



Chapter 7: Social Control and Deviance

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Case Study: The Saints and the Roughnecks

A 1973 article explored the different views that townspeople held of two teenage gangs, one called the Saints and one called the Roughnecks. The author of the article claimed that even though both gangs were violent, delinquent, and disruptive, townspeople agreed that the gang from the higher social class was not as much trouble as the gang from the lower social class. While objective observation concluded that both gangs were equally destructive, the differing views revealed much about the social preconceptions that were at work in the town.

Social Control and Deviance



Both the Saints and the Roughnecks enjoyed rowdy nights out on the town.

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Section 1 at a Glance

Social Control

- People generally follow social norms—and expect others to as well—because they have internalized the norms that they feel are useful and appropriate.
- When a person has not internalized a norm, society uses sanctions to motivate his or her conformity.
- Sanctions can be positive or negative, formal or informal.
- Social control is necessary to ensure that a society functions smoothly.

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**What if your every
misdeed were posted
on a Web site?**



The Virtual Pillory

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Internalization of Norms

- Every society has norms that must be upheld to run smoothly.
- **Internalization** is the process by which a norm becomes a part of an individual's personality, thus conditioning that individual to conform to society's expectations.
- **Examples:**
 - Sitting in a chair instead of on the floor
 - Stopping at a red light



Sanctions

Positive sanctions

- **Positive sanction:** An action that rewards a particular kind of behavior
- Examples include: a teacher giving good grades, cheers from teammates



Negative sanctions

- **Negative sanction:** A punishment or the threat of punishment used to enforce conformity.
- Examples include: a parking ticket, ridicule



Formal sanctions

- **Formal sanction:** A reward or punishment given by a formal organization or regulatory agency
- Examples include: schools giving high or low grades, a business giving a raise or firing a worker



Informal sanctions

- **Informal sanction:** A spontaneous expression of approval or disapproval given by an individual or group
- Examples include: standing ovations, gossip

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Quick Lab

Observing Norms in Social Interaction

Have you ever thought about the norms you obey when carrying on a conversation? Most of us follow certain guidelines for social interactions without realizing it.

PROCEDURE

- 1 Read the questions about conversational behaviors below.

Social Distance: How close or far apart do people stand or sit when talking to one another?

Hand Gestures: Do some people use hand gestures when they speak? Do these gestures clarify or distract from their points?

Eye Contact: Do the individuals maintain eye contact? Is eye contact important?

Facial Expressions: What kinds of facial expressions do individuals make during conversation? How does the other person react?

- 2 Observe your friends and family during conversation, paying close attention to the behaviors mentioned above.
- 3 Record your observations in a chart.

ANALYSIS

1. Think about what you saw. What can you conclude about the norms that govern these behaviors?
2. Were these norms followed, or did some people violate them? How did other people react to the violation?
3. Discuss your observations and conclusions as a class.

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Social Control

- **Social control** is enforcing norms through either internal or external means.
 - **Primary means is self-control**
 - **Other agents use sanctions**
 - Police, religious figures, family, peer group, and public opinion
- Behavior that violates society's basic norms jeopardizes the social order.



