

# Developmental Theories-9

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**Developmental Criminology**- attempts to provide a more global vision of a criminal career encompassing its onset, continuation, and termination

## Foundations of Developmental Theory

- **Life Course**
  - Sees criminality as a dynamic process, influenced by a multitude of individual characteristics, traits, and social experiences
- **Latent Traits**
  - Holds that human development is controlled by a stable propensity or "master trait", present at birth or soon after
- **Trajectories**
  - Suggests there are multiple trajectories in a criminal career. There are multiple subgroups within a population that follow distinctively different developmental trajectories that lead them toward a criminal career

- *Who are the Gluecks and why are they important?*

Answer...founders of this branch of criminological theory, early onset of delinquents as criminal careers

- *According to the life course theory, which of the following is not a factor that renders individuals incapable of maturing in a reasonable and timely fashion?*

- a. Family Problems
- b. Environmental Problems
- c. Educational Problems
- d. **All of the above**

## Life Course Fundamentals

- **Disruption Promotes Criminality**
  - People begin relationships and behaviors that will determine their adult life course. Follow social rules: go to school, get a job, get married, have kids. Doesn't always happen.
- **Changing Life Influences**
  - Family relations, school and peer relations, vocational achievement and marital relations influence a person's criminal involvement

## Life Course Concepts

- **Problem Behavior Syndrome (PBS)**
  - Criminality may best be understood as one of the many social problems faced by at-risk youth; crime is one among a group of interrelated antisocial behaviors that cluster together and typically involve family dysfunction, sexual and physical abuse, substance abuse, smoking, precocious sexuality and early pregnancy, educational underachievement, suicide attempts, sensation seeking, and unemployment
- **Offense Specialization/Generalization**
  - Debates over whether criminals participate in specialized crime or generalized crime

## Theories of the Criminal Life Course

- **Integrated Theories**- incorporate social, personal, and developmental factors into complex explanations of human behavior

- Sampson and Laub: Age-Graded Theory
  - Individual traits are important to understand the onset of delinquent and criminal behavior
  - Experiences in young adulthood and beyond can redirect criminal transitions. People can be turned positive or negative
  - Repeat negative experiences create a condition called **cumulative disadvantage**.
  - Positive life experiences and relationships can help a person become reattached to society and limit criminal behavior
- Turning points
  - Important life events can produce a transition in the life course
  - Important life events can change the direction of a person's life course trajectory
- Social Capital-positive relations with individuals and institutions that are life sustaining

\*Which of the following factors does not contribute to integrated theories of criminal life course?

- a. Social Factors
- b. Personal
- c. Developmental
- d. **Biological**

#### Latent Trait Theories

- Crime and Human Nature
  - All human behavior is determined by its perceived consequences. Ratio of potential gain vs. potential losses
- General Theory of Crime
  - The tendency to commit crime is attributed to a person's level of self-control. People with limited self-control tend to be impulsive
  - Problems with this theory include: tautological (cyclic reasoning), different classes of criminals, ecological differences, racial and gender differences, moral beliefs, peer influence, people change, effective parenting, modest relationship, cross-cultural differences, misreads human nature, one of many causes, criminals are not all impulsive

What is the most prominent latent trait theory?

- a. Integrated Cognitive Anti-Social Theory
- b. **Differential Coercion**
- c. GTC
- d. Control Balance Theory

The primary difference between GTC and Control Balance Theory is \_\_\_\_.

- a. That GTC find individuals find outward motivation to exercise control
- b. CPT individuals find inward motivation for control
- c. GTC find inward motivation to exercise control
- d. CPT individuals find no motivation for control

The primary difference between Cognitive Anti-Social Theory and Differential Coercion is...???

#### Trajectory Theories

- Pathways to Crime
  - Authority conflict pathway- begins at an early age with stubborn behavior; leads to defiance
  - Covert pathway- begins with minor, underhanded behavior that leads to property damage

Which of the following is not a path that will lead to crime according to trajectory theories?

- a. The authority conflict pathway
- b. The covert pathway
- c. **Integrated pathway**
- d. Overt pathway

### **Evaluating Developmental Theories**

#### **Public Policy Implications of Developmental Theory**

- Interactional Theory
- General Theory of Crime and Delinquency
- Age-Graded Theory
- Integrated Cognitive Antisocial Potential Theory
- General Theory of Crime
- Differential Coercion Theory
- Control Balance Theory
- Trajectory Theory