

Free case study about deviance

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Ans 1. Deviance can be categorized as behavior, which is considered to be away from societal norms and values. The inherent nature of deviancy lies in the 'otherization' of the individual and/or his behavior, thus labeling those who perform deviant acts as being deviants. John can be considered a deviant because he joined the Gambino family when he decided that the traditional way of earning money in a lawful manner was not effective enough in enabling his financial success. As stated in the case study above, he did not want to work at the docks like his father primarily due to the fact that he was unable to earn much money and had to work hard. Moreover, John's choice to join organized crime was also the result of his belief that social stratification was based on a system, which repressed those people of lower social classes. John's case fits Strain theory by Merton, whereby individuals turn to deviance as a way to achieve cultural goals when traditional methods do not seem to be feasible for them. John abandoned his father's ways and decided to pursue a life of crime in order to achieve financial success through 'untraditional' means because he believed that traditional means would not be enough for people of his social status to survive in today's society. (Macionis, 2012, p. 197)

Ans 2. Firstly, structural-functional theories of deviance view it as a vital part for the effective running of the overall social system. Secondly, the symbolic-interaction perspective takes into the ways in which people interpret deviance in everyday situations. Lastly, the social-conflict theory is a macro-theory because it views deviancy from a structural perspective. This perspective holds the stance that deviance is linked to social inequality, and <https://assignbuster.com/free-case-study-about-deviance/>

the labeling of what or who as deviant will depend upon the people who hold a monopoly of power within society. (Macionis, 2012, p. 197)

John's decisions seem to coincide with the structural-functional perspective, as the case study mentions that he views society as an oppressive system for those of lower social classes, and that this was one of the major reasons why he felt the need to join the Gambino family in order to achieve a major cultural goal, that is financial success. In another sense, one can argue that John's beliefs were based on the social-conflict theory, but with his particular example, he fits into the structural functional theory.

Ans 3. In the first theoretical perspective, the structural-functional perspective, the theory, which applies to John's case, is that of Merton.

Merton formulated a Strain theory whereby individuals engaged in non-traditional means to achieve cultural goals when traditional means seemed to be either inaccessible or too difficult. (Macionis, 2012, p. 197)

In the second theoretical perspective, the symbolic-interaction foundation, labeling is one of the most important theories, which says that individuals turn to deviancy as a result of how others respond to their actions rather than the result of their own actions. It is possible that John continued these crimes because various individuals labeled him as a deviant or a criminal. Thus, he fulfilled his role as the deviant by continuing his actions and reaffirming his label. (Macionis, 2012, p. 200)

In the last theory, the social conflict perspective, one can view Marx's theory on deviance and capitalism as the most fitting to John's case in one main way. John believed that the social system in place was such that it was designed to repress those of lower social classes, such as himself. Marx's theory also draws upon the assumption that society is controlled and ruled

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by a powerful ruling class minority who benefit from the exploitation of the working class masses. (Macionis, 2012, p. 202)

References

Macionis, J. (2012). *Society: The basics* (14th ed., Annotated instructor's ed.). Upper Saddle River, N. J.: Prentice Hall.