1. What does the author mean when he refers to the "police deployment" perspective?

2. What is meant by the conflict approach? Provide several examples of this approach.

3. What are the findings of the current study regarding the impact of the various predicting variables on decisions to stop and/or search?

4. To what extent do the results regarding level of disorder or disadvantage of a given area have an influence on police decisions to stop and/or search suspects?

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In this section, we will examine the importance of feminist perspectives of crime. Feminist criminology evolved when various assumptions and stereotypes about women in criminal justice were being questioned. Such questions included women as both offenders and victims. It is important to note up front that there is no single feminist perspective, and they often seem to be at odds with each other. However, the overall goal of this perspective is agreed on: to further advance the importance of understanding and furthering research regarding females in the realm of crime and criminal justice. After all, given that far fewer females commit serious violence than males, if we could better explain why women have much lower rates of criminality, then perhaps we could apply this in order to significantly reduce male offending. We will also review feminist critiques of previous research as well as policy implications of feminist perspectives of crime.

**Feminist Theories of Crime**

About the same time that Marxist theories of crime were becoming popular in the early 1970s, the feminist perspective began to receive attention; this was a key period in the women's rights movement. The Feminist School of criminology began largely as a reaction to the lack of rational theorizing about why females commit crime and why they tend to be treated far differently by the criminal justice system. Prior to the 1970s, theories of why girls and women engage in illegal activities were primarily based on false stereotypes.

**Key Terms in the Feminist Perspective**

Before discussing the various feminist perspectives, it is essential for readers to appreciate key terms associated with these perspectives. A few of these key terms are *chivalry*, *patrialism*, and *patriarchy*.

Chivalry pertains to behaviors and attitudes toward certain individuals that treat them as though they are on a pedestal. Chivalrous behavior is more complex than just preferential treatment. Engaging in a chivalrous
relationship usually entails a bartering system in which men hold a more powerful status than do women. Social class or race or ethnicity are also intertwined with such treatment. Women of certain social classes and racial or ethnic backgrounds are considered more worthy of chivalrous treatment than other women. This is best illustrated by Sojourner Truth’s speech “Ain’t I a Woman?” The idea of paternalism denotes that women need to be protected for their own good. In a broader social context, paternalism implies independence for men and dependence for women. Both chivalry and paternalism suggest that certain individuals or groups need protection because they are weak and helpless. This protection can also lead to various types of control.

The Latin word pater refers to the social role of a father as opposed to the biological role of a father. Patriarchy refers to the subordinate role of women and male dominance. Thus, patriarchy is a social, legal, and political climate based on male dominance and hierarchy. A key aspect to this ideology is that women’s nature is biologically, not culturally, determined.

### Key Issues in Research on Gender Differences in Offending

Much of the attention of theorists in the feminist area can be broken into two categories: the gender ratio issue and the generalizability issue. The gender ratio issue refers to theorizing and research that examines why females so often commit less serious, less violent offenses than males. Some experts feel that this does not matter; however, if we understood why females commit far less violence, then perhaps we could apply such knowledge to reducing male offending. The generalizability argument is consistent with the ideas some have about the gender ratio issue, specifically, many of the same critics argue that theorists should simply take the findings that found for male offending and generalize them to females. However, given the numerous differences found between males and females in what predicts their offending patterns, simply generalizing across gender is not a wise thing to do. It is far more complicated than that.

Another important issue in feminist research on crime is that women today have more freedom and rights than those in past generations. Seminal theories of female crime in the 1970s predicted that this would result in far higher offending rates for women. However, this has not been seen in serious, violent crimes. Rather, increases have been observed in property and public order crimes, but they are typically committed by girls or women who have not benefited from such freedom and rights—for example, those who do not have much education, are poor, or who lack strong employment records.

### Types of Feminism

Also, there are numerous forms of feminism and, thus, many types of feminist theories of crime, as pointed out by Daly and Chesney-Lind. One of the earliest was liberal feminism, which assumed that differences in offending were due to the lack of opportunities for females in education and employment and that as more females were given such opportunities, they would come to resemble males in terms of offending. Liberal feminism, also termed mainstream feminism, is founded on political liberalism, which holds a positive view of human nature as well as the ideals of liberty, equality, justice, dignity, and individual rights. A major feature of liberal feminism is that women should receive the same rights and treatment as men. This perspective purports that gender inequality is due to women’s blocked opportunities to participate in various aspects of the public sphere, such as education, employment, and political activity. Strategies for social change are devised to free women from oppressive gender roles—for instance, performing only those jobs associated with the traditional feminine personality (e.g., nursing, teaching, child care).

