Science Fair Logbook

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Question: How do environmental factors affect future criminal behavior?

Method:

1. Find examples of environmental factors (family background, genetic factors, etc.).
2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects.
3. Research popular/common crimes.
4. Create hypothesis based on research.
5. Research the psychological reasoning behind these popular crimes.
6. Research one famous serial killer/murderer, one drug dealer, and one thief to find correlations between environmental factors and crime.
7. Synthesize information and find a conclusion.

Work on project every Friday; one step per day.

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| Date | Activity | Research/Sources |
| 12-10-2023 | Question approved by Ms. Bretner  Chosen project: Study  Individual |  |
| 20-10-2023 | 1. Find examples of environmental factors (family background, genetic factors, etc.). | Environmental influences can be grouped, generally, into 3 main groups: **physical/biological**, **psychological/emotional**, and **social**.   * **Physical/biological**: Concerning current *physical circumstances* or *relating to genetics*.   + State of health (physical illness), genetic vulnerabilities, physical disabilities, age, gender, influence of substances/medications * **Psychological/emotional**: Concerning *emotions*, *thought processes*, and known common *behaviors*.   + Personality, temperament, beliefs, self-esteem, attitude, trauma, events/experiences * **Social**: Concerning *interpersonal relationships* and *social standing*.   + Relationships (family, friends, peers), immediate environment (stressors, context, situations, environment), culture, socio-economic standing   - <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/mentalhealth/psychosocial/principles/Pages/behaviour-factors.aspx#:~:text=physical%20factors%20%2D%20age%2C%20health%2C,the%20person%20needs%20and%20wants>  - <https://www.physio-pedia.com/Biopsychosocial_Model#:~:text=It%20refers%20to%20the%20social,Social%20environment> |
| 26-10-2023 | Completed Ethics and Due Care Form 2A; submitted to CYSF for review |  |
| 03-11-2023 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | Physical/biological (2/6)   * *Genetic vulnerabilities* * Genes are like a set of instructions that tell your body to make different proteins that dictate what it’s going to look like (ex: whether you have brown or blonde hair); also affects components of the brain (ex: neurotransmitters) * Genetic mutations cause proteins to be made incorrectly; it essentially messes up the “instructions” so that it results in a different, incorrect product. This is what causes genetic diseases, and genetic mutations can be passed down so that a genetic disease can be hereditary. Mutations in genes are genetic vulnerabilities/genetic vulnerability factors. * Genetic vulnerabilities can make an individual more susceptible to things like **psychosis** (disorders that affect the mind and detach someone from reality), habits of **aggressive behavior**, **addiction** (affects reward pathway differently, different responses to things like drugs and gambling), **sensitivity** which may affect preferences and behaviors (in taste, sight, touch, smell), certain **social behaviors**, **impulsivity**, et cetera. * *Age* * Older, aging people are more susceptible to depression due to the decline of mental and physical health over the years. * Very young children are naturally disobedient, selfish, impatient, stubborn, and energetic; perceive themselves as the center of the universe and lack emotional/social maturity. * Teenagers are more likely to experiment, experience mood swings, random bursts of aggression, lying, explore their identities, distance themselves from their parents (lack of communication), and act before they think. An underdeveloped frontal lobe, which dictates impulse control, leads to reactive decision making, and teenagers go through many physical and hormonal changes that generally confuse, scare, or anger. * Adults usually exhibit more rational decision making/better discernment (since their brains are more developed), proactivity, independence, responsibility, self-control, and general maturity.   - <https://www.earlypsychosis.ca/downloads/genetic_vulnerability_factors.pdf>  - <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/gene-mutations.html#:~:text=If%20a%20parent%20carries%20a,person's%20body%20throughout%20their%20life>.  - <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/understanding-psychosis#:~:text=Psychosis%20refers%20to%20a%20collection,real%20and%20what%20is%20not>.  - <https://learn.genetics.utah.edu/content/addiction/genes#:~:text=The%20A1%20form%20(allele)%20of,than%20normal%E2%80%94especially%20under%20stress>.  - <https://cura4u.com/blog/physical-and-psychological-effects-of-aging>  - <https://www.medicinenet.com/what_are_typical_behaviors_of_a_child/article.htm>  - <https://www.momjunction.com/articles/important-teenage-behavioural-problems-solutions_0010084/>  - <https://equipp.co.uk/the-science-behind-teenage-behaviour/#:~:text=The%20area%20of%20the%20brain,reactive%20in%20their%20decision%2Dmaking>.  - <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/the-human-experience/201306/six-aspects-being-adult#:~:text=Active%20versus%20Passive%3A%20Adults%20are,depending%20on%20others%20for%20direction>. |
| 09-11-2023 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | Physical/biological (1/6)   * Gender * Gender roles and societal expectations play a part in an individual’s beliefs and behavior. * Children are exposed to gender expectations from family (primarily), peers, school, and mass media from a very young age, becoming firmly entrenched in the societal expectations by around the ages of 4-5. Secondary agents include the workplace and religion (which become more relevant later in life). Repeated exposure leads people to believe that **social constructs = natural behavior**, *even if this isn’t the case* * Children receive more positive feedback (particularly from parents and peers) when engaging with activities that adhere to their gender, encouraging them to continue to choose activities that garner that positive reaction.   - <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/wm-introductiontosociology/chapter/gender-and-socialization/> |
| 12-11-2023 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | Physical/biological (2/6)   * *Gender (CONT’D)* * Women are expected to adopt a nurturing, submissive, polite demeanor, while men are expected to be more strong and aggressive. * Gender roles discourage women from practicing independence and strength, and discourages men from crying or showing emotion * Four main types of gender stereotypes: Personality Traits (nurturing vs dominant) Domestic Behavior (cooking vs doing home repairs), Occupations (teacher vs police officer) and Physical Appearance (includes dress and beauty standards; dresses vs pants or slender vs toned) * Differing hormones between females and males (particularly estrogen and testosterone) also affect behavior. Estrogen tends to harbour a maternal instinct while testosterone typically encourages aggression and reciprocal fairness ("I scratch your back, you scratch mine"). * *Influence of substances/medications* * Drugs essentially mimic neurotransmitters and neural signals in the brain, particularly dopamine, overproducing the chemicals and creating a “high.” * The brain gets hooked on this high, and the more drugs are used, the less the brain is able to feel gratified from any other pleasurable act (like eating or sex). Withdrawal also encourages someone to use drugs more, as they begin to feel uncomfortable and anxious without the substance or drug. Continual use of a drug encourages addiction for these reasons. * Long term misuse of a drug changes the brain to the point that it affects impulse control, decision making, attention span, and memory. Drugs can also cause **confusion, paranoia, changes in perception** and **mood swings**. * Use of drugs or substances can also have long lasting health effects, like various physical disorders or seizures.   - <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/learn/gender-identity/sex-gender-identity/what-are-gender-roles-and-stereotypes>  - <https://americanaddictioncenters.org/health-complications-addiction/central-nervous-system>  - <https://nida.nih.gov/publications/drugs-brains-behavior-science-addiction/drugs-brain>  - <https://www.gatewayfoundation.org/about-gateway-foundation/faqs/effects-of-drug-abuse/> |
