AQA GCSE SOCIOLOGY: CRIME AND DEVIANCE

NAME
CLASS
TEACHER

What are they key ideas in crime and deviance?	R	A	G
The difference between crime and deviance ● I can give examples of how the definition of crime and deviance changes depending on time, place, location, and situation ● I can describe what is meant by the social construction of crime ● I understand how changes in social norms may sometimes lead to changes in the law ● I can explain the purpose of sanctions and laws			
Formal and informal social control ● I can explain what is meant by social control ● I understand why social control is needed in society ● I can explain the difference between informal and formal social control ● I can name five agents of social control *and* how each of these maintains the social order ● I can explain the functionalist view that social control benefits society ● I can explain the Marxist view that social control keeps the working class in place and benefits the ruling class ● I can explain the feminist view that social control exists to keep women in their place ● I understand the role of the media in maintaining social control ● I can explain the role of the courts in maintaining social control			
How crime is measured: official statistics, victim surveys, and self-report studies ● I can explain the role of official statistics in showing how much crime there is ● I can explain the dark figure of crime ● I can explain victim surveys and self-report studies ● I can describe the advantages and disadvantages of each of the above methods			

Biological explanations of crime			
● I can explain the role of genes in those who commit crime ● I can explain Lomboro's research ● I can explain Mednick's research on adopted children			
Psychological explanations of crime			
● I can explain the role of mental illness and psychiatric disorders in those who commit crime ● I can explain Bowlby's research on maternal deprivation and his study on juvenile delinquency			
Social explanations of crime			
● I can explain the following explanations of crime: ● Merton's strain theory, including key words such as 'illegitimate means' and 'innovation' ● Cohen's ideas on status frustration, including key words such as 'alternative status hierarchy' ● Inadequate socialisation ● Relative deprivation ● Labelling theory			
Theories of crime, including functionalists, Marxists, feminists, and interactionists			
● I can explain Durkheim's ideas on why crime serves a positive function in society ● I can explain Marxist ideas on how capitalism is *criminogenic* and why the bourgeoisie are pushed to commit crime ● I can explain Marxist ideas on why laws benefit the bourgeoisie ● I know the difference between white-collar and corporate crime ● I can explain feminist views on crime, including the work of Heidensohn on female social control, the chivalry thesis, and Carlen's work on poverty and female crime ● I understand what labelling theory is, including the work of Becker and Cicrourel's study about 'typifications'			
Who commits crime			
● I can explain the involvement of different social groups in crime, which means I can answer the following questions confidently: ● What explanations are there for young people getting involved in crime? ● Why are men more likely to be involved in crime? ● Why are women less likely to be convicted of a crime? ● Why, over the last 10 years, are women more likely to be convicted? ● Why are some ethnic minorities over represented in the prison population? ● Why are young black and Asian men more likely to be stopped by the police? What is white collar crime? ● Why are working class people more likely to end up in jail than middle class people? ● Why is the crime rate higher in urban areas than rural areas?			

Debates on crime

- Treatment of young offenders - I can explain different arguments about whether or not young criminals should be sentenced for committing crime
- Prison and punishment - I can explain different arguments about whether criminals should be sent to prison
- Violent crime and sentencing - I can explain different arguments about whether violent criminals should be sentenced to life in prison
- The media - I can explain different arguments about whether the media are biased in their representation of crime *and* whether or not the media create crime in society

Specialist key terminology

Agents of social control	
Anomie	
Anti-social behaviour	
Chivalry thesis	
Community service	
Crime	
Corporate crime	
Crime rate	
Dark figure of crime	

Deviance	
Formal social control	
Labelling theory	
Self-fulfilling prophecy	
Official crime statistics	
Agents of informal social control	
Recorded crime	
Relative deprivation	
Scapegoating	
Self-report studies	
Sanctions	

Stereotype	
Status frustration - Cohen	
Strain theory - Merton	
Victim surveys	
White collar crime	
Heidensohn - Female social control	
Male and female socialisation	
Carlen - Women, crime, and poverty	
Racism - Stephen Lawrence case and the Macpherson Report	
Moral panics and folk devils	
Police bias - stop and search	

How can I use this revision booklet?

