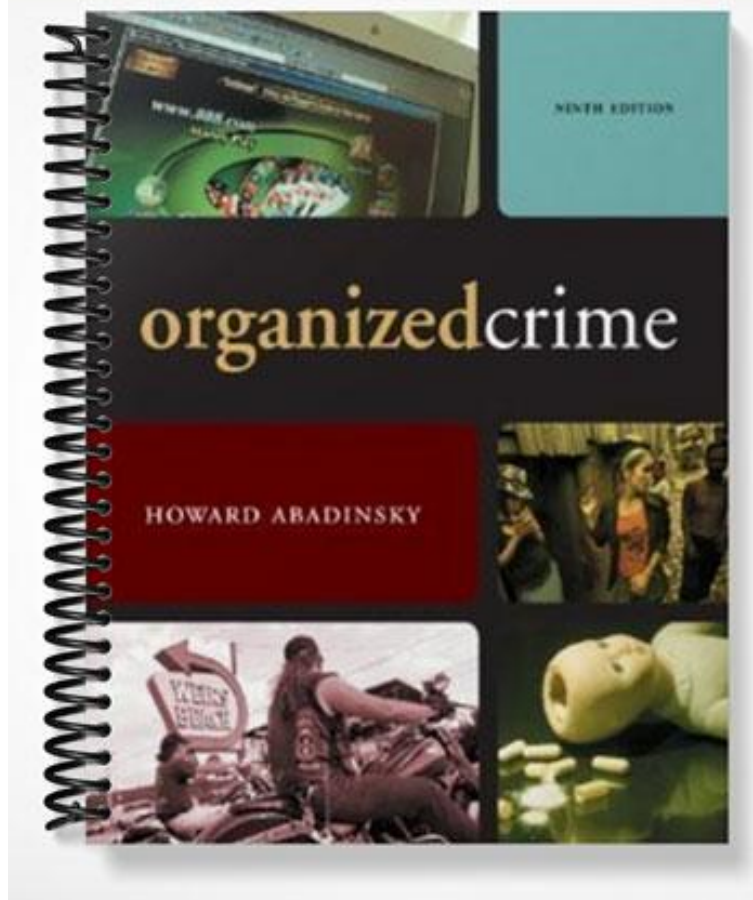


SOLUTIONS MANUAL



Chapter Two Explaining Organized Crime

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, students should be able to:

1. Discuss the theory of anomie and organized crime
2. Understand the theory of differential association in terms of organized crime
3. Discuss subcultures and social disorganization in the realm of organized crime
4. Understand the theory of differential opportunity as it is applied to organized crime
5. Apply social control theory to organized crime
6. Understand ethnic succession and organized crime
7. Apply the psychoanalytic theory to organized crime
8. Apply the learning theory to organized crime

Lecture Outline

- I. The Strain of Anomie
 - A. To Robert Merton, OC is a normal response to pressures exerted on certain persons by the social structure.
 - B. Pathological materialism
 - C. To Merton, it is the goal that is emphasized, not the means.
 - D. The only factors limiting goal achievement are technical, not moral or legal.
 - E. The-ends-justifies-the-means' doctrine becomes a guiding tenet for action when the cultural structure unduly exalts the end and the social organization unduly limits possible recourse to approved means.
 - F. The methods which criminals use in attaining our common goal of wealth may, of course, differ from those which the non-criminal classes use.
 - G. Anomie results when numbers of people are confronted by the contradiction between goals and means and "become estranged from a society that promises them in principle what they are deprived of in reality."
 - H. Merton states there are five modes of individual adaptation to this phenomenon: conformity, ritualism, rebellion, retreatism, and innovation.
 - I. Although *strain* can help explain why some persons from disadvantaged groups become involved in OC, it fails to provide a satisfying explanation for the continued existence of the American Mafia.
- II. Differential Association
 - A. According to Edwin Sutherland, all behavior—lawful and criminal—is learned.
 - i. What is learned depends on the intensity, frequency, and duration of the association.

