysis of its Underlying Assumptions*	Rowman and Littlefield	2nd	2006
Henry, Stuart and Einstadter, Werner	*The Criminology Theory Reader*	New York University Press	1st	1998
Henry, Stuart and Lanier, Mark M.	*The Essential Criminology Reader*	Westview Press	1st	2006
Morrison, Wayne	*Theoretical Criminology: From Modernity to Post-Modernism*	Routledge Cavendish	1st	1995
Lilly, J. Robert, Cullen, Francis T. and Ball, Richard A.	*Criminological Theory: Context and Consequences*	Sage	4th	2007
Moyer, Imogene L.	*Criminological Theories: Traditional and Non-Traditional Voices and Themes*	Sage	1st	2001
Miller, J. Mitchell, Schreck, Christopher J. and Tewksbury, Richard	*Criminological Theory: A Brief Introduction*	Allyn and Bacon	2nd	2007
Sumner, Colin	*Theoretical Criminology*	Sage	1st	2002
Vold, George B., Bernard, Thomas J. and Snipes, Jeffrey B.	*Theoretical Criminology*	Oxford	5th	2002
Walklate, Sandra	*Understanding Criminology: Current Theoretical Debates*	Open University Press	1st	1998
Williams, Franklin P. and McShane, Marilyn D.	*Criminological Theory*	Prentice-Hall	4th	2004

In the profusion of this saturated market, where it seems that almost every instructor wants to author his or her own theory book, if not discover her or his own theory, criminological theory texts have increasingly given space to non-sociological theories, not least because instructors and students have desired a greater range of disciplinary perspectives than those offered from the sociological perspective. Indicative are the comments by the authors of one such text, entitled *Criminological Theory*, in their struggle to retain the disciplinary dominance of the sociological perspective:

> This book is about the major sociological theories of crime. While there are other approaches to the study of crime, since the 1920s criminology has been oriented toward sociology. There are, however, some comments on biological and psychological theories of crime and delinquency in the chapter on Positivism. Those comments have been expanded, in response to instructors' requests. (Williams and McShane, 2006)

Importantly, these authors went on to describe how they had also included rational choice, contemporary developmental approaches, integrative and subjective theories, peacemaking and postmodernism. This is not surprising, especially since Wayne Osgood's November 1997 call to theory textbook writers to go beyond our discipline: 'Text book authors could do a great service by bringing in relevant work from allied disciplines, such as incorporating pertinent developmental research in delinquency textbooks' (this volume, Chapter 22, p. 505). Indeed, while sociology still offers a significant disciplinary underpinning for several of the theoretical explanations, and while books like Williams and McShane (2006) and Beirne and Messerschmidt (2006) doggedly cling to the sociological frame, in the twenty-first century a theory text is sorely lacking if it does not also include contributions from: economics in the form of rational choice and routine activities theories; biology and biological anthropology in terms of genetic and neurological theories; psychology in terms of personality development, learning processes and cognitive theory; geography in terms of spatial analysis, social ecology and social capital; social psychology in terms of symbolic interactionism and social constructionist theory (even if this does overlap with sociology); and, radical, critical, anarchist, feminist and postmodern theory.

In addition it is noteworthy that criminology and criminological theory texts rooted in different disciplines have started to emerge, such as Bartol and Bartol's text which began in 1994 as *Criminal Behaviour: A Psychological Approach*, but by its eighth edition in 2007 became recognizably integrative with a new subtitle: *Criminal Behaviour: A Psychosocial Approach.* Similarly, the biological approach is now commanding its own integrated text reflecting the socio-biological perspective of its authors: *Criminology: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (Walsh and Ellis, 2006). These days students are just as likely to be reading Debra Niehoff's (2002) *Biology of Violence*, as they are Mark Colvin's (2000) *Crime and Coercion: An Integrated Theory of Chronic Criminality*, or Harold Winter's (2008) *The Economics of Crime: An Introduction to Rational Crime Analysis.*

