

Ch. 2 Explaining Deviant Behavior: Positivist Theories

Essentialism=positivism= "scientific" perspective

Empiricism → material world: ascertainable via senses (directly and indirectly)

Objectivism (vs subjectivism)

Determinism (vs free will)

Deviance changes from time to time

Theory- different than any other ideas that other ppl have. Scientific so you should be able to go out and test in the real world if your theory is true.

Key dif between essentialists and constructionalists is a dif take of their defs of deviance

Essentialists- reach the conclusion that deviance is a concrete phenomenon. You can distinguish deviants and criminals from other ppl. Focus on high consensus deviance. Theories deal with crime. Criminals are dif from the non criminals. Why are they deviant?

Constructionists- focus on low consensus deviance. Relativity. No such thing as right or wrong. Laws change all of the time. Crime and deviance arnt about what ppl do/think. Only thing that makes something deviant deals with the audience. How do certain acts come to be condemned as deviant?

Real world is available to our senses (directly)

Sometimes we must infer struff (indirect)

Infer the existence of things through data

Ex: evolution

Objective- there is something there. You can sense it. exists independent of your opinion or bias.

Subjectivism- your opinion and feelings about things. Could possibly vary from person to person

Delusion- they have broken from reality, not a truth. We don't dispel peoples delusions. If we say someone is delusional, we are saying their thoughts are wrong

Determinism- opposite of voluntarism. Peoples actions are outside of their immediate control. Scientists must presume this because you cant actually measure determinism...they just look at direct senses.

Nature vs nurture of human behavior

Biology/genetics- "natural" forces

Social enviornments- "nurturing"

Routine activities theory- ppl are naturally selfish, if you let ppl free will run away they will be socially isolated due to their selfishness. Free will says they will act in a deviant way. They must have a particular target. Regardless of whether or not there is a prime target there is able for them to attack, what determines the outcome of their outcome is determined by the opportunity of doing it. capable guardians ward off the deviance or crime. If no guardians, ppl are more likely to engage in deviant or anti-social behavior. Limiting factor is whether or not they can get away with their actions. Acknowledge free will but ppl's ability to get away with it will determine if they will do it.

Social disorganization perspective- (Chicago school of thought) founded by park and burgess. Shaw and McKay study now. There are certain neighborhoods in a city in which there is more violent than property crime. This is because these neighborhoods are more impoverished. Unstable in terms of their social composition. People move in and out of there. Not stable community so harder for community member sense to insulate themselves against crime.

Ch.3???????????? (maybe end of ch 2)

No theory can account for all types of deviance

Social Disorganization

Big after WW2 but has declined. Now its coming back

Focuses on neighborhoods (smaller parts of the community)

Cant have stability in low rent areas because ppl are moving in and out of the time (transients)

Unstable neighborhoods don't usually have things such as strong families, church, etc

White flight-leaving central city areas and moving to suburbs. This leaves lots of problems behind in the inner-city neighborhoods with low income

Merton's "strain" (or anomie) theory

Not a popular theory now, it has been abandoned

Most cited theory in deviant sociology and criminology

Citations don mean that ppl who cited it agreed, most don't

Merton used to work for Tulane

Originally designed to explain crime in a sociological sense, he said it can be expanded to fit all deviance

Anomie-you are losing the bond that tied you into a culture or sub culture

Starting to be pushed away from a community, less likely to be bound to them, less likely to abide by the norms/attached to rules

What are ppl bound by sociology?

Shared system of language

Shared system of social values

Values-objectives that you strive for that are considered to be "good"

Ex: strong family life,

Shared system of social norms

Norms-standards of behavior that are approved/not approved of

Deals with means to which you achieve what you want

Ex: How do you go about maintaining positive health?

Ex: how do you come up with material success?

You want a conformist (wants things everyone else wants)

Innovators- want to move up the social ladder, gain more success. Which is desired by the society. However, they lie, cheat, and steal their way to the top.

These people arnt given the resources they need (education etc) so they turn to illegal things

Ritualists- turned back on American dream and sub a new dream. No longer want to be super wealthy. They just wish: can I get through the month? They still do good stuff like go to school but just live to live

Retreatists- drop outs. They don't care about success. They don't see the need to follow rules

Rebels- fight back. Political agitators. Argue for political change. Want to argue that measure of people isn't what they possess. I don't want to drop out though cus I need it, i just want to reform it.

Problems- most criminals in US arnt poor (white collar crime) ex: BP

Certain types of deviance not mentioned: why ppl wear weird clothes, homosexuals etc

A lot of ppl have been denied opportunities to succeed, a lot of the times the poor ppl of society arnt getting arrested?????

Street crime is only a small portion of all crime.