

## CHAPTER 4

### 4.1 Self Check page 116

Why do juvenile delinquents commit delinquent acts according to the choice, deterrence, biological, and psychological theories?

First of all, make sure that students understand the definition of the word “theory;” some may mistakenly confuse theories with opinions. A theory is a formalized attempt to answer the question, “Why?” It is the result of the systematic testing of a hypothesis, and as such is closer to a factual statement than an opinion.

According to the choice theory, juveniles choose to commit delinquent acts. According to deterrence theory, juveniles commit delinquent acts when they choose to do so and when the benefits outweigh the risks. Biological theories look at body types, genes, and prenatal conditions for answers about the causes of delinquency. Finally, psychological theories look at the juvenile’s ability to develop morals and self-control; another psychological model is learning theory, which states that juveniles learn through reinforcement or through modeling themselves after other delinquents.

### 4.2 Self Check page 118

1. Briefly describe the classical school. Who was its best known proponent?

The classical school stated that behavior is the rational product of free will. Therefore, juveniles who commit delinquent acts make the rational decision to do so, because of the pleasure they hope to gain from such acts. Its best known proponent is Cesare Beccaria.

2. What beliefs were held by the positive school?

The positive school states that behavior is beyond an individual’s control. At first, positivists looked at biological factors for the causes of crime and delinquency; over time, though they turned to social and psychological factors.

### 4.3 Self Check page 121

1. What are the three reasons for the renewed interest in the classical school?

- Criminologists began to question the premises on which the positive school was founded, because after 100 years of effort the positivists were unable to isolate and treat that cause of crime.
- Crime rates soared in the 1960s and 1970s, which proved to some that the positive approach was not controlling crime.
- Rehabilitation came under attack because many believed that it had little or no effect on recidivism.

In the adult criminal justice system, the main effect of this was the shift from rehabilitation to incarceration.

**2.** How do Lawrence Cohen and Marcus Felson explain the changes in crime rates?

Cohen and Felson believed that the amount of potential criminals remains constant from year to year, decade to decade. They would explain changes in crime rates by changes in the amounts of motivated offenders, suitable targets, and capable guardians.

**4.4 Self Check page 123**

**1.** Name the four assumptions underlying the deterrence theory.

The four assumptions are that:

- Juveniles are rational actors.
- Juveniles are aware of the penalty for their particular offenses, or at least that they are illegal.
- The risks involved in committing offenses are unpleasant.
- In order for deterrence to be effective, sanctions must be swift, certain, and severe—at least in the eyes of juveniles, who will be deterred by this knowledge.

**2.** How effective is the deterrence theory?

In general, there is little evidence to support the belief that arrest and incarceration deter crime.

**4.5 Self Check page 132**

**1.** What factors affect a juvenile's chance of becoming delinquent according to William Sheldon?

Sheldon believed that mesomorphic body types are more likely to lead to delinquency than are endomorphic or ectomorphic body types. (For a full explanation of Sheldon's somatotypes, refer to Figure 4-2 on page 125.)

**2.** Define biosocial factors.

Biosocial factors are interactions between biological and social factors that lead to delinquency. These factors, as discussed in the textbook, are biochemical factors, such as dietary influences, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and prenatal drug use, and hormones; the underdevelopment of the automatic nervous system; and learning disabilities.

**4.6 Self Check page 141**

**1.** Name the six stages of moral development. Beyond which level are people less likely to commit delinquent acts?

The six stages are:

- Punishment and Obedience Orientation
- Hedonistic Orientation
- Interpersonal Concordance
- Law and Order Orientation
- Social Contract, Legalistic Orientation
- Orientation to Universal Ethical Principles

Beyond stage 2, people are less likely to become delinquent.

2. What do learning theorists believe?

Learning theorists believe that juveniles commit delinquent acts because they learn ideas and behaviors that support such actions. This is either through **classical conditioning**, which states that one learns by connecting a stimulus with an expected response, or through modeling, which states that people learn delinquent behavior by **modeling** or imitating the behavior of others.