

# The Role of Criminological Theories in the Identification of the Terrorist Personality

By

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Since time immemorial, terrorists have had distinct motives and ideological orientations. There were the murderers of tyrants in ancient times and in the Middle Ages; the assassins of political and religious enemies; nationalists who felt or were oppressed and were not autonomous in their own state; and extremists of the left and right who felt the need for radical, political and social change. But a new kind of terrorist mentality has arisen, and the coincidence of this new fanaticism with the sudden resurgence of religious extremism has created a threat unprecedented in the history of mankind.<sup>1</sup>

Traditional terrorism, whether of the separatist or the ideological (left or right) variety, had political and social aims, such as gaining independence, liberating the country of foreigners, or establishing a new social order. Such terrorist groups aimed at forcing concessions, sometimes far-reaching concessions, from their antagonists. The new terrorism is different in character, aiming not at clearly defined political demands but at the destruction of society and at the elimination of large

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sections of the population. In its most extreme form, this new terrorism intends to liquidate all satanic forces, which may include the majority of a country or mankind, as a precondition for the growth of another, better, and in any case different breed of human. In its maddest, most extreme form it may aim at the destruction of all life on earth, as the ultimate punishment for mankind's crimes.<sup>2</sup>

### **A Brief History of Criminological Theories**

In order to aim at an evaluation of the characteristics and the motives of terrorism – whether of the traditional variety or its current offshoot - it is necessary to go into a study of the criminological theories hitherto stated, and try to assess the phenomenon of terrorism. In ancient and medieval societies, punishment had straightforward and specific goals. For example, primitive society viewed crime as an offence aided and abetted by evil spirits, against the gods. Thus the purpose of punishment was to placate the gods. The victim became a secondary consideration with the rise of centralised political authority; retribution<sup>3</sup> was the prime rationale for punishment. The offender it was believed, deserved to be punished harshly for transgressions against society, and the state assumed the role of the executioner.

Criminological theories have gone back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when J. Babiste della Porte (1535-1615) studied the relationship between crime and human body. John Casper Lavater (1741-1801) claimed to have identified the relationship between crime and facial features. In 1810, Franz Joseph Gall developed his famous work on craniology or phrenology in which he assumed that crime was one of the behaviours organically controlled by a specific area of the brain. In 1859 Charles

Darwin presented his theory of evolution in *The Origin of Species* in which he argued that the development of a species proceeds through natural variations among offspring.

The classical school represented a reaction to the harsh retributive punishments of the time. Chief among its early proponents was Cesare Beccaria and Jeremy Bentham.<sup>4</sup> Beccaria believed that the function of law was to promote justice.<sup>5</sup> Another influential scholar and reformer of the classical school of criminology was Jeremy Bentham. Bentham embraced Beccaria's ideas and made specific contributions to the 'deterrence theory'. Deterrence is based on the idea that humans are free to choose a course of action in a rational manner, a thought process Bentham described as hedonistic calculus, also called felicific calculus.<sup>6</sup> A person commits a crime because the benefits of the act are greater than the costs of punishment.

The biological approach can be traced back to the early history of criminology, as noted.<sup>7</sup> Several social scientists believed that the presence of certain physical traits made it more likely that an individual would become a criminal. It was out of this assumption, for example, that phrenology emerged.<sup>8</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Cesare Lombroso, founder of modern criminology, believed that criminals were born.<sup>9</sup> Influenced by Darwinian thought, Lombroso applied the concept of atavism<sup>10</sup> to criminological theory. He felt that the principal cause of criminal tendencies was organic in nature. Heredity was the key cause of deviance. Lombroso developed a typology of four basic types of criminals; the born criminal, the criminal by passion, the insane criminal and the occasional criminal.<sup>11</sup>