This booklet walks you through all of the core sub-topics in Crime and Deviance. It explains key concepts and ideas which allow you to give the activities a go. There are opportunities to make mind-maps, answer exam questions, and create summaries of important sociological studies. This booklet can be your main revision tool, but please do not be afraid to do your own online revision too!

Suggested Revision Tasks

1. Read and highlight the information on the key sociologists you need to know.

2. Create a summary mind map or revision cards trying to reduce the information into a few bullet points with key phrases and sociological concepts. Use pictures / images if this is helpful to you.

3. Create your own multiple choice quiz on all of the key thinkers. Create an answer sheet separately (so someone else can test you).

4. Get someone to test you on your multiple choice quiz. Repeat this process regularly.

5. The following pages contain previous exam questions, separated by topic and then into Items (sources) questions, followed by 3, 4 and 12 marker questions. Choose the ones you find hardest and practice those first. Remember to aim for 1 minute per mark timewise.

6. Create plans for 12 mark essay questions. Revise your plan (using the look, cover, say, check method or by telling someone your plan out loud).

7. Practice writing the essays in timed conditions (without your plan). There are sentence starters in this booklet.

'Discuss how far sociologists agree...' – Sentence Starters for 12 Markers

Point	• On the one hand [Marxists] might argue... • On the other hand [interactionists] might think... • [Feminists] would agree with the idea that... • Some sociologists would support this idea because... • One argument in favour of...is... • Another point linked to this issue is... • Alternatively, other sociologists
Evidence	• One example of this is... • The study by...shows that... • The sociologist [name] argued that... • For example, in this study [name] it was found that... • For example [describe a situation] • This is evidenced by... • [Marxist] sociologist ... said that... • [Feminist] sociologists would refer to / use the example of ... to...
Explanation	• The data shows that... • This means that... • This evidence demonstrates • This study shows that... • The consequence of this is... • This links to the idea that...because... • This evidence helps show that... • This supports/criticises the idea that...because...
Linking	• Therefore... • As a result, it is clear to say that sociologists do/do not agree that... • This would clearly support/challenge the idea that... • Sociologists therefore may think that ... • Consequently, this means that sociologists are likely to agree that...
Evaluation	• However, one clear problem with this study is... • However, one criticism of this theoretical approach is... • One challenge to this is... • There is a problem with this view because... • Some sociologists [such as...] would disagree with this view because...
Writing Conclusions	This is where you need to make an argument which has clear reasons and is justified. This means that you are forming an overall judgement which directly responds to the question. *It is clear that there are a range of sociological perspectives on the issue. Whilst it might*

Social construction of crime and deviance

A crime is an illegal act that is punishable by law. Deviance is behaviour which the majority of people disagree with, or which goes against the rules and norms of society. Deviant acts can be- but are not always- illegal. Illegal acts are not necessarily considered deviant.

Deviance is defined according to the social setting in which it takes place. Behaviour classed as 'deviant' can vary according to who performs the act and where they do so. What is classified as deviant also varies between culture and over time.

Many sociologists argue that while crime involves legally defined behaviour, deviance is socially defined.

Whether an act is considered deviant or not depends on how people view and label the act. This means that deviance is judged according to the social setting or the context in which it takes place.

Historical evidence suggests that what is considered as deviant can change over time. E.g. attitudes to smoking and to homosexuality have changed in Britain post World War II.

Cross-cultural evidence suggests that what is seen as deviant can vary across cultures. E.g. differing attitudes as to what is acceptable for women to wear and what is seen as appropriate within their group or society. Both historical and cross-cultural evidence also suggest that what is classed as criminal behaviour can change over time and vary between cultures. E.g. alcohol consumption was illegal in 1920s America and is still restricted in some countries today.

- **A crime is an illegal act** that is punishable by law. If a person commits a crime and is detected, they could be arrested, charged and prosecuted. If found guilty, they will receive a sentence such as a community order, fine or imprisonment. Some illegal acts are not necessarily seen as deviant. For example, parking cars on double yellow lines or using a mobile phone whilst driving, even though these activities are against the law.

- **Deviance refers to behaviour that does not conform to a society's norms or rules.** If a person behaves in a way that is seen as deviant and this is discovered, it could lead to negative sanctions such as being told off, ignored or ridiculed. Some, but not all, deviant acts are also illegal. **Legal deviance is behaviour that is seen as 'abnormal' by most people in a society, but it does not break the law.**

Describe one way in which deviance can be seen to be socially constructed. (3 marks)

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Social control

What are social order and social control?

