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Criminality of Women:
An Analysis on Current Criminological Theories and Female Offender Depiction

By

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A Research Project for Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Masters of Criminology

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Abstract

Criminological theories construct the basis of criminology, as these theories are used to develop preventative and rehabilitative measures. These criminological theories are developed based on standardized testing and empirical research conducted by theorists within the field. At a glance, the theories developed should cover all forms of crimes conducted by a range of individuals. However, a review of the literature determined further analysis of criminological theories must be conducted. This study looks at theories that are most common within criminology and determine whether or not women are equally represented and depicted. By analyzing strain, labeling, biological, and social control theories, it can be determined that the gender gap that existed in the earlier stages of criminology still exists today.

Introduction

Prior to the introduction of feminist criminology following the second wave of feminism in the 1960s and 70s, the field of criminology focused on more masculine theories of deviance and social control (Chesney-Lind, 2006). Gendered violence such as sexual harassment or assault and domestic abuse were overlooked in favor of crimes against and perpetrated by men (Chesney-Lind, 2006). Theories similarly excluded offending, and when female offenders were mentioned within the media or literature, they were often demonized or sexualized (Chesney-Lind, 2006; Tefler, 2017). Feminist activists would soon focus their efforts on female victimization, thus improving the knowledge and literature and creating what is seen as the greatest accomplishments of feminist criminology (Chesney-Lind, 2006).

However, while criminological theories have begun to include more accounts of the victimization of women, a gap within the literature still exists in terms of including violent female offenders due to diverted interests. Despite the inclusion of women within criminological literature, there is still an emphasis on women as victims rather than offenders (Chesney-Lind, 2006). Since the turn of the century, a woman's criminality has been the subject of debate and multiple theories have come about attempting to explain why this gap exists (Chesney-Lind, 2006; Naffine, 1987).

Purpose

The purpose of the study is to explain how violent female offenders are written and portrayed within existing literature and how this portrayal affects victims and offenders of all genders. The study looks at criminological theories – those that tend to be most commonly used in education and policy making – as well as media representation and analyze how female

offenders are represented. Each theory is discussed in depth to provide a thorough critique of whether a woman's criminality is explained and if that theory holds true. The theories include: Biological, Mertonian Strain, Social Control, and Labeling.

Rationale

Based on a review of the available literature, it is anticipated that this study will provide a thorough analysis of several theories and resources that has not been seen. Of the available literature similar to this study, none seem to look at both media resources as well as criminological theories, nor do they include several different schools of theories. Other analyses that cover multiple theories do so with undefined parameters, making the validity of such resources questionable (Islam et al, 2015). The result of this study will be a broader interpretation of the available information on violent female offenders, their criminality, and the effects their representation has on other portions of the justice system.

Limitations

As with any research aiming to explain a lack of information, limitations exist. In this instance, it can be difficult to prove there is a gap in knowledge as the evidence is missing. To counteract this limitation, available literature concerning criminological theories for offending will be analyzed for their inclusion and depiction of female criminality. It is hypothesized that criminological literature either foregoes explanations for female offending or gives biased and unsupported reasonings. If either of these situations can be shown through analysis, the lack of female offender theories can be correlated.

Other limitations include the use of the selected methodology. Qualitative research – due to its nature – is more dependent on the researcher themselves and less on statistical data. As

stated by Anderson (2010), this can allow for bias more easily than quantitative methods. Due to the amount of the information that will be analyzed throughout the study, it is probable that the analysis will be time consuming (Anderson, 2010). Similarly, the results of the study are more complicated to present as it will rely on descriptions and researcher interpretations (Anderson, 2010).

Definitions

For this study, violent female offender will be defined as a woman who has committed and been convicted of a violent crime, one in which she has used or threatened to use force. Violent crimes include robbery, terrorism, rape, torture, and murder. Female offenders will be defined individually based on their depiction within theories and those theories' definitions of female offenders. Each theory will be defined based on original definitions from each theorist who is responsible for the creation of the theory, and the definition will be revised in accordance to future theoretical expansions. Strain theory will be originally defined by Robert Merton, labeling theory will be defined by Howard Becker, biological theory will be defined by Cesare Lombroso, and social control theory defined by Travis Hirschi. Further definitions will be included within subsequent sections.

Literature Review

Progression and Trends

Since the introduction of feminist criminology in the 1960s and 70s, the focus on a feminist take of criminology has been slowly in development. The original feminist school of criminology focused on explaining violent crime as a product of aggressive and toxic masculinity and inequalities within society but did not touch on female crime (Britton, 2000).

One of the earliest texts regarding women in criminological texts comes from Frances Heidensohn (1968). Heidensohn (1968) states that “deviance of women is one of the areas of human behavior most notably ignored” due to the institutional factors in play as well as the overall lack of female crime (p 161). However, while this explanation can be used to understand a concentration on male criminality, it does not explain the “total exclusion of studies of females” (Heidensohn, 1968, p 161).

In a similar analysis, Smart (1976) states the lack of information found in 19th century literature is due to the status of women within society. Because women lacked the same social and legal status that others were given, they were often passed over in criminological studies or grouped in with juvenile offenders or those with mental illnesses (Smart, 1976). Smart (1976) continues her critique of the literature by pointing out much of criminology is in reference to men in both offender theories and victimology theories.

Some of the most widely cited resources for the study of female representation in criminology comes from Naffine (1987; 1996). Within this text, Naffine (1996) breaks down the cycle that causes women to be underrepresented in the literature as well as how that affects them within legal and societal circles. In a previous text, Naffine (1987) provides an analysis of major schools of criminology at the time and how they depict female offenders. By doing so, Naffine (1987) shows the male-centric view criminology tends to take and the stereotypes of women often used within theoretical framework.

While conducting the review of the available literature, a pattern was discerned: a majority of the articles and texts within this subject are dated prior to the turn of the century. While there are still resources published after this date, they are difficult to come across, unlike those from the 1980s and 90s. Based on the articles concerning overall feminine theories in criminology, it

can be said that the focus has once again shifted back to women as victims rather than offenders. Research has also begun to look at the gender inclusiveness of specific theories, especially those related to sexual violence and domestic abuse. This shows that there has not been a readily available review of the major schools of criminology since the 2000s.