There are generally two types of liberal feminists: classical and welfare. Both approaches rely on a great deal on legal remedies to address gender inequality. Classical liberal feminists support limited government and a free market as well as political and legal rights. Central facets of this approach are freedom of expression, religion, and conscience. Welfare liberal feminists favor government involvement in providing citizens, particularly underprivileged individuals, with housing, education, health care, and social security. They also maintain that the market should be limited through significant taxes and restricting profits.

A major criticism of the liberal feminist perspective is that it primarily focuses on the interests of white, middle-class, heterosexual women. Specifically, within the area of feminist criminology, some argue that the liberal perspective poses "men as the criminal yardstick." This results in equating justice with equality and not considering other influential standpoints such as race/ethnicity and social class. Joanne Belknap maintains this:

Prison reform for women would not be nearly as effective in achieving equality with men’s prisons if the only goal was to allow the same access to health care, vocational, educational, legal, and treatment programs. While these would be significant advances, it is also necessary to request reforms that address women prisoners’ experiences, needs, and histories that differ from male prisoners.

Another area where the “equal treatment” doctrine is problematic is in sentencing. Specifically, sentencing reforms aimed at reducing race- and class-based disparities in sentencing for male offenders "may yield equality with a vengeance" for female offenders. Thus, “equality defined as equal treatment of men and women … foreseals more fundamental change and in some instances may worsen women’s circumstances.”

Another major feminist perspective of crime is critical feminism or radical feminism, which emphasizes the idea that many societies (such as the United States) are based on a structure of patriarchy wherein men dominate virtually every aspect of society, including politics, family structure, and the economy. Radical feminism evolved from the women’s liberation movement of the 1960s. This perspective emphasizes the
importance of personal feelings, experiences, and relationships. Gender is a system of male dominance, and women's biology is the main cause of patriarchy.\textsuperscript{18} The cause of gender inequality, according to this perspective, is based on men's need or desire to control women's sexuality and reproductive potential. Further, the process of gender formation is founded on the power relations between men and women wherein men view themselves as superior to and having a right to control girls and women. These relations are further intensified through heterosexual sexuality, as defined by men.\textsuperscript{19}

Radical feminists maintain, in principle, that sexism is the first, most widespread form of human oppression. They do not, however, agree on the nature or function of this sexism or on what strategies are needed for social change. Rosemary Tong identified two types of radical feminism: libertarian and cultural.\textsuperscript{20} Radical libertarian humanists view women as persons. They encourage women to become androgynous individuals who embody both (good) masculine and (good) feminine characteristics. Radical-cultural feminists argue that women should be strictly female or male, community, connection, sharing, emotion, body, trust, absence of hierarchy, nature, immanence, process, will, wariness, hierarchy, domination, culture, transcendence, product, asceticism, war, and death.

Tong noted that this distinction, while not perfect, does the following:

\begin{quote}
\textit{[I]t helps explain not only why some radical feminists embrace the concept of androgyny and others eschew it, but also why some radical feminists view both sex and reproduction as oppressive, even dangerous for women and why others view these aspects as liberating, even empowering for women. . . . Radical feminists are not afraid to take exception to each other's views [emphasis added].}\textsuperscript{21}
\end{quote}

Suggested strategies for social change among some radical feminists include overthrowing patriarchal power relations, developing methods of biological reproduction to permit women's sexual autonomy, and establishing differences, particularly women's special capacities or talents; however, these feminists do not pose gender differences between themselves in an effort to avoid polarization, particularly in the area of sexuality. Even though radical-cultural feminists are against the dangers of heterosexuality and have implied that there is no such thing as consensual heterosexuality, they argue that not all lesbian and gay relationships are consensual or politically beneficial.\textsuperscript{22} For example, they argue that the "lesbian and gay" identity is a socially constructed label that does not accurately reflect the experiences of all lesbians and gay men.