Enrico Ferri set forth his theory of 'criminal causation' in 1881 in his publication *Studies in Criminality in France*. The theory recognises three

different sets of factors in crime: a) those in the physical or geographical environment, b) those in the constitution of the individual, and c) those in the social environment. Ferri outlined four types of criminal in his first work and added two more in later additions. These are similar to those of Lombroso: born criminal, insane criminal, passionnal criminal, occasional criminal, habitual criminal and involuntary criminal.<sup>12</sup> However, criminology focussing on the 'psychiatric aspects of crime' can be traced to three theorists present during the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century – Ray, Aschaffenburg and Maudsley.<sup>13</sup>

Sigmund Freud originally believed that mental illness was a product of brain dysfunction. As the father of psychoanalysis, he believed that we understand human behaviour best by examining early childhood experiences. These experiences, traumatic or not, can profoundly affect behaviour without the individual being consciously aware of their impact. Perhaps Freud's greatest contribution to psychology is his theory that the mind has three levels of consciousness: the unconscious, the preconscious, and the conscious.<sup>14</sup> Coupled with the id, superego, and ego, these layers of the personality can, according to Freudian theory, result in criminal behaviour.<sup>15</sup> He also developed a number of concepts to explain the development of personality conflicts within the unconscious mind. Often, these conflicts are actually defence mechanisms established by the ego.<sup>16</sup> Two other theorists Warren and Hindelag developed several basic interpretations of Freudian psychology<sup>17</sup> as it relates to crime. Stanley Samenow rocked the foundations of Freudian theory when he argued that the criminal "chooses to be a criminal." Samenow also rejected many past psychological theories that blame crime on early learning experiences, as well as unconscious drives and motivations.<sup>18</sup> As a therapist, his work with criminals led him to assign certain personality traits to criminals.<sup>19</sup>

However, beginning with sociologist Emile Durkheim,<sup>20</sup> it became the fashion to explain various forms of crime mainly as a result of social and economic factors. His primary impact was that he focussed attention on the role that social forces play in determining human conduct when the dominant thinking held either that people were free in choosing courses of action or that behavior was determined by inner forces of biology and psychology.<sup>21</sup> His basic argument was that modernisation is linked to crime through the breakdown of social norms and rules - which is he associated crime with the absence of social controls.<sup>22</sup> In an article published in 1938, and revised and elaborated on at least three times since then, Robert Merton, an American sociologist revived Durkheim's concept of anomie.<sup>23</sup> Whereas Durkheim conceived of anomie as a problematic social condition resulting from sudden and rapid social change, Merton saw it as an endemic feature of the everyday operation of certain types of societies.<sup>24</sup> Merton's typology of adaptations to anomie is probably the best-known 'strain theory'.<sup>25</sup>

During the 1920s the Chicago School of Thought came into the field of criminology. It is also known as the Ecological School or the School of Human Ecology.<sup>26</sup> Robert E. Park, a former Chicago news reporter, believed that the city could be used as a laboratory to study crime. Influenced by prominent sociologists such as W. I. Thomas, George H. Mead, and George Simmel, Park saw a connection between how animals live in natural settings and how humans live in urban settings. Park and his colleague Ernest Burgess organised 1920s Chicago into a series of concentric zones according to residential, occupational and class characteristics.<sup>27</sup> Park and Burgess identified the zone in transition as the major source of urban crime.<sup>28</sup> Other theorists followed upon this research.

Perhaps the best known are Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay. Shaw and McKay focussed their attention on four trends that had come to characterise urban life: crime, poverty, ethnic heterogeneity, and residential mobility. Shaw and McKay conducted several studies on delinquency in Chicago over a thirty year period. Their studies confirmed Park's findings that delinquency is highest in the zone of transition.<sup>29</sup>

In his theory of deviant places, Rodney Stark extended the work of the Chicago school. Stark posed the question, How can neighbourhoods remain the site of high crime rates despite a complete turnover in their population?<sup>30</sup> His conclusion: there must be something unique about certain places that sustain crime.<sup>31</sup> Thus according to Stark, the nature of the neighbourhood's ecology determined the crime rate. Even in low-income areas, the crime rate should be lower if the neighbourhood is less densely populated, is more fully residential with less crowded and dilapidated housing, has a low concentration of demoralised residents, and has a low police tolerance of vice.<sup>32</sup>