Current Research in Sociology

Death Penalty: The Ultimate Sanction

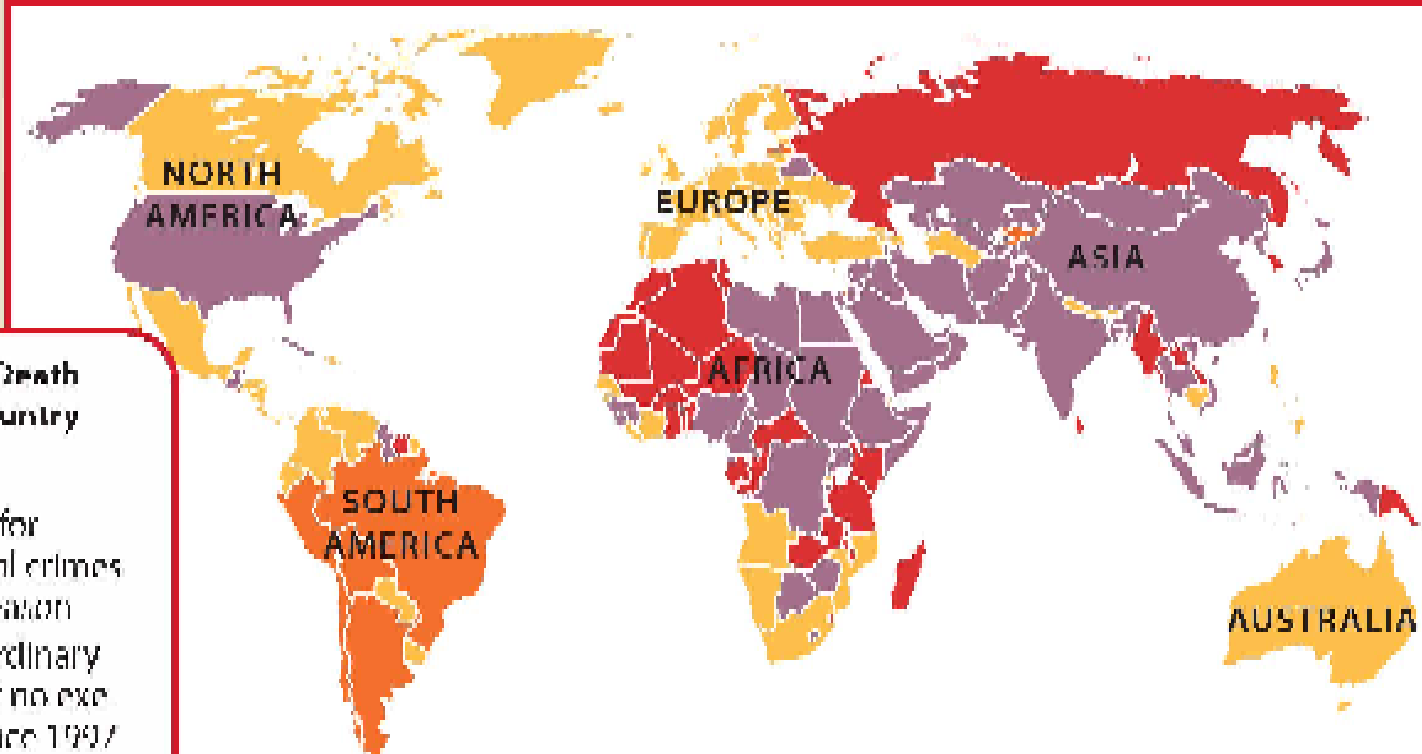
This sanction has been used since ancient times to punish murderers and other criminals. Its morality is debated today. Many nations have banned the death penalty, though the United States still allows it.

- Opposition to the death penalty arose during the Enlightenment, which resulted in limiting its use.
- Venezuela became the first country to ban the practice.
- By 2007, two-thirds of nations had banned the practice.
- Critics claim the practice is immoral and ineffective, and cannot be administered fairly.
- Support for the death penalty remains strong.

THE DEATH PENALTY AROUND THE WORLD

Status of the Death Penalty by Country

- None
- Used only for exceptional crimes such as treason
- Used for ordinary crimes but no executions since 1997
- Used for ordinary crimes such as murder



Source: Amnesty International, *The Death Penalty Worldwide Developments in 2007*

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Thinking Critically

- What does it mean when a country is considered “abolitionist in practice”?
- Why do you think the death penalty is a focus of such debate in the United States?

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Section 2 at a Glance

Deviance

- Deviance is any behavior that violates significant social norms.
- Deviance can serve positive functions, such as clarifying norms, unifying the group, diffusing tension, promoting social change, and providing jobs.
- Functionalists, conflict theorists, and interactionists offer different theories to explain deviance.

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Retreating from Society

Why would a teenage boy lock himself in his room and hide from society?

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The Nature of Deviance

Behavior that violates significant social norms is called **deviance**.

Violating Norms

- Some norms deal with fairly insignificant behaviors.
- Because there are so many norms, occasional violations are unavoidable.
- Behaviors deemed deviant differ across times, cultures, and situations.

