

Criminal theory essay

[Experience](#), [Anger](#)



Law

The Strain Theory has been developed by Robert Agnew who believed that a strain is due to the negative relationships in which the individuals feel that they are being mistreated (Siegel, 2008). The negative behavior which resulted from unachieved goals, loss or death of a significant other, financial problems or negative life events such as divorce, and resulted to anger and frustration of the criminals. There are three types of strain recognized under this theory:

1.) When a person is prevented to achieve pre-determined goals; 2.) Removal of a positively valued stimulus; and 3.) The threat under a negatively valued stimuli. The Strain Theory refers to a more general phenomenon, instead of a disagreement between aspirations and expectations. The strain can take place when something of value is taken from us or when one is being confronted with a negative reaction. As a result, it is transformed to a negative psychological state of disappointment, anger and frustration (Siegel, 2008).

Many strain theorists believed that criminality is a direct result of lower-class frustration and anger. People who come from rich neighborhoods do not feel the strain since they are not deprived of educational and vocational opportunities. This coincides with the Theory of Anomie wherein criminality is high in lower-class segments of society. Siegel (2008) explains that an integrated society maintains a balance between social structure and culture. These are the culturally defined goals and socially approved goals that made it possible to acquire success, wealth and power. The socially permissible means are education, perseverance and frugality. He further adds that

American society convinces that there are ways to achieve these results in two ways which are: 1.) Strong cultural emphasis must be made on the success goals in the U. S. is unmatched by an equally strong focus on the socially approved means. Hence, each individual must work to aspire towards success and achievement of goals in life (Lanier et al., 2004).

At present time, this theory is relevant the criminal system must be designed in such a way that there should be equality of treatment of all prisoners, regardless of social standing. Stealing in the neighborhood is common practice for poor juvenile delinquents because their parents approve their act of stealing from other people as a means of livelihood. Strain theory has a connection with illegitimate opportunity for lack of opportunity of the underprivileged to pursue legitimate means to success. They have no choice but to use the abundant illegal opportunities to acquire money and power. The only opportunity that poor people see is to break the law.

Siegel (2008) stated that the Social Disorganization Theory refers to the theory which connects crime rates to neighborhood ecological characteristics. Many criminologists believe that the root cause of crimes originated from socioeconomic factors. Crime rates in poor communities are high due to lack of resources by the localities to provide the basic services such as housing, healthcare and education. Poor families whose members are unemployed resort to other means to provide for their basic needs. These indigent families get involved in deviant subcultures that sustain and promote criminality. Siegel (2008) has identified the root causes of criminality are identified as follows: poverty, social disorganization,

breakdown of traditional values, criminal areas, criminal transmission and the final outcome is development of criminal careers.

References:

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