Social order us necessary for society to run smoothly. The Functionalists approach argues that social order is based on consensus (agreement). The Marxist approach argues that social order is based on the power of the ruling class over the working class. Much of our behaviour is socially controlled by groups and society.

What is the difference between formal and informal social control?

Formal social control is based on written rules and laws. Informal social control is based on informal social processes and is enforced through social pressure.

Agencies of social control are the various groups (such as peer groups) and organizations (such as the police force) in society that control or constrain people's behaviour and actions. Agencies of formal social control are bodies that make the formal written rules, enforce them or punish people who break them.

Informal social control is based on unwritten or 'taken-for-granted' rules and is enforced through social pressure from groups such as families, friends or beers. It is the control of people's behaviour that is based on social processes such as the approval or disapproval of others.

One way which individuals are encouraged to conform to informal social rules is through peer pressure when a group exerts social pressure on its members to conform the group's norms. Another way is through the rewards and punishments that some parents use to encourage their children to behave appropriately.

KEY WORDS
- Negative sanctions: sanctions that punish those who do not conform to the group's expectations
- Peer group: a group of people who share a similar status and position in society, such as people of a similar age, outlook or occupation
- Positive sanctions: sanctions that reward those who behave according to the groups' expectations, for example through praise
- Social order: this occurs when society is stable, ordered and runs smoothly without continual disruption.
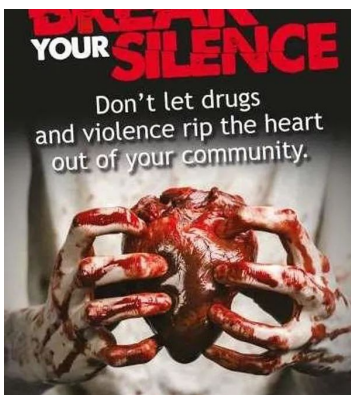
Scenario	Formal or Informal Social Control
James has been late to school several times in the last two weeks. He is told by his teachers that he has to serve detention as a result.	
Shuaib has recently been struggling to focus on work and as a result has been called into his manager's office. He is issued with a verbal warning for his performance.	
Maddison has recently been involved in an environmental protest where she and other protestors were caught trespassing onto private property. She has been issued with a police caution for her behaviour.	
Ash has been charged with dangerous driving and has been sentenced to community service in a magistrates court.	

Identify and describe one informal agency of social control. (3 marks)

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Using the bubble below, create mind map explaining how the family, media, peer groups, religion, police, law courts, and government each maintain the social order - _how do they shape our behaviour?_

How do agents of social control maintain the social order?
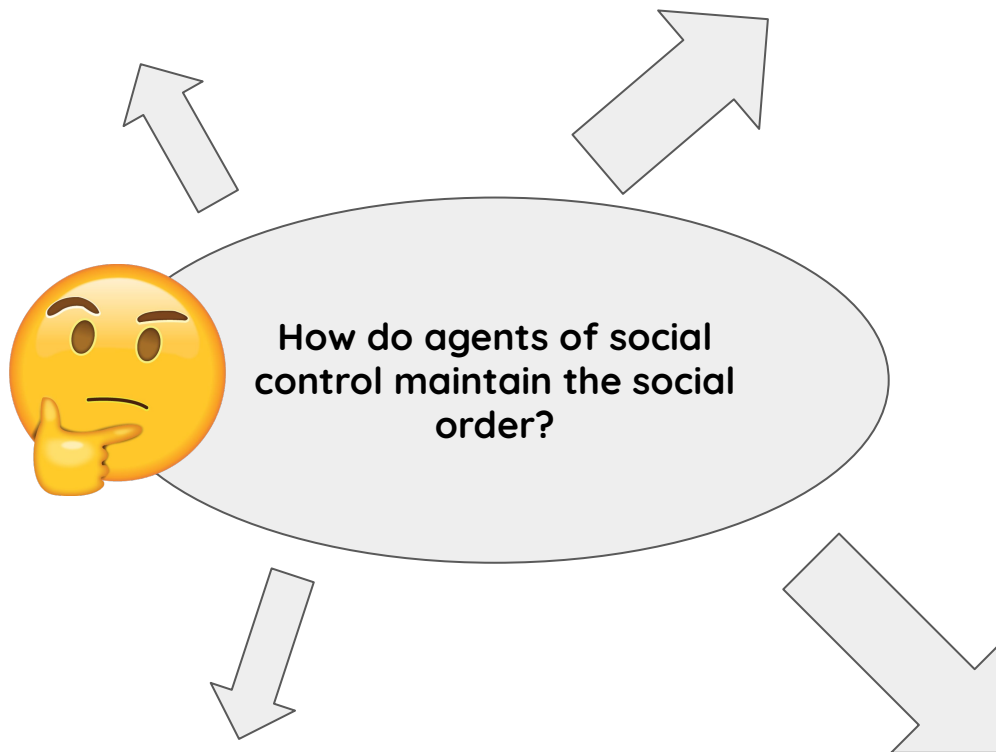
How is crime measured?