The Label of Deviance

- Individuals must be caught committing a deviant act and be stigmatized by society.
- A **stigma** is a mark of social disgrace that sets the deviant apart from the rest of society.
- Sociologists usually refer to the negative social reactions.



Social Functions of Deviance

Deviance has some uses in society

- Helps to clarify norms, unify the group, diffuse tension, and promote social change
- Serves to define the boundaries of acceptable behavior
- Punishment of deviance can prevent others from same deviance
- Draws lines of society and “outsiders”
- Displays of minor deviance diffuse tensions
- Provides legitimate jobs such as lawyers and police



Explaining Deviance

The three sociological perspectives explain the causes and uses of deviance.

Functionalist Perspective

- **Strain theory:** deviance is the natural outgrowth of the values, norms, and structure of society
- Pressure on individuals to meet standards that they can't meet
- **Anomie:** the norms of society are unclear or no longer apply
- Results in confusion over rules for behavior
- Five “modes of adaptation,” or reactions to societal norms
 - Conformity: acceptance of goals and methods of reaching them
 - Innovation: acceptance of goals but not means of reaching them
 - Ritualism: abandon goals but maintain expected behaviors
 - Retreatism: reject both goals and means of reaching them
 - Rebellion: seek to substitute new goals and means for existing goals and means

Social Control and Deviance

MERTON'S STRAIN THEORY OF DEVIANCE

QUICK
FACTS

Merton suggested five responses to the strain that individuals feel when they attempt to meet the cultural goal of economic success through the approved norm of hard work.

Mode of Adaptation	Method of Adaptation	Seeks Culture's Goals	Follows Culture's Norms
Conformity	Accepts cultural goals and pursues them through culturally approved ways	Yes	Yes
Innovation	Accepts cultural goals but uses disapproved ways of achieving them	Yes	No
Ritualism	Abandons cultural goals but continues to follow society's norms	No	Yes
Retreatism	Abandons cultural goals and the approved ways of achieving them	No	No
Rebellion	Challenges cultural goals and norms and substitutes new ones	No—tries to replace	No—tries to replace

Skills Focus **INTERPRETING CHARTS** Using the chart and what you've learned from your reading, identify the modes of adaptation represented in pictures A and B at right.



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Conflict Perspective

- Sees social life as a struggle between the ruling classes and lower classes
- Says people commit deviant acts to gain or maintain power
- Ruling class deems any behavior that threatens its power as deviant



Interactionist Perspective

- Three major explanations: control theory, cultural transmission theory, and labeling theory
- **Control theory:** states that deviance is normal and studies why people conform; states that people conform when they have strong ties to the community

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- **Cultural transmission theory:** states that deviance is a learned behavior; deviants are socialized into deviant behavior instead of acceptable behavior; individuals will adopt the behavior and goals of whomever they are in contact with
- **Differential association:** the relative closeness to deviant and non-deviant individuals
- **Labeling theory:** focuses on how people come to be labeled “deviant;” suggests there are two types of deviance
- **Primary deviance:** occasional violation of norms; neither self nor society labels person “deviant”
- **Secondary deviance:** deviance as a lifestyle; both self and society label person “deviant”

Perspectives on Deviance

Functionalist Perspective Deviance is a natural part of society. It serves positive functions, such as clarifying social norms, as well as negative ones. Deviance results from the strain of goals incompatible with the available means of achieving them.

Conflict Perspective Deviance is a result of competition and social inequality. People with power commit deviant acts to hold on to power. They also label as deviant behavior that threatens them. Those without power commit deviant acts to obtain economic rewards or to relieve their feelings of powerlessness.

Interactionist Perspective Interaction among individuals influences deviance. Control theory suggests that strong social bonds make people conform to norms and refrain from deviance. Cultural transmission theory proposes that deviance is a learned behavior. Labeling theory examines how individuals are identified as deviant.

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Section 3 at a Glance

Crime

- Crime affects everyone in the United States, some as victims, some as criminals, and some as observers.
- Crimes are grouped into five general categories: violent crime, property crime, victimless crime, white-collar crime, and organized crime.
- Crime statistics are gathered and reported by two main sources, the *Uniform Crime Reports* and the National Crime Victimization Survey.
- The criminal-justice system—made up of the police, the courts, and corrections—deals with crimes that have been committed and reported.