Each of the four articles selected for this literature review will be used to analyze the depiction of women as violent offenders in the media and in scholarly literature. Two articles relate to the representation of female offenders within news reports or textbooks, with both explaining how that representation effects the view of a woman's criminality (Love & Park, 2013; Sternadori, 2014). An article from Harrison et al (2015) samples female serial killers from a set time range and conducts independent research on the demographics of the subject, similar to an earlier study by Hickey (2010). However, this study does have its own flaws as well as interesting information that will be discussed which causes the validity of such study to be questioned.

Critique of Selected Articles

Sternadori (2014)

Sternadori (2014) conducted qualitative research to compare the archetypes and framing of two mass shooters. The study posits that the frames and archetypes displayed by news coverage can show how female offenders are viewed by the public versus how male offenders are seen. By comparing Amy Bishop and George Zinkhan – two middle-class, white, university professors with three victims each – Sternadori (2014) can argue that the media and public view female offenders as mentally unstable and along the lines of a “female monster” (p 301). Yet a

male offender with a similar crime fits the “patriarchal, Othello-like archetype” (p 301), whose coverage focused on his career and less on previously abusive behavior (Sternadori, 2014).

Because Sternadori (2014) is focusing on two specific cases that occurred and their media coverage, her data collection included news stories from several different countries; she did not utilize academic articles aside from those to define the theoretical framework. Sternadori (2014) conducted a simple database search using “Amy Bishop” and “George Zinkhan” as keyword search phrases. Sternadori (2014) also used publications that were in close proximity to each case, such as the Huntsville Times and The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Finally, to compare Bishop’s and Zinkhan’s personalities as professors, Sternadori (2014) used student evaluations from RateMyProfessor.com, as it was the “only available form of public discourse...that was not filtered through journalistic frames” (p 306).

Sternadori (2014) attempts to explain a phenomenon – the gendered archotyping of female violent offenders – by using framing analysis, as defined by Pan and Kosicki (1993). To do so, Sternadori (2014) took several steps: she looked at the theme of articles covering both events; any casual statements made by journalists, both explicit and implicit; and rhetorical devices used, as per Pan and Kosicki’s (1993) definitions. Based on Pan and Kosicki (1993), Sternadori (2014) included the word choice and labels designed by journalists to show underlying frameworks and attributes.

By using qualitative methodologies, Sternadori (2014) was able to provide more explanation as to her study and findings. Because the study conducted relied on framing analysis, Sternadori (2014) needed the ability to describe the data collected and could not rely solely on coding the descriptors or the results. However, by using qualitative rather than quantitative methods, the results from the study cannot be applied to similar case as the sample is too small to

allow for generalization. Likewise, because the data used for the analysis is subjective to the criminal case in question, comparisons cannot be made to other cases.

When only taking the two cases into account, Sternadori's (2014) conclusions seem valid. The perpetrators were similar in demographic, minus their gender which was the focus of the study, which allowed for less variables to affect the findings. The circumstances of each shooting were different – Zinkhan's was personal while Bishop's was based on professional circumstances – which only highlighted the findings (Sternadori, 2014). Bishop was painted as a “haggardly witch” (Sternadori, 2014, p 311), with media coverage focusing on her role as a mother with anger and mental health issues, despite acting on professional revenge. Zinkhan, however, was framed as a professor, and media coverage depicted his crime as “acceptable” and most did not attempt to investigate further into his personal life (Sternadori, 2014, p 311). However, it is difficult to say this conclusion is valid for other cases since generalization cannot be made based on the current study.

Harrison et al (2015)

Harrison et. al (2015) is based on a previous idea that the current knowledge of female serial killers tends to come from a single forensic study performed by Hickey (2010) and not from independent empirical data. The study therefore documented the means, motives, demographics, and mental health independently of other studies in order to provide a fresh take on female offenders. Harrison et al (2015) also include the physical attractiveness of the offenders studied, something which is not typically included in similar studies of male criminals. However, the specific method of determining such attractiveness was not discussed. It should also be mentioned that the unattractiveness of an offender was explained by the “stress of arrest and trial and the wearing of prison garments” (Harrison et al, 2015).

Once the sample population was found, the study by Harrison et al (2015) mainly consisted of statistics of the population including demographics, history, antecedents, and crime details. It was found that most female serial killers had been or were currently married, expressed “average to above-average attractiveness” (p 398), and forty percent expressed a mental illness (Harrison et al, 2015). However, the study admits that the interpretation of data on mental illness is difficult and made with caution due to the lack of thorough psychological testing with each individual (Harrison et al, 2015). The inability to confirm certain statistics due to the study not involving direct interaction with subjects leads to a difficult in validating the study.

The data collection used by Harrison et al (2015) was equally lacking in academic journals, aside from those used to design the study and provide operational definitions. Harrison et al (2015) first defined serial murder, and then conducted a search on the website Murderpedia.org to compile a list of female serial killers within the United States between 1821 and 2008. After a list was created, Harrison et al (2015) validated that the offenders matched the authors’ definition of serial killer by looking at news reports. Other than this information, Harrison et al (2015) do not go into detail about how information was gleaned; this lack of information can call into question the validity of certain findings such as mental health, abuse, and demeanor.

By using quantitative methodologies, Harrison et al (2015) could provide summarized information for a large sample population. Due to the size of the sample as well as the generic information gained that allowed for easy coding of data, the gathered data does have the potential of being generalized. When comparing the work by Harrison et al (2015) to studies conducted with “alternative methodologies”, they appear consistent; however, the article itself does not specify which studies the authors are comparing the data to which impedes the verification of

this claim. By utilizing quantitative methodologies instead of qualitative, certain demographics of female serial became more difficult to code, such as their motives Harrison et al (2015). This method does not allow for in-depth descriptions and therefore, motivations of female serial killers are documented as superficial data. It is also possible that during the development of the questions, a structural bias was formed. This could have led to the authors reading and interpreting the data in a way that represented them and not their own subjects.

It should also be noted that the operational definition of serial killer limited the available data for Harrison et al (2015). Originally, the study's initial search on Murderpedia.org consisted of offenders who had acted up until 2014. However, after applying their definition – “three or more victims, with a cooling off period...of at least one week” (p 388) – their results were narrowed greatly to the year 2008 (Harrison et al, 2015). The definition provided by Harrison et al (2015) was based off the one provided by Hickey (2010), and not the one by the FBI which state a serial killer has a minimum of two victims and not three. A brief look through Murderpedia.org suggests that just by increasing the minimum number of victim by one, Harrison et al (2015) ignored potentially hundreds of other female serial killers within the United States alone. This could have impacted the research design as well as the statistics derived.

