

A sociological perspective of structural functionalism



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The criminal behaviour of Robert Pickton can be examined through the sociological feminist perspective. There are numerous factors throughout Pickton's life that could have served significantly towards his deviant behaviour. The feeling of male dominance could have led the man to express his anger and superiority on the opposite sex. As a result, this unacceptable behaviour raises confliction between the two genders; this exemplifies a feminist theory of female oppression. Throughout his youthful year, Pickton may have encountered neglect from a female figure, which could have played an influence on the behaviourism of this serial killer. For example, hostile affection from a mother may have caused Pickton to bottle up his anger to the point where he used criminal acts as a release in his elder years. These later acts could be a mirror reflection to the actions of his mother therefore causing him to avenge his past experiences by murdering as many other women as possible.

Taking a look at the Marxist Feminism theory can also serve in sociologically analyzing the behaviour of Robert Pickton. This theory examines the lack of balance in terms of men and women in an economic outlook. Stereotypical roles and class hierarchies divide the two sexes; for example, women are to take on the "housewives" roles whereas men are more of the working money makers. Pickton may have based his attacks on a lower class level than he assumed himself to be in. He was a farmer who produced and well as distributed food to others, yet due to the fact that "many of the women were prostitutes and drug addicts" (CBC News), Pickton clearly picked on this class for a reason. Perhaps he felt that this specific target group was helpless, and had a negative effect on the world. The imbalanced regard to

class groups may have numbed Pickton's feelings of guilt or awareness to the fact that he was murdering countless women uncontrollably. Robert Pickton's choice of targeting a specific group of women, let alone women in general, goes to show the sociological perspective of feminism in this case.

Psychological Perspective: Psychoanalysis

Thorough psychological analysis of his thinking process, consisting of both his conscious and unconscious mind, can help with focusing on the psychoanalysis of Pickton's behaviour. The Id, according to Freud, is driven solely by impulses. In the case of Pickton, the impulse was sexual, seeing as the women he murdered were all sex workers. It is only fair to assume that he resorted to these specific women for a specific reason, to satisfy his needs. His sexual impulses led to his Id satisfying them. There is also a chance that Pickton was experiencing internal conflict which led to the outcomes of his decided behaviour. The Id has no care for reality, or the needs of anyone else, merely its own satisfaction.

To continue the analysis of Pickton's behaviour, we must now take a look at his ego. Considering an ego develops through experience, it is possible that Pickton's uncontrollable urge to kill women was a result from being neglected in his early years by a motherly figure. Being motivated by unconscious conflicts, Pickton's ego weakened as his unresolved mental struggle in regards to hatred of an important motherly figure from his youth may have caused his murderous acts. He may have been battling for acceptance or love and lost, hence why afterwards he probably felt in need of retribution against his mother's rejection. The feeling of betrayal or rejection by a female likely outsourced Pickton's jealous rage.

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Pickton's super-ego, alike to his ego, can also be seen as weak. This murderer's conscious had to have been aware that his acts were wrong and socially unacceptable; he chose to disregard the difference between right and wrong as still act out in a poor manner. Additionally, Pickton's sense of childhood rejection may have caused him to lose trust and view the world as an undependably hopeless place. This mistrust has a direct correlation and affect to his social interaction and his personality. His criminal acts were a mean of expressing the unconscious conflicts that have not been resolved. His superego's failure to develop is largely due to his inability to identify with his parental figure as well as lack of internalization of parental and social norms, values and morals. Without a fully developed superego, Pickton was missing his conscience and had no empathy for others. The id's domination of his superego caused it to weaken and easily influence him toward urging violent criminal behaviour. Freudians would characterize Pickton's behaviour by having a weak ego, absent super-ego and a strong id.

Anthropologic Perspective: Sociocultural Anthropology

Inside on Robert Pickton's social life can give us an anthropological insight in terms of his behaviour. Going back a few years, it seems as though Robert's relationships and social interaction were not fully developed. Being rejected in an attempt to build social interactions could definitely have caused Pickton to feel inferior. As this feeling of rejection continued, it developed into anger which he then chose to release through attacking the initial source of it all, women. Due to the women's clear inability to defend themselves, Pickton matured a sense of superiority which built motivation to continue his attacks.

Growing up, Pickton may have been exposed to excessive amounts of media violence which may have played a toll on his later behaviour. Media has become one of the most powerful weapons in the world. Since society as a whole is our means of expression, Pickton probably became a victim of conformity. The battle of conformity may seem impossible to conquer; it is a battle that will murder an individual's qualities, and the only way to triumph is through conscious awareness of its outcome. It is evident that this man is not intact with his conscious, meaning he is either prone to making bad decisions by disregarding their consequences or he was never given taught any better.

Examining Pickton's targets, female prostitutes, may correlate with his values, morals and also the economic inequalities of women in the society he grew up in. Seeing as his outlook of women was already poor, prostitution may have been another concern of his. Pickton worked on his farm, meaning he performed physical labour in order to earn his living. On the other hand, prostitution in the view of Pickton may have been a career that earned a living off of pleasure rather than pain; this might have been an unfair and morally unacceptable way to earn a living in the eyes of this murderer. From this, the man may have not felt any sympathy for these women, so he decided to indulge his guilt-free attitude in the killing of a specifically characterized group of targets.

Hypothesis for Research of a Serial Killer

To understand the reason for a serial killer's motives, we must investigate the conscious and unconscious mind by taking a look at the id, ego, and superego. This will help to determine the driving principle of the criminal, the <https://assignbuster.com/a-sociological-perspective-of-structural-functionalism/>

pleasure they were seeking, their ability to differentiate between right and wrong, and the power and development of the id, ego and superego.

Feminists would examine the perspective of women and their rights within a society, particularly one dominated by men. Social systems, structures and issues in relevance to women will be put to the grand focus.

Structural functionalists regard crime as a necessary and constant part of society. In a given society, the majority of people identify, acknowledge and adhere to a shared set of moral guidelines and rules through legal punishment and public offense. Crime is crucial to society because it sets the legal system and develops a shared set of moral guidelines. A drastic increase in criminal behaviour loses people's trust and cohesion. Yet, unusual decreases in crime sets the impression that people have no individuality or freedom, as well as do not share moral guidelines to differentiate between right and wrong. Therefore, the stability of a crime rate has a direct relation to the health of a society. We must also take a look at the survival of society and how criminals become outcasts to the structural norms. One's inability to recognize their place in society, creating an uncertain status, may cause them to deviate from what is acceptable socially.

When conducting research on a serial killer, one must explore and gain insight on the psychoanalytic, feminist, and functionalist perspectives. The collaboration of these perspectives will allow for a thorough understanding in terms of a criminals urge for multiple killings.