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SOCIOLOGY CLOSE UP



How does the definition of crime change with time and circumstance?

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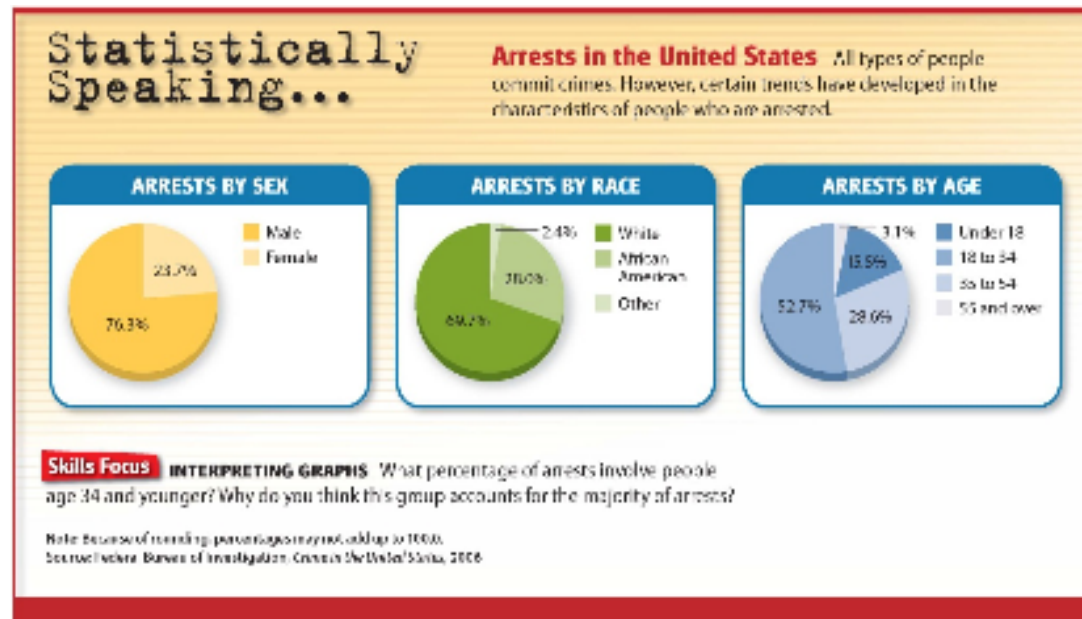
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Crime and Criminals

- A **crime** is any act that is labeled as such by those in authority and is prohibited by law.
- An act that is *immoral* is not necessarily *illegal*.
- Criminals can be any age, gender, or race, although people under 35 are more likely to be involved in crime.

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Types of Crime

Violent Crime

- Murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault
- Make up small percentage of total crime rates, but still alarming
- One every 22 seconds in the United States
- Most victims are African Americans
- Majority of murders committed with guns



Property Crime

- Burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson
- One every three seconds in the United States
- People under 25 commit most crimes
- Many crimes committed by those on drugs

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Victimless Crime

- Prostitution, illegal gambling, illegal drug use, and vagrancy
- Although classified as “victimless,” often have negative consequences for society

White-Collar Crime

- **White-collar crimes** include fraud, tax evasion, embezzlement, price-fixing, toxic pollution, insider trading, and political corruption
- Corporations can be charged with crimes, not just individuals

Organized Crime

- **Crime syndicate:** a large-scale organization of professional criminals that controls some vice or legitimate business through violence
- Legitimate businesses can serve as “fronts” for illegal activities

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Social Control and Deviance

FBI CLASSIFICATIONS OF CRIME

QUICK
FACTS

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) classifies crime into 29 categories. The eight Part I offenses, also called index crimes, are more serious than the Part II offenses. This dividing line varies somewhat from state to state.

