

Institutions

[Law](#), [Justice](#)



2489 5491 2489 5491 How does your text communicate information and ideas about institutions and individual experience? Institutions consist of protest, compliance and enforcement. Sometimes institutions harm the individual and sometimes they affect the individual in a positive way. The two texts, *Shawshank Redemption* (film) and *Scales of Justice* (television drama), both demonstrate this well, through various techniques such as narrating throughout the films. Both texts are about institutions in the criminal justice system. The text, *Shawshank Redemption*, portrays institutions as having a negative impact on the individual.

In particular, it focuses on the strict elements of institutional life within prisons. These include set routines and structures that must be followed by the inmates. Schedules are enforced. A bell rings, doors open, prisoners step out and line up for morning head count. Enforcement and compliance are essential in the institution. Throughout the film one of the main characters 'Red' is narrating, this communicates a different perspective of the effect institutions have on individuals. He expresses this when he says, " I'm telling you, these walls are funny. First you hate them.

Then you get used to them. Enough time passes, it gets so you depend on them. That's institutionalised. " This quote shows a negative impact institutions can have on an individual, instead of wanting to be back in society they become dependent on set routines. The film also communicates the idea that once an individual has been institutionalised for a certain period of time, it becomes almost impossible for them to adapt back into society when they are released from prison. One way this is communicated is by the inmate Brooks' protest against leaving Shawshank.

Brooks has been in Shawshank for an extended amount of time, prison life and routine is now all he seems to know. It becomes obvious to the audience that even he feels he will not be able to adapt back into society. So terrified of leaving prison, he threatens to stab a fellow inmate so that his sentence will be extended, allowing him to stay in Shawshank. This results in Brooks taking his own life when he is finally released, emphasising the earlier reflection made by Red that some individuals can no longer survive without the institutional way of life.

Scales of Justice (Act 1) is about a young and eager probationary constable (Webber) who is graduating from the police academy and has started to work for a police station. The audience sees that he is quiet young and naive through techniques like him twirling his gun around his finger like a young boy would with a toy gun. However as the text progresses we are see that Webber goes through stages of being ecstatic about his new job and not being able to wait to help society as they are “ a walking conscience”, and loving the “ perks” of the job, for example getting discounts on things like food and a car.

The audience begins to find that the police station is one that is quite corrupt. As Webber begins to realise this, we see that the institution is having a negative effect on him by killing his dreams of being a walking conscience of society. At first this just makes him a little uncomfortable, but when it comes to actually seeing the corruption first hand (finding the fur coat in his locker) it brings things into perspective for him. 2489 5491 2489 5491 For a few days, the Webber considers keeping the stolen fur coat, as he takes it home with him.

This is an example of the institution affecting is once very strong and clear conscience, this is the institution having a negative effect on him. Eventually, the guilt of possessing stolen property becomes too much for Webber, and he turns the coat into the head sergeant. Webber confesses that Sergeant O'Rourke was the one who took it and placed it in his locker. This results in more corruption which leads to Webber being dismissed from the police force.

This is because the internal affairs investigator says Webber is lying and took the coat himself, when really the audience knows that he is dismissed because he turned on a fellow police officer. So in the end we see that being the "walking conscience" for society didn't turn out so well for Webber. In conclusion, Shawshank Redemption and Scales of Justice; The Job, both communicate information and ideas about institutions and the individual experience. They both show the aspects of protest, enforcement and compliance within institutions and how the individual is affected through the institution, whether it is in a positive or negative way.