

TABLE 5.1

Biosocial Explanations of Crime

THEORY	EXPLANATION
Eysenck's Biosocial Theory	"Certain biologically-based personality features increase the risk for antisocial outcome, given a particular social upbringing. Individuals are theorized to inherit particular personality features, along with associated autonomic and central nervous system characteristics . . . [Extroverts] are theorized to have a central nervous system that dampens the effect of environmental stimuli. Therefore, punishment does not impact extraverts as much as it does other individuals" (p. 590).
Mednick's Biosocial Theory	"Deficits in the autonomic nervous system of some individuals result in poor avoidance conditioning and an inability to learn law abiding behavior. Children with these autonomic nervous system deficits who are raised in inadequate social environments are considered to be at the highest risk for antisocial outcome" (p. 591).
Buikhuizen's Biosocial Theory of Chronic Juvenile Delinquency	Those prone to antisocial behavior have (a) neurological and cognitive deficits that make it difficult for them to learn avoidance behavior, (b) deficits in their autonomic nervous system that affect socialization, and (c) personalities that "facilitate avoidance learning" (p. 592).
Moffitt's Life Course Persistent Offender Theory	Offenders are characterized as adolescence-limited offenders and life-course-persistent offenders. Adolescence-limited offenders stop offending prior to entering adulthood, whereas life-course-persistent offenders offend throughout their adolescence and adulthood. This theory suggests that "the biological roots of antisocial outcome are present before or soon after birth . . . [and] theorizes that congenital factors—heredity and perinatal complications—produce neuropsychological deficits in the infant's nervous system. . . . Children who are unfortunate enough to have both biological and social deficits are theorized to be at the highest risk for persistent antisocial behavior" (p. 593).