

Chapter 2

Topic 5 Gender, crime and justice

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Activity: Discussion

Female crime: explanations on trial

Learning objectives

At the end of this activity you should be able to:

- Identify key features of a range of explanations of female crime.
- Evaluate the usefulness of different explanations in understanding female crime.

1. Read pages 107-109 of your textbook on *Explaining female crime*.
2. Divide into four groups. Each group will play the part of a defending barrister in a trial. Your role is to make a case for the defence of one of the following explanations of female crime:
 - a. Functionalism: sex role theory
 - b. Heidensohn: patriarchal control
 - c. Carlen: class and gender deals
 - d. The liberation thesis
3. Present your case to the 'jury', i.e. the rest of the class.
4. As a whole class, after all the presentations have been made, discuss and reach a verdict on the value of each one.
5. Individually, write a summary evaluation of the contribution of each of the four explanations to our understanding female crime.