Class Activities

Chapter 7: Psychological/Trait Theories of Crime

**Class Activity 1: Early Psychological Theorizing Regarding Criminal Behavior**

**YouTube Video (Application)**

**NOTE:** The professor can go to keepvid.com to save a copy of the video to his or her computer. Please enter the URL in the box provided. Click download. The video will upload. Once the video is uploaded, save it in the format that works with your computer (usually Download MP4). You can then save it to your computer or a flash drive.

**Instructions:** Watch the following video: http://[www.youtube.com/watch?v=y\_KztSDMNus](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_KztSDMNus). The video is an example of how the id, ego, and superego work. Based on your understanding of how these three aspects of personality operate, answer the questions below.

1. Which component of personality is likely responsible for criminal behavior? Explain.
2. How does the ego mediate the id and the superego?
3. What feelings are produced by the superego that helps human beings avoid criminal behavior?
4. Given what you know about the id, ego, and superego, what criminal justice policies could you put in place to control criminal behavior?

**Class Activity 2: Hans Eysenck: Theory of Crime and Personality**

**Critical Thinking (Paired Exercise)**

**Instructions:** Please read the following sections of the textbook:Freud’s Model of the Psyche and Implications for Criminal Behavior, and Hans Eysenck: Theory of Crime and Personality. Answer the following questions.

1. Define the following terms: *id, ego,* and *superego*.
2. Define the following terms: *psychoticism, extraversion,* and *neuroticism*.
3. Freud identified three components of personality that guides human behavior. Eysenck proposed the PEN model as a theory that linked personality to criminality. Create a chart classifying Eysenck’s personality traits under those of Freud.

**NOTE: See table example.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Freud** | **Id** | **Ego** | **Superego** |
|  | **High Psychoticism:** aggressive, cold, egocentric, impersonal, impulsive, antisocial, and unempathic | **Low Psychoticism:**  Empathic, unselfish, altruistic, warm, peaceful, and pleasant | **Neuroticism:**  Anxious, depressed, guilty feelings, low self-esteem, tense, shy, moody, and emotional |
|  | **Extroversion:** Sociable, lively, active, assertive, sensation-seeking, dominant, and venturesome |  | **Introversion (opposite of extroversion):** Shy,quiet, calm, passive, and hesitant |

**Class Activity 3: Mental Health and the Criminal Justice System**

**Case Study**

**Instructions:** Please read the case study carefully. Answer the questions below.

John was an outgoing child and always a high achiever. He was a straight “A” student in school and he played several sports. He was well liked by everyone who knew him. It was no surprise the John received a full scholarship to attend Massachusetts Institute of Technology. John had dreams of being a civil engineer. Unfortunately, when John turned 20 he began having auditory hallucinations (he began hearing voices). The voices told him that he needed to assassinate the president of the university to prevent an apocalypse. John tried to ignore the voices, but it was no use. The voices had invaded his thinking, so he decided to kill the university president. John bought a gun and attempted to break into the president’s house. As he was breaking in, an alarm sounded and university police apprehended John a few minutes later. They recovered the gun. John kept yelling, “I have to kill him or the world will end!” John had never been charged or convicted of any crimes until now. You are the judge in John’s case.

1. What type of mental illness does John likely have? Is it treatable?
2. Do you think someone with a diagnosis like John’s is more dangerous than other offenders?
3. Do you think John’s case should be referred to the Mental Health Court?
4. Do you think John should receive some type of criminal sanction? If so, what sanction would you impose?