PART I OFFENSES (More Serious)

1. **Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter** willful killing of one human being by another
2. **Forcible Rape** sexual violation of a person by force and against the person's will
3. **Robbery** use of the threat of force to take anything of value from a person
4. **Aggravated Assault** unlawful attack on another person for the purpose of causing great bodily injury
5. **Burglary (breaking and entering)** attempted or actual unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or theft
6. **Larceny (theft, except auto)** unlawful taking of property without using force or fraud, such as pocket picking
7. **Motor Vehicle Theft** unlawful stealing or driving away and abandoning of a motor vehicle
8. **Arson** attempted or willful burning

PART II OFFENSES (Less Serious)

9. **Other Assaults** attacks of a less-serious nature than aggravated assault
10. **Forgery and Counterfeiting** attempting to or making or possessing anything false that seems true to deceive
11. **Fraud** use of false pretenses to obtain money or property
12. **Embezzlement** misappropriation or misuse of money or property entrusted to an individual's care or custody
13. **Stolen Property** attempting to or buying, receiving, or possessing stolen property
14. **Vandalism** willful or vicious destruction, injury, disfigurement, or defacement of property
15. **Weapons** all violations of regulations related to manufacturing, carrying, possessing, or using firearms
16. **Prostitution and Commercialized Vice** sex offenses of a commercialized nature
17. **Sex Offenses** attempts at or consensual sex with someone underage or offenses against common decency
18. **Drug Abuse Violations** unlawful possession, sale, or use of narcotics
19. **Gambling** promoting, permitting, or engaging in illegal gambling
20. **Offenses Against Family and Children** nonsupport, neglect, desertion, or abuse of family and children
21. **Driving Under the Influence** driving or operating any motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs
22. **Liquor Laws** violations of state or local liquor laws
23. **Drunkenness** intoxication
24. **Disorderly Conduct** breach of the peace
25. **Vagrancy** includes vagabondage, begging, and loitering
26. **Suspicion** arrests for no specific offense, followed by release without placing charges
27. **Curfew and Loitering Laws (juveniles)** violations of local curfew and loitering laws, where such laws exist
28. **Runaways (juveniles)** limited to juveniles taken into custody under local statutes as runaways
29. **All Other Offenses** all violations of state and local laws except traffic laws and those listed here

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation

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Crime Statistics

- **The Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) is published annually by the FBI.**
 - **Uses data from local police departments**
 - **Factors that limit reporting of crimes:**
 - Not all complaints make it into a formal report.
 - People less likely to make a report against friend or family member.
 - Police more likely to make an official report when crime is against a high-status person.
 - Victims less likely to report some forms of crime.
- **The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is published by the Bureau of Justice Statistics.**
 - **Uses data from crime victims about reported and unreported crimes**
 - **Relies on interviews with representative sample**



TECHNOLOGY FOCUS

Futuristic Crime Fighting

Police departments and security agencies in the United States are already using technology to detect and prevent crime. For example, millions of video cameras monitor our activities in public spaces. Researchers are already working on improving the capabilities of video surveillance. One recently developed software uses a complex equation to analyze streaming video and detect suspicious activities. The software's ability to flag activity that may be criminal addresses the difficulty of monitoring several screens of video footage at the same time.

As technology advances, however, the potential applications seem to stray into the realm of science fiction. What if authorities could see beyond what is visible to a video camera and read someone's mind? Government and university researchers are working



on technology that would allow them to remotely detect brain activity. And scientists have already made progress toward decoding what they might find there. In a 2007 study, neuroscientists were able to look at brain scans and determine whether an individual given two numbers intended to add or subtract them. It was the first time scientists were able to determine intentions. As the technology continues to progress, some believe that police may one day be able to apply it to detect thoughts of criminal behavior.

Thinking Critically

Make Generalizations What are some of the ethical implications of these technologies and their application as crime-prevention tools?