Love & Park (2013)

In order to show representation of genders as well as their depictions within criminal justice and criminology, Love and Park (2013) recreated a study conducted twenty years previously (Baro & Eigenberg, 1993). In doing so, Love and Park (2013) were able to validate the previous findings, add to the discussion of gendered patterns, and support their hypothesis of the continuing marginalization of women in criminal justice. The study was conducted using

photographs of criminal justice and criminology textbooks using content analysis (Love & Park, 2013).

This study uses a concept by Berger and Bradac (1982) that is used to explain how reality is shaped by perception. Berger and Bradac (1982) state that what people visually observe is then used to structure and create the world and their place within that construct. Using this idea, Love and Park (2013) as well as the previous study (Baro & Eigenberg, 1993) deem it important to observe and understand gendered images as they would depict social norms and thus society would be structured accordingly.

To narrow down the number of textbooks that would be analyzed in the study, Love and Park (2013) only used those that included the word “introduction” within the title or if the description of the textbook pointed towards an introductory level. This left the authors with a total of 45 textbooks, and after another round of narrowing down the sample, only 23 textbooks published between January 2008 and May 2012 were deemed appropriate (Love & Park, 2013). Within each textbook, Love and Park evaluated the pictures within based on four criteria which were further defined: “(a) individual depictions, (b) the social composition of the images, (c) the placement of the images within substantive areas, and (d) interactive images” (Love & Park, 2013, p 326). Once images were analyzed, two graduate students and one of the authors coded the images individual before comparing the resulting data for reliability (Love & Park, 2013). In the end, 2,113 pictures with a total of 2,436 individuals whose gender could be identified were analyzed (Love & Park, 2013).

Within this study, Love and Park (2013) were able to ascertain that women represented 25 percent of photographs within introductory criminology texts, with 76 percent of the images exclusively depicting men. This marked a nine percent increase in male portrayals from the

previous study by Baro and Eigenberg (1993; Love & Park, 2013). This bias in representation was noted by Baro and Eigenberg as important, as it showed the “characteristic of the discipline” (1993, p 25). The second criteria analyzed was the image placement, or the representation of the depicted individual. Within the textbooks, women were more likely to be portrayed as victims or secondary persons within the image, while men made up a higher percentage of criminals and professionals (Love & Park, 2013). The overrepresentation of women as victims also has a detrimental effect on men, who were only portrayed as victims in three percent of the images (Love & Park, 2013).

Because the dataset was stemming from a superficial source such as photographs and not from individuals, using quantitative methods was beneficial to the authors. By coding the pictures three separate times, greater accuracy could be achieved which allowed for validity in the results. Quantitative methodologies such as those employed, including defining the criteria used by the researchers, allows for a possible third replication of the study. In this case, the use of quantitative data does not yield many disadvantages aside from the inability to fully describe and depict the nature of each image. However, doing so would not be conducive with a sample of equal size, and decreasing the number of photographs analyzed would decrease in the validity and generalizability of the results.

Islam et al (2015)

Similar to the proposed study, Islam et al (2015) reviewed major criminological theories. However, the study was conducted solely on theories that focused on female criminality such as masculinization and chivalry theory and does not look at all major criminal theories (Islam et al, 2015). Islam et al (2015) focus on female criminality theories to determine the validity and

“acceptability” of these theories, due to the rising number of violent crimes being committed by women (p 1).

The analysis is conducted on masculinization theory, opportunity theory, marginalization theory, and chivalry theory and includes the proponents of the theories, summaries, and the strengths and weaknesses of each (Islam et al, 2015). A specific form of analysis is not used or stated by the authors, and the weaknesses and strengths of each theory are seemingly based on other theoretical reviews. This makes the standardization of the study near nonexistent as each theory is not being critiqued on the same merits. For example, the masculinization theory is described as being male centered while the opportunity theory’s main weakness stems from the lack of supporting data but does not look at whether or not it is gender biased (Islam et al, 2015). The same can be said for the analysis of theoretical strengths, as theories are not compared on similar factors.

Islam et al (2015) uses qualitative methodologies as the research is based on secondary literature. Because the nature of the study is a literature and theoretical framework review, using qualitative methods allows for Islam et al (2015) to use greater description as well as provide explanations for the analysis provided. However, because the study uses qualitative methodologies to analyze secondary sources, it is more difficult to allow for reproduction of the study and interferes with future comparisons between results. As qualitative analysis of literature can result in differing responses, results become subjective to the researchers.

Because the study is conducted without using specific factors to analyze each theory, stating that the results are valid is proved difficult as the test cannot be replicated in its original form due to potential bias. This study has a framework that can be used for further research such

as the proposed study, as it allows for similar analyses to be conducted. However, any future research should be done so by using standardized factors for each theory.

Research Question and Hypothesis

Based on the literature available as well as the literature reviewed above, standardized qualitative analysis conducted on criminological theories should be conducted with a feminist lens. This study would analyze theories from major criminological schools as well as media reports and describe how violent female offenders are portrayed and how their criminality is explained. The major research question that is looked at during the study is: How are violent female offenders depicted within criminological literature?

Using this question as well as available literature, it is hypothesized that violent female offenders are under represented by criminological theories. It is hypothesized that a majority of criminology theories tend to use the “add women and stir” method as proposed by Daly and Chesney-Lind (1988). This method of theoretical framework tends to apply male centered theories of criminality to women without consideration of differences in social or perceptual constructs. It is also hypothesized that when women are represented within theories and media reports, it is not of equality quality to male representation such as the case studied by Sternadori (2014)

Methodology

A qualitative approach is proposed for this study, specifically one of theoretical review. Theoretical reviews can assist in the growth of the field, especially when “the literature is complex, multi-discipline, or contested”, such as the case of criminology (Campbell et al, 2014, p 1). The use of a qualitative approach to this type of theoretical review would allow for

descriptions and context to be created and interpreted. Within a qualitative study, it is necessary to form the criteria used to choose theories as well as assist in the continued focus of the study itself (Campbell et al, 2014).

The study will focus on major schools and theories of criminology, chosen based on the rate of appearance within recent introductory textbooks (Hagan, 2016; Schram & Tibbetts, 2013; Walsh & Hemmens, 2018). These theories will include Biological, Strain, Social Control, and Labeling. Definitions of each theory are presented, with subsequent analysis conducted on each chosen source to allow for a broader range of analysis.

