

# **Criminalizing Transgressing Youth: A Neofunctionalist Analysis of Institution Building**

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Central concepts of functionalism and neofunctionalism:

Problem solving: Societies are problem-solving entities

Structural differentiation: The proliferation of specialized structures is a trend because institutions are created to address problems of social life

Systems: Societies are systems consisting of autonomous but interconnected subsystems

Culture: Society is held together by culture (both mechanical and organic)

Neofunctionalists modify functionalism in various ways.

The article examines how the institution of media, operating under its internal logic, created a problem (youth crime), which led another institution (the Colorado Legislature) to address by creating a third institution, the Youth Offender System.