Can we be made criminal by…?
- Dysfunctional family.
- Lack of education.
- Lack of employment.
- Drug/alcohol abuse.
- Physical/sexual abuse.
- Mental illness.

Rational Choice Theory
- Associated with Ron Clarke (1980s).
- Notion that criminals are rational actors or “economical decision makers” (Clarke 1980) who analyse the costs and benefits involved.
- Opposes Opportunity Theory.

Routine Activities Theory
- Argue that crime had increased because of growing prosperity and freedom = more criminal opportunities.
- Extended version of ‘opportunity theory’; if you remove the opportunity you may prevent the crime.
- Locates the individual in a larger social context and is dependant on the patterns and routine activities of member in society.
- Ecological Focus – rational offender, flexible in approach, that takes advantage of new opportunities.
- Three necessary conditions:
  1. A motivated offender.
  2. A suitable target.
  3. Absence of a capable guardian.

Punishment, Rehabilitation and Imprisonment

Introduction
- Sentencing is the method by which a state to impose punishment on an offender who has been convicted of a crime.
- Three categories of sentence: deprivation, restriction and positive obligation.
- Punishment is a public display of condemnation, labelling and censure (Ashworth, 2002).

Why Punishment?
- Two main perspectives:
  1. Utilitarian: Forward looking – punishment reduces crime; deterrence, incapacitation and rehabilitation.
  2. Retribution: Backward looking – offenders deserve to be punished.

Retribution
- Desire for revenge.
- Focus on the offence.
- Proportionality.
- Consistent sentencing.
- Measured by level of harm caused to victim.
- Fails to consider disproportionate impact on some offenders.

Deterrence
- Fails to consider opportunistic crimes.
- Hierarchy of punishments.
- High re-conviction rate suggests poor deterrent effect.