The Criminal-Justice System

Police

- Control over who is arrested
- **Police discretion:** the ability to decide who is actually arrested
- **Racial profiling:** the practice of assuming that nonwhite Americans are more likely to commit crimes



Corrections

- **Corrections:** Imprisonment, parole, probation, community service
- Functions: retribution, deterrence, rehabilitation, social protection
- **Recidivism:** repeated criminal behavior



Courts

- Hold trials to determine guilt or innocence
- If guilty, assign punishments
- **Plea bargaining:** the process of legal negotiation that allows a guilty plea in return for a lighter sentence



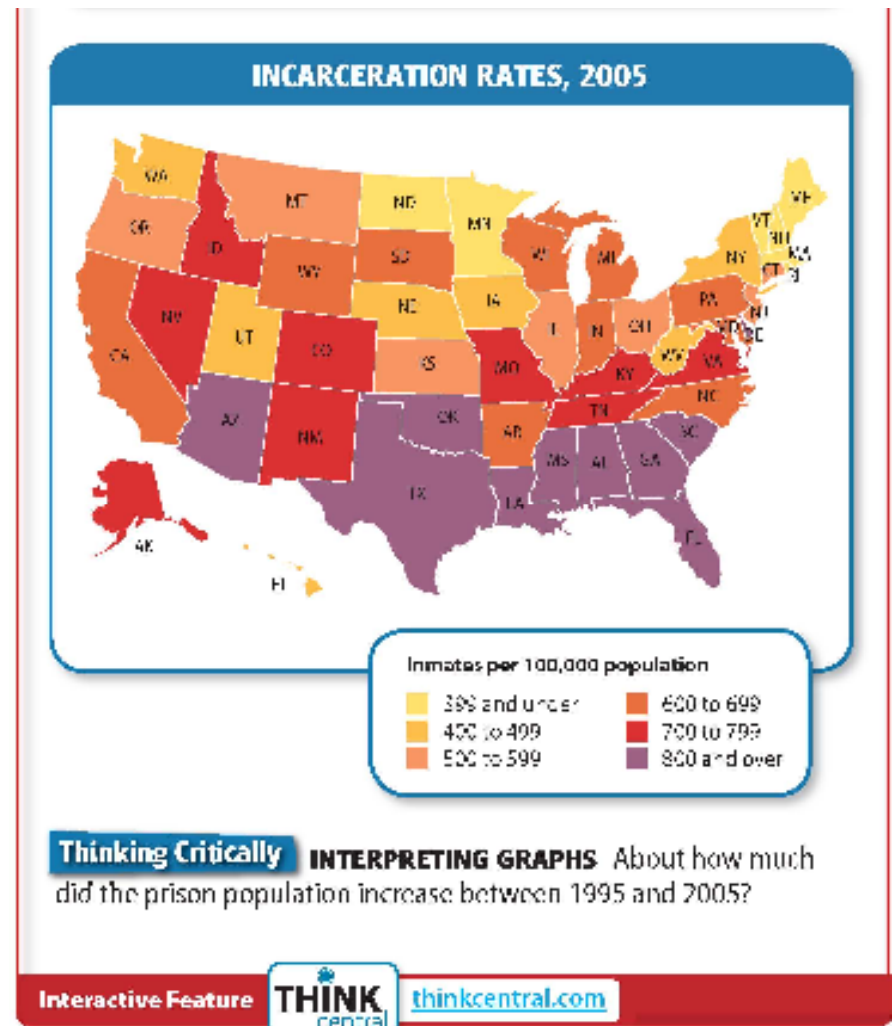
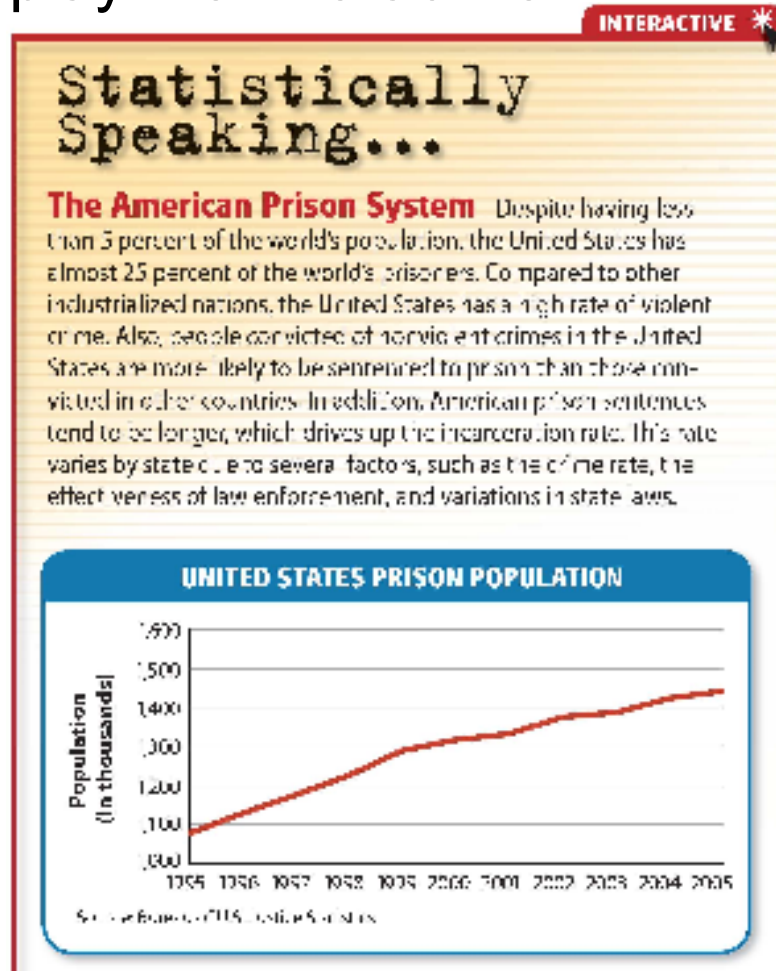
Juvenile-Justice System

