

□ **1) STRAIN THEORY:**

□ **A) Cohen: Middle-Class Values, Strain and Delinquent:** Cloward and Ohlin's theory focuses not on goals but the opportunity to commit crime.

□ CHILD Delinquency

- Cullen believed that delinquency was primarily a problem of poor, working-class boys.
- Status is largely symbolic.
- So long as these lower-class boys stayed at home or in their part of the neighborhood, they don't experience many problems.
- It's when they go to school that problems arise.
- Many of the values taught at schools are those of the middle-class which stand for possibility, achievement, etc.
- However, the means of these boys to achieve are limited.
- When these boys go to school and face middle-class refinement, they appear crude and thus arises their *frustration*. (toughness, power)

□ These boys develop an inverted status system where they value the opposite of what the middle-class praises.

- **Non-utilitarian**—these boys do not value goals but aimless wandering and “screwing around”.
  - o They steal for the sake of stealing and destroy for the sake of destroying.
  - o The boys reject middle-class norms and devalue their property.
- **Expressive Action:**
  - o **Malicious**
  - o **Negativistic**

- In the middle-class, people are taught to value work.
- In contrast, the lower-class praises idleness.
- In the middle-class, individualism is praised.
- In contrast, lower-class boys tend to coalesce into delinquent groups or gangs.

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□ We see in Cohen's work the development of a *strain theory*.

- It highlights the inability of boys in a certain class to **attain status**.

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□ Cullen and Ohlin's contribution to criminology was the notion that to commit a crime, you need the **opportunity** to do it.

- Society has to provide you with some criminal opportunity.

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□ Cloward and Ohlin spoke of **two kinds of structures** in society:

- **Legitimate**—these involve mainstream institutions like businesses, politics, schools, churches, etc.
  - They operate in accordance to the law.
- **Illegitimate**—it is a social structure in the sense that it is organized and has some sense of purpose.

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□ For Cloward and Ohlin, **crime is utilitarian** and has a **purpose**.

- As different as the two structures are, they believe that they are **integrated**.
- In order for the illegitimate social structure to exist, it must be somehow related to the legitimate social structure.
- They have to draw resources from each other.
  - Ex. Many mob bosses had relationships with politicians.

- o The illegitimate structure would extort business from the legitimate structure.

**1. Criminal subculture**—can form in delinquent boys when the legitimate and illegitimate structures integrate.

- o The delinquent boys strive to get into the illegitimate structures, to become mob bosses when they grow up.
- o These boys have already given up hope in joining the legitimate social world.
- o They're *strained* so they hope to break into the illegitimate world.
- o Cloward and Ohlin disagreed with Cohen in that they argued that delinquent boys are driven by goals.
- o Once these kids gain access into the illegitimate but organized, they become less sporadic in their actions and are no longer violent for the sake of being violent.

**2. Conflict Subculture**—these boys use violence to gain status

- o Violence is the one thing that, no matter where they are, they can do.

**3. Retreatist Subculture**—these kids have no hope of getting into the legitimate world.

- o Even worse, they can't make it into the illegitimate world.
- o There are only so many positions in the world of organized crime.
- o Once those positions are filled, everyone else is left out.
- o The kids in the retreatist subculture are those that failed to gain access into the illegitimate world.
- o These kids also failed to get into the conflict subculture because they may not have been violent enough.
- o They are "double failures".
- o They form gangs but they aren't cohesive.
- o These kids then tend to fall into drug use.

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□ If we were to go out into the real world, the majority of kids we would find would be party of the conflict subculture as evident from the graffiti.

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