KRIM4954

Cultural and Narrative Criminology

Exam paper

Answer all the first four questions, 1-4.

The sub-questions (e.g. 1.1, 1.2) should not be answered separately, but integrated into your argument.

1)NARRATIVE CRIMINOLOGY.

Using the readings from the course:

1.1. Explain the main aim of narrative criminology by giving a definition and explaining its core concepts.

1.2. Discuss the significance of storytelling and its connection to harm, violence, or crime.

1.3. Provide an example of how narrative criminology could study a social phenomenon (violence, crime, etc.). Be creative with the example.

2)MICROSOCIOLOGY OF VIOLENCE

Explain the following sentences:

"*The cause of all this incompetent violence is ct/f [confrontational tension/fear]. Violence is difficult, not easy; we have been led astray in thinking otherwise, both by media violence (which typically portrays fighters as good or bad, but nevertheless as brave and competent) and by our criminological theories (which assume that background conditions in an individual's biography are sufficient to account for violence). On the basis of micro-situational evidence, I say not so; the very situation of confrontation, when violence is threatened, generates ct/f, and this creates a barrier to the effective use of violence against ones opponent"* (Collins, 2009, p. 568). In your answer:

2.1. What does the concept of confrontational tension/fear mean? Why is it useful for the purposes of understanding face-to-face interactions?

2.2. In your answer, provide an example of the use of this term.

2.3. Would the use of this concept be aligned with a background or foreground approach, as referred to by Jack Katz? Justify your answer.

3)CASE STUDY: SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Explain this paragraph:

"(Stories) are not simply techniques for constructing an ethical self within the shaming context of the prison; they are also outputs of that context, and as such they are phenomena which take us closer to or further from justice. Stauffer (2015) has argued that the stories which we tell about harm affect our capacity to heal from it, both as individuals and as societies, and she shows that most criminal trials (and, more controversially, many restorative justice processes) only allow limited and stunted versions of the true story to emerge. The stories told by the men interviewed for this project had been similarly shaped by the institutions which were punishing them. The conditions of their imprisonment made it hard for prisoners to engage fully with what they had done, let alone to produce an account which fully made room for the people they had hurt" (Ievins, 2019, p. 289). In your explanation:

3.1. What relationship does the author establish between narratives and institutional contexts?

3.2. Why are stories important in regards to desistance, treatment or subjective change processes?

4)CULTURAL CRIMINOLOGY

Explain the following sentences: *"Meaning might seem an oddly abstract focus for a critical criminological approach like cultural criminology, and so perhaps a useful starting point is the practical meaning of meaning. As I employ the concept here, 'meaning' refers to the contested social and cultural processes by which situations are defined, individuals and groups are categorized, and human consequences are understood"* (Ferrell, 2013, p. 258). Include in your answer:

4.1. The main interest of cultural criminology.

4.2. The main difference between cultural and narrative criminology.

4.3. Provide an example of a topic or issue of interest to cultural criminology.