These diverse disciplinary theoretical contributions are not only fundamental to a comprehensive understanding of crime causation, but they are reflected in the major journals of the field such as *Criminology*, *Justice Quarterly*, *Crime and Delinquency*, and *Law and Society Review*. In a 1998 celebration of the American Society of Criminology's fiftieth anniversary of its journal *Criminology*, we edited a collection of theory articles published as *The Criminology Theory Reader* (that were drawn exclusively from that journal), reflecting just this diversity of disciplinary theoretical thought (see Henry and Einstadter, 1998). We continue with the same multidisciplinary organizational structure for this present volume. Since 1999 criminological theory has expanded even more and now has its own journal, *Theoretical Criminology*, which is solely devoted to theory development, while theory continues to permeate the other leading criminology journals. In addition there are numerous websites where criminological theory can be accessed (see Table 2 below).

Table 2: Major Websites on Criminological Theory		
Sponsor/author	Title	Website address
Thomas O'Connor/ North Carolina Wesleyan College	Criminal Justice Megalinks	http://www.apsu.edu/oconnort/
Cecil Greek/Florida State University	Criminology Links	http://www.criminology.fsu.edu/crimtheory/theorylinks.htm
Bruce Hoffman/Ohio State University	Crimetheory	http://www.crimetheory.com/
C. George Boeree	Personality Theory	http://webspace.ship.edu/cgboer/perscontents.html
Michael C. Kearl/ Trinity University	A Sociological Tour Through Cyberspace	http://www.trinity.edu/~mkearl/theory.html
Robert O. Keel/ University of Missouri-St Louis	Theories of Deviance	http://www.umsl.edu/~keelr/200/200lec.html
Paul Leighton/Eastern Michigan University	Paul's Justice Page	http://www.paulsjusticepage.com/

In the rapid expansion of theories of crime causation, it has become clear that there are numerous continuities and discontinuities in theoretical thought. With regard to discontinuities, theoretical development in criminology is in part the result of fragmenting of a theory into multiple sub-theories (for example, radical theory emerging from conflict theory and itself fragmenting into a variety of critical criminology that includes several varieties – feminist theory, postmodernist theory, left realist theory, critical cultural theory and anarchist/ peacemaking theory).

With regard to continuities, theoretical development comes about in several ways. Criminologists may develop a revision of an existing theory in response to further conceptual and or empirical testing (for example, Agnew's Revised Strain Theory; Tittle's modified Control Balance Theory). Alternatively, new directions are carved from an old theory that transform it into something superior and take it in a new direction (for example, Akers development of Sutherland's Differential Association Theory into Social Learning Theory, or Hirschi's supplanting of his own Social Control Theory, with Self-control Theory). Both of these developments would fit into what John Laub (2003) describes as 'traditional scientific theory accumulation in which new theories build upon the foundations of their forerunners'. But he also says that in other cases 'perspectives are blended, and this fusion produces unique criminological theories'. As we have seen, this is what is meant by theoretical integration.

At its simplest, theoretical integration is defined as 'the combination of two or more pre-existing theories, selected on the basis of their perceived commonalities, into a single reformulated theoretical model with greater comprehensiveness and explanatory value than any one of its component theories' (Farnworth, 1989, p. 95). While the practice of integration is complex (see Einstadter and Henry, 2006), the idea seems obvious to those new to the field. As instructors of criminological theory we have experienced students' puzzlement about why criminologists do not simply combine the best elements of the variety of different theories into one general theory that would cover all possibilities and, in the process, eradicate the inherent weaknesses in each individual theory. Indeed, our students have also observed that

many criminological theories seem to intersect, play off one another, and share elements, thus implying integrative possibilities.

