

3/31 Sykes and Matza: The Neutralization of Guilt

Sutherland gave concrete examples of the content of what is learned
they refer to only abstract things
definitions, unfavorable to the law.etc.

S&M : neutralization

can be characterized in different ways

a kind of learning theory

connect directly with Sutherland's differential association

Sutherland and Cressey:

When criminal behavior is learned, the learning includes

(b) the specific direction of motives, drives, rationalizations, and attitudes.

S&M fits into this proposition of association

techniques of neutralization describe the rationalization, attitudes and values involved in delinquency and crime

Delinquent: they don't have long term goals; want to score big money without big effort.

Juvenile Delinquent: Conspicuous Consumption: Juveniles don't save money; they blow it, for expensive clothes.

They reject the protestant ethics.

Professionalism, softness, and peace: neighborliness, friendly, valued in mainstream, won't let emotion into the interaction with clients.

Delinquent: some alternative sub-culture. They look beneath the surface what mainstream middle-class values.

Subterranean values

Middle class: entertainment: they go to Vegas, what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas: subterranean, beneath the surface.

Middle class like thrills and kicks, and have dreams to score big.

If they want to retire early, work harder.

People buy things for display

We value the right to defend ourselves and we value gun ownership.

Juvenile delinquency: tap into sub values.

Juvenile Delinquency: only appears as their own because they have the freedom and leisure to indulge those values. A leisure class, Juvenile Delinquency.

A leisure class is a group of people who consume but not produce.

Personal: like beauty, useless stuff.

Teenagers don't have to work, they screw around. They are less concerned about work, more concerned about

beauty.

Because they are not in the work, they can indulge the sub. Otherwise, they will be in the same value system as the main stream middle class.

Values about the law, work.

Juvenile Delinquency: they feel guilty

People respect teachers, businessmen, mainstream stuff. Juvenile Delinquency broke these laws, and feels guilty, have to deal with it.

1. defend a technique
2. how derive from the mainstream value, culture

Techniques of Neutralizations

1. Denial of responsibility (like mental illness, unfair treatment, he is not responsible for the killing, those who hired him is. He is just the gun)

A person feels compelled by outside forces beyond his control.

A individual is being made to act by outside social forces. Behavior is determined.

It wasn't his choice, social forces compelled him to do it.

Positivist criminology: provide the basis for this explanation.

We don't hold them responsible for what they do.

2. Denial of injury: criminal act not redefined.

The criminal act is called something other than crime. "Borrowing a car"

rape being called sex.

bribery: just business, how business is done.

Mala in se: bad and always bad

mala prohibita is bad because the law defines it as bad, hence illegal. Differently at different times and places. The law always changes its minds.

Sodomy laws: cover a lot of behaviors besides sodomy.

Pot: legal in Colorado

Criminal can do what law did: call his act something not criminal

3. Deny the victim

Target v. human-being

computer viruses

taking away their humanity: black person: not a victim, not a person.

Victim not person, but the target.

I'm the real victim

Restaurant steal food.

2 ways: 1) say not knowing the victim, the victim does not exist (specially when victims are far way: e.g. white-collar crime. factory which are producing pollution--ignore people that are affected)

the hitman will not refer to the victim by name---the hitman does not want to see his victim as a person, rather they simply call the victim a target

2) by calling oneself the victim

one defines oneself as the victim of the other people who is to be harmed

e.g. I have to take the money---these bastards underpaid me so many years

a woman stole a ham in the catering company ---she feel victimized by the company because her meager wages

some people in society---seen as legitimate targets----suspicious, deviant

e.g. homosexuals ----not much concern about their civil liberty

ex-cons---people who deserve no protection

this made denial of victim possible

4. Condemnation of the condemner

White color crime

these forces can be corrupt, by attacking the person who make the rules.

Politician, suspect democracy

if people making accusations are even more guilty as same kinds of wrong doing---they have no more authority

undermine their moral authority

they are hyprocrite----how can someone condemned by a hyprocrite?

e.g police ---condemners

we have a lot of citizens as successful, powerful people----sometimes they are simply due to chance or luck----not

because they are great people----they are corrupt----they don't have moral authority

5. Appeal to high loyalties

Some loyalty (God's will) is higher than the law, the guilt is neutralized.

Father embezzles money to support daughter.

Is used before the act is committed. Remove the innovations.

Techniques: use before the criminal act