Violence, older peers, and the socialization of adolescent boys

Sociology, Violence

I will be writing a summary of the journal article " Violence, Older Peers, and the Socialization of Adolescent Boys in Disadvantaged Neighborhoods" written by David J. Harding (2009), who argues that, " cross-cohort socialization by older neighborhood peers is one source of socialization for adolescent boys" (Page 445). He uses primary data collection from 60 adolescent boys in three Boston neighborhoods to " understand the causes and consequences of these interactions and relationships" (Harding, 2009, Pg. 445).

In the journal article " Violence, Older Peers, and the Socialization of Adolescent Boys in Disadvantaged Neighborhoods" by David J. Harding, Harding (2009) suggests that disadvantaged neighborhoods influence how adolescents make romantic and educational decisions. Adolescents are also more likely socialized with the more accessible older people in the neighborhood who don't have a job, and work on the streets. The young people feel that socializing with older men in their community that work in the " underground" economy helps with navigation through the dangerous streets and the older men influence their decision.

The social isolation theory " argues that lack of participation in the mainstream labor market isolates residents of inner-city communities from middle-class social groups, organizations, and institutions" (Wilson, 1996, pg. 446). That theory, according to Harding (2009), suggests that kids in communities that are have high unemployment, don't experience a life that is organized around their families work place, so some don't feel like they need to join the work force in the future for a source of income.

They see their community make a living on the streets. One hole in the social isolation theory is that it does not address that in inner-city neighbors, people do, in fact, share some of the same ideals as other social classes such as the desire to get married and the importance ofeducation(Harding, 2009). In ghetto-cultured neighborhoods, even decent families are competing with their child's peers when it comes to influencing their decisions on sex, crime and school.

Adolescents look up to young men who are higher ups in the neighborhood due to their success in the streets (Harding 2009). Violence in inner-city neighborhoods is also a way to move up in the social totem pole of the community showing your masculinity and earnrespect. Harding suggests his own theory; he had a methodology for primary data collection. He interviewed 60 adolescent boys between the ages of 13 to 18 in three ghetto locations in Boston.

In his investigations, he found that violence in disadvantaged neighborhoods is rarely random or accidental; it is directly related to interpersonal relationships and on going conflicts (2009). Anotherobservationwas, " the younger adolescent boys of Roxbury Crossing and Franklin struggle to cope with the ever-present threat of violence, relationships with older peers are one strategy for securing at least a measure of protection…By contrast, adolescent boys in Lower Mills face a much lower threat of victimization.

Their social lives are not structured by strong neighborhood identities that restrict social networks or the use of geographic space, so strategies for reducing the threat of victimization are less necessary" (Harding, 2009, Pg.

452). In Harding's investigations, he takes note that there is big distinction between neighborhoods. He gives the example of a kid named Marcus that has a neighbor who owed him $4, but since he didn't want to fight his neighbor, he threatened his neighbor's friend that lived in another neighborhood to get hismoneyback.

There is a large amount of respect between people in the same neighborhood and big rivalries between different neighborhoods (2009). Parents in Lower Mills don't have to worry about their children getting jumped or fighting. They go to the park and have a good time. On the other hand, parents of children in Roxbury and Franklin are constantly worrying about whether their children are getting involved with dangers on the streets. Neighborhood identity has a lot to do with violence (Harding, 2009).

Violence is a defining characteristic of impoverish neighborhoods and it structures kids lives and socialization (Harding, 2009). According to Harding, " With respect to social organization theory, this article shows how thefailureof a community to control violence can have spillover effects in other domains through the impact of violence on the age-structure of peer networks" (2009, pg. 462). References Harding, David. (2009). Violence, Older Peers, and the Socialization of Adolescent Boys in Disadvantaged Neighborhoods. American Sociological Review. 74, (3), 445-464.