

Seminar in criminology - classmate response 11

Law



Law Response Essay 11: Criminology Based on Karen Rodriguez's discussion about a documentary regarding the lives of inmates in prisons, two different aspects of prison life emerge. One, it is evident that life in prisons does not only mean that a person loses a chance to make their own decisions, but things do not go as a person plans. For example, as noted in Sykes' (2014) study, majority of inmates in prisons get deprived of some of the freedom that people outside prisons take for granted. This shows that a new inmate should not expect that what he or she plans while in prison goes as planned. Secondly, the other aspect of prison life is that psychotic breaks are common among some inmates. In the documentary, an inmate such as the Armando Doctor masturbates in public and cuts himself regularly which in my view seem like signs of psychosis (HD Documentary, 2014). Hence, this shows that prison is a place that has a high chance of impairing the cognitive function of a man who is mentally stable.

Rodriguez has made a perfect comparison between the study and the events occurring in the documentary. By citing inmates such a Doc, Merchant and Mr. Jack, as examples in her discussion, Rodriguez makes it easier for readers and viewers to make the connection between the study and the documentary.

Lastly, I noted that Rodriguez also used different sources to reference her work. Though there are no in-text references, she makes it easier to gain access to the study and the film, for any person who might read her discussion for the first time. She has also made it easier for her readers who might be future law enforcement officers, politicians or lawyers to realize that having high rates of incarceration are not helpful for those who are repeat offenders.

Reference

HD Documentary. (2014). Prison life: Hardest prisons correctional maximum security [You Tube]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSZ2U5UwJBg>

Sykes, G. (2014). Inmate subcultures. In J. Wooldredge & A. Thistlethwaite (Eds.), *Forty Studies that Changed Criminal Justice: Explorations into the History of Criminal Justice Research*. Boston, MA: Little, Brown & Company