I was asked many times to sit down [at the beginning of class], until the teacher just lost his cool and sunned* me in front of the whole class. I don’t even remember what he said, but he’d raised his voice, and in front of a crowd, I could not back down.

I raised my hand and mushed him in the face. “Don’t you ever yell at me again in your life.”

He quietly ordered me outside, and then summoned the school police...

Here was my declaration of borders and respect. But of course there was a price (p. 140).

*See slang dictionary entry 12, in which “to sun” is to “verbally, physically or emotionally wound someone.”

Theory is that the overall age distribution of criminal offending (Figures 1 and 2) is really made up of two groups (Figure 3):

- **Life-Course-Persistent** – Relatively small number of offenders, characterized by poor neuropsychological functioning, disordered personalities, & irrevocable “holes dug” for oneself (e.g., lack of education, police record), preventing escape from life of crime.

  - **Origins:** *Neural development may be disrupted by maternal drug abuse, poor prenatal nutrition, or pre- or postnatal exposure to toxic agents ... In addition, some individual differences in neuropsychological health are heritable in origin... After birth, neural development may be disrupted by neonatal deprivation of nutrition, stimulation, and even affection ... Some studies have pointed to child abuse and neglect as possible sources of brain injury in the histories of delinquents with neuropsychological impairment ...* (p. 680)

  - **Link from brain impairment to delinquency:** *There is good evidence that children who ultimately become persistently antisocial do suffer from deficits in neuropsychological abilities.* (p. 680)

  - **Getting “trapped” in life of crime:** *Personal characteristics such as poor self-control, impulsivity, and inability to delay gratification increase the risk that antisocial youngsters will make irrevocable decisions that close the doors of opportunity.* (p. 684)
Moffitt (continued)

- **Adolescence-Limited** – Temporary form of offending by a larger number of more-or-less “normal” adolescents, who imitate the LCPs to gain certain material and social rewards, but then give up offending when they realize the costs as adulthood approaches (e.g., jeopardizing job and marital prospects).
  
  - Highly common: *about one third of males are arrested during their lifetime for a serious criminal offense, whereas fully four fifths of males have police contact for some minor infringement...* (p. 685)
  
  - LCP youth may appear “cool” to AL’s: *life-course-persistent youths are able to obtain possessions by theft or vice that are otherwise inaccessible to teens who have no independent incomes (e.g., cars, clothes, drugs...). [LCP] boys are more sexually experienced and have already initiated relationships with the opposite sex. [LCP] boys appear relatively free of their families of origin; they seem to go their own way, making their own rules... Viewed from within contemporary adolescent culture, the antisocial precocity of [LCP] youths becomes a coveted social asset* (p. 687)
  
  - AL youth may then imitate the LCP: *every curfew violated, car stolen, drug taken, and baby conceived is a statement of personal independence and thus a reinforcer for delinquent involvement.* (pp. 688-689)
Moffitt (continued)

- **AL’s can “turn off” the delinquent activity:** ... when aging delinquents attain some of the privileges they coveted as teens, the consequences of illegal behavior shift from rewarding to punishing, in their perception. An adult arrest record will limit their job opportunities, drug abuse keeps them from getting to work on time, drunk driving is costly, and bar fights lead to accusations of unfit parenthood. Adolescence-limited delinquents have something to lose by persisting in their antisocial behavior beyond the teen years. (p. 690)

- **AL’s retain good decision-making faculties:** [Adolescence-limited delinquents] have adequate social skills, they have a record of average or better academic achievement, their mental health is sturdy, they still possess the capacity to forge close attachment relationships, and they retain the good intelligence they had when they entered adolescence. (p. 691)
Male/female ratio of juvenile (age 10-17) arrests for violent crimes, 1980-2009


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Factor</th>
<th>1998 Evidence (Hoyt &amp; Scherer)</th>
<th>Newer Evidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sexual abuse/maltreatment</td>
<td>“it is not clear whether [experiencing] sexual abuse... leads to increased participation in delinquent behavior, or whether other factors, such as destructive parenting in general, are responsible for the appearance of a relationship between sexual abuse and delinquency.” (p. 95)</td>
<td>“For girls, different dynamics [than for boys] linked early victimization with later violence... whereas adolescent externalizing behavior helped propel female victims of child maltreatment toward later violence, adolescent internalizing behaviors protected them against later violence...” (Topitzes et al., 2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family processes</td>
<td>“there appear to be strong correlations between female delinquency and a lack of parental acceptance and a high degree of conflict with parents; however, it is uncertain whether this is a cause or effect of female delinquency.” (p. 97)</td>
<td>“the relationship between family disruption and delinquency was stronger among females than among males” (Steketee et al., 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peers</td>
<td>“peer relationships may mitigate delinquent behavior in females, in contrast to their amplifying affect in males” (p. 98)*</td>
<td>“Being in groups that are involved in nuisance behavior leads to delinquent behavior more often in females than in males.” (Steketee et al., 2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academics</td>
<td>“Academic difficulties have been one of the single best predictors of delinquent behavior, particularly for boys ... For girls, the association is less clear, with some studies finding no significant correlation until adolescence ... and others reporting poor school achievement at age 8 years predicting later criminality in women...” (p. 98)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Hoyt and Scherer (1998) also talk about the development of female gangs (when they exist):

*A female gang typically emerges after a male gang has been established and often takes a feminized version of the male name... The stereotypical gang role for girls is to conceal and carry weapons for the boys, provide sexual favors, and sometimes fight against girls who are connected with enemy male gangs... The most consistent empirical research finding is that friendship and bonding between gang members (sometimes sealed through initiation rituals) is an important factor in accounting for female participation in gangs.* (p. 98)
Crossroads Study

The enrolled youth were at least 13 years old and under 17 years old at the time of their committing offense, and were charged with a low-level offense (e.g., assault, petty theft, vandalism). Each study participant is being followed for a period of three years past enrollment with the end result a comprehensive picture of life changes in a wide array of areas over the course of this time, as a result of varying degrees of justice system penetration at processing.

One of many articles from this project:


...CU traits were related to endorsing a leadership role during the index offense..., endorsing a leadership role during any group offense committed by the youth..., and for reporting that the index offense was their idea... (p. 372)
Juvenile Justice System

• **History** (National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, & Medicine)

• *The State of Juvenile Justice in Texas* (see chart pp. 58-59)

• **Points of Interventions** (steps through the Juvenile Justice system)

• *Re-Examining Juvenile Incarceration* (Pew Charitable Trusts; also looks at alternative punishments)
“Gang member to PhD”

Video about Victor Rios, Professor at UC Santa Barbara
Internet Resources

American Society of Criminology

Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention
(U.S. Government)

“Risk Factors for Delinquency: An Overview”

Harvard Youth Violence Prevention Center

“Becoming a Man” Chicago Youth-Violence Prevention Program
(Evaluated by University of Chicago)

Vox reviews evidence for and against 16 leading theories
of why U.S. crime rate have declined

Special Issue of Child Development (Jan./Feb. 2017)
on Severe Youth Violence