# Social Problems Works and Discretion

## Summary/Abstract

In this paper, a sociological issue described by German Lopez emerges. The sociological aspect that arises from this article is that of the social problems work and discretion. In this regard, this is an article that talks about the shooting of Saheed Vassell, who was a young man suspected to have some mental illness. Indeed, Saheed Vassell had bipolar disease and was brandishing a metal object to a passerby. While examining this case, Lopez asserts that on a Wednesday, the police received 911 calls, that a man in Brooklyn was pointing a silver gun to the people.

When the police responded to the calls, the New York Chief of police noted that the man took a shooting stance, towards the police officers. The police had to respond by firing ten rounds of bullets at the victim, killing him instantly. After the short out, the police found out that he was holding a bent silver pipe, and not a gun. Moreover, after arriving at the scene, the police did not try to calm the situation but responded immediately by force. Arguably, this is an unethical procedure.

The police do not have the mandate of killing an unarmed man. Furthermore, the person under consideration was a madman. The police failed on proper policing methods, which involves arriving at the scene, assessing the situation and acting based on the risks observed. In fact, the use of crude force to solve a social issue within the community is an old policing method that is ineffective.

## The Description of the Sociological Concept

The sociological concept that emerges from this article is, “the social problem work and discretion concept.” Indeed, this is a sociological concept that developed after the weaknesses of other sociological theories and perspectives. The flaw identified in these sociological theories and aspects is that they define a social problem in a broad view. However, the social problem work and discretion concept explain the social problem in a narrow view (Leckie, et al. 27). In this regard, the social problem work is a theoretical framework that seeks to apply the constructions of the social problems, in the lives of individuals.

On most occasions, the philosophy of the social problems works occurs in a face to face conversation or relationship. Furthermore, this is a theoretical framework applicable to people who engage themselves in doing sociological jobs. Examples of such people are police officers, teachers, social workers and doctors (Spector and John 13). Moreover, under this theoretical framework, people such as the drug addicts, the mentally disturbed and offenders are socially construed as a social problem. Besides, the social workers are under pressure because of the expectations that their leaders require of them, and the reality in their practice.

Furthermore, because of the various codes of practice placed in their fields, the social problem workers feel constrained. For example, doctors have the Hippocratic code, which they are supposed to adhere to when doing their work. Teachers and police officers also have their codes of conduct that define the manner which they are supposed to work. In this regard, the social workers face pressure with their codes of conduct, and the expectations of the society towards them. Nonetheless, the social workers have discretion, and this is because they cannot be under supervision all times.

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## The Connection of the Theory

There is a connection of this story to the sociology of works problem and discretion. For instance, according to this theoretical perspective, the theory applies to social workers. In this regard, the social workers in the newspaper article are the police officers. A code of conduct regulates the police, and one of them is the kind of force to use when seeking to fight crime. For instance, the police are not allowed to kill a person who is not armed. They can only use lethal force when their lives are in danger.

In the scenario above, it is clear that there is a constraint in the works of the police and their ethical code of conduct. For instance, the police used a lethal force to kill a person who was not a threat to them. To prove this point, Lopez asserts that, “four of the police officers fired ten rounds, killing the man (2)”. Indeed, this is an example where the ethical and code of work of the police officers conflicted with the actual reality of their work. Moreover, the concept of discretion also appears in this article. Under the principles of discretion, it is difficult to supervise the police officers all the time. In this regard, they may act in a particular manner that they think is right, when carrying out their duty and this explains why the police officers killed Saheed without taking appropriate measures of determining whether he was armed. Furthermore, the notion of discretion can also occur when a social worker does not want to reveal confidential information. In the article, the New York police refused to disclose the identity of the police officers who killed Saheed Vassell.

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## Works Cited

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