- B. In a capitalist society, socioeconomic differentials relegate some persons to an environment wherein they experience a compelling sense of strain—*anomie*—as well as differential association. In the environment where OC has traditionally thrived, strain is intense.
 - C. Instead of conforming to conventional norms, some persons, through differential association, organize their behavior according to the norms of a delinquent or criminal group to which they belong or with which they identify.
- III. Subcultures and Social Disorganization
- A. *Culture* refers to a source of patterning in human conduct; it is the sum of patterns of social relationships and shared meanings by which people give order, expression, and value to common experiences.
 - i. The strength of a culture is determined by the degree of commitment of its members.
 - B. A *subculture* “implies that there are value judgments or a social value system which is apart from a larger or central value system.”
 - i. Subcultures are patterns of values, norms, and behavior which have become traditional among certain groups.
 - C. Central to the issue of culture versus subculture are *norms*, “group-held prescriptions for or prohibitions against certain conduct.”
 - D. Subcultural theory explains criminal behavior as learned; the subcultural delinquent has learned values that are deviant.
 - E. Clifford R. Shaw and Henry D. McKay: Certain clearly identifiable neighborhoods maintained a high level of criminality over many decades despite changes in ethnic composition.
 - i. Such neighborhoods are characterized by attitudes and values that are conducive to delinquency and crime, particularly organized crime.
 - ii. A disruption of the social order is associated with high rates of delinquency in a community, the result of a breakdown in mechanisms of social control.
 - F. John Landesco found that OC in Chicago could be explained by the prevalence of social disorganization in the wider society (during the period of Prohibition) and by the distinct social organization of urban slums from which members of OC emerge.
 - G. Inadequate familial socialization prevents some persons from conforming to the conventional norms of the wider society. Through differential association, some of these persons organize their behavior according to the norms of a delinquent or criminal subculture with which they identify or to which they belong.
 - H. For an OC group to survive, it must have an institutionalized process for inducting new members and inculcating them with the values and ways of behaving of the social system.
 - I. Gerald Suttles: Refers to areas from which members of OC have typically emerged as *defended neighborhoods*: recognized ecological niches whose inhabitants form cohesive groupings and seal themselves off through the efforts of delinquent gangs, restrictive covenants, and a forbidding reputation.
 - J. Recruitment into OC is made viable because “in the type of community under discussion boys may more or less realistically recognize the potentialities for personal progress in the local society through success in delinquency.”

- K. Prospective members of OC “typically come from communities which share collective representations and moral sentiments which allow them to recognize the pursuit of a career in the underworld as a legitimate way of life.”
- IV. Differential Opportunity
- A. Richard Cloward and Lloyd Ohlin: The American preoccupation with economic success, coupled with socioeconomic stratification, relegates many persons to an environment wherein they experience strain.
 - B. Conditions of severe deprivation with extremely limited access to ladders of legitimate success result in collective adaptations in the form of delinquent subcultures.
 - i. Retreatist subculture
 - ii. Conflict subculture
 - iii. Criminal/rackets subculture
 - C. According to Cloward and Ohlin, access to criminal ladders of success is no more freely available than are noncriminal alternatives.
 - D. In OC, there is the greater importance of social relations, and illegal business relationships have to be built up.
 - E. Persons with specific skills or occupations, such as those involving transportation and finance, may be drawn into a criminal organization through a serendipitous social relationship with an OC network—*social opportunity*.
- V. Social Control Theory
- A. Social control refers to those processes by which the community influences its members toward conformance with established norms of behavior.
 - B. Social control theorists argue that the relevant question is not, “Why do persons become involved in crime, organized or otherwise?” but rather, “Why do most persons conform to societal norms?”
 - C. According to control theorists, “delinquent acts result when an individual’s bond to society is weak or broken.”
 - D. *External restraints* include social disapproval linked to public shame and/or social ostracism and fear of punishment.
 - E. The strength of official deterrence—force of law—is measured according to two dimensions: risk versus reward.
 - i. *Risk* involves the ability of the criminal justice system to detect, apprehend, and convict the offender.
 - ii. The amount of risk is weighed against the potential rewards.
 - F. *Internal restraints* include what psychoanalytic theory refers to as the *superego*: an unconscious, yet powerful, conscience-like mechanism that provides a sense of guilt.
- VI. Ethnic Succession
- A. Jews and Italians came to the United States in large numbers at about the same time—the turn of the century—and both settled in urban areas.
 - i. There was, however, a very different attitude toward intellectual accomplishments in the two cultures.
 - ii. Jews from Eastern Europe regarded study as the most important activity for an adult male.