Indeed, 1997–98 was a watershed year in the movement toward the integration of theory and was marked with the interdisciplinary theme 'Crossing Boundaries and Building Bridges' chosen for the 1997 American Society of Criminology conference in San Diego. On this prophetic occasion D. Wayne Osgood proclaimed to the assembled criminologists:

> I am going to try to convince you that it is best for criminology if many of us make a regular practice of academic thievery by keeping our eyes on sister disciplines to see what ideas would be useful to take for ourselves ... Criminology is an inherently interdisciplinary field ... There has been tremendous growth and change in criminology in the last twenty years, and one aspect of that change is our relationship to other fields of study. (This volume, Chapter 22, p. 503)

The publication that same year of Gregg Barak's *Integrating Criminologies* and *Integrative Criminology* (Barak 1998a; 1998b) sealed this new direction. Barak offers several explanations for why theorists are drawn toward integration: (1) because of a desire to arrive at central anchoring notions in theory, (2) to provide coherence to a bewildering array of fragmented theories, (3) to achieve comprehensiveness and completeness, (4) to advance scientific progress, and (5) to synthesize causation and social control.

Since 1998 the integrative turn has explicitly highlighted the drawing together of different theoretical frameworks into an interdisciplinary approach. Indeed, while the theoretical integration of concepts, ideas and propositions in criminology is not new, such that 'most theories bring together a range of ideas prevailing in a particular historical period', 'What is different about integrated theories emerging in the past twenty-five years (since 1979) is the emergence of *explicit* rather than implied integration; theorists state that they are integrating specific sets of theories to explain crime' (Einstadter and Henry, 2006, pp. 310–11).

In this book we gather together selected examples of theoretical developments in each of ten disciplinary-related criminological theoretical frameworks that have been published over the past ten years (1998–2008). From each framework we have included two articles, which were selected to reflect the cycle of dual trends toward disciplinary fragmentation and interdisciplinary integration.

Classical and Rational Choice Theories

Classical and rational choice theories refers to theories influenced by the ideas of economics, particularly the idea that humans are free-thinking, rationally calculating, self-interested beings, who choose to act or not based on a cost–benefit calculation about whether doing so produces net pleasure rather than pain. In short, people act to maximize their sense of well-being or utility. These ideas first emerged in the classical period described as 'pre-criminological', offered by European philosophers such as Cesare Beccaria (1738–94) and Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), much influenced by Enlightenment notions of the 'social contract', rational thought, logical deduction, and the emergence of free market economics. In their reductionist view of humans there is no difference between criminals and non-criminals except that criminals have made the decision that the risk/costs from law violation are low relative to the prospect of rewards, whereas non-criminals judge the risk/costs to be too high, and so refrain

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from such behaviour. Ever since these principles were first implemented as the French Code of 1791 following the French Revolution, it was realized that not everyone is equal in their ability to reason, nor bestowed with the equal rationality necessary to accurately assess costs or benefits. Following years of attrition, the rational choice perspective was resurrected in the early 1970s as a reaction against 1960s criminal justice reforms that had brought discretionary indeterminate sentencing, rehabilitation and treatment; the rationale for those reformers like David Fogel was to return to a justice-based, rational model for dealing with offenders. Ten years later, led by the then British government researchers Ronald Clarke and Derek Cornish and the American criminologist Marcus Felson, a new version of classical theory had been born. This one was based on a rational offender, who makes choices about their routine patterns of activity, and who can be influenced to avoid crime by situational deterrents. Most of these contemporary rational choice theorists, like their neo-classical counterparts, embrace the concept of limited rationality.