Another major ecological theory focuses on what are called 'routine activities'.<sup>33</sup> The premise of this theory is that the daily routine movements of people explain victimisation patterns.<sup>34</sup> The most influential contemporary theory of crime comes from 'social learning theory', which emphasises the interaction between the person and the environment.<sup>35</sup> Social learning theorists believe that people become criminals as a result of what they have learned in their environment.<sup>36</sup> The current status of knowledge does not permit to be definitive about what causes an individual to engage in criminal conduct, because the causes of criminal behaviour, as with all other behaviour, are complex and involve biological, environmental, and psychological factors.<sup>37</sup> With different individuals, and even with different types of crimes, each of these factors may play a different relative role in explaining why any

given individual engages in criminal behaviour. While social learning theory is generally accepted and is the explanation that best explains most crimes and most criminals.<sup>38</sup>

All this theorising reveals that there has been no comprehensive explanation for aggressive behaviour and violence. Each and every case has to be viewed in its specific context.<sup>39</sup> However, at the same time, certain common traits may be identified in criminal behaviour. These include a troubled childhood, poverty, lack of opportunity, social segregation, alienation fostered by the urban environment and finally, a desire to gain recognition among immediate social circles. It is these traits that in turn lead the individual towards an obsession with religion or any particular political/social doctrine, identification of the 'enemy' (real or fictitious), and finally a gradual tendency to move towards such instruments that would grant the much needed revenge. Sometimes the revenge may not be planned, but might simply be an outburst of anger, which has hitherto simmered deep within the individual. In either case, the criminal act is not a single act, rather a culmination of various factors that 'push' the individual towards the completion of the 'deed' concerned.

### **The Elusive Terrorist Personality**

The actions of terrorist organisations are based on a subjective interpretation of the world rather than objective reality. Martha Crenshaw in her article, "The Subjective Reality of The Terrorist: Ideological and Psychological Factors in Terrorism," states that perceptions of political and social environment are filtered through beliefs and attitudes that reflect experiences and memories.<sup>40</sup>

A crucial question, therefore, is what draws people and groups to that type of activity? One of the chief obstacles to understanding terrorist behaviour is the prevalence of popular misconceptions about what kind of people terrorists are. Among the most common misconceptions is that they are deranged. Another simple and perhaps even more satisfying misconception is that terrorists are morally depraved.<sup>41</sup> A more sympathetic explanation of terrorist behaviour postulates that individuals are forced into terrorism because the intolerable conditions under which they live have left them no choice. This variation of the 'innocent victim of society' model is often used to absolve terrorists and terrorist organisations of any liability for their actions.<sup>42</sup> Thus these explanations of terrorist behaviour, no matter how emotionally satisfying, are flawed.

Searches for a single 'terrorist personality' have always failed owing to basic differences in character and motivation. In tsarist Russia, terrorists were political militants who saw no other way to compel the authorities to make concessions toward greater freedom. Most of them were not even particularly radical, but they were willing to sacrifice their lives in what seemed to them a sacred struggle. Some, like in every such movement, joined because their friends did, but there was no doubt about the idealistic motivation of leading figures. In case of nationalist-separatist movements, the state of affairs is more complicated simply because their struggle is not merely directed against the authorities but also against other national groups.<sup>43</sup>

Terrorists in democratic societies tend to be elitists; they claim to know better than the masses what is good for them. While a few of the 19<sup>th</sup> century terrorists claimed that no one in society was free from guilt and that innocent bystanders were bound to be killed, the great majority



would target only leading political enemies. Indiscriminate murder is, by and large, a component of 20<sup>th</sup> century terrorism. Furthermore, there is a basic difference between Europe and America and the parts of the globe where human lives count for little.<sup>44</sup>