| 18-11-2023 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | Physical/biological (2/6)   * *Physical disabilities* * A physical disability is any long-term condition that limits physical mobility and function; some examples are vision, hearing, speech impairment, any atrophy of muscles or bones, and neurodevelopmental/degenerative disorders like Parkinson’s or Cerebral Palsy * Social constraints or stereotypes can make it difficult for those with physical disabilities to find their place in society. This can lead to isolation and loneliness, ultimately affecting their mental health. * Common mental issues that may come with a physical disability include **PTSD** (can depend on how the individual reached this state), **stress**, **anxiety**, **depression**, and **anger issues.** * Most of these are a side effect of social rejection rather than the disability itself. However, the **pain** and **sudden change** caused by the disability can affect mental issues as well. * Parents raising disabled children may become more stressed and anxious over the special care the child requires which can reflect onto the disabled child’s mental health and behavior based on how they interact with the child (discipline methods, controlling behavior, etc.). Physically disabled children, then, often have worse mental health and/or are more likely to lash out at others. * *State of health (physical illness)* * **Illness behavior**: how an individual perceives, understands, and adapts behaviorally to a perceived illness, pain/discomfort, or impairment * Stages of Illness Behavior: (1) Symptom Experience/Assessment; (2) Assumption of the Sick Role; (3) Medical Care Contact/Self Care; (4) Dependent Patient Role; (5) Recovery and Rehabilitation * *Stage 1, Symptom Experience:* **Where the individual realizes symptoms of pain or discomfort and adopts an emotional response.** The seriousness of the symptoms are evaluated based on familiarity, extent of disruption, frequency, available information, priority, context, and available treatments. * *Stage 2, Assumption of the Sick Role:* **Where the individual and society identify the individual as sick.** The sick individual is usually excused from certain responsibilities or obligations because they are sick and are therefore entitled to deviate from their usual roles, though they are expected to want to get better and to do everything in their power to accomplish this. * *Stage 3, Medical Care Contact/Self Care:* **Where the individual seeks out medical care and/or pays special care to themselves.** An individual’s decision to seek care is influenced by their background (ex: men were less likely to seek medical care than women), personal perception of the seriousness of the illness, and situational factors. * *Stage 4, Dependent Patient Role:* **Where the individual is expected to try their best to get better, relying heavily on health care professionals.** The individual’s schedule is often disrupted because of this newfound dependence. * *Stage 5, Recovery and Rehabilitation:* **Where the individual returns to their normal lifestyle and roles.** This is much easier with acute/short-term illness, but chronic/long-term illness may require additional help to resume a typical role in society. In fact, this “typical role” may never be resumed and the individual my remain in the Sick Role indefinitely.   - <https://leafcare.co.uk/blog/the-impact-of-physical-disabilities-on-mental-health-and-well-being/#:~:text=For%20example%2C%20people%20with%20spinal,the%20adaptation%20to%20the%20environment>.  - <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0193397317301740#:~:text=Past%20research%20has%20shown%20that,are%20more%20likely%20to%20be>  - <https://davidscottsociology.tripod.com/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/illnessbehaviorandthesickrole.pdf>  - <https://www.jove.com/science-education/13101/classification-of-illness#:~:text=The%20stages%20of%20illness%20behavior%20include%3A&text=Symptoms%20experience&text=Assumption%20of%20the%20sick%20role&text=Medical%20care%20contact> |
| 25-11-2023 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | **Psychological/Emotional (2/8)**   * *Personality* * Personality describes the enduring, long-term, and unique traits and behavior a person develops to adapt to life. It includes **interests, values, passions, abilities**, and **emotional patterns.** * Personality traits are on a spectrum and people often lean more towards one side or the other (ex: introverts and extroverts). The more extremely the person leans toward one end, the easier it is to predict their behavior. * Specific situations play a role in behavior, however, so you cannot make a completely concrete hypothesis based on an individual’s personality without evaluating them in different situations to get a better idea of their behavior. * You can still infer some behavior based on personality traits alone. For example, extroverts are more likely to become involved with leadership careers since they assert themselves more in groups of people. They also prefer jobs with social interaction like sales, politics, or teaching (as this is where they draw energy from) while introverts prefer jobs with less social stimulation like programming, writing, or accounting. Again, where a person is on the spectrum would affect the likelihood of choosing a social job vs an individual one. * *Temperament* * While you **develop personality** over time, you are **born with a temperament**, and it is therefore **unchangeable** (unlike personality which is malleable). * 20%-60% of temperament is passed down genetically. * 4 primary types of temperament: **Sanguine**, **Choleric**, **Phlegmatic**, and **Melancholic** * *Sanguine*: Sociable, energetic, and optimistic. Prone to indecision and impulsivity. Often extroverted, thrill seeking, and in extreme cases, susceptible to drug addiction. * *Choleric*: Competitive, assertive, and goal oriented. Prone to stubbornness and impatience. Often influential, prideful, and involved in leadership roles. Willing to ignore other aspects of life (such as relationships and social connection) to reach their goals, and often believe that being right is the most important thing. * *Phlegmatic*: Patient, dependable, and laid back. Prone to indifference and missing out on opportunities due to a lack of assertiveness. Often non-confrontational and peace-making. Typically perceived as passive, boring, or apathetic. * *Melancholic*: Sensitive, analytical, and reserved. Prone to anxiety surrounding the unknown and experience difficulty working in groups. Often methodical, thorough, and prefer to work independently.   - <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/wm-organizationalbehavior/chapter/personality-and-behavior/>  - <https://www.apa.org/topics/personality>  - <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-extroversion-2795994#:~:text=Extroversion%20is%20characterized%20by%20sociability%2C%20talkativeness%2C%20assertiveness%2C%20and%20excitability.&text=People%20low%20in%20extroversion%20are,need%20as%20much%20social%20stimulation>.  - <https://hrdqstore.com/blogs/hrdq-blog/difference-behavior-personality-temperament>  - <https://www.betterhelp.com/advice/temperament/what-is-the-choleric-temperament/> |
| 02-12-2023 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | **Psychological/Emotional (1/8)**   * *Beliefs (Religion)* * Religious beliefs form an individual’s morality and personal sense of truth, in turn dictating the decisions they make in their daily lives. Essentially, it determines how one thinks and acts. * Widely accepted beliefs can become integrated into a whole culture, shaping the societal expectations. * Religion is originally bred to sustain the human race, whether this be through survival, reproduction, or optimizing human behavior in a way that is beneficial to the whole society (by being morally righteous). * Religion utilizes positive and negative reinforcement to motivate people to make moral and ethical decisions.   + Examples of this include heaven (+), hell (-), and karma (+ & -)   - <https://www.monkprayogshala.in/blog/2016/5/15/how-religion-influences-behaviour-1> |
