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Short Assignment #3

Agnew's General Theory of Strain

After listening to the Tommy Shakur Ross case, in the podcast "Ear Hustle: Episode 2: Misguided Loyalty" I think the theory that could apply is Agnew's General Theory of Strain. According to general strain theory (GST), persons who are under stress or bad emotions may turn to crime as a way to cope with their feelings and reduce the strain (Agnew, 1992, 2006). GST defines strains as unpleasant circumstances and occurrences. Subjective strain and objective strain are the two general shapes that this can take. The majority of people detest an event or circumstance, which is known as objective tension. Contrarily, subjective strain is a situation or circumstance that the person experiencing it detests. Between these two strain kinds, there are often three ways that strain manifests itself: losing something valuable, receiving unfavorable treatment from others, and failing to meet one's own objectives (DeCamp et al., 2020). In the case of Shakur, also known in his gang as "Joker", he was influenced by his emotions at the time to have criminal behavior. Starting with the feelings of rejection and remorse that he had for his father, since his father, who was a pastor, wanted Shakur to be part of the church, eventually Shakur preferred to practice sports such as soccer and karate, but his parents did not agree. These emotions towards his father, along with social influences led him to join the band, Eight Tray at

the age of 13. Something similar also happened the day Shakur killed Stanford Burse. One day at the liquor store, Shakur saw Stanford, who instantly recognized by his appearance that he was part of a gang. As Shakur greeted him, Stanford replied "What that West Side Rollin' 60s like?" Upon making that comment, Shakur became quite upset and had a feeling of showing his power within the gang, whereupon without a second thought, Shakur waited for Stanford outside the store and shot him with a gun. Again Shakur, without thinking of the consequences it would cause, just acted on his emotions at the moment.

Although in Shakur's case, we can see part of the Social Learning Theory, since he was influenced by his peers at an early age to start experimenting with the world of substances and crimes, I believe that the Theory that dominates in this case is the General Strain Theory, since Shakur's emotions made him commit bad decisions and crimes without thinking about how it could affect him in the future, as in the murder he committed.

DeCamp, W., Lunn, B., & Bottom, N. R. (2020). Workplace crime and deviance. In *Elsevier eBooks* (pp. 305–320). <https://doi.org/10.1016/b978-0-12-817748-8.00027-4>