It is hard to contest the primary assumption of this theory. Despite the fact that more women than men receive professional, white-collar jobs, men still get paid a significantly higher wage for their work on average. Furthermore, the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives—and other high political offices, including president, cabinet posts, and U.S. Supreme Court justices—are still held primarily by (or enriched by) men. So the United States, like most other countries in the world, appears to be based on patriarchy.

The extent to which this model explains female criminality, however, remains to be seen. Regarding crime, it is not clear why this perspective would expect higher or lower rates of female criminal behavior; some delinquent offenses, it may partially explain the greater tendency to arrest females. For example, every self-report study ever conducted shows that males run away far more than females; however, Federal Investigation (FBI) data show that females are more often arrested for running away. This difference may provide the best explanation for this difference. Females are more protected—rather, arrested for running away—because they are considered to be more likely to be supported by their patriarchal social order. Moreover, it appears to be somewhat valid.

Similar to rational or radical feminism is Marxist feminism, which emphasizes the role of the capitalist system on the costs of the means of economic production, thus focusing on the economic structure. Marxist feminism argues that women control economic power in the country—as well as in virtually every country in the world—through the capitalist system. One of the primary assumptions of capitalism is survival of the fittest or the best, which seems to favor women. Studies have shown that women in the United States do better out of the capitalist system, than those in most other countries. Furthermore, women in countries based on a less favorable lifestyle and are not as well received economically and as the United States. Whether it is true or not, Marxist feminism does not explain all the reasons. An argument against this perspective is that of socialist feminism, which moved away from focusing on structure (e.g., Marxism) as the primary determinant for females and instead emphasized control of reproductive rights. This model believes that women should take control of their own bodies and their reproduction in order to control their future. It is not entirely clear how females' control over their reproduction can increase or reduce their crime rates. However, no one can deny that data show that fewer reproducing frequently, especially in inner-city, poor environments, tend to offend more often than others. It is not clear whether or not other factors mediate these effects. Women who want to control their reproduction in order to control their future are the least likely to do so, despite the availability of numerous forms of contraception. It is unclear how much socialist feminism has contributed to an understanding of female criminality.

Some scholars maintain that while it is possible to distinguish between Marxist feminism and socialism, it is difficult, particularly because these two perspectives' differences are more in terms of emphasis than substance.\textsuperscript{20} Marxist feminism places gender in the context of production methods. The burdens of production are operated and reinforced in a male-dominated economic and political order.
The causes of gender inequality are due to hierarchical relations of control with the increase of private property and ownership among men. Class relations are primary, and gender relations are secondary. An insightful example of such gender and class relations is housework. Traditionally, housework has been allocated to women; however, housework does not produce surplus value or profit. Thus, some do not consider this labor. Jenny van Hoof conducted semistructured interviews to examine dual-career heterosexual couples’ explanations and justifications for the division of housework that followed more traditional gender roles. Marxist feminism focuses essentially on work-related inequalities as well as enhancing our understanding of the trivialization of women’s work in the home (e.g., raising children, doing housework) and the tedious, poorly paid jobs predominately occupied by women. The General Social Survey reveals that when asking males and females regarding their perceptions as to who does most of the cleaning in the household, there is an overwhelming response of either “always female” or “usually female.”

Socialist feminism attempts to synthesize radical and Marxist feminism. This perspective attempts to integrate concepts such as male domination and political-economic relations. Social feminists focus on gender, class, and racial relations of domination. They differ from Marxist feminists in that both class and gender relations are deemed primary. Within the socialist feminism perspective, there are two general themes: (1) two-system explanations of women’s oppression and (2) interactive-system explanations of women’s oppression. Under the two-system explanations, these emphasize less committed to the Marxist-founded framework. Rather, they maintain that patriarchy, not capitalism, may be women’s ultimate worst enemy. The interactive-system explanations attempt to illustrate that both capitalism and patriarchy are equal contributors to women’s oppression; they are interdependent. These feminists use terms such as “capitalist patriarchy or patriarchical capitalism.”

