Theories of Criminal Behavior: Why do people commit crime?

Theory:
A series of interrelated propositions that attempt to describe, explain, predict, and ultimately control some class of events

Classical Theory

- Human beings are fundamentally _______________
- __________ and ______________ are two central determinants of human behavior
- ________________________, a necessary evil, is sometimes required to deter law violators
- Root principles of ___________________________ in the nature of things and cannot be denied
- Society exists to provide benefits to individuals which they would not receive in isolation
- Even though laws as we know of them today have not always existed, expectations and standards for behavior have established norms in societies

Theories of Criminal Behavior

- Classical and Neoclassical
- Biological
- Psychological
- Sociological

- Age of Reason during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries
- Indirect contributions to the development of classical criminological thought
  - Thomas Hobbes
  - John Locke
  - Jean-Jacques Rousseau

- ________________________________
- ________________________________
- ________________________________
Italian born writes his *Essay on Crimes and Punishments* in 1764

Extension of Beccaria's writings

In any criminal legislation, “the evils of punishment…must be made to exceed the advantage of the offense.”

Modern-day application of classical principles to problems or crime and crime control in contemporary society

- Get-tough social policies
- Deterrence
  - Scare away from future acts
- Just Deserts Model
  - A punishment or reward that is considered to be what the recipient deserved
- Determinate and Truth in Sentencing

Rational Choice Theory

Product of the 1970’s and 80’s with its origins in the writings of Beccaria and Bentham

Free Will Key Points

1. All people of their own free will chose between conventional and criminal behavior
2. Some people believe crime is more attractive because it requires less effort and more gain
3. People stay away from acts in which the punishment outweighs the gain
4. Punishments are the primary reason not to commit a crime
Solutions to Criminal Activity

1. ________________________________
2. Make the criminal justice system more ___________________________; let it be known to the public
3. Make punishments fit ________________ and not _____________________

Biological Theory of Criminal Behavior

- Idea of biological influence and reference to it has long been used to explain human behavior
- Most common type of criminal offense
  - Impulsive, heat of the moment
  - Can understand actions to some degree
- ____________________________crime
  - Different “blood” than average person
  - Calculated, planned out crime
    - Different than you and I
  - “Honest face”, “trusting eyes”, “evil look”
  - Some states sterilized habitual offenders; ruled unconstitutional in 1942 OK case

(1758-1828)

- ____________________________ (Craniology): the shape of the human skull was indicative of personality
- Different behaviors were controlled by different regions of the brain
  - Injury or improper development with brain causes greater likelihood of crime
  - Bumps would identify these points
- Therefore, lumps and bumps found on the skull could be studied for likelihood of criminal behavior

(1863-1909)

- Italian considered to be “______________
- Influenced by writings of ______________
- Criminals were throwbacks to ______________
  - Physical characteristics represent where Darwin believed humans had evolved from
- Did post-mortem examinations of famous criminals
- Identified key physical characteristics influencing likelihood of crime
Lombroso’s Physical Characteristics

- Thick skull
- Protruding chin
- Low, sloping forehead
- Deep, inset eyes
- Large ears
- Abundant and curly hair
- Long arms
- Large lips
- Large, hooked nose

(1893-1977)

- Completed study on juvenile delinquents in Boston
- Concluded humans are one of four body types
- ___________________________________: muscular, large bones, athletic, aggressive temper; __________________________________
- Endomorph: soft-roundedness, short limbs, small bones, easy going
- Ectomorph: slender, small-boned. Introvert, sensitive
- The Balanced Type: a person of average build, being neither overweight, thin, nor exceedingly, muscular

Recent Biological Studies

- Hypothesis: extra Y chromosome found in approximately 1 or 2 out of every 100 males would make them more aggressive
- Prison population study: results _________________________________
- British study in 1943 linked murder to low sugar levels
- Excess levels of some white sugars has also been found to increase hyperactivity and aggressiveness
- ________________________________
- ________________________________ levels increases aggressive behavior
  - "Roid Rage"
- ________________________________
- Natural chemical in ________________________________
  - ________________________________ levels of Serotonin creates more aggressive behavior
  - ________________________________ and ________________________________
- Poor diet and pollution have been linked to aggressive behavior

Recent Study Identifying Physical Factors

- James Q. Wilson and Richard Herrnstein study
- Gender: predominantly male
- Age: declines throughout life span
- Recent studies with brain development
  - Males not until early 20’s fully developed
  - Sociological factors as well
- Body Type: disproportionately mesomorph
- Intelligence: clearly and consistently with low intelligence
- Personality: typically aggressive, impulsive, and cruel
- Body types reflect personality
Biological Crime Prevention