The essay by David A. Ward, Mark C. Stafford and Louis N. Gray (Chapter 1) reviews the multiple meanings of 'rational' within rational choice theory. Much like the rather broad-ranging concept of free will implicit in classical theory, the authors express the multiple interpretations of 'rational' – ranging from the idea of conscious and deliberate calculations about the cost and benefits of criminal behaviour, to the idea of loose calculations about the value of criminal behaviour. Whereas classic versions of rational choice theory – rooted in eighteenth-century economics around utilitarian philosophy and expected utility – implied that people engage in purposive and sensible cost-benefit analysis of their actions, the authors' new version of rational choice theory suggests that people are imperfect processors of information who act on *perceived* assessments of rewards. The data from their study 'suggest that both the probabilities and magnitudes of rewards for non-crime should be incorporated into models proposing to capture the process by which criminal decisions are made' (p. 13). Ward, Stafford and Gray show how a situational, bounded or limited rationality model allows a modified deterrence theory to be incorporated into strain theory and social learning theory. In the past, deterrence theory was often rejected by criminologists because of its reliance on a strong sense of rationality, but in the new conceptualization of rational choice (as well as of deterrence) there is no requirement 'that people possess free will' (p. 5). In the case of the integration of this new theory into strain theory, for example, differential probabilities for reward from crime can be incorporated with differential perceived opportunities for access to legitimate opportunity structures in order to arrive at a more nuanced explanation of how decisions to offend are made. Significant to the new version of rational choice – as well as with other theories in this volume – is the exposure of the modified theory to rigorous empirical testing. Ward, Stafford and Gray employ an experimental laboratory test to compare the fit of an economic utility model to a satisfaction balance model, with an emphasis on the effects on deterrence. A value of this new version of rational choice theory – with its weaker sense of rationality – is openness to a more robust integration of a diverse range of criminological theories and methods.

In contrast, Willem de Haan and Jaco Vos (Chapter 2) apply rational choice theory to the crime of street robbery. As the authors state, criminological theory should explain all forms of criminality, even the ones that appear to be irrational or impulsive. Based on their analysis of 5000 police statements and interviews and focus group statements of street robbers in the city of Amsterdam, they argue that rational choice theory fails adequately to conceptualize

the affective dimensions, normative aspects, and social and cultural circumstances that are essential elements to understanding this type of criminal behaviour. Their choice of street robbery as a test for the 'heuristic model' of rational choice is instructive in large part due to the common perception that street robbery is an act of desperation committed by desperadoes who act spontaneously or, in some cases, accidentally; further, in typical cases of street robbery there is a discrepancy between the minimal gain of the offender and the serious violation experienced by the victim. In their review of the classic idea of rational choice, de Haan and Vos discuss the difficulty of integrating this economic and philosophical model into the more empirically driven field of criminology. They argue that rational choice 'is not a theory but an idealized model of decision making', and thus they embark on the study of rational choice as a heuristic model (p. 25). From their interviews with street robbers, they sought to contextualize rational choice and street crime by asking about the goals of the perpetrators, the possible advantages of robbing passers-by, the awareness of possible disadvantages of committing the crimes, and the preference for committing street robbery over other property offences. In addition to finding that their informants often preferred to do something else – other than street crime – de Haan and Vos also discovered that street robbery was related to three affective, normative and cultural dimensions that are typically absent from traditional rational choice theory: impulsivity, moral ambiguity and expressivity. This demonstrated the value of considering the 'insider's view', that is, the 'meaning that perpetrators give to their own behaviour' (p. 40).

Biological and Biosocial Theories

With biological and biosocial theories we see almost the mirror opposite of the assumptions made about humans and their actions by the theorists in Part I. Biosocial theory first appeared in the criminal anthropology of the 'Italian School' led by Cesare Lombroso (1835–1909) and his students Enrico Ferri and Raffaele Garofalo. Much influenced by the contemporary evolutionary theory of Charles Darwin, these founding criminologists saw the roots of crime in inherited characteristics that viewed 'born criminals' as genetic throwbacks (atavists) to an earlier stage of human evolution. By the 1950s the work of early Lombrosian criminology had been replaced with ideas about body type and criminal propensity found in the research of anthropologist Ernest Hooton and physician William Sheldon. In this 'somatyping' research, body types were seen as indicative of propensity to types of crime, which turned out to be more a reflection of the stereotypes of offenders and who the criminal justice system arrests, rather than about the inheritability of criminal tendencies.

Contemporary biological and biosocial theories argue that humans inherit a set of biological and genetically determined attributes that differentiate people across a continuum. As a result, when situated in certain environmental contexts some will have a greater propensity to break the law than others. Unlike classical theories, biosocial theories suggest that there is something inherently defective in the *individual* who is prone to committing crimes. Such crime-prone people can be identified, and actions and interventions can be taken that will prevent or reduce the probability that they will commit crimes. Most contemporary biosocial criminologists do not give priority to the genetic over environmental causes of crime; rather they see these as interactive components, such that certain environments may trigger inherited tendencies leading the human brain to make criminogenic behaviour choices.