| 30-12-2023 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | **Psychological/Emotional (2/8)**   * *Self-esteem* * Self-esteem describes one’s perception of their **personal worth**. * Individuals with low self-esteem tend to think badly of themselves, judge themselves harshly, blame themselves, ignore their positive qualities/achievements, make jokes at their own expense, deflect compliments, take unkindly to criticism, and avoid challenges out of fear of failure. * People with low self-esteem often avoid social gatherings and activities (to avoid outside judgement), have problems with their appearance (overcompensation vs. little effort), become involved in unhealthy relationships (may feel they need to “earn” love OR may become angry and bully others out of an inferiority complex), exhibit reactivity, fail to practice self-care, and, in extreme cases, may practice self-harm. * Individuals with high self-esteem tend to celebrate personal strengths, have a better handle with adversity, can give/accept compliments, push past setbacks without letting them define their self-worth (resilience), treat themselves with love and respect, accept/appreciate criticism, have confidence in their abilities, and feel comfortable sharing opinions and setting boundaries. * People with high self-esteem often have functional/healthy relationships, cope better with stress and pressure, exhibit proactivity, experience greater academic success, think critically, are kinder or more generous (prosocial behaviors), are more assertive, and are better at communication. * People with high self-esteem understand that they are worthy, while people with low self-esteem believe that they are unworthy. * The range of self-esteem is a spectrum and often fluctuates for one person. * *Attitude* * An attitude describes **a set of emotions, beliefs, and behaviors** exhibited towards a specific object, person, thing, idea, or event. It is a learned evaluation of something. * If you have a positive attitude about something, you will act positively towards it. If you have a negative attitude, you will act negatively towards it. * ABCs of Attitude: Affective (emotions about the issue), Behavioral (behavior), and Cognitive (beliefs/opinions about the issue) components * Although someone may have an attitude about something, this does not necessarily guarantee that they will act on it. The stronger the attitude, the more likely it is to influence behavior. * Attitudes are created through experiences, social norms (determines the acceptance of certain behaviors), conditioning (developing positive or negative associations based on purposeful exposure), and observation (seeing other people do certain things in a certain way and evaluating the outcome of their actions). * Attitudes affect your perception of the world. A person with a positive attitude is more likely to have an optimistic view and will see the good in others and situations. They will act accordingly. A person with a negative attitude is more likely to have a pessimistic view and will have negative interactions with others. They, too, will act accordingly.   - <https://www.verywellmind.com/why-it-s-important-to-have-high-self-esteem-5094127>  - <https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/self-esteem>  - <https://www.healthdirect.gov.au/self-esteem#:~:text=If%20you%20have%20low%20self,or%20measured%20against%20other%20people>.  - <https://positivepsychology.com/self-esteem/>  - <https://www.verywellmind.com/what-is-self-esteem-2795868>  - <https://www.verywellmind.com/attitudes-how-they-form-change-shape-behavior-2795897#:~:text=What%20are%20the%20four%20types,while%20implicit%20attitudes%20are%20unconscious>.  - <https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/relation-of-attitude-to-thought-and-behavior/> |
| 31-12-2023 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | **Psychological/Emotional (1/8)**   * *Trauma* * Psychological trauma is the lasting emotional response one experiences after living through life-altering and emotionally and/or physically distressing event(s). * Three types of trauma: Acute, chronic, and complex. * Acute: A single distressing event. * Acute trauma examples: Natural disaster, rape, assault, sudden loss. * Chronic: A repeated or prolonged distressing event. * Chronic trauma examples: Bullying, domestic violence, sexual abuse, long-term illness, war. * Complex: Several varied distressing events; often interpersonal or invasive in nature. * Complex trauma examples: Family disputes, neglect, childhood abuse, domestic violence.   - <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/trauma>  - <https://www.camh.ca/en/health-info/mental-illness-and-addiction-index/trauma#:~:text=Trauma%20is%20the%20lasting%20emotional,regulate%20emotions%20and%20navigate%20relationships>.  - <https://www.medicinenet.com/what_are_the_3_types_of_trauma/article.htm> |
| 04-01-2024 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | **Psychological/Emotional**   * *Trauma (CONT’D)* * Lasting effects of trauma include: diminishing a person’s ability to take pleasure in things they used to enjoy, making it difficult to trust others or experience affection, and reduced emotional regulation (disproportional reactions to certain situations that remind the individual of the traumatic event). Some people will turn to alcohol, drugs, or self-harm to cope with trauma. * Trauma can cause PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder). Effects of PTSD include **INTRUSTIVE MEMORIES** (nightmares, flashbacks, emotional or physical reactions to things that remind one of a traumatic event, recurrent thoughts), **AVOIDANCE** (avoiding anything associated with the traumatic event/avoiding discussing or dwelling upon the event), **CHANGES IN THINKING AND MOOD** (emotional numbness, difficulty experiencing positive emotions or pleasure, hopelessness, negative thoughts about the self and others, difficulty maintaining relationships), and **CHANGES IN PHYSICAL AND EMOTIONAL REACTIONS** (irritability and aggression, being easily startled or frightened, constantly being on guard/hypervigilance, self-destructive behavior, experiencing guilt or shame, having trouble sleeping or concentrating). * Note that these symptoms of PTSD can also be experienced by an individual who has undergone a traumatic event but does not have PTSD. This is referred to as ASD or Acute Stress Disorder. **ASD lasts for a shorter period (usually for a month after the event) while PTSD lasts for much longer.** * An individual with ASD may also feel anxiety or intense fear or helplessness. * 80% of the time, ASD eventually develops into PTSD. * Certain risk factors that contribute to one’s likelihood of developing PTSD include: genetics, early trauma (such as childhood abuse), intense/long-lasting trauma, already existing mental health issues, already existing problems with substance abuse, and a lack of solid support system to cope with the trauma.   - <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/24755-acute-stress-disorder>  - <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z-topics/trauma#:~:text=Depending%20on%20how%20you're,things%20you%20used%20to%20enjoy>.  - <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/post-traumatic-stress-disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20355967#:~:text=Post%2Dtraumatic%20stress%20disorder%20can,with%20drugs%20or%20alcohol%20use>  - <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/conditions/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-ptsd/causes/#:~:text=Changes%20in%20the%20brain&text=It's%20thought%20that%20changes%20in,does%20not%20reduce%20over%20time>. |
| 05-01-2024 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | **Psychological/Emotional**   * Events/Experiences * Past experiences may closely tie in with trauma; negative events may traumatize a person to the point where it disrupts his or her day-to-day life. * People tend to seek out positive experiences that may have already taken place. Similarly, they avoid associations with past negative experiences. * Past experiences can affect how people interpret present circumstances. |
| 06-01-2024 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | **Social**   * *Relationships (family, friends, peers)* * People in positive close relationships have better mental, physical, and emotional health. Contrarily, people in negative close relationships tend to have worse mental, physical, and emotional health. * It is in fact healthier to be alone/single than to be in an abusive or toxic relationship. A lack of relationship is better than a negative one. * Negative relationships increase a person’s risk of developing depression, anxiety, or suicidal thoughts. * Quality of relationships outweighs quantity; having few close friends is healthier than having many acquaintances. * When someone is surrounded by people who exemplify certain behaviors, they tend to adopt these behaviors. (Ex: copying someone who eats healthy vs copying someone who smokes). Although all are liable to fall prey to this, adolescents and young adults are most susceptible to being influenced by others in this way.   - <https://iuhealth.org/thrive/how-relationships-affect-our-health#:~:text=Studies%20show%20that%20people%20involved,health%20and%20emotional%20well%2Dbeing>.  - <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/statistics/relationships-community-statistics> |
