

Example of dont shoot by david kennedy book review

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



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Question 1:

Kennedy and his team have created a data-driven approach. They aren't just guessing or using their best judgment about what makes sense. Explain how Kennedy and his team use and rely on data in designing the violence and drug intervention programs and – once the programs are functioning – to evaluate whether they are working.

Kennedy's team are very much data driven in their approach as they tend to focus on the rude statistics which indicate that criminals have a lot of avenues to choose when it comes to rooting out the causes and effects of crime in the various departments. His analysis of the situation in Boston in the early 1990's is mind boggling and extremely revealing as it demonstrated that criminal minds were running syndicates and crime networks which truly reached out to all communities and their relationship with the police was obviously disastrous. Kennedy analysed the hard facts behind the crime statistics, which youths came from poor or depressed neighbourhoods, how these were involved in a life of crime from an early age, how they coped with the huge problems facing them and how they

eventually descended into a maelstrom of violence accordingly. Other correlations include the manner in which crime statistics are related to the criminals being locked up or incarcerated and the predominantly high incidence of black people who ended up hounded or jailed by the police. The drug intervention programmes then obviously worked miracles as all the data was in place so the proper applications could eventually be applied accordingly.

Question 2:

Why does Kennedy argue that fixing the entire criminal justice system or attacking the root causes of crime is not necessary to reduce much of inner-city violence and open air drug markets?

While it is good that Kennedy treats the reform of the justice system nonchalantly, he does seem to argue that this is not the only issue which is required to change accordingly for a reduction in crime. He states that reform of criminals and a better approach to social cases backed up by rigid statistics is probably the best way to approach these issues which can tend to overboil sometimes. He constantly sets about several statistics and encourages relationships between criminals and the police to foster a better rapport between them which will obviously eventually result in a much clearer and focused relationship which could bring criminals closer to absolution.

Essentially Kennedy believes that most of the so called criminals are good persons and that some proper social training and peer to peer experiences will change their lives even if these seem to be bad and without much hope.

Reforming the whole criminal justice system is definitely not an option at this stage as this would create a situation where the rule of the law would have to be followed to the letter with the inevitable results of doom. This would undoubtedly lead to violent clashes with the police who would use a hard line to crack down on vigilantes, criminals and drug dealers. Kennedy observes that this would be nothing short of a recipe for disaster.

Question 3:

Kennedy argues that gang members and drug dealers are rational. What does he mean by that?

Rationality is something which is subjective and without much description, one can arrive at the appropriate conclusions without much problems. Gang members and drug dealers can apply this rationality even when faced with complex problems and Kennedy certainly applied this sort of approach to his fieldwork.

In many ways the US system is inherently flawed in that it does not offer equal opportunities to all. In the South where education is still something of an issue, there is still de facto segregation in certain areas which is definitely not seen in Japan or Russia for example. Children from poorer backgrounds and from different ethnic communities obviously suffer to integrate themselves into the white community and this means that the language barrier for Hispanics is something of a problem when it comes to this fast growing section of the population.

However when it comes to college education, the US can be said to be head and shoulders above the rest. With such prestigious universities as Harvard

and Yale, we can observe a shift in the quality of education which is not seen in the other countries chosen for comparison.

Describe the methodology (the approach, the method) that Kennedy applies to ending inner-city violence and open air drug markets? Explain the various steps his program takes. (Hint: focus

on one of the cities he discusses in his book and lay out what steps come first, second, third, etc.)

You don't have to provide lots of detail or specifics. He approaches each city in the same way,

the names of the neighborhoods or gangs aren't important. Write in general terms about the

approach.

Question 4

Kennedy is very focused on ending the violence in open air drug markets by using what can only be termed as highly innovative methods. He insisted in Boston for example that the police had to admit their failures and black community leaders had to back police. This wasn't something which was easy, certainly not for black leaders who always saw the police as their intrinsic enemy. However this approach yielded incredible dividends as by 1996 the crime rate in inner city Boston was absolutely zero.

How did Kennedy manage to achieve this? It was made through a combination of several issues but most importantly the method of participant observation was used and this seemed to work wonders. Through this first step, Kennedy was able to observe the working methods of the gangs and

drug dealers and this led him to propose solutions for dialogue accordingly. Secondly there was the issue of coming up with a rapprochement method between the so called criminals and the police and this meant that wonders were being worked in the ways police would actually engage in conversation with the gangs and dealers. All this led to a highly congenial atmosphere between everyone.

Interestingly this quote from the review of ' Don't Shoot' by Sudhir Venkatesh shows that the participant observation method was truly hard at first but which was made to work in the end.

“ For many reasons, this outreach wasn't easy. Police had to publicly admit their failures, black community leaders had to back white police, and both had to be seen consorting with criminals in the interest of public safety. The results were hard to argue with. Youth homicide rates went down to zero in 1996, and the overall homicide rate dropped by 50 percent by the end of the decade” (Venkatesh p 1).