An additional perspective of feminist criminology is that of postmodern feminism, which holds that an understanding of women as a group, even by other women, is impossible because every person’s experience is unique. If this is true, we should give up discussing female criminal theory and theories of criminality in general—along with all studies of medicine, astronomy, psychology, and so on—because every person interprets each observation subjectively. This perspective rejects the traditional assumptions about truth and reality; the emphasis is more on the plurality, diversity, and multiplicity of women as distinct from men. Tong argued that the relationship between postmodernists and feminists is “uneasy.” For instance, similar to all postmodernists, postmodern feminists reject the idea of an absolute world that is “male” in style (i.e., phallocentric). They also reject any attempts to provide a single explanation or steps women must take to achieve liberation (i.e., a feminist “to-do list”). Those who identify themselves as postmodern feminists “invite each woman who reflects on their writings to become the kind of feminist she wants to be. There is, in their estimation, no single formula for being a good feminist.” The bottom line is that, according to postmodern feminists, there is no point in measuring anything. Thus, this model is based on anti-science and has contributed very little to the study of understanding or explaining female criminality or gaining some useful information about females as victims.

In all these variations of feminist perspectives, it is interesting that little emphasis is placed on parental differences in how children are disciplined and raised. Studies have clearly and consistently shown that parents, often without realizing it, tend to globally reward young boys for completing a task (e.g., “You are such a good boy”), whereas they tend to tell a young girl that she did a good job. On the other hand, when young boys do not successfully complete a task, most parents tend to excuse the failure (e.g., “It was a hard thing to do; don’t worry”), whereas for young girls, the parents will often globally evaluate them for the task (e.g., “Why couldn’t you do it?”). Although numerous psychological studies have found this tendency, it has yet to make it into the mainstream criminological theories of crime.

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Case Study: Gertrude Baniszewski

When the police arrived at the home of Gertrude Baniszewski in October 1965, they found the lifeless body of 16-year-old Sylvia Likens. Sylvia’s parents had found employment as carnival workers. This required them to move around, so Gertrude Baniszewski agreed to board Sylvia and her sister Jenny for $20 a week. When one of the checks arrived late, Baniszewski lashed out at the two girls. This was followed by 3 weeks of violent and sadistic attacks, especially on Sylvia. A number of Baniszewski’s seven children, along with some neighborhood children, watched or actually joined in the torture. This was all done under the supervision of Baniszewski. No one reported the abuse. Sylvia’s emaciated corpse was covered with more than 150 wounds ranging from burns to cuts. Sylvia was burned with cigarettes numerous times, was forced to dance naked in front of the other children, took baths in scalding water, and was constantly beaten and starved. On one horrible night, Baniszewski took a sewing needle and carved an “F” in Sylvia’s abdomen.

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2Daily and Chesney-Lind, “Feminism and Criminology,” 537.
2Bell, The Invisible Woman, 538.
2Tong, Feminist Thought, 111.
2Tong, Feminist Thought, 111.
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Evidence regarding Feminist Theories of Crime

As discussed previously, there is no doubt that female offenders were highly neglected by traditional models of criminological theory, and given that females make up at least 50% of the population of the world, it is important that they be covered and explained by such theories. Furthermore, we also discussed the fact that if we knew why females everywhere commit far less violence than men, it would likely go a long way toward devising policies to reduce the extremely higher rates of violence among males. However, in other ways, the feminist theories of crime have not been supported.

For instance, as noted previously, the seminal feminist crime theories specifically proposed that, as women became liberated, their rates of crime would become consistent with the rates of male offending.38 Not only did this fail to occur, but the evidence actually supports the opposite trend; specifically, the females who were given the most opportunities (e.g., education, employment, status) were the least likely to offend, whereas the males who were not liberated or given such opportunities were the most likely to engage in criminal behavior.29

On the other hand, one major strength of feminist theories of crime is that they have led to a number of studies showing that the factors causing crime in males are different than those for females. For example, females appear to be far more influenced by internal, emotional factors; they are more inhibited by moral emotions, such as shame, guilt, and embarrassment.30 Ultimately, there is no doubt that feminist theories of crime have contributed much to the discourse and empirical research regarding why females (as well as males) commit crime. In fact, some highly respected criminology and criminal justice journals have been created to deal with that very subject. So, in that sense, the field has recognized and accepted the need to examine feminist theorizing and research on offending and the justice system and explore the various issues involved.