| 08-01-2024 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | **Social**   * *Immediate environment (stressors, context, situations, environment)* * Context determines what is acceptable in a social situation, and as such determines how someone is likely to behave and how that behavior will be received. (Ex: joking while studying for an exam with a friend vs joking during the actual exam). Situations, objects, emotions, and words will be received differently based on the circumstances surrounding them. * Perceived context may differ from actual context (fundamental attribution error: when dispositional assumptions are made about something. Tendency to place blame.) Actor-Observer bias also comes into play here (when you automatically assume better of yourself, attributing achievements to your own abilities and failures to circumstances, then attributing the failures of others to their own personality and disposition). * Environment influences motivation to act. A messy hallway attracts more mess as people are more likely to leave trash in it, while a clean hallway motivates people to keep it that way. * Environment influences mood through lighting, color, sound, smell, and temperature. Dark and cold environments may lead to feeling unmotivated. Environments with harsh lighting and noise may lead to agitation. Environments with calming colors like blue or green and minimal clutter may lead to a better mood. Familiar (and positively associated) people and objects will similarly contribute to mood. * *Culture* * Culture: a set of shared beliefs or way of life passed from generation to generation. * Culture is a form of context as it dictates what is considered acceptable behavior in certain situations. * Culture can affect attitudes and perceptions of things like beauty and success, which in turn dictates behavior. (Ex: in a culture where being skinny is ideal, people are more likely to diet and exercise, as opposed to a culture that finds well-rounded people desirable). * Communication styles differ across cultures. Some cultures may favor individualism, boldness, closeness, or being personable, while others value collectivism, respect, humility, or being mild-mannered. Differences in core ideals like these will vary across cultures and thus will affect how people from contrasting cultures will interact and view each other. Culture shock and misunderstandings may occur. An example of this may be staring being considered rude in one culture while it is completely acceptable another.   - <https://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/what-impact-does-environment-have-us#:~:text=The%20environment%20can%20facilitate%20or,behavior%20and%20motivation%20to%20act>.  - <https://pressbooks.online.ucf.edu/lumenpsychology/chapter/what-is-social-psychology/#:~:text=Essentially%2C%20people%20will%20change%20their,the%20intra%2D%20and%20interpersonal%20levels>.  - <https://kids.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/frym.2018.00003#figure-1>  - <https://www.verywellmind.com/how-your-environment-affects-your-mental-health-5093687>  - <https://thinkculturalhealth.hhs.gov/assets/pdfs/resource-library/communication-styles.pdf>  - <https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Courses/Southwest_Tennessee_Community_College/Competent_Communication/02%3A_Culture_and_Communication/2.01%3A_The_Impact_of_Culture_on_Behavior>  - <https://www.livescience.com/21478-what-is-culture-definition-of-culture.html> |
| 10-01-2024 | 2. Research the impact of said environmental factors on human psychology and behavioral side effects. | **Social**   * *Socio-economic status* * Socio-economic status (SES): The hierarchical placement of individuals and groups in society based on both social (reputation, respect, power) and economic (financial) status. * Covers several factors including education, income, prestige, occupation, living conditions (i.e., food and housing security), and wealth. * Low SES correlates with the poor working-class while a high SES correlates with the high-class. * People that come from low SES families are more likely to respond aggressively to insulting behavior, and as such are more prone to committing assault or bullying others. This is believed to be because a person of low SES are more sensitive to anything that threatens their sense of self-worth. The lashing out is a psychological defense mechanism. * Those with a low SES have higher rates of depression, anxiety, illicit drug use, cigarette dependency, attempted suicide, heavy drinking, hostility/aggression, and emotional and behavioral difficulties (delinquent behavior, ADHD, social problems). They are also more likely to develop diseases or conditions later in life (morbidity). Moreover, they have higher mortality rates, even in children and infants. * Children from low SES families tend to do worse in school. They are also more likely to miss school or drop out. Contrarily, children from high SES families tend to do better in school. * People (children and adolescents particularly) from high SES families tend to show health promoting behaviors like having a nutritious diet and engaging in a physically active lifestyle. Meanwhile, those from low SES families tend to engage in unhealthy or self-destructive behaviors like early smoking, drug abuse, low physical activity, and eating unhealthy food. * People of high SES are often less stressed and impulsive, showcase better memory and cognitive functions, and display self-regulatory behaviors. * People of low SES are more likely to have a group-centered or collectivist mentality, while those of high SES are likely to have a personal or individualist mentality. * Those who are wealthy or high-class tend to be entitled or narcissistic, while those in the low-class category are more emotionally in tune with others.   - <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-psychology-of-social/#:~:text=Low%2Dstatus%20people%20are%20much,to%20personal%20threats%20and%20insults>.  - <https://www.apa.org/pi/ses/resources/publications/children-families>  - <https://www.apa.org/topics/socioeconomic-status#:~:text=Socioeconomic%20status%20is%20the%20position,of%20society%E2%80%94ethnic%20origin%20or>  - <https://www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/health_equity/socioeconomic.htm#:~:text=Socioeconomic%20status%20is%20a%20multidimensional,from%20cardiovascular%20disease%20(CVD)>.  - <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-003-x/2020001/article/00001-eng.htm>  - <https://www.apa.org/monitor/2015/02/class-differences#:~:text=%22Class%20affects%20whether%20someone%20is,lack%20in%20their%20daily%20lives>.  - <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fnhum.2018.00543/full#:~:text=Higher%20family%20SES%20is%20also,Sweitzer%20et%20al.%2C%202008>)  - <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fpubh.2023.1228632/full> |
| 23-01-2024 | 3. Research popular/common crimes. | The most common offences in the U.S.A. are property crime (includes larceny-theft, burglary, vandalism, arson, and motor-vehicle theft) and violent crime (includes physical and sexual assault, rape, robbery, and murder).  Common offences in Canada include breaking and entering and assault.  Fraud, as well as drug and alcohol related crimes, are also common in the world.  - <https://www.statista.com/statistics/202714/number-of-committed-crimes-in-the-us-by-type-of-crime/>  - <https://www.gelmanlawfirm.com/blog/list-of-the-most-common-crimes-in-the-united-states/>  - <https://www.halt.org/most-common-criminal-charges-in-canada#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20Crime%20Severity,for%20which%20data%20is%20available>.  - <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00013-eng.htm>  - <https://www.jasonkatims.com/2020/09/what-are-the-5-most-common-criminal-charges/>  - <https://www.criminaljusticedegreehub.com/what-are-the-most-common-crimes-in-the-united-states/> |
| 23-01-2024 | 4. Create hypothesis based on research. | Environmental factors likely play a large role in future criminal behavior, with social and psychological factors having the largest impact. This hypothesis is based on common crimes, which are typically born from economic and personal need in addition to tendency towards aggression and low impulse control. Personality, temperament, and beliefs (belonging to the psychological category) and immediate environment, socioeconomic status, and relationships (belonging to the social category) are likely the most significant contributors. |
