

An analysis of a hate crime essay example

[Law](#), [Evidence](#)



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Abstract

Different theorists have come up with different ways of assessing and demystifying the issue of hate crimes. Many of them have proposed theories that have been used in detailing what happens when a certain choice is made in place of another. For example, in the case Sigmund Freud's theory, it is noted that individuals are faced with a psychological choice on either to fulfill their inner desire of pleasure without regard on the consequences or to become socially conscious in every decision made including the actions taken. Skinner (1978) on the other have focuses on hate crime analysis via the external stimuli like praise for good deeds. On the other hand Erik Erikson asserts that human behavior is as a result of experiences encountered during development. One question still remain, do hate crimes follow a specified pattern characteristic of an individual's character? This will be the topic of discussion.

Introduction

It has been noted and claimed that most of the hate crimes that are experienced tend to follow a specific pattern. These patterns happen to develop with an individual over time as the person grows up and matures. Given the impact that these characteristics and patterns may have on a person, it becomes crucial that the person's behavior route is monitored and corrective measures taken to ensure proper decision making that will eventually lead to a decrease in the number of hate crimes.

Ayton (2011) captures the story of a young man named Joseph Paul Franklin who went on a shoot to kill spree against the Jews as well as the African-Americans before his capture back in 1980. It is estimated that the number of casualties ranged between 7 and 20 within the short time he was involved in this frenzy exercise (Ayton, 2011).

Franklin hailed from a community that was surrounded by the American Nazi Party for which Franklin became a member as early as 20 in addition to his membership in the National States Rights Party, Ku Klux Klan and the Nazi Party (Ayton, 2011). Franklin also came from an abusive family and was the subject of abject torture as reported in Ayton (2011). Having no reference point for good morals, Franklin resulted in his behavior.

Claim # 1

It is thought that most of the people who are responsible for initiating hate crime do have a history of an abusive childhood.

Evidence

According to Erik Erikson's (Block 2004) theory, people are meant to pass through milestones during development and they have the conscious capability of getting through these milestones without being stuck in the middle. Franklin's case shows evidence of childhood emotional and psychological experiences were not dealt with in the right manner and thus the anger that should have dissipated as he developed stayed on, only to be unleashed in his killing frenzy.

Secondly, it is also evident from Skinner's theory that positive reinforcement causes positive behavioral changes and decisions (Skinner, 1978). In the

case of Franklin, it is evident from the excerpt that he rarely received positive reinforcement. On the contrary, there was enormous amount of negative reinforcement that precipitated in his future choices. Understanding the way child upbringing impacts on future decision making is important in curbing criminal activities.

Significance: Looking at Franklin's case, he was more of a punching bag than a loved child and thus the environment took a toll on his decisions in future the hate grew up with him becoming bigger and uglier with time.

Claim # 2

Lack of channels of expression might have led to an antisocial behavior in Franklin.

Evidence

It is good to note that Franklin's decision to join socially perverse groups might have been driven by seclusion in his childhood. It is noted that of the other children who faced similar childhood abuse, Franklin seemed to take most of the beatings (Ayton, 2011), which according to Erik Erikson might lead to segregation from the rest of the peers (Block 2004). During Franklin's upbringing, there seemed to be lack of available channels for self-expression and thus after growing up the same need to express oneself was provided by racist social groups like the American Nazi Party for which Franklin gladly joined (Ayton, 2011) and became a partaker of their evil motives.

According to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalysis, the human behavioral choices are influenced by two critical forces with the third force emanating from the balance of the two aforementioned forces (Freud, 1910). Freud (1910) continues to illustrate using Id as the force that lies in the unconscious mind

that naturally seeks only pleasure while disregarding the consequences therein. Looking at the case of Franklin, it is evident that he made a conscious decision to fulfill his fantasy of heroism by killing and became a hero to his fellow group members.

Significance: These findings are significant in that when children and grownups are denied an avenue for self-expression, they subconsciously seek for any available avenue for self-expression with minimal regard to the consequences of joining some organizations.

Claim # 3

Regardless of the level of education, formal or informal, the environment tends to shape the direction in which an individual will take in future development.

Evidence

According to Skinner (1978) a person's personality and choice is highly influenced by the environment under which that person is raised. While demonstrating this fact, Skinner took a rat and placed that rat in an enclosure with a lever of which upon pressing the lever, food would be released and acted as a reward. Franklin's past was full of negative reinforcement from the parents and this led to his actions. The parties that Franklin joined had a negative reinforcement, supporting perverse actions against the social norms another contributing factor.

Significance: Franklin best denotes a failed society with rotten social norms and best supports Skinner's theory.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that most of the hate crimes tend to follow a definite pattern. The level of exposure to absurd conditions led to his decisions in future. In identifying the prevailing factors, it becomes important to change situations by taking counter actions. In this case, it is evident that Freud's psychoanalysis theory does not capture the imminent need to understand the motivation of Franklin to commit hate crimes. From Erik Erikson's theoretical perspective, the only breakthrough is that Franklin seems to have gotten stuck in childhood psychological development and thus the actions. Skinner's theory on positive reinforcement seems to capture the holistic to Franklin's problem from social to cultural to psychological and thus it best explores Franklin's crime.

References

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