- Young offenders cannot be expected to be as responsible as adults
- New laws ensure juveniles receive fair treatment
- Some places treat young as adults

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Social Control and Deviance

Click on the image below to play the Interactive.



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Sociology in Today's World

Identity Theft

Identity theft occurs when a criminal uses another person's name and financial standing to buy items or complete financial transactions.

Victims of identity theft often lose their financial standings because of the crime.

- Identity thieves may rent an apartment, get medical services, make large purchases, or use another's name while being arrested.
- Federal Trade Commission estimates there are more than 9 million cases a year.
- Methods of theft include stealing wallets or phishing.
- Prevention methods include shredding documents and monitoring bank statements.

Social Control and Deviance

Police discovered these stolen identification cards and credit cards during a raid.



THE STATS ON IDENTITY THEFT

3.7% of American adults fell victim to identity theft in 2005.

\$3,257 was the average amount of money lost in each case of identity theft in 2006, up from \$1,408 the year before.

166,248 unique phishing messages were detected by Symantec, an Internet security company, in the last six months of 2006.

72% of Americans are concerned about their personal records being stolen over the Internet.

Sources: Federal Trade Commission, 2007; Gartner, 2007; Symantec Internet Security Threat Report, 2007; ABC News poll, 2005

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Thinking Critically

- In what category of crime does identity theft belong?
- How might the different theoretical perspectives on deviance explain identity theft?

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Experiment: Applying What You've Learned

How to Be an Ethnomethodologist

What role do norms play in your everyday life?

1. Introduction

- In this experiment, you will examine the norms you have internalized by choosing one to break.
- Ethnomethodology is the study of how people do things.
- Ethnomethodologists deliberately break norms in order to define them.

2. Choosing a Norm

- Identify a norm you can break, resulting in unique but harmless behavior that is atypical for you.
- Once you identify a norm, break it. Observe the people around you. If possible, repeat the experiment in different settings.
- Write notes about your experience.

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Experiment (cont.)

3. Record Your Observations

- **Using your notes, write a report of your experiment that answers the following questions:**
- What norm did you choose?
- What setting did you choose?
- What kind of people witnessed your experiment?
- How did people respond?
- How did you feel while breaking the norm?



4. Role-play Your Experience

- In small groups, create role-playing scripts for one of the group members' experiment.
- Choose a spokesperson to present the skit and describe the possible effects on society if others broke the same norm.

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Experiment (cont.)

5. Discussion

- **What did you learn from this experiment? As a group, discuss the following:**
- Which norm breaking was most interesting?
- What emotions did you experience?
- Was your behavior seen by an authority figure?
- Did you experience any sanctions for your behavior?
- Did you think of yourself as deviant?

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