

Theory Summary Section:

Reintegrative Shaming Theory and Policy

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CRJS 426W: Criminological Theory

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24 February 2025

Overview of Reintegrative Shaming Policy

According to John Braithwaite, “The crucial distinction is between shaming that is reintegrative and shaming that is disintegrative (stigmatization). Reintegrative shaming means that expressions of community disapproval, which may range from mild rebuke to degradation ceremonies, are followed by gestures of reacceptance into the community of law-abiding citizens.” John Braithwaite separates two types of shaming in this quote Reintegrative shaming and disintegrative shaming. Reintegrative shaming involves fixing misbehavior and reintegration into society. However, disintegrative shaming, includes public humiliation and rejection. It is theorized people can choose to change and rejoin into society through reintegrative shaming. Reintegrative Shaming Theory (RST) states that if the punishment is compassionate and focuses on rehabilitation over the rejection of the offenders, it might discourage criminals. This might appear differently than others in forms of punishment, especially in cases of domestic violence, and can help address repeated violations and the hesitancy of victims to participate in court proceedings.

The Center for Court Innovation in New York City, NY, is an ongoing organization working with communities to create programs that minimize domestic and gun violence, encouraging the safety and well-being of survivors of domestic abuse (DA) during the court process, and offers “a guide for the city and other funders” on the practices and proposals the organization aims to promote (Packer, n.d.). “Stigmatizing other human beings is a common human frailty because stigmatizing the debased identity of others is a way of shoring up our own identity” (Braithwaite, 1989). Reintegration of offenders reduces their chances of reoffending and increases the distance they maintain from crime, which, based to the reintegrative shaming

theory, results in lower reoffending rates, greater victim engagement, a drop in crime in integrated societies, and less shaming. It stresses the value of community connections and healing actions.

Penalties are common in the current legal system for domestic violence, which might discourage participants or fail to address the deeper issues that contribute to abuse. A move toward rehabilitation which encourage accountability for offenders and assist victim goals is the primary objective covered by the Reintegrative Shaming strategy. Domestic violence policies can decrease case dismissals, improve victim engagement, and encourage long-lasting behavioral change in offenders by including restorative justice principles, community involvement, and organized reintegration programs. This point of view opposes the conventional punitive approach and supports the Prosecutor's Office's objective of lowering domestic abuse without overly depending on the criminal justice system.

Resources

Braithwaite, J. (1989). *Crime, shame, and reintegration*.

<https://doi.org/10.1017/cbo9780511804618>

Packer, H. (n.d.). *Restorative Justice and Intimate Partner Violence* / Center for Justice

Innovation. Center for Justice Innovation.

<https://www.innovatingjustice.org/programs/restorative-justice-IPV>