Feminist criminology evolved, primarily from liberal feminists, with the realization and objection that gender was essentially ignored and excluded from criminological theory.31 This exclusion was difficult to understand given that gender was such a strong predictor of criminal behavior.32 Further, feminists recognized the limitations of critical and radical criminological perspectives given the primary focus on economic disparities without examining the issues of race and gender. Thus, "early feminist criminologists demanded that analyses of crime include consideration of gender in ways that had not occurred before."33 Twenty years after her essay on female crime, Dorie Klein included an afterword; she maintained that feminist criminologists need to address three major challenges: They must (1) continue to search for the scientific basis of theories of men's and women's criminal behavior, (2) re-examine gender and racial/ethnic biases in the social sciences, and (3) develop a new definition of crime.34 Joanne Belknap gave an overview of the potential of various traditional criminological theories to provide insight in examining gender differences and similarities in understanding criminal behavior. Some of the traditional criminological theories that do have some promise in this area of understanding include differential association theory and strain and general strain theory.35

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38For a review, see Tibbetts and Herr, "Gender Differences."  
41Burgess-Proctor, "Intersections of Race, Class, Gender, and Crime," 31.  
Kathleen Daly and Meda Chesney-Lind identified the following five elements that distinguish feminist thought from other forms of social and political thought:

1. Gender is not a natural fact but a complex social, historical, and cultural product; it is related to but not simply derived from biological sex differences and reproductive capacities.
2. Gender and gender relations order social life and social institutions in fundamental ways.
3. Gender relations are constructs of masculinity and femininity and are not symmetrical but are based on an organizing principle of men’s superiority and social and political–economic dominance over women.
4. Systems of knowledge reflect men’s views of the natural and social world; the production of knowledge is gendered.
5. Women should be at the center of intellectual inquiry, not peripheral, invisible, or appendages to men.

When addressing whether there can be a feminist criminology, Daly and Chesney-Lind maintained that feminist theories and research should be incorporated in any criminologist’s study of crime. Incorporating such perspectives and other unexplored aspects of men’s crime and forms of injustice as well as forms of theory construction and verification. Thus, they argued that the promise of feminist thought has barely been realized.

Almost 20 years after Daly and Chesney-Lind’s article on feminist criminology, Amanda Burgess-Proctor argued that contemporary third-wave feminist criminologists, it is essential to build on the foundation laid by previous feminist criminologists. Specifically, she maintained that feminist criminology needs to embrace all sources of oppression without prioritizing gender. Thus, feminist criminology should incorporate an intersectional framework, informed by multiracial feminism, which includes such defining social characteristics as race, class, gender, sexuality, nationality, and age.

One feminist framework that has been used to explore the experiences of women in the criminal justice system is pathways research:

A feminist approach to understanding the etiology of females’ (and sometimes males’) offending is termed by some as “pathways to crime.” This approach attempts to determine life experiences, particularly childhood ones, that place them at risk of offending. The pathways research indicates that traumas such as physical and sexual abuse and child neglect are not only defining features in the lives of many female offenders, but also these traumas are often related to one’s likelihood of committing crimes.

Critiques of Feminist Theories

A number of criticisms concerning feminist theories have been raised by feminist scholars. In the 1960s, women of color challenged feminism by arguing that these perspectives essentially focused on the experiences of White middle-class women. After reviewing feminist theory in sociology, Janet Saltzman Chafetz argued that the current topic among feminist scholars is the intersection of race, class, and gender. A number of feminist scholars maintain that examining difference, rather than equality, is a major emphasis of current feminist studies.

While some feminist scholars maintain that the shift in focus has revitalized feminist theory, others assert that it has introduced new conflicts in feminist studies. Maxine Baca Zinn and Bonnie Thornton Dill stressed, however, that while there may be problems when focusing on difference, our perspectives take their bearings from social relations. Race and class difference are crucial, we argue, not as individual characteristics . . . but insofar as they are primary organizing principles of a society which locates and positions groups within that society’s opportunity structures.

