

Criminal behavior essay example

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



There are two forms of controlling behavior that members of a society are expected to display. The norms of society are the informal form while the laws of society are the formal form (Licht, 2008). Crime is an action that is a breach of the laws of society and may involve harm to society while a breach of the norms of society is known as delinquency. Of course, adults are not the only ones who commit crimes. Even juveniles, i. e. children and teens below the age of 18, can commit crimes, and a crime committed by a juvenile is referred to as juvenile delinquency because it is deemed inappropriate and unfair to sentence juveniles as an adult (" Juvenile delinquency"). Crimes are measured law enforcement agencies and officials, and are reported in the form of Uniform Crime Reports, the National Crime Victimization Survey and the National Incident-Based Reporting System (" Chapter two: Measuring").

The origin of crime can be traced back to at least 7000 years, when Cain murdered his brother Abel, as mentioned in the Bible. That was the first murder and the first crime committed in this world, and ever since then, mankind has been committing crimes of different levels, such as the most recent and shocking, Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting. For a long time criminologists have pondered for a way to prevent crime, and this is why it is important to examine criminal behavior and why crimes are committed. There are four perspectives that explain the origin of criminal behavior (Schneider, Gruman, Coutts), which are

- Biological Perspective: According to the biological perspective, an individual may commit a crime under the influence of genetic factors. An individual may be more likely to commit a crime as a result of a genetic

factor in than those are not being influenced by similar genetic factors. For instance, men with higher levels of testosterone in their body are more likely to behave aggressively and commit a crime (Schneider, Gruman, Coutts).

- **Sociological Perspective:** According to the sociological perspective, criminal behavior is based on behaviors people learn during the course of life depending on their experiences with the social environment, and how they choose to interact (Schneider, Gruman, Coutts). For instance, people who have been abused as a child are more likely to develop criminal behavior than those who had a normal, happy childhood.

- **Psychological Perspective:** According to the psychological perspective, people develop criminal behavior when their personality is influenced by factors affecting their normal mental functions (Bartol & Bartol, 2011). For instance, antisocial or retarded individuals may be more likely to commit a crime.

- **Psychiatric Perspective:** The psychiatric perspective explains that psychiatric disorders are the most likely reason behind the development of criminal behavior. This may include disorders such as anxiety disorders, delusional disorders, schizophrenia, and those suffering from any such disorders may be more likely to commit a crime (" Psychiatric disorders associated," 2012).

- **Psychoanalytical Perspective:** According to Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytical theory, people who develop a criminal behavior have no sense of what is right and wrong, they lack a conscience and so they commit crimes without feeling guilty (Vito, Maahs & Maahs, 2012).

Over the years, a variety of theories based upon the above perspectives that

explain why people commit crimes have been examined in the hopes of finding a way to prevent crime. Some of the integral ones include:

- Cesare Beccaria's Classical Theory: According to Beccaria, criminal behavior is a result of free-willed choice, and that people commit a crime when the consequences of committing the crime are outweighed by the benefits of committing the crime (" Cesare beccaria").
- Social Disorganization Theory: According to this theory, criminal behavior emerges in disorganized communities because these communities lack the means to fight crime and disorder (" Chapter 4: Social").
- Individual Trait Theory: Numerous biological and psychological traits distinguish criminals from non-criminals, and crime is the result of the interaction of individuals, who have these traits, with their social environment (" Psychosocial theories: Individual").
- Richard Quinney's Peacemaking Theory: As proposed by Richard Quinney, according to this theory people who suffer, whether they are being personally harmed on a daily basis, or are victims of inequality or injustice, develop criminal behavior and commit crimes. Therefore, the solution to crime is peace (Barnes).

There are a myriad of other theories proposed by many different researchers and theorists that provide an explanation of the origin of criminal behavior.

Theories that explain the reason behind criminal behavior are based on certain risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual might commit a crime, which include development, social, family, parental, and psychological risk factors. These risk factors further fall under a variety of key risk domains such as community, education, economy, family, parents,

and peers, and if any of these key risk domains affect an individual in a negative manner, they only make it more likely for an individual to commit a crime. For instance, poor parenting or being constantly bullied at school can cause an individual to develop criminal behavior (" Chapter 4 --").

People have been committing crimes for a long time, but the origin of criminal behavior is still shrouded by mystery even though a variety of resources, such as the ones mentioned above are, are used to try and explain why a criminal commits a crime. However, so many explanations make criminal behavior an even more complicated topic.

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