Hence, what kinds of people are likely to join sects or such terrorist groups engaging in such acts of violence? Aggression and intense hate can manifest themselves in a variety of ways, in writing a manifesto or making a speech as well as in throwing a bomb. Psychologists, psychiatrists, criminologists, anthropologists, and neurologists have given much thought to the issue of whether or not there is a predisposition toward violence in human beings. Two traits that appear to be disproportionately prevalent among terrorists are low self-esteem and a predilection for risk taking.<sup>45</sup>

Many followers are likely to be drawn to a terrorist organisation by the charisma of the leader and the feeling of identity provided by the group as a means of compensating for their own feelings of inadequacy. A personality trait prevalent among terrorists is a propensity to take high risks. A high proportion of terrorists appear to be stimulus hunters who are attracted to situations involving stress and who quickly become bored with inactivity. Curiously enough, a predilection towards violence does not appear to be a dominant aspect of terrorist personalities. Most terrorists have been ambivalent towards the use of violence and human suffering.<sup>46</sup>

Genetic, biological and neurophysiological research has produced certain indicators with regard to the propensity towards aggression and violence. Genetic factors do play a role, as the studies of twins have shown, as does low intelligence and family and peer influence. Aggression has been explained with reference to innate human instincts as well as

neurochemical changes that affect aggressive tendencies – for example, the brain contains chemical substances, such as serotonin, that can influence aggression.<sup>47</sup> While not denying the presence of these and other biological factors, psychoanalysts have asserted that there are also psychological structures that inhibit aggression, and that ‘learning’ and ‘socialisation’ play a role that is equally if not more important.<sup>48</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Thus, it is difficult to ascertain the origins of terrorist behaviour or the factors that influence the same. Terrorist’s motives differed widely in the past – and they will differ even more so in the future. But there are discernable patterns that can be broadly applied.<sup>49</sup> What makes young people join such groups is spiritual emptiness rather than an empty stomach. The stresses and strains of modern life frequently have been adduced as reasons why such people turn to violence. Membership in a terrorist group or organisation can also enhance one’s social standing in a broader community – family, ethnic, confessional or national.<sup>50</sup> One also cannot rule out the material well being as a contributing factor in cementing individual loyalty to a group.

Hence, all the above factors contribute towards the creation of the terrorist personality, which in due course endures the complex transformation of becoming full fledged terrorists or terrorists-in-the-making. It is difficult for criminological theories to point out with precision any one factor responsible for the growth of the terrorist personality, but a study of all the divergent factors, as well as an

evaluation of the same, will in all probability place us in a better position to understand the different stages that go into the making of a terrorist.

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<sup>1</sup> Walter Laqueur, *The New Terrorism: Fanaticism and the Arms of Mass Destruction*, Oxford University Press, US, 1999, p.79.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p.81.

<sup>3</sup> Belief that the offender deserved to be punished harshly for transgressions against society. It is closely aligned with the revenge motive.

<sup>4</sup> Gennaro F. Vito and Ronald M. Holmes, *Criminology: Theory, Research and Policy*, Wadsworth Publishing Company, California, 1994, p. 74.

<sup>5</sup> In his 1764 essay *On Crimes and Punishment* he formulated the following principles which represented a dramatic departure from how the criminals had previously been perceived:

- Prevention of crime is more important than the punishment for the crime committed.
- Desirable criminal procedure calls for the open publication of all laws, speedy trials, humane treatment of the accused and the abolition of secret accusations and torture.
- The purpose of the punishment is to deter persons from the commission of crimes, not to give society an opportunity for revenge.

In short Beccaria redefined criminality, prescribed fair treatment for individuals and temporarily removed revenge and retribution. His ideas directly influenced the American Bill of Rights as well as the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen, the precursor to the French Constitution of 1791.

<sup>6</sup> George H. Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*, Dryden Press, New York, 1973, pp. 612-617.

<sup>7</sup> Vito and Holmes, *op. cit.*, p. 76.

<sup>8</sup> Phrenologists believe that the exterior of the skull reflects the shape of the brain and the faculties of the mind. Thus 'bumps' on the head could suggest criminal tendencies. *Ibid.*, p.99.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p.93.