To illustrate this perspective, the contribution to this section by Lee Ellis (Chapter 3) summarizes the evidence of the correlations between criminal behaviour and neurological, hormonal and twelve biological factors (including testosterone, mesomorphy, maternal smoking during pregnancy, hypoglycaemia, epilepsy, altered heart rate, skin conductivity, cortisol, serotonin, monoamine oxidase, and certain brainwave patterns). Ellis points out that biological factors are often absent from criminological theories, in part due to the lack of training in biology of most criminologists. In his 'evolutionary neuroandrogenic theory' (ENA) Ellis argues that aggressive and acquisitive criminal behaviour is an evolutionary outcome of human reproduction and sex competition among males and that specific neurochemistry is responsible for male aggressiveness and acquisitiveness. Ellis claims that environmentally based theories, such as social learning and social ecology, cannot explain the correlations found in the twelve biological factors. Combining age, gender demographics and social status with biological correlates, Ellis develops a theory integrating biological and environmental factors to explain competitive/victimizing behaviour, which he claims 'exist along a continuum, with "crude" (criminal) forms at one end and "sophisticated" (commercial) forms at the other' (p. 47). He argues that individuals who have 'the greatest capacities to learn and plan will move rapidly after puberty from criminal to non-criminal forms of competitive/victimizing behaviour', whereas those absent such capacities will remain locked into their pubertal state such that 'serious criminality will be concentrated in adolescent and young adult males of low social status' (p. 47).

In Chapter 4, Anthony Walsh discusses behaviour genetics – an arena that examines people's individual differences – and goes on to explore ways that this can inform classic and revised strain theory by enabling us to sort people into different modes of adaptation to structural strain. Like Ellis, Walsh sees value in integrating the knowledge obtained from the science of human difference into theories explaining the differential impact of social and structural environments, and, like Ellis, he also expresses concerns about the lack of integration of biological theories into mainstream criminology. To address this concern Walsh advocates overturning the taboo against the idea that 'genes may play a role in criminality' (p. 79) by incorporating behaviour genetics into criminological explanation. Behaviour genetics provides an opportunity to understand the role that environmental effects play in criminal behaviour, which, ironically, is often greater than actual genetic effects. Walsh describes the ways in which genetic effects can be disentangled from environmental effects, through twin and adoption studies and the analysis of heritability. Using the social scientific concept of agency, he says that the concept is congenial to behaviour genetics: 'people's unique genotypes will largely determine what aspects of the social environment will be salient to them' (p. 83). Gene/environment correlation relates to this understanding of agency and provides a more nuanced understanding of how genotypes and the environment are inherently related. Walsh suggests that although there is no crime gene, there are genes that 'lead to the development of certain traits and characteristics that may increase the probability of criminal behaviour in some environments and in some situations' (p. 85), and this is particularly evident in the case of antisocial behaviour. Following a review of traditional anomie/strain theories, Walsh addresses the specifics of two of Robert Agnew's individual-level factors (temperament and intelligence) and their relationship to middle-class success, suggesting that a biosocial – and not thoroughly biological – view of crime may be plausible.