What are the main sources of statistical data on the extent of crime?

Official statistics on police recorded crime are published in the UK by the home office. Victim surveys and self-report studies also provide statistical data on the extent of crime. British crime surveys estimates of crime are higher than the figures on crimes recorded by the police
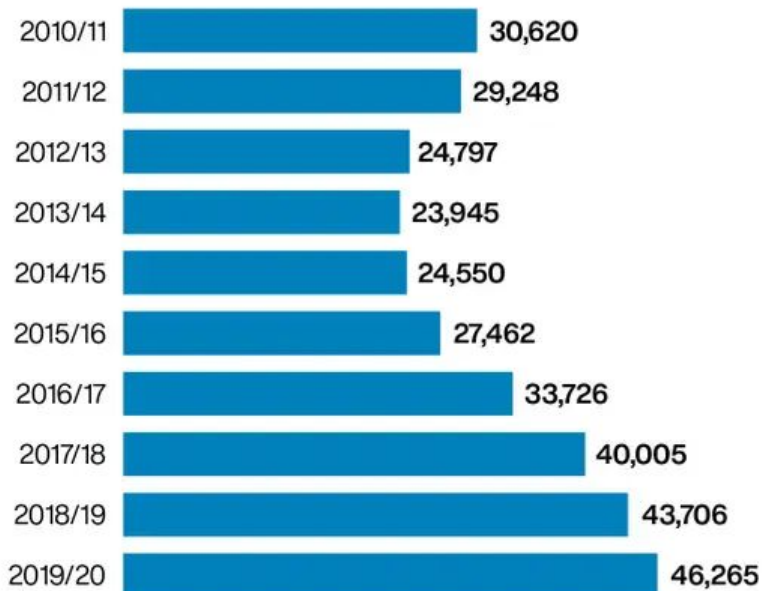
How far do official statics on recorded crime measure the extent of crime?

Not all crime is discovered, witnessed, reported or recorded, so official statistics on police recorded crime do not tell the whole story.

What is meant by the 'social construction' of official crime statistics?

Official statistics on police recorded crime are based on a series of decisions made by, for example, victims and police officers. As such, they do not provide a true picture of crime levels.

Knife crime offences recorded by police in England & Wales

Year	Offences
2010/11	30,620
2011/12	29,248
2012/13	24,797
2013/14	23,945
2014/15	24,550
2015/16	27,462
2016/17	33,726
2017/18	40,005
2018/19	43,706
2019/20	46,265

PA graphic. Source: ONS. Figures exclude Greater Manchester Police due to data issues

Why might knife crime offences go under-reported?

Official statistics are an important secondary source of quantitative data. Police recorded crime statistics exclude the 'hidden figure' of crime including unreported and unrecorded crime.