Standardized statements have been created in reference to the original research questions and each theory was judged on a Likert scale. These statements include: The theory is accepted in the modern literature; the theory has been revised and is accepted in its revised form; women are mentioned within the accepted theoretical framework; female criminality is explained by the theory in question; statements made about female criminality are reinforced with relevant data collection; statements about female criminality have been proven to be accurate with subsequent research. Because it is anticipated that each theory will consist of multiple secondary resources, the average score of the Likert scale for each question has been calculated after individually reported in order to gauge the most accurate account.

Despite the data being collected not being statistical in nature, diligent and accurate notes of the analysis have been kept within a computerized document and any handwritten notes that occurred have been computerized using the date originally recorded.

Analysis

Strain Theory

Merton, 1938

First introduced by Robert Merton, strain theory is the concept that structures within society as well as the perceived cultural goals are what lead to an individuals' criminal actions (Merton, 1938). Originally created as a response to the proposed biological theories, Merton's article and theory aimed at explaining criminal behavior to outside causes (Merton, 1938). Within this theory, it is suggested that a nonconforming or criminal response occurs when the pressures of social structures are exerted upon a person (Merton, 1938).

It is important to take into consideration two aspects of social structure when considering crime: the cultural goals or purpose that are put in place and therefore the "frame of aspiration reference" (p 38); and society's regulations and definitions of the acceptable ways to reach these prescribed goals (Merton, 1938). It is when goals are pushed by a society but individuals are denied equal access to socially accepted means that strain occurs and can lead to five adaptive responses: conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism, and rebellion (Merton, 1938). Each response either rejects or accepts the goals and the means to achieve the goal.

This theory in its originality was accepted and a major component of the literature in the 1960s. However, the following decade saw criticism due to the theoretical limitations of Merton's work (Agnew, 1992). Merton (1938) only uses his theory within its context to explain financial crimes, and the definition used for the original strain theory is only applicable to those criminal acts. Because of the limitations, Mertonian strain theory in its original form is not

generally as accepted or used within criminology and more focus is placed on Agnew (1985; 1992) which is later discussed.

When looking at how women are depicted within strain theory, it is important to first take into consideration the gendering of each theory. Mertonian strain is fairly gender neutral, with the theory not being specifically applied to either sex. However, the validity of Mertonian strain can be questioned as Merton used existing crime statistics as proof to his theory and did not question their meaning (Merton, 1938; Naffine, 1987). Because there are no statements on female criminality, the validity of the theory's view on female criminality cannot be determined or analyzed.

Cohen, 1955

Cohen (1955) is one of the first works of literature to address the differences between male and female criminality using strain theory with a focus on juvenile delinquency. Cohen (1955) started by describing the societal goals boys and girls face within the United States: boys are said to have varied ambitions while the ambitions of girls focus solely on men and procuring a husband. These ambitions therefore depict men and boys as achievers and doers, while women and girls are shown as passive companions to men (Cohen, 1955). Cohen (1955) specifies that when boys commit delinquent acts, it is due to not having the proper resources to fit in to their surroundings either at home, with peers, or in school.

Within Cohen (1955), it is stated that the main cultural goal is status, and when boys and men within the working class do not have the means to attain these coveted statuses, criminal behavior – or reaction formation - occurs. Cohen (1955) equally emphasizes achievements as a valued American characteristic, such as academic and those of economic value. To Cohen

(1955), American culture highly values these achievements, the ability to create and maintain relationships, reliability, and self-control. These proclaimed cultural ideals are specifically stated to fit middle-class men, and not the female role (Cohen, 1955).

Cohen (1955) is a strong resource in terms of studying male delinquency and has been credited as one of the earliest theorists to look at the relationship with delinquency and the construction of masculinity (Belknap, 2007). However, there are several prominent critiques to this theory and publication (Kitsuse & Dietrick, 1959). Major criticisms include the lack of statistical evidence to support the claims as well as the untestability of the methodology used (Kitsuse & Dietrick, 1959). Cohen (1955) also fails to explain the ambivalence of the working-class towards middle-class values (Kitsuse & Dietrick, 1959).

While strain theory in this form is gendered, it is highly biased towards the male role in society due to the emphasis on men (Cohen, 1955). Cohen (1955) does mention the female role, however does so with only four pages of the entire work. Within these pages, Cohen (1955) states that women are focused on their relationships with men and it is these focuses that explain why “boys collect stamps, girls collect boys” (Cohen, 1955, p 147). Women are depicted as inactive and unambitious helpmates, and femininity is understood to be a combination of frailty and emotional instability (Cohen, 1955). Therefore, female criminals are only capable of expressing their criminality, which stems from their inability to form relationships, with sexual promiscuity (Cohen, 1955). Cohen (1995) explains that the lack of violent female crime stems from women being insulated from societal strains due to having a less demanding role when compared to men. Without the pressure from society to achieve the same goals as men, they do not deviate in the same way (Cohen, 1955).

As previously mentioned, the statements being made in this work of literature do not have empirical support nor are they later supported by subsequent research (Cohen, 1955). Contradictory studies from the late 1960s and 70s have shown that efforts by women to find mates did not correlate to criminal behavior (Sandhu & Allen, 1969). The pattern of delinquent behavior between both girls and boys have also shown to be quite similar aside from slightly higher rates in boys (Naffine, 1987). To further contradict Cohen (1955), research applying strain theory to juvenile delinquents is inconsistent with its data. There are studies that support Cohen and state that strain affects male delinquents more than girls (Simons, Miller, & Aigner, 1980), while other studies show that strain is more relevant to girls (Datesman, Scarpitti, & Stephenson, 1975; Segrave & Hastad, 1983) or have a similar influence on boy sexes (Cernkovich & Giordano, 1979; Figueria-McDonough & Selo, 1980). However, most juvenile delinquency studies utilizing strain theory have shown to dispute Cohen's (1955) claims and explain female delinquency as a reaction to their environment rather than their lack of marital partner (Campbell, 1987; Joe & Chesney-Lind, 1995).

Agnew, 1992

While Merton (1938) was a major theory during the 1960s, it came under criticism in the 1970s by theorists such as Bernard (1984) and Cole (1975). This criticism led to suggestions to abandon the concept of strain theory altogether (Hirschi, 1969; Kornhauser, 1978). Agnew (1992) became an advocate to instead revise the combined strain theories of Merton (1938), Cohen (1955), and Cloward and Ohlin (1964). While a previous rendition of the revision does exist (Agnew, 1985), it should be noted the specific 1992 revision is the most cited within strain literature and broadens the understanding and definitions of strain theory.

