Journal Article Questions

# Chapter 10: Social Process and Control Theories of Crime

Article 1: Church, W. II, Wharton, T., & Taylor, J. (2009). An examination of differential association and social control theory: Family systems and delinquency. Youth Violence, 7(1), 3–15. Retrieved from

http://journals.sagepub.com/stoken/default+domain/xKxD3Jjrx95dYbkVYVf4/full

This study applies differential association and social control theories to juvenile delinquency. Using a path analysis model, relationships between family, self-image, and behavior are explored. Analyses suggest that positive self-image leads to decreased delinquency, and association with delinquent peers is the greatest predictor of delinquent behavior, regardless of race.

Questions that apply to this article:

1. What three factors are investigated by the authors concerning delinquency?

2. What can a positive self-image do?

3. What is the greatest predictor of delinquent behavior?

Article 2: Spraitz, J., & Bowen, K. (2016). Techniques of neutralization and persistent sexual abuse by clergy: A content analysis of priest personnel files from the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Journal of Interpersonal Violence, (31)15, 2515–2538. Retrieved from

http://journals.sagepub.com/stoken/default+domain/xp4dm265f6VJEgHUbmVr/full

The sexual abuse problem in the Catholic Church has received considerable attention by the media in recent years and growing attention from empirical researchers. Despite this growth, there is a lack of theoretical research that uses neutralization techniques to examine clergy offending. Using Sykes and Matza’s theory, this study examines the techniques of neutralization used by accused priests in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee. Priests’ personnel files, which were made publicly available by the Archbishop of Milwaukee in July 2013, were analyzed retrospectively through a qualitative content analysis of all direct statements and correspondences from the accused. The findings indicate that many priests denied responsibility or injury in an effort to justify their sexually abusive behaviors, but that no discernible patterns of technique use emerged. The need for continued research using recently released personnel files from other dioceses is also discussed.

Questions that apply to this article:

1. What is the purpose of this study?

2. What was the most-used technique of neutralization used by the sample?

3. What recommendations do the authors have for extending this research?

Article 3: Zhang, Y., Day, G., & Cao, L. (2012). A partial test of Agnew’s general theory of crime and delinquency. Crime & Delinquency, 58(6), 856–878. Retrieved from

http://journals.sagepub.com/stoken/default+domain/H26vmgvZWXjbvk3JN3sK/full

In 2005, Agnew introduced a new integrated theory, which he labels a general theory of crime and delinquency. He proposes that delinquency is more likely to occur when constraints against delinquency are low and motivations for delinquency are high. In addition, he argues that constraints and motivations are influenced by variables in five life domains. Capitalizing on longitudinal data of Paternoster’s *Youths and Deterrence: Columbia, South Carolina, 1979–1981*, a structural equation model is developed to test Agnew’s theory. Data limitations preclude a full test of the theory, but the results support the core proposition of the theory: Life domains increase delinquency by reducing constraints against delinquency and by increasing motivations for delinquency. Other propositions of Agnew’s theory garner mixed results.

Questions that apply to this article:

1. Which proposition of Agnew’s general strain theory does this study attempt to test?

2. Are the authors able to establish causal order of delinquency?

3. What is a limitation of the study?