Psychological Theories

In Part III we include essays that draw on psychological explanations of crime causation. The roots of psychological criminology can be found in Sigmund Freud's (1856–1939) psychoanalytical ideas, but they gained a foothold in criminology through a series of studies by students of Freud such as August Aichhorn, William Healy, Augusta Bronner, John Bowlby and Kate Friedlander, who in the 1930s and 1940s wrote about the failure of the mind's ego and superego to control its id. Failure to control behaviour, particularly sensation seeking, became an analysis of the failure of parents' ability to develop children with balanced personalities that could control sensation seeking, impulsivity and the pursuit of immediate gratification. From the psychological perspective, although differences between people form the basis of explaining their antisocial conduct, these differences are seen to have less to do with inherited genetic patterns and more to do with human development, particularly the development of the mind and thought processes and how these emerge from relationships in families. A recurrent theme in psychological thinking about crime has been the ways that human development, particularly during childhood, results in different personalities, some of which are abnormal or antisocial in their relations with others. These are especially likely to occur where childhood development had been subject to abuse, or trauma, resulting in antisocial or in extreme cases sociopathic or psychopathic personality disorders; such personalities are more prone, under triggering environmental contexts, to engage in antisocial behaviour, including crime and violence. Psychological explanations for crime go beyond personality development to look at social learning processes, from behavioural rewards and punishments to behavioural modelling, which also takes account of the situational and environmental context including images, video and other media. Cognitive psychology contributes the idea that behaviour may also result from destructive thinking patterns that respond to frustration and perceived threats with aggression. Indeed, the variety of psychological theories provides an unacknowledged wealth of explanation to criminological theory.

Julie Horney (Chapter 5) argues that criminology is often not only restricted to single disciplines but also to one stream of thought within a discipline. She states that when psychological perspectives are used, criminologists will typically focus on the trait perspective in attempts to find how certain traits are correlated with behaviour. Instead, Horney proposes to take a broader view of psychological correlates of criminality that 'emphasizes the situational specificity of behavior' (p. 114). This psychological emphasis is seen as providing an underlying disposition to offend, such that crime is the behaviour resulting when opportunities exist that allow that disposition to manifest itself. Thus, rather than seeing crime in terms of 'a set of global traits that predispose behavior', crime is understood through 'particular patterns of behavior-situation contingencies' (pp. 116–17). Horney contextualizes her argument with a review of B.F. Skinner's concept of operant conditioning that has influenced a number of criminological theories, including differential association and social learning. According to Horney, while learning is a valuable concept for criminological theory, the *context* of 'learning' has been somewhat misunderstood: instead of seeing organisms as solely *acquiring* new behaviours, organisms must be understood as *maintaining* certain behaviours. Thus, she argues that criminologists should focus not simply on how lawbreaking attitudes are learned but how, and why, they are maintained over the long term by the lawbreaker. Horney's work challenges simplistic understandings of the 'criminal mind' (p. 118) focusing instead on the

specificity of situations and individuals – such as the separate spheres of work, home, school, bar, the street, and so on – and the environmental consistencies evident in individual lives. With these tenets in mind, Horney's theoretical contribution leads psychological criminology to a greater appreciation of longitudinal and life-course understandings of criminal behaviour that interweave with social and environmental contexts.

Albert Bandura's contributions to the psychology of social learning in criminology have often overshadowed his theorizing of the cognitive processes involved in antisocial behaviour. In this section we include a short essay (Chapter 6) in which he applies his social-cognitive theory to explain substance abuse. Central to both areas of inquiry is the notion of self-efficacy found in the strategies that people develop to deal with obstacles and that determine an individual's sense of their own agency. In terms of substance abuse, Bandura believes that many theories 'grossly over-predict psychopathology and the inability to overcome substance abuse' (p. 129). In contrast, he suggests that humans do, in the face of dealing with substance abuse, display an inherent capacity for self-regulation. Further, Bandura illustrates how many conceptualizations of substance abuse rely on risk assessments and models of failure, rather than successful examples of self-regulation on the part of the recovering individual. Bandura argues against deterministic models of substance abuse that suggest that people are merely products of their environments; in his 'agentic' view, people play an active role producing their environments. As people cope with their addictions, and as they move through the varying stages of achievement, recovery from relapse and long-term abstinence, perceived self-efficacy is the greatest determinant of success; individuals with high self-efficacy benefit the most from clinical treatment and ultimately exhibit the self-regulatory behaviours needed to beat their addictions. Whereas traditional psychological theories of crime overemphasize substance abuse as an individualistic issue, the agentic social-cognitive theory stresses that substance abuse, and related psychological and environmental factors, have an inherently social dimension.