Some feminist scholars emphasize the importance of examining the interlocking, or intersection, of race, class, and gender. The development of an intersectional perspective on gender and race is rooted in the work of scholars focusing on women of color.

Burgess-Proctor identified key conceptual factors that distinguish multiracial feminism from other feminist perspectives. First, multiracial feminism claims that gender relations do not exist in a vacuum; rather, men and women are also characterized by their race, class, sexuality, age, physical ability, and other social locations of inequality. Second, multiracial feminism stresses the importance of recognizing the ways intersecting systems of power and privilege interact on all social–structural levels. Third, multiracial feminism is founded on the concept of relationality; this “assumes that groups of people are socially situated in relation to one another and are based on their differences.” Other key conceptual facets to multiracial feminism include appreciating the interaction of social structure and women’s agency, implementing various methodological approaches, and an emphasis on understandings founded on the lived experiences of women. This evolving perspective uses various terms such as multiracial feminism, multicultural feminism, and U.S. Third World feminism. Another issue that has been raised by feminist scholars is that, when conducting research on women, it is essential that one avoid placing these women as either offenders or victims. This has been referred to as the “blurred boundaries” theory of victimization and criminalization. As Mary Gilliss noted, “Criminalization is connected to women’s subordinate position in society where victimization by violence coupled with economic marginality related to race, class, and gender all too often blur the boundaries between victims and offenders.”

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91 Daly and Chesney-Lind, “Feminism and Criminology,” 504.
92 Ibid., 504.
93 Burgess-Proctor, “Intersections of Race, Class, Gender, and Crime,” 27–47.
94 Ibid., 43.
98 Fay Finberg and Anna Lowenhaupt Ting, “Introduction,” in In Uncertain Terms, Negotiating Gender in American Culture, ed. Fay Finberg and Anna Lowenhaupt Ting (Boston: Beacon Press, 1990), 1–32.
100 Zinn and Thornton Dill, “Theorizing Difference from Multiracial Feminism.”
104 Ibid., p. 37.
Policy Implications

There are numerous policy implications regarding feminist theory and feminist perspectives of crime. A key aspect to understanding policies based on feminist theories of crime is that some policies are not always directed at offenders. Rather, feminist perspectives also incorporate broader social issues that are connected to criminal behavior. Thus, aspects of policies related to feminist theories of crime are reflected in broader concepts of feminism. For instance, feminist researchers emphasize the importance of reflexivity. This is when research personal is the political: Feminist work has demonstrated that even the most apparently private interactions have political consequences and motivations. The inextricable connections between the personal and the political means it is unsatisfactory to treat individuals as if they were isolated from society—at the very least because this cannot give an accurate picture of people and their lives.

This phrase—"The personal is the political"—refers to the notion that the "private sphere" (e.g., sexuality and domestic life) is as structured by power relations involving gender, sexuality, race, class, and age as the "public sphere" (e.g., waged work outside the home, party politics, and state institutions). Another aspect related to feminism is praxis. According to Josephine Donovan, praxis does not refer just to conventional models for change and will in the process change consciousness. Praxis also implies building alternative communities where one theory translates into action. One of the most essential opportunities for praxis centers on the pursuit of social justice.

Influenced by the women's movement (i.e., the second wave of feminism), our understanding of the legal response to rape have undergone substantial changes. For instance, Julia Herman Schwindenberger theorized how rape myths have pervaded the legal sphere of society, as exemplified by the belief that if a rape victim did not "fight back" or resist, as well as demonstrate physical evidence of such a confrontation, then she must have initially given her consent and afterward "changed her mind." In the past, this myth has been significant in laws that required a demonstration of resistance. However, the Schwendingers provided the following analogy to elucidate the misconceptions associated with this myth:

Businessmen may forcibly resist theft of their property. But no law demands this kind of personal resistance as a condition for the lawful protection of his property rights. Women's rights, on the other hand, seem to be another matter. [italics in original].