| 24-01-2024 | 5. Research the psychological reasoning behind these popular crimes. | Many crimes can usually be traced to socioeconomic status (poverty), substance abuse, beliefs, and peer pressure. Emotional reasons such as rage, impulsivity, and fear are also liable. Some commit crime to feel a thrill or adrenaline rush.  Property crime is motivated by a desire for some sort of material gain. It can be born from **necessity** or **greed**. High risk tolerance (the ability to take large risks with uncertain payout) and impatience come into play. It is usually **premeditated**.  Violent crime is motivated by a desire for control or power; it can also be motivated by emotional reasons like those listed above. Low self-control comes into play (which is the case with most passion driven crime such as drug and sexual offences). As such, it is often **spontaneous**, but this is not always the case.  - <https://www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.2112645119#sec-4>  - <https://www.eurekalert.org/news-releases/941749>  - <https://www.alliant.edu/blog/why-do-people-commit-crimes>  - <https://www.waldenu.edu/online-bachelors-programs/bs-in-criminal-justice/resource/what-influences-criminal-behavior> |
| 25-01-2024 | 5. Research the psychological reasoning behind these popular crimes. | Many crimes committed by young people are directly influenced by peer pressure and the types of people within their peer group. If they are surrounded by people involved with crime or those who make bad decisions, due to their age they are more likely to be affected and to assimilate to the behavior.  Fraud is like property crime in the sense that it can be born from either necessity or greed. Extreme negative financial situations (such as debt and loss of employment) and having a convenient position of power may drive someone to commit fraud. |
| 27-01-2024 | 6. Research one famous serial killer/murderer, one drug dealer, and one thief to find correlations between environmental factors and crime. | Serial killer: Joanna Dennehy  Note that Dennehy was chosen as she does not fit into the typical stereotype of most serial killers (American male rapists with troubled childhoods) so as to better explore the diversity of environmental factors that may contribute to this type of crime.  Dennehy may be better described as a spree killer as her murders were close together.  Four Types of Serial Killers   1. **HEDONISTIC**  * Pleasure seeking killers; murder for ***lust***, ***thrill***, or ***comfort*** (financial/material gain)  1. **VISIONARY**  * Usually ***psychotic***; believes they are being directed by some otherworldly, demonic, or godly being  1. **MISSION-ORIENTED**  * Murder to complete a specific goal, usually being the ***eradication of a group of people*** (ex: black people, prostitutes) or ***revenge***  1. **POWER AND CONTROL**  * Murder to ***exert a sense of control*** over a helpless victim   Joanna Dennehy in particular best fits into the hedonistic category. She murdered mainly for the *thrill* of it, seeking attention and fame. However, some of her tendencies suggest that power and control may have come into play.  - <https://www.grunge.com/760638/these-are-the-4-types-of-serial-killers/>  - |
| 29-01-2024 | 6. Research one famous serial killer/murderer, one drug dealer, and one thief to find correlations between environmental factors and crime | Joanna Dennehy  **Overview**  Joanna Dennehy was a British woman who killed three men and attempted the murder of two others over the span of 10 days in 2013. She was diagnosed with *anti-social personality disorder*. Various sources claim she also had *borderline personality disorder, paraphilia sadomasochism, and obsessive-compulsive disorder.*  **Biography**  Dennehy had a stable and normal family life. Although she contests this, claiming that she was abused, family and friends have seen no basis for this claim. (Note that Dennehy is considered a pathological liar). She had loving, albeit strict parents and a younger sister named Maria. In her early years, Dennehy enjoyed “girly” activities such as playing with dolls and fashion. She did well in school and was considered smart by her parents; it was expected that she would go on to become a lawyer. As she grew older, she became naturally strong-willed, confident, and protective of those close to her.  However, when she became a teenager, she entered a rebellious phase. She began to coerce boys into doing homework for her, openly slapping them if they didn’t comply. She bullied a girl named Marika, threatening her and encouraging her to kill herself. Additionally, Dennehy spent time with older boys involved in petty crime and drug use, cutting off her wholesome relationships with her friends and sister. She experimented with alcohol and drugs. This brought out a manipulative, narcissistic, and controlling side of her. Maria describes this change as sudden, saying she didn’t know what else could have caused “such a radical change in her personality from age 14.”  At the age of 15, Dennehy fell in love with 20-year-old John Treanor and ran away with him. At 17, she had her first child, Shianne. Three years later, she gave birth to her second. Dennehy’s behavior grew more erratic, violent, and dangerous. She drank heavily and cheated on Treanor with both men and women, leaving home for nights at a time. She engaged in sadomasochistic (enjoyment of receiving and giving pain/humiliation) sexual exploits, indulged in self-harm, and took drugs. One night, she returned home with pins through her arms, pulled out a knife and stabbed into the floor, and said “I could kill someone.” The next day, Treanor escaped with the two children.  After Treanor left, Dennehy moved to a different district where she rented a living space. Here she met landlord Kevin Lee and became his enforcer, intimidating people who had not paid the rent. She also became involved in an affair with Kevin.  Dennehy committed petty crimes (like burglary and theft) and worked as a sex worker to fund her addictions. Some speculate this work may have led to her deep hatred of men.  **Peterborough Ditch Murders**  Dennehy murdered three victims in this order: Lukasz Slaboszewski, her neighbor John Chapman, and her landlord Kevin Lee. She had two male accomplices: Gary “Stretch” Richards and Leslie Layton. These accomplices helped her transport and dispose of the victims. She said she wanted to be like Bonnie and Clyde, hoping to kill nine men in total. She said she didn’t want to kill any women, especially not women with children.  Slaboszewski was lured with a promise of sex. However, he was blindfolded and stabbed in the heart. Dennehy stored his body in a garbage bin. She was proud of Slaboszewski’s murder, allegedly showing his body to a 14-year-old girl that lived on Kevin Lee’s rental property and taking pictures to show her acquaintance, Mark Lloyd.  After murdering Slaboszewski, Dennehy claimed to have developed a taste for killing, calling it “moreish.” She targeted her next victim, John Chapman, stabbing him in the neck and chest. Chapman was an army veteran and Dennehy’s housemate.  With the help of her accomplices, Dennehy later disposed of both Chapman and Slaboszewski’s body in the same ditch in Peterborough.  Dennehy then killed Kevin Lee in the same manner as her previous victims. She convinced him to wear a black sequined dress before stabbing him to death. Dennehy’s accomplices helped her dump Lee’s body into another ditch in Peterborough. He was laid in a sexually suggestive position to humiliate him further.  Although Lee’s body was discovered first, Slaboszewski was Dennehy’s first victim.  **Attempted Murders**  Dennehy attempted the murder two random dogwalkers, later identified as John Rogers and Robin Bereza.  After roping Mark Lloyd in as an unwilling participant to help Dennehy and Stretch sell some stolen goods, they took Lloyd along for a ride as Dennehy searched for more victims to kill. She told Stretch, “I want my fun. I need you to get me my fun.” Stretch stopped the car and Dennehy jumped out and stabbed Robin Bereza (64) several times with a knife. She went back into the car and the three drove until they found another dogwalker. She stabbed John Rogers (56) about 30-40 times before stealing his dog. Both men miraculously survived the frenzied attacks.  **Arrest and trial**  Dennehy and Stretch had been on the run from the police after a passer-by discovered Kevin Lee’s body and notified the authorities. Police knew that Dennehy and Stretch were behind the attack, although it was once believed that Stretch was the main perpetrator (as he was 7’3’’ and had an intimidating appearance) with Dennehy being his accomplice.  Dennehy was apprehended a few minutes after the second attempted murder.  When she was brought to the station, she quipped and flirted with the male officers, seemingly amused by the situation.  While awaiting trial, a police officer discovered Dennehy’s diary. It contained a plan to escape by killing an officer and severing their fingers to bypass the biometric security system. Due to this, Dennehy was moved to solitary confinement.  She pleaded guilty to three counts of murder and two counts of attempted murder. This decision surprised everyone, including her own legal team. This was likely a last show of control or power on Dennehy’s part.  Dennehy was sentenced to the life in prison.  Dennehy didn’t change even after being sentenced. She threatened to kill another inmate, Rosemary West, who was one of the only other women in Britain to receive a whole life sentence. West was moved to a different prison. While in prison, Dennehy became romantically involved with other inmates and a male policer officer. She even attempted a (failed) suicide pact with female lover Hayley Palmer. She continued to manipulate men even from her place in prison.  **Personal evaluation**  Based on the information I have gathered so far, I have formulated a hypothesis explaining Joanna Dennehy’s crimes relating to the three types of environmental factors.   * Social * Dennehy’s parental upbringing was likely not responsible for her future actions or psychological disorders. * Her criminally inclined peer group likely contributed to her future actions. The group encouraged the use of drugs and alcohol. The use of these likely brought to light and reinforced any existing psychological problems Dennehy might have already possessed. * Although the social factor may not have directly lead to the development of psychological shortcomings, they likely indirectly contributed to Dennehy’s actions and mental state. * Physical * Some drugs can cause or worsen symptoms of mental illness. Dennehy’s substance abuse is likely the primary contributor to her downfall. * I hypothesize that Dennehy may have been at a higher genetic risk to develop anti-social personality disorder (which is mainly genetically inherited) or any of her other psychological deficiencies; perhaps there are some recessive genes that run in her family that may have contributed to this development. * Psychological * Obviously, Dennehy’s numerous psychological disorders are the main reason why she killed and enjoyed it in the first place. She lacked remorse for her killings because of her ASPD, her impulsivity and aggression might be linked to her borderline personality disorder, and her sadomasochism likely played a part in her ability to hurt others and derive pleasure from it.   **Conclusion**  Joanna Dennehy’s sadistic tendencies can likely be traced to her numerous psychological disorders which she may have genetically inherited. Substance abuse likely played a part in bringing these disorders to light. Her peer group facilitated the substance abuse. She was easily influenced by her peer group most likely because of her young age and (initially) empathetic personality.  In conclusion, Joanna Dennehy’s criminal behavior cannot be wholly attributed to one type of environmental factor. Below, I have ranked how influential the three types of factors likely were in Joanna Dennehy’s life, with 1 being most influential and 3 being the least.   1. **Psychological** 2. **Physical** 3. **Social**   As such, Dennehy’s behavior is probably best attributed to **PSYCHOLOGICAL** environmental factors. Psychological disorders fall into this section. Although both social and physical/biological factors feed into this, Dennehy’s psychology is ultimately the main reason for her attitudes and behaviors regarding crime and murder. Again, all three types of environmental factors are involved in some way, but they all seem to contribute to the psychological side of it, suggesting that it has the highest impact.  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uCq8Sw1AP8s&ab_channel=BuckleZ>  - <https://www.crimeandinvestigation.co.uk/crime-files/joanne-dennehy/biography>  - <https://allthatsinteresting.com/joanna-dennehy>  - <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/8885937/sick-serial-killer-joanna-dennehy-asked-to-be-punched-during-sex-and-flirted-with-coppers-hours-after-killing-spree/>  - <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2014/feb/12/joanna-dennehy-psychology-sadomasochism-murder>  - <https://meaww.com/joanna-dennehy-sister-innocent-child-serial-killer-britain-dangerous-itv-documentary-maria>  - <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/15187965/joanna-dennehys-victims/>  - <https://www.crimeandinvestigation.co.uk/articles/joanna-dennehy-and-peterborough-ditch-murders#:~:text=From%20there%2C%20the%20trio%20continued,immediately%20came%20to%20their%20assistance>.  - <https://www.thesun.co.uk/news/17409381/serial-killer-joanna-dennehy-prison-committed-psychopath/> |
| 31-01-2024 | 6. Research one famous serial killer/murderer, one drug dealer, and one thief to find correlations between environmental factors and crime | Drug lord: Frank Lucas  Note that Frank Lucas was chosen because of the amount of information provided regarding his background, allowing cross examination and a better understanding of the environmental factors that influenced his criminal behavior. Also chosen because many drug cartels were headed by men of Mexican descent. |
| 01-02-2024 | 6. Research one famous serial killer/murderer, one drug dealer, and one thief to find correlations between environmental factors and crime | **Overview**  Frank Lucas was an African American man who dealt “Blue Magic” heroin. He smuggled drugs from Southeast Asia and dealt them from Harlem.  \*Note that Frank Lucas is a big fat liar\*  **Biography**  Frank Lucas was born in 1930 in North Carolina. He was born and raised in **poverty**. During childhood, he spent most of his time looking after his siblings. The **Jim Crow laws** (laws that enforced segregation) were in effect at this time and caused him much grief. He was uneducated and would mug drunk people to make money. In addition to this, he grew up in the Great Depression (1929-1939).  Lucas claims that he was first inspired to begin a life of crime after witnessing the KKK murder his cousin. According to Lucas, members of the Ku Klux Klan came to his home in the night and shot his cousin dead for allegedly “looking flirtatiously at a white woman.” Lucas was only six at the time, while his cousin, Obadiah, was twelve.  Lucas was involved in an altercation with his boss. After fighting him, setting his company aflame, and stealing $400, he escaped to New York City. There, he discovered the fortune to be made in illegal drugs and gambling and began to take part, participating in armed robberies, petty crime, and selling drugs.  Lucas caught the attention of Ellsworth “Bumpy” Johnson, the head of an extortion and gambling ring, after shooting a man in the head. Johnson allegedly acted as Lucas’ mentor until he died in 1968. It was at this time that Lucas began developing his own criminal organization.  **Crimes**  After realizing the Mafia had a monopoly on heroin supplies, Lucas flew to Thailand and partnered with Leslie “Ike” Atkinson. Atkinson ran a bar in Bangkok where he would sell drugs to black soldiers. Lucas and Atkinson made a deal with a man named Luchai Rubiwat. Rubiwat harvested nearly pure heroin from the poppies he grew.  Lucas smuggled this heroin back overseas in furniture and supposedly fake US Army coffins. This particularly potent and pure strain of heroin was branded as “Blue Magic.” He only hired close friends and relatives to distribute Blue Magic.  From this point, Lucas’ wealth grew. He converted his money so that it was legitimate (money laundering). He invested in various real estate properties. He claimed that, at one point, he was making $1 million a day, though this has since been proven to be an exaggeration.  However, Lucas made the mistake of wearing a $100,000 chinchilla coat to a high-profile Muhammad Ali match. This caught the attention of the authorities. They were surprised he had better seats than some comparatively more prolific figures. |