<sup>10</sup> Relates to the theory that criminals have the physical characteristics of the primitive man – that they are biological throwbacks on the evolution scale.

<sup>11</sup> The Born Criminal: Credit for this term goes to Enrico Ferri, a student of Lombroso, who originated the term. A) According to Ferri's work, during his time this group represented about a third of all criminals. B) The born criminal is both a moral imbecile and an epileptic. C) The connection between criminality and epilepsy is one of derivation rather than identity. D) Epilepsy represents a genus of which criminality and moral insanity are the species.

The Criminal of Passion: While Lombroso felt this type more likely to be female than male, the category is distinguished not by gender but by the level of impetuosity and ferocity. A) This type of criminal commits crime because he/she is "urged by the pure spirit of altruism." B) Examples of this type of

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criminal are the wife who kills her unfaithful husband, and the brother who kills the man who raped his sister. C) In this category, homicide forms 91% of the cases.

The Insane Criminal: Those best labelled in this category include: 1) kleptomaniacs 2) nymphomaniacs 3) habitual drunkards, and 4) pederasts. A) This type commits crime because of a defect in the brain, which makes it unable to distinguish right from wrong. B) These individuals were considered truly insane without responsibility for their actions.

The Occasional Criminal: The broadest and most inclusive category and include four types. A) The Pseudocriminal: Individuals who become criminals by mere accident e.g. Killing in self-defence. These criminals are also called Judicial Criminals. B) Criminaloid: These are epileptoids who suffer from a milder form of the disease so that without adequate cause criminality is not manifested. These are individuals with weak natures who can be swayed by circumstances to commit crime. Often showing hesitation before committing crime. C) Habitual Criminals: Individuals who regard the systematic violation of the law in the light of an ordinary trade. Include those convicted of theft, fraud, arson, forgery and blackmail. D) Epileptoid Criminal: Individual suffering from epilepsy.

<sup>12</sup> Born Criminal: Is one who because of heredity is more likely to respond to criminal stimuli.

Insane Criminal: Suffers from mental disease or a neuropsychopathic disturbance.

Passional Criminal: Two types of passional criminal; one who suffers from a prolonged and chronic mental state, and one who suffers from an emotional outburst.

Occasional Criminal: The vast majority of criminals commit crimes as a result of family and social milieu.

Habitual Criminal: Crime is an acquired habit. Involuntary Criminal: Not a fully developed concept.

<sup>13</sup> Isaac Ray (1807-1881) considered 'moral insanity' to be a 'cerebral disease' that could cause a person to commit horrible crimes in spite of all efforts to resist. Gustav Aschaffenburg (1866-1944), a pioneer of psychiatric criminology, argued against the theory of hereditary criminality and maintained that the individual was more likely to be influenced by the social environment. Henry Maudsley (1835-1918) studied the relationship between crime and insanity, especially 'epileptic madness'. He believed that criminals suffered from 'moral degeneracy' – a deficiency of moral sense.

Vito and Homes, *op.cit.*, p. 121.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, also A. A. Brill (ed.), *The Basic Writings of Sigmund Freud*, Modern Library, New York, 1938; Clifford T. Morgan, Richard A. King, John R. Weisz and John Schopler, *Introduction To Psychology*, McGraw Hill Book Company, New York, 1986, pp. 575-588, 616-662.

<sup>15</sup> a) Id: the unconscious, instinctual aspect of the personality. The id wants what it wants when it wants it. The primary rule of id is, "If it feels good, do it!" the id demands immediate gratification.

b) Superego: the mediator between the unconscious id and the external world. The development of the superego arises out of the relationship between the child and the world. Parents, schools, and other social institutions serve as models for the content of the superego. Even though it lies in the realm of the unconscious, the superego manifests itself in the restraints imposed by moral, ethical, and societal values.

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c) Ego: the conscious part of the personality. The ego becomes the mediator between the savage wishes and demands of the id and the social restrictions of the conscious world, governed by the superego. According to this 'reality principle', the ego delays certain behaviours until the time is suitable for their gratification, as well as entirely denying other behaviours.

