

Chapter 5

P. E. N. T. A. C. R. I. M. E.:

Project on Electronic ‘NTensive Advanced Teaching For Criminological Research & Intelligence in Media Era

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter introduces the birth of the project named P.E.N.T.A.C.R.I.M.E. based on a dynamic teaching approach. The contemporary Criminology has to face today’s complexity, then the Criminologist has to apply a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary way of thinking to deeply understand the brand-new Criminal and Deviant phenomena. During the latest years Communication has gained a main role in human life especially about the group relationships. The author shows the philosophy, methodology and technology profile of this seminar project that can be represent a new and useful way to grasp the meaning of Media processes and Media technology in the so-called new Terrorism, the Global Terrorism. Thanks to the interconnection between technology mediated teaching and learning it is possible to create an open-source Knowledge model to be used as valuable tool both in research and practice field.

CRIMINOLOGY: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH TO FACE COMPLEXITY

Background

The project has arisen from the author’s experience as sociologist, criminologist, geopolitical analyst, I.T.C. expert and Police officer.

Since 2004, he teams up with Professor Gemma Marotta, Associate Professor of Criminology at “Sapienza” University of Rome – Faculty of Communication Sciences.

In these years the author has been Criminology Course Tutor, Social-Change Analysis Course Tutor, and he has taught some lessons in: Criminology and Sociology; Terrorism and Counter-terrorism; Media and Crime; Social-Change and Deviance; Geopolitics, Immigration and Law.

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Talking to students during these years, he has realized that they asked and needed more dynamic teaching to let them experience the “taste” of their wished tomorrow occupation.

Mainly today, the Italian University system is based on a very traditional way of teaching which doesn’t agree with a rational use of technology to increase at the same time the capacity of teaching and learning.

Oppositely, as the author points out, the complexity of today’s social, cultural and political context emphasizes the importance of technology use to promote a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary characterization of contemporary Criminology, which is able to face the challenges given by the soaring phenomena of Deviance and Crime, especially related to the organized crime as one of the main actor of next future.

So, the author believes that is necessary to reach a systemic theoretical and practical approach. In this way the objective of study can be conceptualized by many points of view as the many fields of interest that focus on it.

It has to be considered that, for this reason, every deviance and/or crime phenomenon happens in a strong-tight functional interdependence between man – as “social actor” – and the social structure or sub-structure, in which he has integrated and he can live together with the other men, sharing his and their interests, or in opposition to shared social norms or - in the extreme – against the Law.

To be more precise, it seems necessary to explicate what is the kind of scientific approach that the author promote during his didactic collaboration, at the above mentioned Faculty of Communication Sciences.

In fact, the author wants to underline, that the object of study: criminal as individual, criminal fact or event, criminal phenomenon - from a micro-level to a macro-level of analysis - has to be studied according to a systemic model and referring to the interaction of the main principles and methodologies of the following disciplines:

- Social-Change Analysis – it studies the changes of social structures together with the relational dynamics of men.
- Sociology of Deviance – it studies the causes and origins of deviant behavior, along with its radicalization into the society. It see into the relationship between man and institutions in charge of social control and safety & security.
- Criminology – studies the origins, ways and causes of events that offend and damage personal and public safety and interests.
- Communication Sciences – study the Communication, not only as transfer of encoded information, but in particular as social relation that can be possible thanks to the sharing of particular meanings.

Therefore, it’s clear that the technology – in particular information technology - can help the Criminologist to manage all these specific tools given by the above mentioned theoretical approaches.

According to these analytical perspective, the centrality of Communication Sciences is pointed out especially in the main role taken by this dynamic of interaction during the process named “social unit” construction. In fact, “atomized” men join together thanks to the sharing of a language and/or a set of signs recognized by themselves.

It is the result of the affiliation – “normal”/deviant / criminal - concept as identity self-recognition through the assimilation of behaviors and/or lifestyles, all integrated into a system of rule-set.

The author has experienced that studying, analyzing and countering the terrorist phenomena, it is necessary, both in research and practice; such as the knowledge of communication dynamics through the deviant and/or criminal behavior is set. That is why the Criminologist has to observe:

- Verbal systems of communication - referring to the relationship signs/symbols;

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