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How far would you go to make a cool \$3.2 million dollars? A Colorado couple made that calculating decision that will send them to prison for a long time. Drug manufacturing in this country is at an all time high. Its affect crosses all social boundaries causing mental, emotional and financial hardship on family, friends, and society as a whole. It has become such a problem that U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy addressed the issue in May of this year stating that "this legislation would reauthorize and expand the ability of the Attorney General to award grants aimed at increasing the number of cops on the streets and in our schools" Leahy, P. (May 2007).

The hard question is "why do people engage in such destructive activity?" The answer lies within human nature and its delicate intricacies, be they by choice or inherent traits.

"Officers hit pay dirt when they raided a suspected Ecstasy lab in a home here [Denver, Colorado]Tuesday. They found enough chemicals to make 50,000 to 80,000 tabs of Ecstasy with a street value of up to \$3.2 million," said John Cohen, special agent for the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. Scanlon, B. (2007) Rocky Mountain News

Choice Theory advocates that behavior is central to our existence and driven by, five genetically driven needs, similar to those of Maslow:

- Survival (food, clothing, shelter, breathing, personal safety and others)
- and four fundamental psychological needs:
- Belonging/connecting/love
- Power / significance
- Freedom / responsibility, and
- Fun / learning

Behavior ("Total Behavior" in Glasser's terms) is made up of, four of these components: acting, thinking, feeling and physiology. Glasser suggests that we have considerable control or choice over the first two of these, and little ability to, directly choose the latter two. As these four components are, closely intertwined, the choices we make in our thinking and acting greatly affect our feeling and physiology.

This theory and its categories definitely fit the scenario mentioned in the crime in this essay. The actions of the offenders dictate that they did calculate, plan, and then proceed with the offense



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of manufacturing Ecstasy. This kind of, planning, targeting and assumption of financial gain are the results of rational choice of those committing the crime.

The decision of where to purchase the ingredients and, how much to purchase based on what they planned to distribute, all lead credence to the aspects of Rational Choice. Additionally, it can be considered a foregone conclusion that they knew their target, the popular clubs around town known for those who engaged in consuming their product. They knew how to market it and, knowing what the going street price was it can be safely assumed that they considered the cost of financial gain to be worth the risk of being caught.

The bottom line in connecting Rational Choice Theory to the crime presented in this paper is that every step of the process involved a, well planned, calculated, informed and, intelligent decision to engage in the criminal activity of the production of the illegal drug Ecstasy and to deliver it to market.

The core components of most importance to the Trait Theory is cognition, intelligence and, personality.

Cognition is the individual's level of mental ability to make decisions, process information, and ideas, problem solving and, how they perceive the world around them and its relation to them. In this respect, this element of Trait Theory also applies to the crime in this essay. The offender's ability to make a decision based on known information regarding the drug's popularity and ease of manufacturing is a key component to their decision.

Their level of intelligence is such that they are able to process the information of chemical compounds, and the ease of obtaining those compounds. In addition, their intelligence suggests that they have a high level of reading comprehension. This would be, needed in order to understand the "recipe" for their manufacturing endeavor.

As for their personality traits, these could be multiple, though not to be construed as multiple personality disorder. They are inventive, resourceful and, communicative, (needed to persuade a buyer). They are risk takers, and have little or no respect for the law. These traits could be inherent genetically or, they could be acquired, through early childhood learning behavior.

The next question in that parade is, if a person's intelligence is increased, and along with it their cognitive abilities, will their genetic makeup override the new learning and still condemn them to criminal behavior? Studies have shown this not to be so.



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