<sup>16</sup> The basic assumption behind the Freudian theory is that human nature is inherently antisocial. Due to the influence of the id, infants start life in a state of immorality with antisocial drives (instincts). As infants grow and develop, however, they confront social rules that they must abide by. Thus, they must give up the primitive drives of instant wants gratification, unbridled sexuality, and unrestrained aggression. Children develop a superego from experience and from role models such as parents and siblings that guides them along the pathway to appropriate behaviour.

<sup>17</sup> Vito and Holmes, *op. cit.*, p. 124.

- Criminal behaviour is a form of neurosis.
- The criminal suffers from a compulsive need for punishment in order alleviates guilt feelings and anxiety stemming from unconscious strivings.
- Criminal activity may be an alternate means toward gratifying needs and desires not met by the family.
- Delinquent behaviour is often due to traumatic acts, memories of which have been repressed.
- Delinquent behaviour may be the result of displaced hostility.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 125.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

- Chronic lying
- The view of other people's property as their own
- Unrelenting optimism
- A great amount of personal energy
- A fear of injury or insult
- Intense anger
- Manipulative ness
- An inflexibly high self-image

<sup>20</sup> Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) is by far one of the most important and prolific sociologists in the history of the field. Durkheim himself is credited with making sociology a science, as he used an empirical methodology in his own studies, especially in regard to his study of suicide rates and issues of European nations. For details, Anthony Giddens, *Emile Durkheim; Selected Writings*, Cambridge University Press, London, 1972. Also, Robert N. Bellah (ed). *Emile Durkheim: On Morality and Society, Selected Writings*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1973.

<sup>21</sup> Although this is now the dominant view it was considered quite radical at the time. While there is no clear agreement on whether his theory of the relationship between crime and modernisation is accurate,

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there is at least some evidence that the basic patterns of crime found in the modern world can only be accounted for by such a theory.

<sup>22</sup> Seamus Breathnach, *Emile Durkheim on Crime and Punishment (An Exegesis)*, Dissertation, US, 2002, accessed electronically at <http://www.bookpump.com/dps/pdf-b/1121547b.pdf> , on June 10, 2009.

<sup>23</sup> Durkheim coined the term "anomie," and shed light on the inner workings of society that his predecessors had overlooked. He showed that all the aspects of human society work together much like the parts of a machine, and this concept is referred to today as sociological functionalism. This idea of functionalism - societal organisation playing the major role in the lives of humans - has become the very paradigm of most sociological study today. Durkheim defined the term anomie as a condition where social and/or moral norms are confused, unclear, or simply not present. Durkheim felt that this lack of norms - or pre accepted limits on behavior in a society - led to deviant behaviour. Anomie = Lack of Regulation / Breakdown of Norms. Industrialisation in particular, according to Durkheim, tends to dissolve restraints on the passions of humans. Where traditional societies - primarily through religion - successfully taught people to control their desires and goals, modern industrial societies separate people and weaken social bonds as a result of increased complexity and the division of labour. This is especially evident in modern society, where we are further separated and divided by computer technology, the internet, increasing bureaucracy, and specialisation in the workplace. Perhaps more than ever before, members of modern society are exposed to the risk of anomie. Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, ( translated by George Simpson.) The Free Press, New York, 1933.

<sup>24</sup> Daniel J. Curran and Claire M. Renzetti, *Theories of Crime*, Allyn and Bacon, Massachusetts, 1994, p.19.

<sup>25</sup> Strain theory argues that crime result when individuals are unable to achieve their goals through legitimate channels. In such cases individuals become frustrated and may either try to achieve their goals through illegitimate channels or strike out at others in their anger.

<sup>26</sup> Curran and Renzetti, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

<sup>27</sup> A) Factory Zone: The central business district; featuring retail trade (shops and offices), light manufacturing, and commercialised recreation.

B) Zone in Transition: Active, constantly changing area, perhaps containing a pocket of luxury apartments.

C) Workingmen's Homes Zone: Occupied by the working-class people who have escaped from the zone in transition.