The following reasons for this are:

- Some crimes are **not witnessed/discovered**. For example, white-collar crimes such as fraud or misuse of expense accounts may not be discovered
- Some crimes that are witnessed or discovered are not reported to the police
- Less serious crimes such as vandalism tend to be under-reported while most car theft is reported, probably for insurance purposes
- People tend not to report crimes they see as private, perhaps because they feel shame

- Victims might not report a crime such as sexual assault because they feel that the police will handle it insensitively
- Employers might not report crimes that their employees commit. For example, if company directors discover that one of their managers had stolen company funds, they may not report it to the police in order to avoid negative publicity. Such white-collar crime is under-represented in police-recorded crime statistics.
- The police do not necessarily record all crime that is reported to them
- They may see the crime as too trivial to record
- They may doubt the complainant's report
- They may have insufficient evidence that a crime has actually been committed
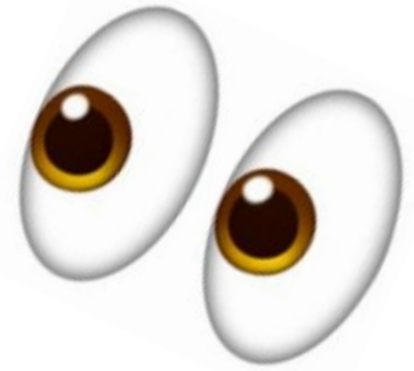
Sociologists argue that police recorded crime stats are '**socially constructed**'. This means that the stats are the outcome of the decisions and choices made by people, such as witnesses, victims or police officers, who are involved in their construction.

Describe one way in which deviance can be seen to be socially constructed. (3 marks)

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CRIME REDUCTION AREA

WE ARE WATCHING YOU

COMMUNITY CRIME WATCH
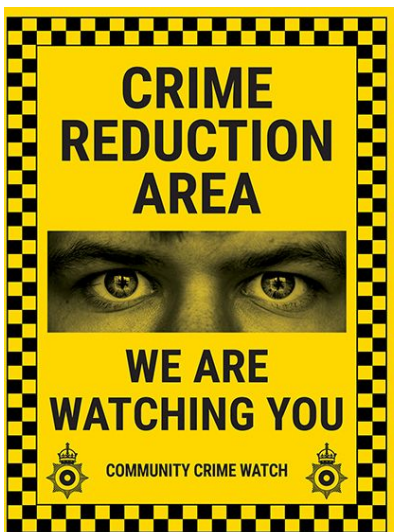
Why might incidents of sexual assault go under-reported *and* under-recorded?

Actual incidence of sexual assault
Unknown

Reported in victim survey 143,900[a]
100%

Reported to police (27,197)[b]
18.9%[c]

Recorded by police (18,172)[d]
12.6%

Adjudicated defendants (1,816)[e]
1.3%

People proven guilty (1,383)[f]
0.9%

People in custody (1,024)[e]
0.7%
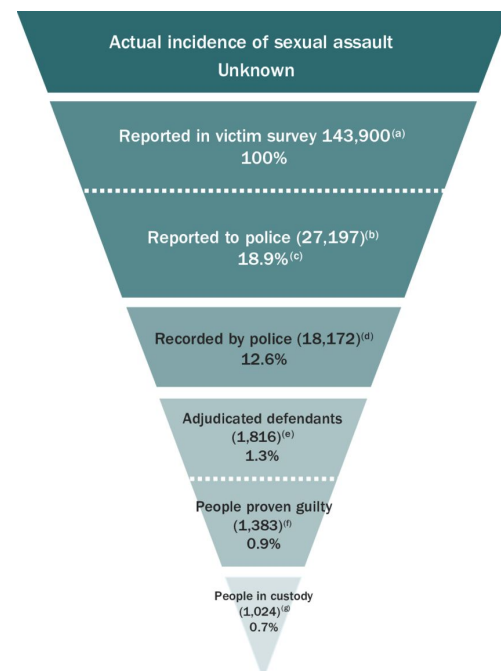
Victim Surveys and Self-Report Studies

Victim surveys ask people about their experiences of crime.

The British Crime Survey (BCS), for example, measures crime via surveys with large samples of households in England and Wales (representative). It interviews people about whether they have been a victim of particular offences during the last year, and if so, whether they reported the crimes to the police.

Victim surveys indicate that many victims do not report crimes to the police. This under-reporting helps to explain why the police-recorded crime statistics are lower than the estimated statistics based on victim surveys.

Self-report studies ask people to reveal offences they have committed.

The Offending, Crime and Justice Survey (OCJS), for example, is a longitudinal study that measures the extent of self-reported offending, drug use and antisocial behaviour in England & Wales, particularly among 10-25 year olds.

