Positivism :

While classical criminology influenced the judicial system, by the later part of the 19thCentury the new social sciences developing in universities were becoming increasingly interested in the causes of crime. This work was underpinned by positivist ideas of the similarities between the social and the natural sciences. Crime was a technical problem and not a moral or political one. It was caused by some ‘defect’ and once you knew the cause you could put it right, rather like a mechanic can repair a faulty car. Of course, positivists differed in where they located the origins of that defect:

 in biological theory, the defect was to be found in the body

in psychological theory, it was in the mind

 in early social theory it was less evidence of a defective individual than a defective environment [a longstanding theme in a variety of sociological approaches].