

Chapter summary criminal justice class

Sociology



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Summary of “ Chapter 2” Summary of “ Chapter 2: The Search for the ‘ Criminal Man’” “ Chapter 2” explores the early theories of crime, and it covers spiritualism, classical thinking, and positivism. Spiritualism believes that criminals are possessed by evil spirits or demons. This approach, however, produced problems in determining the innocence of the accused. For example, trial by battle is based on the belief that whoever God favored wins and is the innocent one (Lilly, Cullen, & Ball, 2011, p. 19). The weakness of this trial is that strong warriors can continue doing criminal deeds, since they tend to win. Furthermore, spiritualism cannot be tested scientifically because the causes of crime belong to the underworld (Lilly et al., 2011, p. 19). The issues of difficulties in establishing innocence and removing the blame from the individual gave birth to the classical school of thought. Classical theory opposes the spiritual explanations of criminal behavior. It argues that crime is a product of human free will, where people act according to the pain-and-pleasure principle (Lilly et al., 2011, p. 20). This principle says that people evaluate the risks and benefits of their actions, including criminal ones. Cesare de Beccaria used democratic liberal ideas and applied them to the field of criminal justice. His book promoted the principle of innocent-until-proven-guilty, due process of law, and ensuring that the punishment is equal to the crime. He believed that punishment should be a crime deterrent and fit the nature and brutality of the crime. The Positivist school resisted the idea that crime is an outcome of free will and the pain-and-pleasure principle because many factors can lead to it. Cesare Lombroso focused on the biological explanations for human behavior. He argued that brain problems cause criminality, not individual free will. Criminals are born, not made. Enrico Ferri extended the work of Lambroso <https://assignbuster.com/chapter-summary-criminal-justice-class/>

and stressed that social, political and economic factors contribute to the “making” of criminals (Lilly et al., 2011, p. 25). He suggested social changes that can help the poor or disadvantaged criminal to escape his world of crimes. Raffaele Garofalo believed that crimes are actions against the laws of nature (Lilly et al., 2011, p. 27). One of the weaknesses of positivism is that their research methods are not strong enough to get convincing results. These early theories have affected the criminal justice policies and practices of their times. Some of them, including their biases, continue to affect present people and criminal justice principles and behaviors. The authors of the book remind readers to be critical-minded in analyzing different concepts, as well as current approaches to justice and punishment.

Reference

Lilly, J. R., Cullen, F. T., & Ball, R. A. (2011). *Criminological theory: Context and consequences* (5th ed.). SAGE. ISBN-13: 978-1-4129-8145-3.