The 2004 OCJS interviewed around 5000 young people about their involvement in various offences during the previous year. Each interview lasted for around one hour. Interviewees listened to the more sensitive questions via headphones and entered their answers on a laptop without the interviewer's help. By asking people to disclose offences they have committed, the OCJS provides information on offenders and offences that are not necessarily dealt with by official agents of formal social control.

Victim Surveys	
Advantages	Disadvantages

Self-Report Studies	
Advantages	Disadvantages

What is the dark figure of crime?

Recorded Crime

Unrecorded Crime

This is the amount of unreported, unrecorded, or undiscovered crime.

This gap between reported and unreported crimes calls the reliability of official crime statistics into question, but all measures of crime have a dark figure to some degree. The gap in official statistics is largest for less serious crimes. For example, it is harder for murder to go undiscovered than fraud or identity theft.

How does a crime come to be included in official statistics?

a. Detected - seen, heard, witnessed
b. Reported - victim or witness notifies authorities
c. Recorded - police recognition

Total Crime

Victimless crimes

Crimes reported to the police

Crimes reported on a victimization survey

Intimate partner and sexual violence
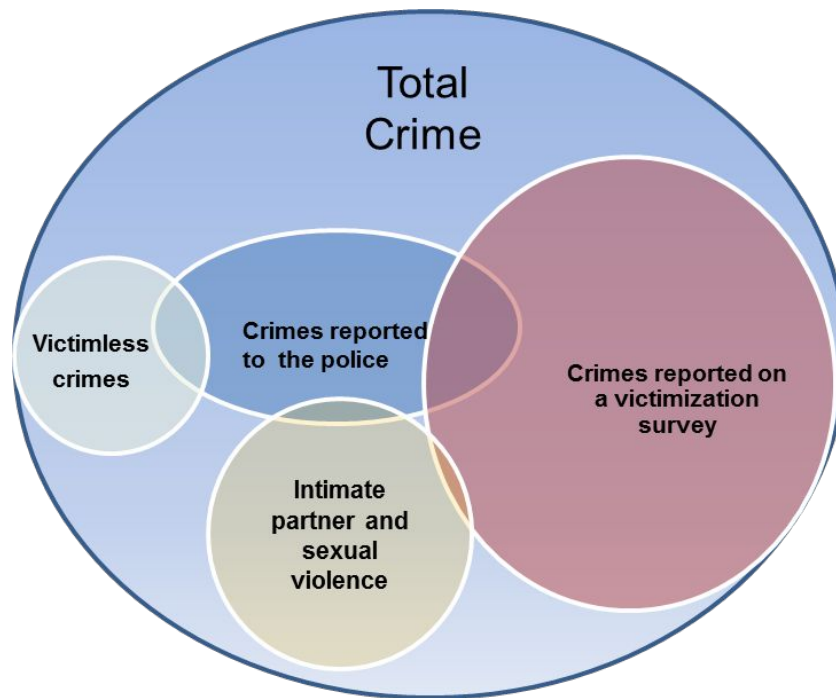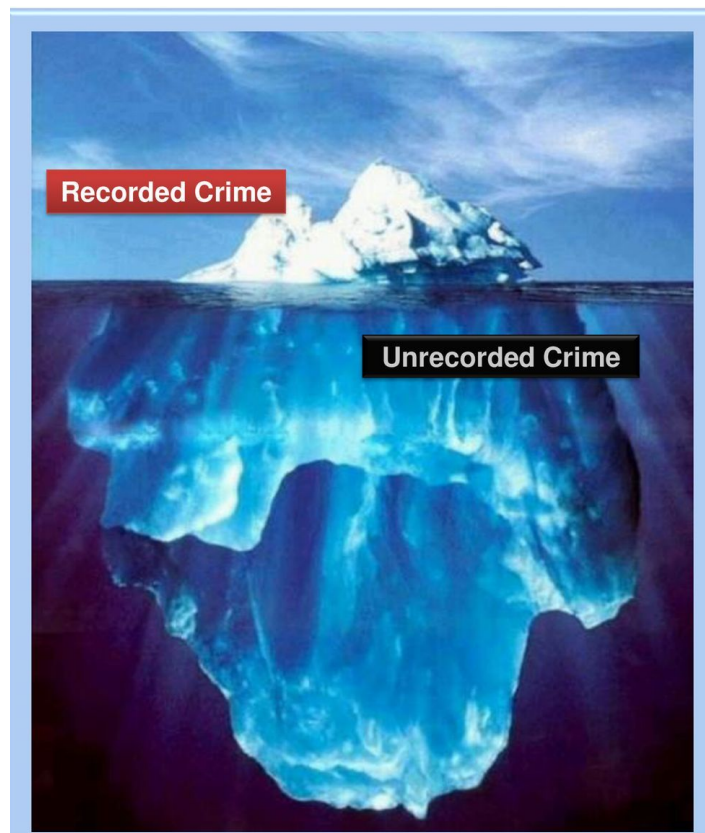
Explain why, using examples, official statistics may not be an accurate reflection of the amount of crime committed. (3 marks)

