

Crime in human nature



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Introduction

I believe that some humans are born inherently good and are all born with a clean slate. I believe that some people commit crimes because of biological, psychological and sociological reasons. I also believe that environment causes people to change and become evil over time. This change can be from good to bad and can be temporary or permanent. In essence, you might have committed a violent crime in the past and now have become a born again Christian. There is also the population that never commits a serious offense but will continue to break minor laws. And last but not least are those who are good and continue to be good throughout life with little or no deviation. These are all reasons of why I believe humans are born inherently good.

As I stated, events throughout one's life can cause them to change and go bad.

For example, if your father abused you when you were a child and that transposed in to you abusing your child. Then there is a high probability that your child we grow up to abuse his children. In regards to the example, some theorists would argue that this family has criminal genes and that this type of abuse is hereditary. Not all child abuse victims grow up to abuse. In rehabilitation, a child could be removed from an abusive situation and overtime heal not go on to repeat abusive acts. So, I do believe in rehabilitation.

In this research paper I will be discussing some of the many theories of crime to support my opinion of why I believe people are inherently good, not evil.

The first school I will use to support my opinion of why people are inherently good is the positivist school. The positivist school began in the late nineteenth century and ignited a scientific revolution in criminology. It was founded by Cesare Lombroso and his students Enrico Ferri and Raffaele Garofalo. These were known as the founders of positivist criminology. They focused more on the actual criminals and not the crimes themselves

Summary

Classical criminologists focus on the crimes themselves and not the actual individuals who commit crimes. Positivist criminologists stress the causes of criminal behavior, such as causation and multiple factor causation. Just like I suggest, positivists agree that ones' individual behavior is more or less determined by factors with the individual or in his or her external environment (Curran & Renzetti, p. 16). The positivist school uses the scientific method in order to find the reasons and causes of criminality.

Through history, human behavior has been measured and recorded and used to make important theories of why crimes are committed. Classical criminologists believe that crime is committed by offenders and that decision to commit crimes is not a result of rational decision and that it is out of their control. If that were to be true, then what good would punishment do? If crimes are committed because people are inherently evil, then punishment would be ineffective. Positivists and I believe that offenders should be committed to treatment in order to have a chance at being rehabilitated and that people are inherently good.

With the strategy of rehabilitation, criminologists can measure multiple offenders' progress from intake to release. This provides positivist criminologists a starting and ending point for measurement comparing offenders and rehabilitation. Criminologists can also conduct ongoing evaluations over one individual's life and recommend certain treatments to continue the rehabilitation process after initial release. For some, the rehabilitation process can take a lifetime, for others it could be quicker, depending on ones' condition. Unlike the Classical School, the Positivist School believes that strict standard sentences are detrimental to the rehabilitation process.

Positivist School believes in indeterminate sentencing for offenders. This type of sentencing allows for more flexible correctional strategies to aid in offenders rehabilitation into society. This would allow for each offender to be sentenced to just the right amount of time in a correctional facility that would aid in his or her rehabilitation. Thus, determinate and or mandatory sentencing policies are not part of the Positivist School and are of the Classical School. Opposed to the classical school, the criminal justice system has a duty to treat offenders of all types of crimes and to rehabilitate them back in to society

Conclusion

Next, the Chicago school will be discussed to support my opinion of why external factors cause humans to commit crimes. The Chicago school looks at crime and individuals from the sociological perspective of external factors. Unlike theorists that see internal factors such as biological, physiological and psychological as reasons to support theories of why people commit crime.

Those internal factors mentioned would belong to the classical school of criminality and theories of crime not in favor of my opinion of why people are inherently good.

The Chicago school was founded in 1892 at the University of Chicago. Many members of the facilities had similar upbringings and beliefs. They were children of skilled parents, born in small rural towns and lived on acres of land. Well in the 1900's a surge of immigrants, mainly from African American and European descent came to live and work in Chicago and other industrialized cities like it. Many of them had no money at all, and their cultural and religious beliefs were different than that of contemporary America at the time. In response to the increase of population, especially from immigration, the Chicago sociologists decided to bring on a social transformation.

Social deviance was studied to see whether inner cities have higher rates of crime than that of urban areas further away from the center of the city. Robert Park from the Chicago School found that the further one moved away from the center of the city, the less chance of being involved in a crime. So for individuals living in the center of the city, social disorganization would occur. This is a result from their study in Chicago in 1928. Inner cities were mixed with different groups of people that had different beliefs and values, there were no social norms and it was a socially disorganized area. All of the social external factors such as values and norms created a break down since no two groups could agree on a common social goal. These external factors brought a breakdown in the inner-city and several forms of social deviance occurred, the end result was crime.

Like Shaw and McKay, I believe that the best way to control crime is to prevent juvenile delinquency. Juvenile delinquency is a major course of concern because many juvenile delinquents become career criminals. A study by Shaw and McKay showed that external factors in inner-city life caused higher juvenile delinquency rates. They actually concluded that race or ethnicity were causes of crime. Shaw and McKay also found that it was the neighborhoods themselves that caused one person to become a delinquent and the other not to be. Those neighborhoods in the city were in poor condition, with sub standard living arrangements.

Based on my opinion from the above studies, I would suggest some changes for the criminal justice system. For example, police departments could focus more of their efforts on community policing and some of their efforts on hard nose policing. I believe that a mixture of both policing strategies has to be used in order to reduce all types of crimes. For example, hard nose policing should be introduced into the neighborhoods that consistently have high crime rates. Like in the study by Park in Chicago, neighborhoods with little to no crime would probably not need such a hard nose policing strategy and be better suited for community policing and mild patrols. But the inner city or Zone 1 as in their study would need a harder nose policing strategy.

Community policing would not work well in the inner-city or Zone 1 because many of the individuals did not communicate or reside in that loop.

The court systems use a combination of indeterminate, determinate and mandatory sentencing policies depending on what State and crime you are talking about. They use different sentencing policies to ensure the safety and welfare of the public and to keep repeat and violent offenders behind bars.

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We can't just have a bunch of convicted violent offenders with ankle bracelets all over the streets, one could say. Lesser offense non violent crimes are better applied to indeterminate sentencing.

Indeterminate sentencing believes in rehabilitation and treating offenders to ensure that they will not repeat or commit a new crime. Some states have a combination of indeterminate programs and indeterminate sentencing systems in their courts. For example, when the judge says 5 to 10 years, he is giving a range, this is indeterminate sentence. If the judge were to say ten years, then that would be determinate or mandatory based on the crime. If it were California, then it would be a mandatory third strike and you're out policy.

In Utah indeterminate sentencing is used, allowing inmates a chance to be released early from prison. Inmates might have a sentence reduction if they show good behavior. In the above example which takes place in Utah, an offender can get out in five years instead of the full ten, if he or she completes all necessary programs, shows good behavior and has been rehabilitated. Different statutes have different sentencing ranges for crimes committed. When it comes time to get released, the Board of Pardons and Parole will decide on when you will actually leave prison.

Indeterminate sentencing gives hope to offenders and a chance for them to take responsibility for their actions and lives. This is because their release dates from prison are on how well they behave in prison and what positive changes they have made in life. This type of sentencing gives a different board a chance to see the validity between the actual crime and the person

themselves. Indeterminate sentencing is one method that the criminal justice system uses to help in controlling and preventing crime.

In regards to the death penalty, I think that we should continue to use it. Certain criminals should not be allowed to be rehabilitated. Rehabilitation is a privilege and should only be given to those who have committed murder or some other type of heinous crime.

If people are inherently good, can the death penalty be legitimately used?