| 02-02-2024 | 6. Research one famous serial killer/murderer, one drug dealer, and one thief to find correlations between environmental factors and crime | Frank Lucas  **Arrest**  Frank Lucas was arrested in 1975 after his home was raided and authorities discovered around $584,000 in cash. Lucas was sentenced to 70 years in prison.  However, he reduced his sentence significantly (to around 5-15 years, sources differ) by becoming a government informant. He notified the authorities of other drug dealers and corrupted police officials and was rewarded for it. Although he did get in trouble with the law after one last drug exchange in 1984 (post-informant), he experienced no other setbacks and was released in 1991.  **Regrets**  After returning to Harlem and seeing the first-hand the damage he caused, Lucas understood the gravity of his actions. He admitted he did something terrible, saying that “I probably did more damage than I did good… If you wanna put that I was a no good son of a b\*tch, be my guest. ‘Cause that’s what I was.”  He contributed to his daughter’s organization “Yellow Brick Road,” an organization that supported children whose parents were in prison. He believed in the importance of education and hoped that others could learn from his mistakes.  Lucas passed away of natural causes at the age of 88 in 2019.  **Personal evaluation**  Based on the information I have gathered so far, I have formulated a hypothesis explaining Frank Lucas’ crimes relating to the three types of environmental factors.   * Social * Racial stigma and socio-economic status likely played an extremely significant role in the life of Lucas and his crimes. * Jim Crow laws, the KKK, his lack of education, and experiences with poverty forced Lucas to witness violence and rely on crime for survival from a very young age. * Time period and setting are also important to consider. In combination with racial stigma leaving him financially disadvantaged, Lucas growing up in the Great Depression only continued to widen this gap. Realistically, crime was one of the only places he could turn if he wanted to survive. * If not for his situation, Lucas likely would have never indulged in criminal behavior in the first place. * Physical * Lucas’ race (and the associated physical traits) is the reason he was discriminated against and treated the way he was in the first place. * He likely would have led a healthier, safer, and more privileged life if he had been white. * Psychological * Lucas’ personality/temperament, personal values, psychological reasoning, and resolve likely dictated how he responded to his situation.   **Conclusion**  Frank Lucas’ criminal behavior can likely be traced to his socio-economic status and the racial stigma he faced. The time period and setting he grew up in only continued to contribute to his poor social standing. His physical characteristics made him susceptible to racial stigma. His psyche dictated how he responded to his environment.  In conclusion, Frank Lucas’ criminal behavior cannot be wholly attributed to one type of environmental factor. Below, I have ranked how influential the three types of factors likely were in Frank Lucas’ life, with 1 being most influential and 3 being the least.   1. **Social** 2. **Physical** 3. **Psychological**   As such, Lucas’ behavior is probably best attributed to **SOCIAL** environmental factors. Social situations fall into this section. Although physical/biological factors technically feed into this, Lucas’ societal environment is ultimately the main reason for his attitudes and behaviors regarding crime. Again, all three types of environmental factors are involved in some way, but social factors appear the most in Lucas’ life, suggesting that it has the highest impact.  (From the Jan 31 to Feb 2):  - <https://www.biography.com/crime/frank-lucas>  - <https://themobmuseum.org/blog/frank-lucas-the-drug-kingpin-who-inspired-american-gangster-is-dead/>  - <https://allthatsinteresting.com/frank-lucas>  - <https://www.historydefined.net/frank-lucas/>  - <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/05/31/obituaries/frank-lucas-dead.html#:~:text=At%20the%20peak%20of%20his,Los%20Angeles%20and%20Puerto%20Rico>. |
| 04-02-2024 | 6. Research one famous serial killer/murderer, one drug dealer, and one thief to find correlations between environmental factors and crime | Thief: Stéphane Breitwieser  (Note that Breitwieser was chosen because he does not fit in the stereotype of the typical thief that steals for financial gain).  **Overview**  Stéphane Breitwieser was a French man who stole hundreds (anywhere between 200 and 300) of priceless artworks from several museums, auctions, and churches all over Europe. The value of the amassed art is difficult to place; it may be anywhere near $2 billion.  (coping mechanism?)  **Biography**  Breitwieser was always fond of art and objects in general. He used to be fascinated with stamps, postcards, coins, and old pottery fragments – all of which he bought for himself or picked up off the ground.  Breitwieser had difficulty connecting with others and would become volatile and temperamental when engaging with peers. He couldn’t understand common pastimes—like sports or games—and didn’t derive pleasure from drugs or drinking. However, he was wholly infatuated with museums and archeological sites, which he could allegedly spend hours wandering throughout. In fact, he claims that he emotionally connected better with objects compared to humans.  He was an only child who lived in luxury for most of his childhood. He grew up surrounded by antique art inherited by this father. However, when his parents divorced, his father took his art and expensive possessions with him. Breitwieser and his mother became significantly poorer and were forced to move.  After the move, Breitwieser met a woman named Anne-Catherine Kleinklaus, who would later become his girlfriend and accomplice in many of his heists. He claims that he “loved her right away” and that she was the only person he was able to build a connection with, much like the connection he could only feel with objects. Kleinklaus shared the same interest in museums and beauty.  At the age of 19, Breitwieser worked as a museum security guard for a time. Although it was not for the purpose of gathering background information at the time, this experienced helped him understand the minds of security guards and subsequently helped him in his future crimes. |
| 06-02-2024 | 6. Research one famous serial killer/murderer, one drug dealer, and one thief to find correlations between environmental factors and crime | **Thefts**  The first time Breitwieser stole, it was unplanned and impulsive. Visiting a museum with his girlfriend, he came across an antique pistol and decided that he deserved to have it – his father had antique firearms but, like all of his possessions, took them after the divorce – and Breitwieser saw it as a way to replace what should have been his anyway. His girlfriend condoned and allegedly encouraged him take the pistol, and so he stole it.  After that first theft, Breitwieser saw no point in resisting temptation and stole whenever the urge came to him. He claims (which are supported by psychological assessments) that he stole out of beauty and appreciation for art as opposed to financial gain. His passion for art was excessive, obsessive, and somewhat abnormal; he was enamored with art even to the point of sexual arousal, claiming that he would never steal a piece unless it aesthetically appealed to him and garnered an emotional reaction.  Stealing in broad daylight, Breitwieser never used force. He and Kleinklaus would visit a museum (as regular citizens) dressed in formal clothing to appear credible. The two would browse and Breitwieser would pick a small object to steal (usually a painting). While Kleinklaus kept watch, he would carefully cut the painting from its frame (or pry it from its display case, depending on the nature of the art and how it was stored), hide the piece in his jacket or pants, and the two would leave just as easily as they had entered. Empty frames became Breitwieser’s calling card. He was observant, clever, and had mastered remaining inconspicuous and calm under pressure. He travelled Europe looking for and stealing art, particularly in France, Belgium, Switzerland, and Germany.  He amassed somewhere near $1-2 billion worth of art from approximately 200 different museums. He sold none of it. Breitwieser kept his stolen works in the attic of his mother’s home. This room doubled as the bedroom he and Kleinklaus shared; he enjoyed being surrounded by art while he slept.  