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Here is a diagram that illustrates the processes involved in an offender going to prison. There are many decisions that need to be made by social actors before crime is included in official statistics.

By answering the following questions you will see how official statistics are a social construction.

What types of crime are most likely to be reported?

What types of crime are least likely to be reported?

What crimes are easier than others to see?

Who defines what a crime is?

Do the police consider all crimes *seriously*? Which are considered more important?

Consider the following crimes.

How likely are they to be reported?

Cybercrime, arson, theft, violence, domestic violence, hate crime, modern slavery, anti social behaviour, murder, sexual assault, stalking, terrorism.

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AN EVENT
    |
    v
observed      <--  which         --> unobserved
and defined       could be defined    or not defined
as crime          as crime is         as crime
    |                                      |
    v                                      v
by                or by              not reported
victim or public  --------           or reported but
    |                     |          not as crime
    v                     v
reported  =====>  police
                     |
                     v
take action  <--  who decide to  -->  take no further
    |                                  action
    v
arrest
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    v
prosecution  --or-->  caution
    |
    v
convicted    --or-->  acquittal
offender
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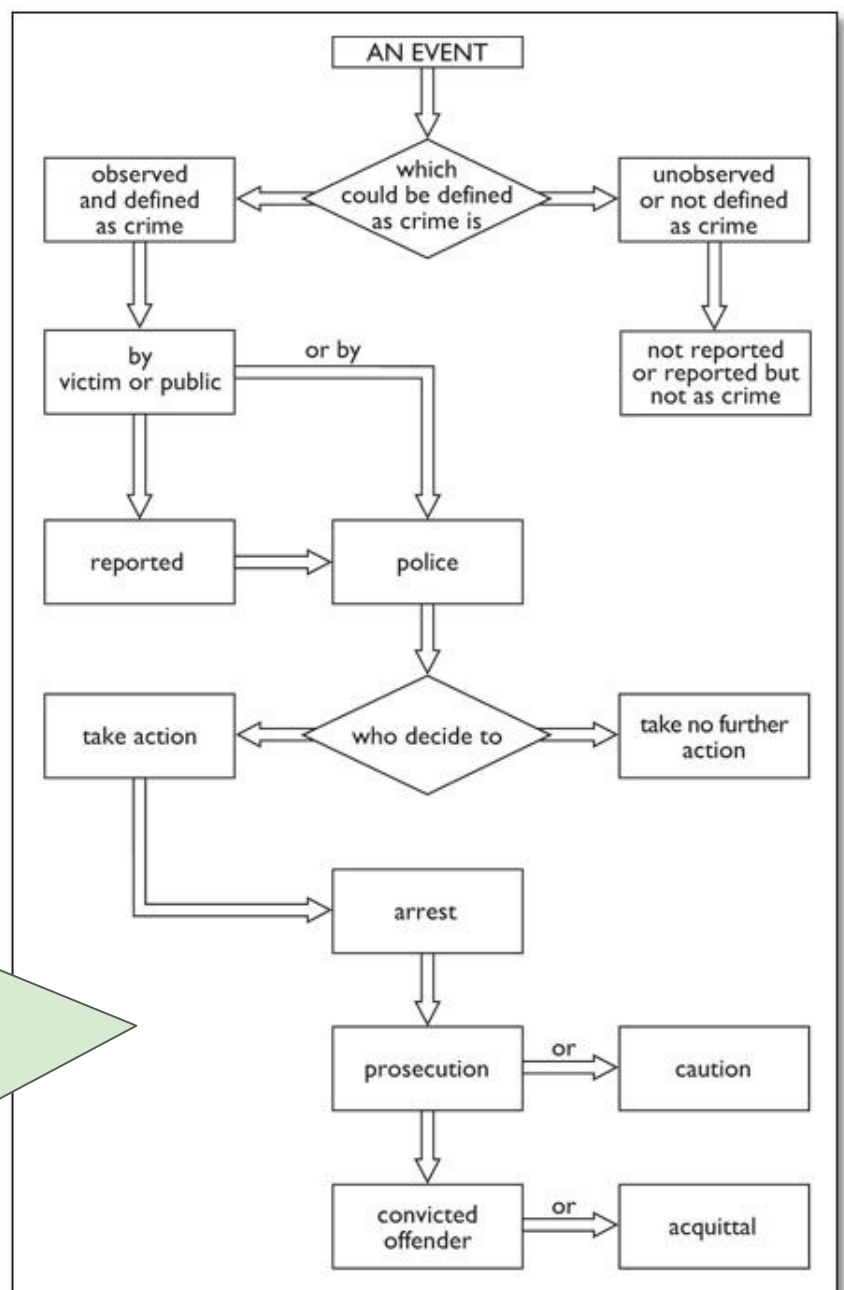
There are concerns from some social commentators about the relatively high level of youth crime in society.