D) Residential Zone: Middle to upper-class area of single family dwellings and expensive homes.

E) Commuter Zone: The suburban area; populated by escapees from the other zones.

<sup>28</sup> They found that these areas also had the highest rates of delinquency, disease, infant death, and other social problems. In addition, they found that the crime rate declined as one moved from the centre of the city to the outer zones.

<sup>29</sup> Other key findings included the following:

- Stable communities have lower rates of delinquency.

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- Communities with higher rates of delinquency have social values that differ from those with lower rates of delinquency.
  - Lower-income areas with a high rate of frustration and deprivation have a higher level of delinquency.
  - Social conditions in a community (such as overcrowding, physical deterioration, and concentration of foreign-born and black populations) are directly related to the rate of delinquency.
  - In lower-class areas, no stable social values unify the community, so delinquency is seen as a legitimate alternative to a law-abiding posture.

The etiology (i.e., cause of origin) of American delinquency is culturally unique

<sup>30</sup> Curran and Renzetti, *op. cit.*, p. 143.

<sup>31</sup> Stark examines five variables known to affect the crime rate in a community: 1) density, 2) poverty, 3) mixed use, 4) transience, and 5) dilapidation. These variables interact with four others: 1) moral cynicism among residents, 2) increased opportunities for crime and deviance, 3) increased motivation to deviate, and 4) diminished mechanisms of social control.

Vito and Holmes, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-144.

Propositions on “Deviant Places”:

- The greater the density of a neighbourhood, the more contact there is between those most and those least predisposed to deviance.
- The greater the density of a neighbourhood, the higher the level of moral cynicism.
- When neighbourhoods are dense and poor, homes will be crowded.
- Where homes are more crowded, people will tend to congregate outside the home, where there are greater temptations and opportunities to deviate.
- Where homes are more crowded, there will be lower levels of supervision over children.
- Poor, dense neighbourhoods tend to be mixed used neighbourhoods, where homes, apartments, retail shops, and even light industry are jumbled together (the Chicago school’s zone of transition).
- Poor, dense, mixed-use neighbourhoods have high transience rates.
- These areas tend to be dilapidated. Dilapidation is a social stigma for residents.
- The larger the relative number of demoralized residents, the greater the number of available ‘victims’.
- Stigmatised neighbourhoods will suffer from more lenient law enforcement. More lenient law enforcement increases moral cynicism and increases incidence of crime.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>33</sup> The theory postulates that for any crime to occur, three elements must converge: 1) a motivated offender, 2) a suitable target, and 3) the absence of a capable guardian (e.g., an alert neighbour, an alarm system) to prevent crime.

<sup>34</sup> Vito and Holmes, *op. cit.*, pp.144-145.

<sup>35</sup> Alan E. Kazdin (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Psychology Vol. 2*, American Psychological Association and Oxford University Press, New York, 2000, p. 348.

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<sup>36</sup> This theory is particularly appealing because it can explain how individuals act differently under different circumstances. For example, people are more likely to become criminals under some circumstances and, once they have committed criminal acts, they are more likely to continue doing so if they are rewarded or reinforced.

<sup>37</sup> Kazdin, *op. cit.*, p. 349.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Laqueur, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

<sup>40</sup> In Robert O. Slater and Michael Stohl (eds.), *Current Perspectives on International Terrorism*, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1988, p. 12.

<sup>41</sup> A cursory review of public statements by responsible authorities – the U.S. Congress, the British Parliament, the Israeli Knesset, or even the erstwhile Soviet Politburo – shows that neither the ‘terrorist-as-evil monster’ image nor the ‘terrorist-as-lunatic’ image is not restricted to the uninformed.

<sup>42</sup> The fallacy of this argument is that the great majority of those who live under such conditions never resort to terrorism, no matter how compelling their grievances, they are still legally and morally accountable for their acts. Supporters of the Palestinian cause argue, for example, that Palestinian terrorism is not the fault of the Palestinian Liberation Organisation or its members, but of the denial of self-determination.

