

Why people commit crimes

Law



Many theories have been developed to explain why people commit crimes. Some of these theories will be discussed in this report. The sociological approach was explained by Sutherland and Cressey who believe that crime is a result of a person's association with people who believe that crime is desirable (Wilson, 1974). Another theory on what makes people commit a crime is that of Yochelson and Samenow who espoused the idea that crime is a result of an individual's free will (Bryant, 2012). According to them, criminality is the outcome of how people think and decide on certain matters and that criminals are inherently "irresponsible, impulsive, self-centred, and driven by fear and anger (Bryant, 2012, par 11).

For Sigmund Freud, crime is a result of man's failure to satisfy his basic desires for food, sex and survival (Bryant, 2012). He contends that if a person is unable to meet these desires legally, he will try to satisfy them through illegal ways. Freud explains further that much deviance is a result of "an excessive sense of guilt as a result of an overdeveloped superego" (Bryant, 2012, par 7).

The source of the problem of a criminal mind cannot simply be explained by one reason because it may be a conglomeration of various issues that confront an individual.