- iii. Immigrants from Southern Italy, on the other hand, tended to regard formal education either as a frill or as a source of dangerous ideas from which the minds of the young should be protected.
 - B. The pool of available candidates for membership in OC dwindled in Jewish communities. In Italian communities, it remained adequate enough.
 - C. Peter Reuter theorizes that having established a dominant position, an unchallenged monopoly of force, the Mafia can depend on its fearsome reputation, an asset that can be substituted for personnel costs that would be incurred by maintaining armed forces.
 - D. Reuter notes, however, that challenges to the Mafia outside of black and Hispanic communities have not been noticeable.
 - i. The structure of Italian-American OC groups provides an explanation.
 - 1. The Mafia is often “invisible.”
 - 2. The decentralized nature of the organization would render a frontal assault unproductive.
 - E. Nicholas Gage states that Irish, Jewish, and Italian mobsters have tended to recruit and promote from within their own ethnic groups, while cooperating with one another. OC is no less stratified than the wider “legitimate” society, and the dominant groups in both have always been white.
 - i. This leads to the issue of *ethnic succession* in OC.
 - F. According to this thesis, each successive immigrant group experienced *strain* to which some members reacted by *innovating* in accord with a tradition that had been established by earlier American entrepreneurs—the “Robber Barons.” Ethnic succession results when a group experiences success in crime, and legitimate opportunities thereby become more readily available.
 - G. According to the ethnic succession thesis, involvement in OC is simply a rational response to economic conditions; organized crime can be understood as a rational choice for responding to anomie.
 - H. Other theorists reject this one-dimensional view.
 - i. OC, they argue, provides important psychic rewards and meaningful social structures.
 - I. The long neighborhood-based apprenticeships through which OC chooses the cream of the “wannabes” are history.
 - J. The relationship between certain insular—*defended*—neighborhoods and OC also appears to be undergoing change.
- VII. Zips
- A. The connection between the criminal organizations of southern Italy—Mafia, Camorra, *'Ndrangheta*, *Sacra Corona Unita*—and the American Mafia are the *Zips*, recent immigrants from the *Mezzogiorno*.
 - i. Many are *mafiosi* fleeing intense pressure from Italian law enforcement and murderous factional conflicts between competing Mafia, Camorra, and *'Ndrangheta* groups.
 - B. Some of these *Zips* have been admitted to membership in American Mafia Families, and many more are operating in their own associations independent of, but in cooperation with, traditional crime groups.

- C. They are essentially reproducing the small-scale neighborhood life in which OC has traditionally felt most comfortable.
- D. Among Italian-American crime groups in the United States, there has been a demand for criminal labor, particularly in the highly rewarding but dangerous enterprise of drug trafficking.
- E. The Zips and their American counterparts “share similar customs, criminal philosophies, and a common heritage. The prototype of the crime Family is identical in each system.”
- F. In criminal and law enforcement circles, however, their “Old World” ways have earned the Zips more fear and respect than their American counterparts.

VIII. Clinical Psychology/Psychoanalytic Theory

- A. Clinical psychology is based, to various extents, on psychoanalytic theory, a body of work fathered by Sigmund Freud.
- B. Personality is strongly influenced by determinants in the unconscious that develop early in life.
- C. These determinants evolve during early stages of psychological development.
- D. A delicate balance is maintained by unconscious forces as a person experiences various sociocultural and biological aspects of existence.
 - i. When the balance is upset, the psyche passes from the normal to the psychoneurotic or the psychotic.
- E. Central to the psychoanalytic explanation for crime is the superego, a conscience-like mechanism whose function is to restrain the person from antisocial behavior.
 - i. If the superego does not attain full strength, the person is more likely to act on primitive impulses, often of a violent nature.
 - ii. Persons with an *antisocial personality disorder* (ASP) have a poorly developed superego—they are psychopaths or sociopaths—who are restrained only by the fear of punishment that alone cannot exercise adequate control over antisocial impulses.
- F. The psychopathic criminal is totally without conscience, capable of unspeakable acts, and shows no external signs of psychoses or neuroses.

