

Examining theory paper essay sample

[Law](#), [Criminology](#)



Why is crime committed? What are the reasons behind individuals committing crime? Crime can be committed by just about anyone, at any time. The following essay will be an examination of social process and development theories on the video " Pelican Bay State Prison: War Zone." The primary subject of the video " Pelican Bay State Prison: War Zone" is the fact career criminals are being able to conduct their business that landed them in prison in the first place without a problem. That the major issue of overcrowding and interaction of rival gangs has made an environment of chaotic proportions. The video displays the vulnerability it has with man power compared to how many inmates there are. Now what it seems like a place for protection and a school a crime, overcrowded undermanned prison seem like a college for the career criminal. Social process theory, also known as interactionist perspectives, suggest that everyone has the potential to violate the law. Social process theory holds that criminal behavior is learned through interactions with others and the socialization process occurring as the result of group membership is seen as the primary route through which learning is occur.

Some of these groups can involve family, peers, work groups, and reference groups. Social process theorist suggest that individuals who have weak stakes in conformity are more likely to be influenced by the social processes and conditional experiences that lead to criminal acts. This specific theory looks at the interactions an individual makes within a group. Social process theory can be incorporated with a juvenile in a broken home, a first time offender serving year plus, or someone simply trying to fit in at school. More so in the pre-adult years, just about every interaction we have with anyone

or group can be chalked up to a new learning experience. Some of the different types of social process theory are social learning theory, social control theory, and labeling theory. Social learning theory, also known as learning theory, suggest that all behavior is learned in relatively the same way.

These learning experiences include acquisitions of norms, values, and patterns of behaviors beneficial to crime. Criminal behavior is a product of the social environment, not an innate characteristic of particular people. Social control theory suggests that inhibiting effect of social and psychological integration with others whose potential negative response, surveillance, and expectations regulate or constrain criminal impulses. Social control theory focuses on the strengthening of the bond people share with the individuals and institutions around them. Labeling theory is the idea that society's response to the criminal and the process through which a person comes to be defined as a criminal and labeled criminal are significant contributory factors. Labeling theory can be perceived as a psychological aspect as to why an individual might commit crime and/or become a career criminal. The environment in which a criminal lives in can be altered due to the fact he/she is deemed a criminal. Though the crime itself might not be serious enough to some, it still creates mistrust within a community.

This is essentially what labeling is but more importantly the effects it has on an individual. Social developmental theory views that criminality is a dynamic process influenced by social experiences as well as individual characteristic. " Students of human development recognize that the process

of development occurs through reciprocal dynamic interactions that takes place between individuals and various aspects of their environment, and the social development perspective posits that development, which begins at birth (and perhaps even earlier), occurs primarily within a social context.” Human development simultaneously occurs on many levels such as psychological, biological, familial, interpersonal, culture, societal, and ecological. Social developmental theories, more times than not, tend to be integrated that combine various points of view. This specific theory accounts for the interactions as youths.

Being exposed to our environments, families, friends, peers, teachers, and so forth. As children grow and development towards adulthood, depending where you are geographically, and be presented difficult and wrong choices that will no doubt dictate his or her future. Unfortunately, specifically if it's a child, they might not have a choice on the matter. For an example, if an individual is exposed to constant violence, drug and alcohol abuse, and gang activity then he/she we development different views and norms within their environment. Between social process and social development theories, just about any of them can be associated with the video “ Pelican Bay State Prison: War Zone.” As you see with social learning theory, individuals are being sent to serve time but instead are actually going to school for criminals. Trying time they do time they learn valuable information and techniques that will be used when they finish their sentence. Overcrowding is an issue tats felt across the country especially California.

So when all of these criminals get together under one roof, then start teaching each and trading secrets. Social control theory is actually almost working against the system. Here you have a massive building that houses thousands of hardcore criminals cut off from the outside world, and yet their still able to conduct their business without a problem from inside the prison walls. They've taken the ability to be secluded from society and used it as a means of protection. Labeling theory is a constant reminder that a criminal will be a criminal till the day they die. Upon finishing his/her sentence (whether it be probation or prison time) if their constantly reminded that they are a criminal then they will never change. If society has deemed them criminally unchangeable, what's the point of trying? Unless there's some underlying mental issue, crime begins with family.

If an individual is surrounded by criminal activity and violence while still developing, then he/she is only going to know that way of life. I saw a similar show about prison life awhile back and I can remember there was just about a whole family serving time in the same state. Growing up there wasn't much. Essentially it was the poorest part of the neighborhood and highest crime rate in town. So from the very start I was associated with what I know now as labeling theory. I was told I was probably up to know good going into that part of town. Little did they know (or fail to find out) that that's where I lived. My Mother raised four boys by herself and did a great job. She went to school full time at night while working full time during the day while we were in school. Social learning and development theories were well in hand as my Mother showed us the struggles of being a single parent but doing everything you can to put food on the table and roof above our heads. It's in

my opinion that we are groomed by are role models and family was we develop to make our own choices in life.

References:

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