

Sociology and criminology

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Critical criminology vs mainstream criminology Critical criminology is used to cover a whole range of criminological perspectives and theories that tend to challenge the underlying assumptions on which the conventional or mainstream criminology is based. Critical criminology offers alternative ways of understanding the control of crime. Critical criminologists sometimes refer to the mainstream criminology as the administrative, correctional, establishment, positivistic, or managerial criminology. The focus of the mainstream criminology is considered to be excessively narrow and focused at street crime, individual offenders, as well as social engineering on state's behalf. The claims of scientific objectivity based on the mainstream criminology are rejected in the perspectives of critical criminology. The critical criminological perspectives also refuse to accept that the scientific method has any privileged status. Although critical criminologists sometimes use quantitative analysis to apply an empirical approach, yet critical criminology, for the most part, adopts an approach that is qualitative and interpretive to the social reality's understanding in the crime's realm. Most prestigious journals do not accept critical scholarship and a fundamental reason behind this is the criticism it offers for the mainstream theories and thoughts (Schwartz et al., 2000). Nevertheless, there are other issues involved as well; there exists a prejudice against the works that are not obsessively methodological, highly empirical, and are grounded in a rigid theoretical framework. Labeling theory Deviance is not an act's quality that has been committed by an individual. Instead, it is a result of application of sanctions and rules by others on an offender. Deviant behavior is what people recognize as deviant and the deviant is that who gets successfully labeled for exhibiting the deviant behavior. Labeling approach is amongst

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the most effective approaches that can be developed in the cases of deviance. Primary deviance occurs because of numerous reasons and its effect on self is marginal. Secondary deviance happens in result of the reaction of the society to the primary deviance. It changes the self-concept from normal to becoming deviant. A new identity is taken by the individual so that he/she becomes a shoplifter in his/her own mind. Sometimes, judges criminalize an action by ruling in a certain manner that creates a precedent for rulings in the future. Decriminalization is in contrast to criminalization and is that in which an illegal act is transformed into a legal act.

Classical vs neoclassical theory of crime

According to the classical theory of crime, every individual has his/her own free will, so anybody can be a criminal depending upon what choices he/she makes on his own. Classical theory emphasizes on the availability of choice to everybody. For example, a man that has deliberately robbed a bank should be punished because he chose to rob when he could have avoided it. On the other hand, the neoclassical theory suggests that although every individual has a free will, the tendency of an individual to use the free will is determined by numerous factors that may include but are not limited to social disorganization and mental illness. I think that the neoclassical theory of crime is more rational as compared to the classical theory of crime because it takes into account the role played by nurturing as well as different circumstances of each individual on his/her free will whereas the classical theory tends to act oblivious of the influence of these factors on the individual's tendency to commit crime. The neoclassical theory of crime tends to improve the stance of the law enforcing bodies toward the perpetrators that may influence the severity of punishment or level of guilt. It emphasizes upon the need to treat different perpetrators

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differently because of the differences of evidence that exist among them. For example, children cannot be expected to behave as responsibly as the adults. Crime is caused as a consequence of various conditions that tend to influence the perpetrator and convince him/her to commit it. Relation between demographics and crime Demographics have an important relation with crime. Demographic factors that depict an individual's tendency to exhibit crime include but are not limited to rate of fertility, fraction of children that have been raised by single parents, and the fraction of children born from the teenage pregnancy. These demographic factors depict the property crime as well as violent crime. Fertility rate is directly proportional to crime. The more children in a family, the greater their tendency to commit crime gets as parents' attention is divided among all children. Single parents' children are susceptible to committing crime because they are not adequately supervised. Children born to teenager mothers have a high tendency to commit crime because they have been stigmatized and might have faced oppression in the society. Works Cited: Schwartz, M. "Critical Criminology and the Mainstream: Issues in Publishing Critical Scholarship." *The Critical Criminologist*. 10. 2. (2000).