

Lecture 12 Sutherland Differential Association Theory

- Criminal behavior is learned
- Sutherland's Differential association theory was revolutionary
- They assumed that people commit crime because there is something wrong about them. While Sutherland believed that crime is a life course.
- Edwin H. Sutherland: Origin and development of criminal behavior
 - Historical/Genetic Theory:
 - The history of individuals. Individual biography
 - A person's criminal behavior at one period of time is a reflection of the past period of time that he/she has experience
 - Mechanistic/Situational Theory: Cause and effect
- Donald R. Cressey
 - Propositional Theory
 - stated in 9 propositions
 - a statement about a relationship between two or more factors
 - Deductive Theory
 - start out with some general propositions, then unpack that statement
- Sutherland's Propositions of Differential Association
 1. Criminal behavior is learned
 2. Criminal behavior is learned in interaction with other persons in a process of communication
 - a. Criminal behavior is often learned in a very subtle ways
 - b. Crime is not taught explicitly. It is learned through others' behavior, facial expression, etc. (Communication of Gestures)
 - c. Criminal attitude
 - d. It takes place in communication of gestures.
 3. The principle part of the learning of criminal behavior occurs within intimate personal groups.
 - a. Copresence: simple but powerful
 - i. when a person is physically with another person
 - ii. there is power when people are copresent with one another
 - iii. it is almost impossible for a person to learn crime from a media. It must takes place within copresence
 - b. Conformity
 - i. Society is made up with different groups.
 - c. Differential Association
 - i. Each group has its own opinion
 - ii. A person will tend to associate with some groups with others
 - iii. Intentionally social process
 4. When criminal behavior is learned, the learning includes:
 - a. techniques of committing the crime, which are sometimes very complicated, sometimes very simple
 - i. Crime is like a profession

- ii. Certain skill is required to commit crime. A person has to learn these skill specialize it.
 - b. the specific direction of motives, drives, rationalizations, and attitudes
 - i. A person not only learn the techniques, but also learn how to motivated from a crime. And a person learns the attitudes
 - ii. Linguistic Constructs (Donald Cressey):
 - iii. Rationalization
 - an excuse
 - may alleviate someone's shame
 - a person sees the ends and means of his action
 - very often to be thought of
 - Motivation leads to crime
 - Compulsion has no goal. It comes by insanity
5. The specific direction of motives and drives is learned from definitions of the legal codes as favorable or unfavorable
 - a. Differential Social Organization
 - i. Thorstein Sellin: Culture Conflict
 - Primary culture conflict
 - ii. Differentiation of Modern Societies
 - b. Individualism
 - c. Horizontal Mobility
6. A person becomes delinquent because of an excess of definitions favorable to violation of law over definitions unfavorable to violations unfavorable to violation of law
 - a. central proposition of differential association
7. Differential associations may vary in frequency, duration, priority, and intensity
 - a. may carry greater weights than others
8. The process of learning criminal behavior by association with criminal and anti-criminal patterns involves all of the mechanisms that are involved in any other learning
 - a. Criminal patterns ----- Learning -----> Crime
 - b. Anti-Criminal patterns ----- Learning -----> Conformity
9. While criminal behavior is an expression of general needs and values, it is not explained by those general needs and values since non-criminal behavior is an expression of the same needs and values
 - a. Needs and values leads to crime and conformity