Agnew (1992) addresses the main criticisms against Merton (1938) such as the inability to explain crime outside of financial activity or why criminal behavior is only the response of a few individuals of the population. Agnew (1992) explains that while strain results in multiple negative emotions such as anger, depression, and fear, these emotions do not necessarily predict criminal behavior. It is only when criminal means to meet a prescribed social goal is sought out by a person under strain that crime occurs; therefore, crime is more so a strategy to cope with their strain rather than an immediate response (Agnew, 1992). Strain as a source of crime is described with four characteristics that lead to a criminal response (Agnew, 1992). If the strain is seen as unjust, high in magnitude, connected to a lack of social control, and a pressure to commit crime exists, a criminal response is more likely to occur (Agnew, 1992). Agnew (1992) further defines three different types of strain: the inability to achieve social goals, the removal or potential removal of positive stimulus, and the threat of negative stimuli.

For the most part, Agnew (1992) is widely accepted as the most inclusive and generally unlimited explanation of strain theory. However, it is criticized for issues opposite as those found with Merton (1938) and is described as being too broad in definition (Jensen, 1995). Because of the broad definition of what constitutes as strain, it can be argued that strain could be any factor which would then prove impossible to test and thus allowing Agnew (1992) to be “virtually unfalsifiable” (Jensen, 1995, p 152).

When it comes to the gendering of strain, Agnew (1992) remains fairly neutral. Both sexes are described with phrases such as “his or her” and “he or she” in reference to the hypothetical offender (Agnew, 1992). Likewise, because Agnew (1992) does place more of an emphasis on an individuals’ responses to their environment as a source for crime, the sex of the individual is not entirely discussed. Agnew (1992) remains a fairly gender-neutral source of

criminality explanation and does not make statements about the cause of specific female criminality and therefore cannot be proven as incorrect in nonexistent ideas.

Agnew & Broidy, 1997

After the publication of Agnew (1992), two questions arose within the criminological literature that would later be addressed by Broidy and Agnew (1997): how can the crime rate difference between men and women be explained, and why do women commit crimes in the first place? Broidy and Agnew (1997) point out that the general goal of answering these questions was in the application of theories that were “developed primarily to explain male behavior” to explain female crime (p. 275). Broidy and Agnew (1997) state that due to the revised definition of strain included in Agnew (1992), strain theory can be applied to female offenders. General strain theory can then be used to look at how oppressive conditions affect women and therefore explains female offending (Broidy & Agnew, 1997).

When looking at the gap in offending, it does seem that men are more likely to commit violent crimes, aside from family-based offenses (Chesney-Lind & Shelden, 1992 as cited by Broidy & Agnew, 1997). Broidy and Agnew (1997) believe this gap exists due to men being subjected to more and different strains than women, and therefore men are more likely emotionally respond to strain with anger which is conducive to anger. While Broidy and Agnew (1997) explain the perceived lack of female offending to women having a different and less criminal response to strain, women are also explained to internalize their anger which leads to drug offenses.

Broidy and Agnew (1997) further investigate the hypothesized statements on female offending and criminality on the literature available on the topic of female strain and emotional

responses. The idea that women experience less strain than men is disproved within the study as the literature points out women experience as much if not more strain than men and are likely to find the strain as more stressful (Broidy & Agnew, 1997). These findings are pointed out to be even more important due to the lack of research into female relevant stressors such as abortions, discrimination, and “the burdens associated with nurturing others” (Broidy & Agnew, 1997, p. 278).

In reference to the second half of the strain theory application, Broidy and Agnew (1997) look at literature pertaining to the response to stressors by, as reaction to strain is a major factor in criminal behavior (Agnew, 1992). The available literature at the time argues that while men react to stress with anger and hostility, women are more likely to become depressed or anxious (Mirowsky & Ross, 1989). However, when looking at anger specifically, Mirowsky and Ross (1989) found women report feeling angry almost a quarter more frequently than men but are still depressed. Broidy and Agnew (1997) explain this difference by citing Campbell (1993), which states that the anger felt by women is somehow different than male anger, as it is accompanied by “fear, anxiety, guilt, and shame” while men feel anger and “moral outrage” (p. 282).

While Broidy and Agnew (1997) do place reliance on relevant data to support the statements of female criminality, it is important to note the literature used were published in the late 80s and 90s, as it was available. A recent study that examines similar emotional responses in men and women have shown slightly different results (Simon & Nath, 2004). Women were shown to report more negative feelings – including anger – while men were more likely to report positive or neutral emotions (Simon & Nath, 2004). Contrary to Broidy and Agnew’s (1997) claims, Simon and Nath (2004) showed that women not only are more likely to feel anger, but their anger is “more intense and of longer duration than men’s” (p.1166).

Labeling Theory

Becker, 1963

When discussing labeling theory, it is necessary to understand the origins of the theoretical framework as it has impacted the depiction of women throughout the theory. Howard Becker (1963) has been labeled as the most famous of the many theorists who began the concept of labeling with his work studying jazz musicians. Becker (1963) collected data through observation of those labeled deviants within society in order to see from that labeled vantage point rather than as an outside observer. It was through this observation that Becker (1963) was able to describe how such labeling can influence future behavior. Once an individual is labeled, they are more likely to join an equally labeled social group which will support a similarly labeled behavior (Becker, 1963). It is this work that allowed for the continuance of labeling theory as well as be widely accepted throughout the criminological literature. For the most part, labeling theory has not undergone major revisions such as strain theory.

However, Becker (1963) focused solely on male jazz musicians, despite the numerous numbers of female jazz artists that were available for observation. The majority of women who were mentioned were done so in the role of the wife of a participant rather than as a labeled deviant themselves (Becker, 1963). The portrayal of these wives came through the eyes of the musicians, allowing them to be seen as boring nags who annoyed their husbands (Becker, 1963). In the rare instance that Becker (1963) did observe female musicians they are depicted as sexual objects and not as musicians equal to their male counterparts. The depiction of women by Becker (1963) has seemed to have a lasting effect on subsequent labeling frameworks.

The few statements made by Becker (1963) on deviant women are not necessarily reinforced with data as it is based purely on observations rather than scientific data. However, subsequent labeling studies have focused more on the application of the theory and the gender differences in labeling. This has allowed for Becker's (1963) statements to not exactly be proven false as Becker looked more at the attitudes of women rather than the labels given to them by society or the propensity of their labeling overall.