IX. Behavioral Psychology/Learning Theory

- A. Central to behavioral psychology is that all behavior is shaped by its consequences.
- B. Behavior is acquired through operant conditioning—a method of learning that occurs through rewards and punishments for behavior—that occurs through interaction with the environment.
- C. According to learning theory, antisocial behavior is merely the result of learning directly from others (e.g., peers) or the failure to learn how to discriminate between competing norms, both lawful and unlawful, because of inappropriate reinforcement.
- D. The environment inhabited by OC is awash with reinforcement for antisocial behavior.

Key Terms

anomie
Antisocial Personality Disorder
camorra
conflict subculture
conformity
connected
Cosa Nostra
criminal/rackets subculture
criminogenic
culture
defended neighborhoods
delinquent subculture
differential association
differential opportunity
enclave
ethnic succession
external restraints
gangster chic
goodfellas
innovation
internal restraints
norms
pathological materialism
rebellion
retreatism
retreatist subculture
ritualism
social control theory
strain
subculture
superego
The Outfit
wiseguy
Zips

Chapter Summary

Some theories of crime and deviance provide insight into OC. Anomie suggests a strain between societal expectations for success and limited opportunity drive cause certain persons to innovate in the form of OC—a queer ladder of social mobility.

According to differential association, all behavior—lawful and criminal—is learned in intimate personal groups, although learning the techniques of sophisticated criminality

requires the proper environment. Subcultural theory explains criminal behavior as learned; the subcultural delinquent has learned values that are deviant in an environment characterized by social disorganization. In these defended neighborhoods, inhabitants form cohesive groupings, sealing themselves off through the efforts of delinquent gangs and a forbidding reputation. Such neighborhoods have traditionally provided the recruiting grounds that ensure the continuity of OC.

The theory of differential opportunity notes that illegitimate opportunity for success, like legitimate opportunity, is not equally distributed throughout society and access to criminal ladders of success are no more freely available than are noncriminal alternatives. According to social control theorists, delinquent acts result when an individual's bond to society is weak or broken, and the strength of this bond is determined by external and internal restraints.

As the only theory developed to explain the continued existence of OC, ethnic succession posits that OC provides a "queer ladder to success" for disadvantaged groups who eventually leave OC, making way for the next wave.

Psychological theories, psychoanalytical and behavioral, help to explain why persons exposed to the same social and physical environment react differently and the concept of superego helps explain antisocial and psychopathic behavior frequently found in organized crime wherever found.

Review Questions

1. How does Robert Merton's theory of anomie explain OC?
2. What is the connection between differential association and OC?
3. How does social disorganization explain why OC is more likely in certain neighborhoods?
4. How does cultural transmission (Shaw and McKay) explain the continuity of OC in certain neighborhoods?
5. What do Cloward and Ohlin (differential opportunity) say about OC?
6. What qualities of the delinquent subculture correlate well with the prerequisites of OC?
7. What is meant by the "defended neighborhood"?
8. How does social control theory explain the emergence of OC?
9. What is the theory of "ethnic succession"?

10. Why did Italians remain in OC so long? What factors explain the exit of Italian-Americans from OC?
11. How have the Zips affected ethnic succession theory?
12. How does psychology explain the behavior of persons in OC?

Student Activities

1. Ask students to take a stance on the ethnic succession thesis. Do they believe that the theory is too one-dimensional?
2. Assign students to small groups. Have each group develop and present to the class a summary of one theory from this chapter.
3. After group presentations are completed, lead a class discussion on the question of which theory offers the strongest explanation for organized criminal activities.