Legislative reforms were enacted in an effort to modify state rape statutes. Patricia Seales and Ronald Berger asserted that the major goals of the legislative reforms included (1) increasing the reporting of rape and enhancing the prosecution and conviction of rape cases, (2) improving the treatment of rape victims involved in the criminal justice process, (3) achieving comparability between the legal treatment of rape and other violent offenses, (4) prohibiting a broader range of coercive sexual conduct, and (5) expanding the range of persons protected by the law. Four major types of legislative reforms were identified: (1) redefinition of the offense, (2) evidentiary reforms, (3) statutory offenses, and (4) penal structure. Another example of how feminist criminologists have informed policies is in the area of gender-specific programming. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention established a funding opportunity to enhance programs specifically targeted to juvenile girls. Such programming gives females an increased sense of community. This sense of community has been associated with juveniles developing and integrating a healthy identity.

There have been efforts to incorporate these key factors of gender-specific services for female juvenile offenders. For instance, Lisa Bond-Maupin and her colleagues argued that intake officials recognized an appreciation of how gender, class, and race influence the lives of female juveniles. Other studies have also recommended that agencies providing services to female juveniles incorporate gender-specific or gender-responsive programs. Such programming has also been recommended for adult female offenders with substance abuse problems as well as for adult female prisoners.


Ibid., 21.


Conclusion

In this section introduction, we discussed the reasons for why it is so very important to examine the feminist perspective of crime. Importantly, we examined a wide variety of types of feminist perspectives and the factors that each of them focus on. We also examined the evidence that empirical research has shown for the feminist perspectives as well as the critiques of such theories in this realm. We also discussed some of the policy implications that can be derived from these models. Ultimately, it is of primary importance to include such feminist perspectives in future research and theoretical developments. Furthermore, it is important to realize that females offend far less than males; if criminologists could figure out why, this could be a landmark finding in efforts to reduce crime, especially if we could apply some of the findings of research on this perspective to chronic male offending.

SECTION SUMMARY

- An emphasis on the feminist perspective on crime grew out of a long history of females being neglected in the history of criminological research as well as concern for them as victims in the criminal justice system.
- Various concepts are key in the feminist perspective, such as chivalry, patriarchy, and paternalism—all essentially diminish the status of females in society.
- One primary research question in this area is about why females are universally less likely to commit serious violent crime than males, called the gender-ratio issue.
- The other primary research area deals with whether or not the same key factors (e.g., peers, unemployment, poverty) apply in the same way for females as they do for males, which is referred to as the generalizability issue.
- We examined five different key types of feminism and what each of them focus on regarding why females are discriminated against and what leads them to commit crime.
- Evidence regarding feminist models of crime are mixed with some showing clear support and others showing the opposite of what was predicted.
- Daly and Chesney-Lind’s list of the elements of feminist thought were discussed and presented as one of the key propositions of the feminist perspective on just criminology but also sociology and social life.
- Critiques of feminist theories showed that many women take issue with what other feminist scholars have proposed, particularly by neglecting the issues of race and social class and focusing only on gender.
- It is notable that the critiques mentioned led to much research and discussion on the intersection of these various classes of people, which has advanced the understanding of feminism, racism, classism, etc., across the board.
- Policy implications based on the feminist perspective were also examined with the ultimate conclusion that if we could truly understand and explain why females commit so many fewer serious violent crimes, then we could likely reduce our crime rate dramatically by applying such knowledge to males.

KEY TERMS

chivalry 441  
Manist feminism 445  
postmodern feminism 447  
critical feminism 443  
patriarchy 442  
rational feminism 443  
liberal feminism 442  
paternalism 442  
socialist feminism 445

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the key concepts of the feminist perspective?
2. What are the key assumptions and features of the various types of feminist perspectives?
3. Which type of feminist theory do you believe is the most helpful for explaining crime?
4. Do you believe the "generalizability" hypothesis is accurate and that key factors or causes of crime are the same for males and females? In other words, do the same factors (e.g., unemployment, peers, emotions) have the same influence across gender?
5. What are the primary critiques of feminist criminological theories?
6. Which of the policy implications based on the feminist perspective do you most agree with? Least agree with?

WEB RESOURCES

Feminist Theories of Crime
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wlZbDBqOYnk
http://faculty.washington.edu/matsuoka/courses/517/Readings/Daly%20Chesney-Lind%20Feminism%201998.pdf
http://now.org
http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/sociology/crime-and-deviance/feminism-and-crime
https://www.google.com/?q=feminist+theories+of+crime