Harris, 1977

Harris (1977) did look at women within labeling theory, however did so by viewing and explaining their conformity, rather than looking at criminal women. While not a revision or independent version of labeling theory, Harris (1977) does extend the framework to include women in some fashion. By looking at the earlier stage of labeling, Harris (1977) does not use official labeling and instead looks at the type-script as a means to depict criminals.

The statements made about women do not explicitly focus on their criminality, rather their lack of criminal activity. Within the study, it is stated that women conform to society's roles more so than men due to more powerful men convincing them of the inappropriateness of crime (Harris, 1977). Harris (1977) states that those in power attempt to force this conformity due to women being necessary to perform social functions such as child-rearing, an action that would be impossible to do while incarcerated. Harris (1977) states that a people with power develop type-scripts for who are deemed acceptable criminals – in this instance, black men – and those who do not fit this script are viewed as non-offenders.

These statements, however, are not necessarily reinforced with other empirical data and some portions of the statements tend to be fairly vague in construct. While placing emphasis on

powerful men popularizing female stereotypes to control them, Harris (1977) does not offer explanations as to why this control is important to those in power. There is also a difficulty in testing Harris' (1977) theory; suggestions on testing were not made by Harris and it proves difficult in theory. If crime occurs because of stereotypes placed by others, researchers would have to test whether or not criminals offend because of those stereotypes, something which is difficult to do as it would rely on self-reporting of the offender.

Bernburg, Krohn, & Rivera, 2006

As most of the literature of the original labeling theory comes from the 60s through the 80s, it is important to take into consideration a modern study using the theory. Bernburg, Krohn, and Rivera (2006) briefly cover the strengths of Becker (1963) such as the general impact of the deviant label on future deviant acts due to the natural social support that accompanies the label. Bernburg et al (2006) focus on looking at how labeling affects both male and female delinquency, as the juvenile years are the most likely to be impacted by deviant labels.

While this study does not add on to the existing labeling literature with improvements, revisions, or additions to the framework, it still allows for modern testing of an older theory. Because of this, the study does not necessarily make original statements about female offenders, although they are mentioned more so than previous literature (Bernburg et al, 2006).

However, a conscious decision made by the researchers may have impacted the results. As admitted by Bernburg et al (2006), men were consciously oversampled – 75 percent to 25 percent – based on a study by Blumstein et al (1986). This study states that men are “more likely than females to be chronic offenders and to engage in serious delinquency” (Blumstein et al, 1986, p. 74). And while this statement as been supported by other literature, it allows for the

claim of circular logic. The study by Bernburg et al (2006) concludes by stating that females are less likely to engage in delinquency after being labeled, despite beginning with a biased population sample.

The data collected can be replicated which allows for retesting with a more equally divided sample if necessary. This along with the support of other literature throughout the article adds to the accurate data and findings (Bernburg et al, 2006). However, as stated previously, it may add more support if the sample populations are more equal in its division as to account for any circular construction.

Biological Theory

Lombroso & Ferrero, 1895

In 1876, criminal anthropologist Cesare Lombroso published a work of literature that proposed that certain people are predisposed to criminal behavior which would allow for the explanation of crime. Within the translated version of the text, only a few paragraphs are dedicated to female offenders, most of which credit female criminality to prostitution with little to know evidence aside from measurements of craniums and the physical attributes such as tattoos and weight (Lombroso, 2006).

In response to the Italian feminist movement as well as to supplement his work on male offenders, Lombroso published a secondary work solely focusing on female offenders (Lombroso & Ferrero, 1895). The study used the same methodology as the previous one on male offenders; measurements were catalogued of living and dead specimens (Lombroso & Ferrero, 1895). Of these specimens, two groups were formed, “normal” women and “atavistic” women

(Lombroso & Ferrero, 1895). Lombroso and Ferrero (1895) explained that criminal behavior was based on atavism, that criminals were less evolved than the rest of the “normal” population.

This original framework stated that women as a whole were not as evolved as men due to the passivity of their reproductive organs, however this should have shown more criminal tendencies in women than the fourteen percent that the literature claimed (Lombroso & Ferrero, 1895). Lombroso and Ferrero (1895) attempt to explain this contradiction by stating that due to the passivity of women, any organic deviation would not be as extreme as deviance in men; the statement was also made that only “beautiful” women – those who were not atavistic – would be able to reproduce and therefore would slowly weed out abnormal individuals. Another contradiction made in this framework is the statement that female offenders were more likely to show male characteristics (Lombroso & Ferrero, 1895). However, if this were true, it could be said they were more like men than women, and therefore should have been viewed as more biologically evolved solely based on Lombroso and Ferrero’s (1895) work.

While the study conducted by Lombroso and Ferrero (1895) is fairly sound in its methodological practices, and each observation is fully documented and photographed, there is no support for the claims made. The literature focuses on fitting both criminal and non-criminal women into feminine stereotypes to continue the stigmas put in place; the same can be said for Lombroso’s (2006) statements on people of color.

Thomas, 1967

Revisions to Lombroso and Ferrero’s (1895) were attempted at by Thomas in two separate works of literature (1907; 1967). A major revision to previous literature includes the redefining of criminality from a biological abnormality as proclaimed by Lombroso and Ferrero

(1895) to a “socially induced pathology” (Smart, 1976, p. 37). The statements on women overall are very similar to Lombroso and Ferrero’s (1895) and seems to widen the reach that biological sex has on a woman’s likelihood to become intellectuals of any type (Thomas, 1967). Thomas (1967) did not look in depth at the links between sex and society, although did make a few statements explaining why middle-class women seemed to commit less crimes than those in lower classes. Poor women were said to commit crimes for a new experience, while women of societal importance or economic comfort were more focused on establishing and protecting their image (Thomas, 1967).

Thomas (1967) did include additional traits that are attributed to a woman’s nervous system, however these traits revolve around varieties of love. It is the lack of receiving and giving love that then causes women to commit criminal offenses (Thomas, 1967). Therefore, prostitution is the most common form of female offending and is a direct result of women looking for love and attention which they require but do not find by socially accepted means (Thomas, 1967). In fact, women were more believed to become prostitutes as a way to manipulate men and achieve their own sexual goals, with no economic motivations (Thomas, 1967).

This claim is not supported by research, especially in the modern times. Research conducted solely on pathways to prostitution have cited several other causes for women to turn to prostitution (James & Meyerding, 1977; Silbert & Pines, 1981). In one study conducted with current and former prostitutes ranging from ages 10 to 49, ninety percent of the 200 respondents cited money as being the main cause (Silbert & Pines, 1981). Many of the women interviewed reported some type of sexual abuse either from family members or strangers, which leads to emotional destruction and criminal behavior (James & Meyerding, 1977; Silbert & Pines, 1981).

