

Table 13.3**Summary of sociological perspectives: Crime and criminal justice**

	Functional	Conflict/Feminist	Interactionist
Explanation of crime and criminal justice	<p>Crime emerges from the social order.</p> <p>People experience “strain” when they are exposed to cultural goals but do not have the access or resources to achieve them.</p> <p>Individuals are likely to make some new rules (or break the old ones) to attain these goals.</p> <p>Society also controls criminal behavior through four elements: attachments, commitment, involvement, and beliefs.</p>	<p>Criminal justice decisions are discriminatory and designed to sanction offenders based on their minority or subordinate group membership (race, class, age, or gender).</p> <p>Problems emerge when particular groups are disadvantaged more than others by the criminal justice system.</p>	<p>Interactionists examine the process that defines certain individuals and acts as criminal.</p> <p>Interactionists also examine how criminal or deviant behavior is learned through association with others.</p>
Questions asked about crime and criminal behavior	<p>How/why are individuals denied access to resources to achieve their goals?</p> <p>What social controls are in place to reduce criminal behavior?</p>	<p>How do our criminal justice policies reflect political, economic, and social interests?</p> <p>Why/how are particular groups targeted as “criminals”?</p> <p>How do women’s experiences as crime victims and offenders differ from men’s?</p>	<p>Is criminal behavior the result of being labeled a “criminal”?</p> <p>Is criminal behavior learned?</p> <p>How are our perceptions of criminals and victims socially created?</p>