<sup>43</sup> The Irish terrorists, for instance, did not begin sectarian, and there were even Protestants among their leaders. However, as the struggle continued in Northern Ireland, the terrorists turned against their Protestant neighbours as much as against the London government.

<sup>44</sup> The case of Nezar Hindawi is not atypical. Born in Jordan in 1954, he sent his pregnant fiancée with, unknown to her, a parcel of Semtex hidden in a computer to board an Israeli plane from London to Tel Aviv. The planned explosion would have taken place over southern Europe, killing all 375 passengers, including his fiancée and unborn child. Owing to the vigilance of the airport guards, the plot was foiled. Although western commentators denounced his action as brutally criminal; his behaviour was not thought to be particularly loathsome in the part of the world where he came from because his wife was not Muslim. Hindawi was not a psychopath, and there are many like him, mercenaries from Afghanistan and Algeria, who would kill with relish. The culture they live in, the combination of nationalism and religion gives them the legitimisation for acting out their cruelty.

<sup>45</sup> Those with low self-esteem tend to place unrealistically high demands on themselves, and when confronted with failure, to raise rather than lower their aspirations. A common psychological characteristic among those with low self esteem is to feel out of control of their own lives and to be convinced that their lives are controlled by external sources. This phenomenon called ‘externalisation,’ accounts in part for the accumulated wrath they direct towards forces believed to be the source of all their problems. They also tend to externalise the weaknesses and self-denigration they feel in themselves and transfer them to an outside enemy. Another form of displacement common to terrorists has been identified as ‘splitting’. It occurs in individuals who have incurred psychological damage in childhood and have never fully integrated the good



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and bad aspects of the self. These aspects are ‘split,’ the good being identified with idealised self and the bad projected onto external enemies. This psychological tendency appears to be more common among terrorist leaders than followers, for it provides a grandiose self-image that project confidence and purpose and attracts others to its glow.

<sup>46</sup> Ulrike Meinhof, the Red Army Faction leader, was apparently terrified of guns, and the Palestinian terrorist Layla Khalid was able to deal with presence of child passengers on hijacked airliner only by blotting the possible consequences out of her mind. These feelings scarcely suggest the behaviour of bloodthirsty, psychopathic killers. Some even went to great lengths to avoid direct responsibility for violent death. It is possible that taking hostages is a preferred tactic at least in part because of the terrorist’s ability to shift the blame for any ensuing violence to the target government if it refuses to satisfy the terrorist’s demands. John W. Crayton, “Terrorism and the Psychology of the Self”, in Lawrence Zelic Freedman and Yonah Alexander (eds.) *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Hindustan Publishing Corporation, Delhi, 1985, pp. 33 – 41.

<sup>47</sup> Matthew Robinson and Tom Kelley, *The Use Of Neurological Cues By Probation Officers To Assess Brain Dysfunction In Offenders*, Presented to: Annual meeting of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, March 1998, accessed electronically at <http://www.neurological.edu> , on January 2002.

<sup>48</sup> Charles A. Russel and Bowman H. Miller, “Profile of a Terrorist”, in Lawrence Zelic Freedman and Yonah Alexander (eds.), *Perspectives on Terrorism*, *op. cit.*, pp. 45-60.

<sup>49</sup> The composition of membership of extremist cults and terrorist groups varies from country to country according to social conditions, religious traditions, and historical factors. In the Muslim world terrorists are likely to come from two classes: the unemployed youth from poor families, and numerous individuals who went to universities and seminaries and are also unemployed. In the United States, many terrorists hail from middle class families. They not only include university dropouts, but also people with degrees in subjects like psychology. Material deprivation does not play a significant role in Western societies; the German Red Army had no working class members, and in the Italian Red Brigades only a few became terrorists by way of the Communist Youth League. In some of the separatist terrorist organisations, such as the IRA, the lower class element is much larger.

<sup>50</sup> The admiration of relatives and peers is apparently a significant factor in consolidating membership in the ETA, the provisional IRA, and Hezbollah.