Pollak, 1950

Another recent take on biological theory, while leaning more towards a combination of sociological and biological factors, still repeats the fundamentals of Thomas (1967) and Lombroso and Ferrero (1895) (Pollak, 1950). Unlike previous biological literature, Pollak (1950) supports the concept that men and women both offend at the same rate. Pollak (1950) explains the perceived difference in statistics is partially explained by a chivalrous or more lenient way women are treated by the criminal justice system. This claim has been supported by subsequent research, as women have been shown to receive lighter sentences if they are able to show they are economically and socially dependent (Kruttschnitt, 1982).

It is stated that women are deceitful in nature, a concept that is supported by women being able to conceal their menstrual cycles, the education of children on certain matters, as well as physically deceiving husbands as to their sexual desires by being passive (Pollak, 1950). Pollak (1950) suggests that because women are naturally deceitful and manipulative – due to their weaker physical strength – they are more prone to being the masterminds behind criminal activity and manipulate male actors to commit crimes for them.

However, Pollak (1950) fails to take into consideration the social stigmas surrounding many of these evidentiary points as well as the power imbalance that exists between men and women. By stating that women are the masterminds behind a male actor, he overlooks active female criminals who are the perpetrators of their own offenses and are not “immune from arrest” (Smart, 1967, p. 47).

Social Control

Hirschi, 1969

Rather than focus on the causes of criminal behavior, those in the school of social and power control look to explain why people choose to conform and obey laws. The original control theory is made up of four categories that in turn prevent people from acting in deviant ways: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief (Hirschi, 1969). Attachment is the link between a person and their society, commitment is the individual's investment into social constructs, involvement is the idea of social bonding and socially approved activities, and belief emphasizes a person's belief in moral and social values (Hirschi, 1969). Hirschi (1969) suggests that when people have high connections to their society, other people, and have strong morals and social bonds, they are more likely to conform to laws put in place. This theory is fairly accepted amongst social control theorists, with other theorists usually adding on to the theory rather than fully rewriting it.

While Hirschi's (1969) control theory is written as gender-inclusive, the application of the theory becomes centered around male delinquents, specifically White school children. This focus on juvenile boys can be seen as an interesting choice, as a sample population would have been higher when looking at girls since social control theory is interested in why people do not offend (Hirschi, 1969). Given that statistically women and girls are less likely to offend, focusing on girls rather than boys may have led to stronger results (Naffine, 1987). It is especially odd considering the original study began with both sexes – and approximately 2,000 female subjects – and ends with the girls “disappear[ing]”; their disappearance was never justified (Hirschi, 1969; Mann, 1984, p 263).

By overlooking the female juvenile delinquent, Hirschi (1969) emulates the pattern seen previously with criminological studies, where the normal convention is to study men. This decision could be conscious or unconscious; if unconscious, it draws into question the preference

towards male subjects even in areas where female behavior could be more important and telling. Along with the lack of female representation, Hirschi (1969) follows the same pattern of describing male behavior, which distinctly contradicts how women are depicted throughout criminology. The law-abiding person is male, responsible, successful, and follows the law as a sensible reaction (Hirschi, 1969). In previous frameworks, the assumed law-abiding person is female, however she is passive and dependent on others (Cohen, 1955; Schur, 1984). This depiction continues the negative depiction of women throughout criminology as either conformer or criminal.

Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990

A continued and slightly enhanced version of social control theory was put forth by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) and referred to this version as general theory. General theory of crime aimed to combine theories to create an emphasis to self-control rather than social control (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). In doing so, general theory of crime individuals who have a lower self-control and have the ability to offend will be more likely to commit crime (Gottfredson & Hirschi, 1990). Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) state that the difference in criminal statistics based on gender, race, age, and class are due to how these characteristics interact with both social and self-control.

General theory of crime has been criticized as a whole for its lack of definitions (Akers, 1991; Taylor, 2001). Similar to Harris' (1977) strain theory, Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) theory has been stated to be too vague in framework construct. Taylor (2001) states that the definitions of what constitutes self- and social control are not fully understood and explained, nor are their interactions with each other. Akers' (1991) pointed out that a main issue in the general

theory of crime was the lack of separation between the propensity to commit crimes and self-control, which allows for the assumption that the two are synonymous.

This theory of social control has also been criticized by multiple other theorists for its lack of inclusion of women as victims and offenders (Bottcher, 2001; Flavin, 2001; Miller & Burack, 1993; Taylor, 2001). Butcher (2001) critiques the general crime theory for not taking power and its effect on crime into consideration and as well as the ignorance of gender, a critique also covered by Miller and Burack (1993). Two theorists similarly point out how the general theory of crime does not cover violence against women as well as gender roles within families, both of which are important characteristics in studying criminology (Flavin, 2001; Miller & Burack, 1993). Despite these critiques, modern studies applying the general theory of crime shows that self-control as well as the access to criminal opportunities do have a fairly significant impact on delinquency (Li, 2004; Nakhaie, Silverman, & LaGrange, 2000).

Hagan, Simpson, & Gillis, 1979; 1987

In order to build upon social control theory, a secondary theory was suggested in order to address the criticisms given to Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) and combined social control theory with gender and family theories (Hagan, Simpson, & Gillis, 1979; 1987). Power control theory explicitly includes gender, as it emphasizes power dynamics within families and households with the belief it impacts the “gender-determined control of adolescents” and their risk of criminal behavior (Hagan et al, 1987, p. 813). The studies related to power control theory state that there is a greater gender gap in delinquency rates in homes where the mother is seen as having a lower status than the father, than in homes where both parents are seen with the same status (Hagan et al, 1979; 1987). The power control theory states that the power make up between parents – being of equal status or one seen as lower than the other, typically the mother

– has an impact on the subsequent delinquent behavior of girls (Hagan, 1979; 1987). In theory, in homes with parents showing equal statuses, there should be less of a difference in the behavior of sons and daughters due to how they are socialized equally (Hagan et al, 1979; 1987).