Social Learning and Neutralization Theories

Social learning is clearly founded in psychological theory but its adaptation to explaining criminal behaviour, first by Edwin Sutherland (1939) and subsequently in an expanded form by Ronald Akers (1973), moved the concept from its early behaviourist roots toward recognizing the importance of the social context of learning through symbolic interaction with others. Unlike the stimulus-response mechanism posited in behavioural models, social learning theorists see learning occurring in association with others, through interaction, particularly in intimate small group social settings among family, friends and peers. The learning process is the same, regardless of what is learned, and the difference between criminals and non-criminals is the learning content. Non-offenders learn the values, norms, knowledge, skills, motives and behaviour that conform to convention, whereas offenders learn values, norms, knowledge, skills, motives and behaviour necessary to commit crimes contrary to the norms of convention. While Sutherland did not specify the process of social learning, Akers went on to do so and moved the theory closer to the cognitive learning theory of psychologist Albert Bandura whose work also showed that learning could occur from images and media representations, in film, television and, more recently, gaming and the Internet. Social learning theorists insist on the importance of the whole theory rather than emphasizing any

one part of it. However, it is what occurs when the moral definition of acts as wrong or right, consistent with learned conventional values, are contradicted by learned applications of words and phrases that justify or excuse a behaviour, that led to one of the most creative theoretical developments known as neutralization theory.

Founded by Gresham Sykes and David Matza in 1957, and refined by Matza in 1964, neutralization theory challenges the idea that there is a stark contrast between conventional mainstream society and delinquent subcultures. Rather, each person learns both sets of norms and values through their cultural involvement in mainstream society and its subterranean underbelly. Sykes and Matza addressed the perpetrator's ability to neutralize feelings of guilt, all the while maintaining a connection to conventional society. Neutralization thus explains how people socialized into mainstream culture can be episodically released from the moral bind of convention and law by words and phrases called 'techniques of neutralization' that render them morally free, if sufficiently motivated by perceived rewards, to act offensively.

Interestingly, it is Albert Bandura's cognitive psychology that has recently done most to advance the theory of neutralization, which he terms 'moral disengagement'. Bandura suggests (Chapter 7) that 'the disengagement of moral self-sanctions from inhumane conduct is a growing problem', and to address his idea he focuses on appending psychological theories of morality – which tend to stress moral thought exclusively – to include moral conduct (p. 135). Consistent with his cognitive theory, Bandura argues for an agentic understanding of how individuals are active producers of the moral systems of which they are a part. As humans engage in moral agency, they are involved in both inhibitive (the ability to refrain from inhumane behaviour) and proactive (the power to behave humanely) forms of action. He goes on to describe a series of mechanisms or disengagement practices that 'are selectively activated and disengaged from detrimental behavior' (p. 136). These include moral justification (how people convince themselves of the rightness of their actions), euphemistic labelling (the use of sanitized language or concepts to lessen one's sense of responsibility for one's actions), advantageous comparison (making harmful conduct look good), displacement of responsibility (as in Milgram's studies, giving up responsibility by channelling agency to a superior), diffusion of responsibility (including the division of labour and group or collective action in decision making), disregard or distortion of consequences (the minimization of harm for one's actions), and dehumanization (the viewing of those being poorly or inhumanely treated as inferior, animalistic or demonic). Using this set of mechanisms, Bandura then illustrates how moral disengagement operates in social contexts, including the My Lai massacre, terrorism, American weapons dealers and the gun industry. Most significant in such studies is how 'social cognitive theory avoids a dualism between social structure and personal agency' (p. 149).

Volkan Topalli's 'When Being Good is Bad: An Expansion of Neutralization Theory' (Chapter 8), reworks Sykes and Matza's theory to include a broader range of rule-breaking, most particularly violent street crime and individuals who are explicitly committed to unconventional, rather than conventional, norms. In Topalli's reformulation, neutralization is broadened beyond the scope of individuals who use it to deal with their guilt about betraying society. Topalli suggests that this original emphasis on guilt as a product of conventional value structures is limiting. Topalli illustrates a number of methodological and conceptual weaknesses of the theory, including: the use of college students (who typically abide by conventional norms of society) as case studies; the over-reliance on offenders who are

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