Some of the objects he stole are listed below:   * Ivory sculpture; ‘Adam and Eve’ by George Petel * Painting; ‘Sybille, Princess of Cleves’ by Lucas Cranach * Sketch; ‘Two Men Standing’ by Jean-Antoine Watteau   As time progressed, tension grew between Breitwieser and Kleinklaus. While Breitwieser’s passion for theft and art only grew, Knleinklaus began to feel stifled by their lifestyle. The two fought and their relationship grew unstable.  **Arrest**  Breitwieser had previously been arrested but was let off with light warnings. This time, he was arrested after stealing a bugle in Switzerland. Initially, he was going to be charged for this single theft only, but the police suspected his crimes were on a grander scale.  After discovering her son’s crimes—likely after being informed by Kleinklaus—his mother destroyed all the art Bretiwieser had stolen out of rage. The artworks were thrown into a nearby water canal, burned, or disposed of. When authorities came to the house to search it, they found the attic empty. Many of the objects were later discovered in the Rhone-Rhine Canal, with many more remaining unaccounted for.  Breitwieser served three years in jail for his crimes. His mother and girlfriend also received jail time.  **Aftermath**  Breitwieser and his girlfriend separated.  Upon release, Breitwieser reverted to stealing but on a much less grandiose scale. He was arrested for shoplifting, then arrested again for stealing from museums and attempting to sell his finds online.  **Personal evaluation**  Based on the information I have gathered so far, I have formulated a hypothesis explaining Stéphane Breitwieser’s crimes relating to the three types of environmental factors.   * Social * The divorce of his parents may have had an impact on him as a child. His father leaving may have caused him to develop a mindset of “retribution” to explain every object that he stole; he may have felt that the world owed it to him. * Growing up an only child may have limited opportunities for Breitwieser to learn how to interpret social cues or interact with others. * He was brought up in an environment where he was surrounded by art. His parents often dropped him off as museums and archaeological sites, and his father owned many antiques. This environment likely contributed to his general love for art. * Lack of notable social activities in childhood may have led to a difficulty of relating with others. * Physical * The impact of physical factors is difficult to discern, as he has not been officially diagnosed with psychological disorders to pin genetic vulnerabilities to. * In the event that Breitwieser does possess some sort of psychological disorder, this trait may have been passed on through recessive genes OR he may have been genetically at risk of developing certain disorders. * Psychological * The divorce of his parents may have caused some deep rooted trauma (whether this is because of the objects or the people remains unclear), and stealing became his coping mechanism. * Based on his actions and thought processes, there are several psychological disorders that I theorize Breitwieser may have possessed. (Note that I am not suggesting he had all of these, but rather listing potential disorders).   + He may have been a **kleptomaniac** or possessed some other similar **impulse disorder** (like BPD), which would explain his addiction to stealing and his need to possess certain objects.   + He may have experienced **objectophilia**/**objectum sexuality**, which would have caused him to feel emotionally, romantically, and/or sexually attracted to objects. This might explain why he could connect with objects better than he could connect with humans and consequently grew obsessed with them.   + He may have possessed some sort of disorder that prevented him from interpreting social cues (such as **Asperger’s Syndrome**), which would explain why he had difficulty emotionally connecting with humans.   + He may have even had **Stendhal Syndrome**. This would have caused him to become emotionally overwhelmed and filled with ecstasy when in the presence of art and natural beauty. Breitwieser himself believed that he possessed this disorder.   **Conclusion**  Stéphane Breitwieser’s criminal behavior can likely be traced to potential psychological disorders or discrepancies (especially those related to impulse control). These disorders could have been developed in response to emotional trauma. He may have experienced trauma after the divorce of his parents (familial situation). Genetic vulnerabilities may have also potentially contributed the development of psychological disorders. His childhood environment likely contributed to his love for art and potentially the difficulty he experienced connecting with others, both of which were factors in his criminal activity.  In conclusion, Stéphane Breitwieser’s criminal behavior cannot be wholly attributed to one type of environmental factor. Below, I have ranked how influential the three types of factors likely were in Stéphane Breitwieser’s life, with 1 being most influential and 3 being the least.   1. **Psychological** 2. **Social** 3. **Physical**   As such, Breitwieser’s behavior is probably best attributed to **PSYCHOLOGICAL** environmental factors. Potential disorders (particularly pertaining to impulse control related disorders) and his unyielding love for art and beauty fall into this section. Although social factors likely have fed into this, its impact is unclear. Even still, having access to the full psychological assessment would be beneficial in determining exactly how his psyche affected his criminal behavior. Again, all three types of environmental factors are involved in some way, but psychological factors appear to carry the most weight in Breitwieser’s life, suggesting that it has the highest impact.  (From Feb 4 and 6)  - <https://bigthink.com/high-culture/stendhal-syndrome-love-art-steal-mental-illness/>  - <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9878-kleptomania>  - <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/reviews/the-art-thief-michael-finkel-review-stephane-breitwieser-1234672570/>  - <https://www.artmajeur.com/en/magazine/2-art-news/hundreds-of-objects-of-art-were-stolen-by-stephane-breitwieser-the-arsene-lupin-of-museums/331246>  - <https://nypost.com/2023/08/12/this-art-thief-nabbed-239-works-of-art-worth-an-estimated-2-billion/>  - <https://www.gq.com/story/secrets-of-the-worlds-greatest-art-thief>  - <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/st%C3%A9phane-breitwieser-michael-finkel-art-thief-1.6903074> |
| 11-02-2024 | 7. Synthesize information and find a conclusion. | Conclusion:  There are three main types of environmental factors. Biological/physical factors pertain to genetics and physical capabilities; age, gender, substance abuse, physical illness, genetic vulnerabilities, and physical disabilities fall under this category. Psychological/emotional factors pertain to individual personality traits and thought processes; temperament, personality, beliefs, self-esteem, and trauma fall under this category. Social factors pertain to situational circumstances and social dynamics; relationships, immediate environment, socio-economic status, and culture fall beneath this category.  All three types of environmental factors—social, psychological, and biological—influence or contribute to criminal behavior in some way. However, they are all interconnected in a certain way.  Typically, the train of influence reads like this: social factors push a person’s behavior to extremes within psychological factors. Meanwhile, biological factors dictate what types of extremes or social situations a person may be vulnerable to.  For example, in the case of Joanna Dennehy, her social peer group pushed her to extreme behavior by influencing her to partake in substance abuse, which amplified her existing psychological disorders. The social factor (peer group) encouraged her biological factor (substance abuse) which made her much more susceptible to her driving psychological factor (mental illness).  ***In conclusion, psychological, social, and biological environmental factors all affect future criminal behavior. While psychological factors are typically the driving factor, the extremes are dictated by social factors and genetic vulnerabilities.*** |
| 14-02-2024 | 7. Synthesize information and find a conclusion. | Began assembling trifold (decorative pieces). |
| 16-02-2024 | 7. Synthesize information and find a conclusion. | Began inputting information into slides for print. |
| 18-02-2024 | 7. Synthesize information and find a conclusion. | Continued inputting information into slides for print. Began creating case files for each criminal case study. |