- Prenatal and Postnatal care
- Monitoring for early symptoms
- Reduce exposure to violence
  - Sociological and Psychological connection
- Neurological examinations
  - Brain activity and responses
- Biological research in prisons
  - Difficulty because of inmate rights

Serial Killer

- Killer who over a period of time slay ____ or more victims and are

  "________________________" period

- Even though they are motivated to kill by an inner drive, behavioral scientists do not know what causes it
- Term “_______” generated in mid 1970’s by Robert Ressler
  - Former Director of FBI’s Violent Criminal Apprehension Program
  - Crimes in a “series”
- Approximately ___ serial killers over past 100 years in the United States with anywhere from _____ to _____ victims
  - ___% of those killers have been since 1950
  - Experts estimate that there are anywhere from ___ to ____ serial killers are active at any point in time

Classifying Serial Killers

- Based on __________________________
  - Act-focused: __________________________
    - Based on the act itself
      - Also based on __________ and ______________
  - Process-focused: those who kill slowly
    - __________________________

- Based on __________________________
  - ______________
    - Follow basic behaviors
  - Asocial: excluded from society

General Characteristics

- Majority are
  - __________________________
  - __________________________
  - __________________________
  - __________________________
  - __________________________
  - Normal, shy and quiet
    - __________________________
  - Charming, smooth outgoing
    - __________________________
Why they kill

- Difference between psychotic or psychopathic killers
  - ____________ understands right from wrong
  - Desire to satisfy their own needs
  - ____________ out of touch with reality in some way
  - More to control rage or satisfy mind and thoughts
- Majority seem to have experienced ______, either physical or sexual as a child
- Consuming need for _____ or ______
- Often choose victims weaker than them
- Victim may have “_______” value to killer

3 Early Warning Signs

- _______________: 60% of all serial killers were wetting the bed past the age of 12
- _______________: fire fascination is an early manifestation of their own obsession with destruction
- _______________: many serial killers, before moving to human victims, start with small animals

Phases of a Serial Killer

Experts have noticed a pattern of 7 steps from the start of the killings to the very end which can repeat numerous times

- ____________________________
  - Fantasy or “dreams” of committing act
- ____________________________
  - Stalking phase identifying potential victim or area
- ____________________________
  - Luring of victim; false sense of security
- ____________________________
  - Pleasure often times with fear from victim
- ____________________________
  - Murder takes on a personal side for the killer
- ____________________________
  - “Souvenir” from victim allows them to relive act and fantasy
- ____________________________
  - Emotional letdown of committing act and also not fulfilling fantasy

Ed Gein

- Individual that inspired movies
- ____________________________
- Grew up on Plainfield, WI farm to religiously fanatic mother and alcoholic father
- Following both of their deaths, closed off mother’s room and other areas where they had spent time together
- Contact with others was limited but raised little concern from neighbors
- “Discovery” of remains in house revealed body parts of all sorts scattered with some turned into furniture
- Main hobby was _____________________; admitted to _____ murders but suspected in ______ others
- Gein died in an institution in 1984
Charles Manson and his Family
- Childhood spent in many reformatories
- Imprisoned as an adult for theft and assault
- The name “______________” referred to the group of women who associated with him
  - Obsessed with the ____________ and “_______________________”
- Orchestrated a series of murders by his family including actress Sharon Tate
  - Total of ____ murdered in two night spree
- Sentenced to death but penalty changed to _________________ when death penalty eliminated in 1972

Ted Bundy
- Known for being _________________________________
  - Grew up believing his mother was his sister; his grand-parents his parents
- Would use a ____ and ask attractive college women to assist him in loading his _________________
- ________ state killing spree from 1974 to 1978
- Estimate ____ murders during that time but possibly as many as _____ plus
  - Attending law school at time of first murder
- Arrested in 1975, convicted in 1976 of kidnapping
  - Sentenced to 15 years
  - Investigators begin to cross-reference series of cases
  - Extradited to Colorado where he would escape from prison
- Heads to Florida where he commits final murders
  - Blamed violent pornography in death row interview for murders
- ___________________________ in _________________ in 1989

Dennis Rader
- ___________________________
  - __________________________________
- Commits 10 murders over a 30 plus year period in _________________,
- Use of media to gain “recognition”
- Considered himself to be a student of serial killers
- Finally captured in 2005 and sentenced to __________________________

Jeffrey Dahmer
- ____ murders committed over more than 10 years in Milwaukee, WI
  - ___________________________
  - Father even finds “remains” which he believes is deer carcass; was actually 2nd victim
- Commits first murder at the age of _________
  - ___________________________
  - Drilled holes in living humans to create “zombies”
- Finally arrested after attempted victim escaped
  - Apartment found with acid drums to dissolve bodies and parts of bodies and skulls preserved
  - ___________________________