Power control theory has been supported by both research conducted by the original theorists as well as subsequent studies (Hagan et al, 1979; 1987; Singer & Levine, 1988). However, other studies reported contradictory findings. In a report by Dornfeld and Kruttschnitt (1992), it was found that while girls' behavior is more likely to be influenced by family factors such as divorce and discipline, gender stereotypes do not always play a role. Another study looked at the power structures of families a bit more detailed and found that delinquency rates were not impacted by parents' statuses, but rather were a factor of social class and the receipt of negative discipline from father or paternal figure (Morash & Chesney-Lind, 1991).

Results

Depiction of Women in Strain Theory

Based on the above sources, it can be determined that, while attempting to depict female criminality, strain theory still lacks a full and modern depiction of female offenders. For the most part, it can be said that the whole of strain theory literature is accepted by the modern criminologist. While revisions have been recommended and produced after heavy critique on the original theory, the overall concept is still heavily cited and approved of. Basic strain theory resources that outline the theoretical framework do not look at gender or sex of the offender, rather they focus on the outside environment and causes of crime (Agnew, 1985; 1992; Merton, 1938). However, when specifically applied to female offenders, strain theory seems to be simply outdated. When looking at Cohen's (1955) application and its lack of supporting data, it can be

said that this version of female criminality is based more on stereotypes of women. Cohen (1955) claims female criminality is solely expressed through sexual deviance, which is a claim that is not typically applied to men. Broidy and Agnew (1997) do manage to apply general strain theory to women with general success and with the literature that was available at that time, it is difficult to apply the same ideas to the modern female criminal due to the subsequent conflicting research.

Depiction of Women in Labeling Theory

The literature available on labeling theory does tend to look at both male and female offenders equally. However, the approaches used for each sex varies. While studies looking at male offenders focus on their own experiences, studies on female offenders tend to draw conclusions based on existing data. As described by Naffine (1987), women described by labeling theorists are “stripped of any ability to challenge or question her position in society” and are “conceived as object rather than agent” (p 83). Along with the difference in acquiring information, labeling theory as a whole school of criminology is difficult to empirically test as many times it is based on participant observations.

The depiction of women within labeling theory is of much more importance as the theory bases itself in the description of the offender. Deviant women are more likely to be labeled as “mentally ill”, while their male counterparts are labeled as “criminal”, making the mentally ill label an explanation and alternative to a serious female offender (Morris, 1987). Frigon (1995) states that women are depicted as such due to the view that they have strayed from their ideal femininity and gender role. Schur (1984) makes an equally interesting point explaining the differences between the labeling of the sexes: women are stigmatized without being criminal, and even their physical appearance and “...perhaps even the mere condition of ‘being’ a woman”

can lead to this view. This depiction of women as mentally ill or promiscuous or even hysterical creates a stereotypical view of female offenders as something less serious or dangerous as male offenders (Tefler, 2017)

Depiction of Women in Biological Theory

By stating that women are less evolved, and female offenders are deformed physically, Lombroso and Ferrero (1895) seemingly set the course for the rest of biological theory as well as other criminology theories. As this literature was widely used for understanding the criminal mind, it is more than likely that this idea of women being inferior beings who were only capable of sexual deviance and not violence continued throughout other theories such as labeling. Biological theory seemingly created a cyclical effect on the view of female offenders. By seeing them as inferior, research on women focuses less on statistical data and observations and more on assumptions made on stereotypes. Rafter and Gibson (2004) reported Lombroso and Ferrero's (1895) work not only negatively impacted the feminist movement of the time, but has continued to impact on studying female crime, more so than *The Criminal Man* (Lombroso, 2006) had on male offender research.

While one would imagine that biological theory would adjust in views overtime, the majority of biological work still held the same belief and in fact tended to build upon Lombroso and Ferrero's (1895) work. However, it should be noted that due to biological theories leading towards eugenics-based crime prevention (Rafter, 1997; 2008), these theories would be later rejected (Rocque, Welsh, & Raine, 2012). However, relatively recent theorists have argued that a biological difference exists in the levels of aggression, circling back to the concept that women are not as capable of feeling aggression, despite subsequent research (Maccoby & Jacklin, 1975; Simon & Nath, 2004; Wilson & Herrnstein, 1985).

Depiction of Women in Social Control Theory

Both social control and power control theory offer inconsistent findings when it comes to the criminality of women and girls. While the research has shown that girls and women tend to have greater social and familial ties than boys do, these social ties tend to be insufficient in explaining differences in criminal behavior. In social control theory, a lack of female offending tends to be related back to simply being feminine rather than being responsible as conforming boys are often depicted as. Social control theory seemingly takes a similar approach with negatively depicting women and girls as previous studies have, but instead placing that depiction along with their conformity rather than their criminality.

Discussion

In criminological literature, a majority of the research currently being conducted can be traced back to the origins of new theories. By examining major schools of criminology and analyzing their depiction of gender roles and explanations of female criminality, a bigger picture can be painted of the current status of women in criminology. While many feminist criminologists are conducting similar studies, most of these critiques occurred in the 80s and 90s, during the second wave of feminism. Many modern applications of the discussed theories still do not take into consideration feminist critiques, and instead aim to expand on previous theories that support stereotypical ideas.

A major limitation with the application of criminological theories onto female offenders is their focus on juvenile delinquency rather than serious adult offenders. The crimes committed by the women in theoretical studies tend to be sexual in nature or involve property crimes, which ignores an estimated quarter of individuals charged with violent crimes (U.S. Department of

Justice, 2015). In order to better understand the criminality of women, it is suggested for more theorists to continue studies on violent female offenders rather than solely focusing on juvenile offenders.

Based on this research, it can be determined that while female offenders are not necessarily ignored, they are overlooked and simplified to societal stereotypes instead of being properly studied like their male counterparts. In turn, subsequent research should be conducted focusing on individual theories as well as continued theoretical application to female offenders. Future research into how the stereotypes used to explain female behavior affects arrests as well as victims of female offenders should be taken into consideration.

The major schools of criminology tend to paint a singular picture of women: passive. When women commit crimes, their actions are explained down to their sexuality rather than aggression, and female offenders are often sexualized (Tefler, 2017). If not sexualized, female offenders become monstrous myths akin to nightmarish fairytales; either depiction showing negative connotations (Tefler, 2017). When male criminals are researched and discussed, they are a natural concept of the world, with their behavior being explained as a normal reaction to the pressures felt by society. Similarly, men who do not commit crimes are seen as something beyond normal; they are praised and given statuses such as responsible rather than boring. While these distinctions may not seem to be important to criminology as a whole, it still continues the negative views society has towards women, which may be in turn affecting the views of criminologists as it did with classical biological theories.

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