

Good example of essay on deviance and social norms theory

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



In this video, a cop killed a white unarmed man without any evidence, an issue that brought much controversy. Most people could not believe that an armed officer shot an unarmed citizen almost eight times. According to the law, a police officer did not have the right to shoot an innocent citizen. The video can be analyzed using the deviance and social norms theory. Deviance can be defined as any behavior or act that rebels the expected norms of a society. The act has sufficient severity to make the majority of the society disapprove it. Norms, on the other hand, can be defined as social codes that govern the community (Henry 106). In this case, the defiant was the armed cop. The social norm was an officer killing a citizen with no evidence. The theory used in the deviance and norms theory is labeling theory, which claims that police officers do not have the power to prosecute citizens. Police officers are law enforcers, but they are not above the law. It was wrong for the officer to make conclusions that the killed citizen was guilty without having any evidence. It showed how the situation in America is, where some officers can use personal grudge to get back at a person. In this case, there were allegations that the killed citizen had stolen cigarettes at a robbery store. Though stealing is still a form of breaking the law, the officer did not have any evidence that the person was involved in the robbery.

Deviance is a relative issue, which changes according to the status of the situation. In this case, if the shot person was armed, the officer was allowed to use force. However, according to the proceedings of the case, the citizen declared that he was not armed. Instead of the officer hearing the plea of the citizen, he shot him two more times, killing him. There is a mindset in how people expects the society to behave, and in situations like these, police

officers are expected to use brutal force on a citizen when they feel that they are endangered by the citizen. However, in this case, the cop was not at any danger dealing with the citizen. The killing of an "innocent" citizen is what irked the society.

Another issue considered a deviance of norm in this case is the killing of an unarmed citizen who did not pose any threat or danger to the police officer. The law does not allow cops to use brutal force while dealing with citizens, apart from when they see they are at a risk of getting bodily harm, or their lives are at risk. However, in this situation, the officer knew well that the citizen was not armed, yet he shot him eight times. The main objective of the police department is to maintain order in the country, but not cause havoc. In this situation, the police defied what the law and society expect of him. Instead of restoring order, the officer killed the suspect, even after he had surrendered with pleas that he had no guns. The sad thing is that the officer finished him off right after admitting he did not have any weapon with him. Police officers should not use brutal force while dealing with citizens. As a society, we expect police officers to provide protection to us.

Works Cited

Henry, Stuart. *Social Deviance*. Cambridge: Polity, 2009. Print.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N6OsV-wvLzk>