Crimonology Essay, Research Paper

If you look up the word criminology in the dictionary it would be defined as a scientific study of crime as a social phenomenon. Social phenomenon? Say what?

Criminology is a social science rather than a branch of law. Although there are several different theories surrounding criminology, they all share a common goal: the search for the causes of criminal behavior in the hopes that this information can be transformed into policies that will be effective in handling or even eliminating crime.

Although it is a specialty, it’s not a single discipline. It combines the efforts of statisticians, psychiatrists, sociologists, lawyers, police officials, and probation officers.

Criminology centers its attention on the criminal as a person, his behavior, and what has led him or her to a life of crime. Criminology seeks to understand the criminals’ genetic makeup, to learn whether there is an inherited tendency to crime. It also takes into consideration such issues as the individuals socioeconomic background, family background, educational opportunities, and childhood associations.

Early criminologists, of the late 18th century, believed that everyone had the ability to make rational choices. Therefore, their theory was that if a rational

person knew that a particularly painful punishment was in-store for them, they would not commit the crime. This led to the creation of such punishments as beatings, torture, banishment, death, fines, and public humiliation.

In the 19th century, it was said that criminal behavior was biologically determined. Also, it was not until the 19th century that imprisonment became the most common penalty for crimes.

One major interest of criminologists is correction: what should be done with the criminal once he or she has been caught, tried, and convicted. In the 20th century, the purpose of imprisonment shifted from confinement to turning prisoners away from a life of crime when released.

Criminology is often criticized for the fact that there are so many competing theories of crime causation rather that one unified theory. Though these theories are different, they all help with the fight against crime.