The Ministry of Justice produced a report entitled 'Youth Justice Statistics: 2018 to 2019', in which they presented the national statistics on recorded criminal behaviour amongst young people (below the age of 18). The report stated that there were 21 700 children either cautioned or sentenced in that time. Of this group:

- 85% were male
- 15% were female
- 73% were White
- 27% were Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic
- 23% were aged 10–14
- 77% were aged 15–17.

Source: Ministry of Justice, 2020

From **Item A**, examine **one** weakness of using government-reported statistics to research youth crime.

[2 marks]

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Item A

In 2018, the Ministry of Justice published a report entitled 'Statistics on Women and the Criminal Justice System 2017'. This report presented information on offending and victimisation according to gender.

The report used information from a wide range of sources, such as national statistics and the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW). The report stated the following:

- 85% of arrests are men
- 74% of offenders prosecuted were men
- 95% of the prison population was male
- women are more likely to experience domestic abuse than men
- women were most likely to be prosecuted for TV Licence fee evasion, truancy of their children from school, and shoplifting.

Source: Ministry of Justice, 2018

i   From **Item A**, examine **one** strength of the research.

[2 marks]

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Why do people commit crime?

Biological explanations of criminality state that we inherit genes that cause criminal behaviour.

Lombroso's (1876) biological theory of criminology suggests that criminality is inherited and that someone "born criminal" could be identified by the way they look. One's nature made them wilder, untamed and unable to fit in the 1870s society - leading them to turn to turn to crime. They were considered 'less evolved.' This implies that criminality is inherited and that it can be identified by physical defects.

Some more proof of this would be that criminal behaviour runs in some families. Adoption studies show how crime could be inherited. Hutchings and Mednick (1975) studied 14,000 adopted children and found that a high proportion of boys with criminal convictions had biological parents with criminal convictions too, suggesting a link between aggression and genetics.

Psychological explanations see crime and deviance as the result of experiences that affect our mind or thinking patterns

- Attachments to others
- Trauma
- Personality traits
- Mental disorders

Bowlby (1944) argued that babies come into the world biologically pre-programmed to form attachments with others. Therefore, if they experience early separation, they are likely to experience negative effects. This is called maternal deprivation.

Bowlby conducted a classic study investigating the effects of prolonged maternal separation on juvenile delinquency, known as the 44 Juvenile Thieves Study. To test the theory of maternal deprivation affecting children's emotional and social development, Bowlby investigated 44 juvenile thieves, comparing them to 44 control children (those at risk of emotional issues but had not committed crimes yet).

He found that more than half of the criminals in his study had been separated from their mothers for at least 6 months in the first five years of their life.

According to interactionists, no one can be a 'born criminal' because crime is socially constructed.

C. LOMBROSO — L'Homme criminel.   Pl. VI.

Fig. 1. — P. R., voleur napolitain.   Fig. 2. — B. S., faussaire piémontais.
Fig. 3. — BOGGIA, assassin.   Fig. 4. — CARTOUCHE.
Fig. 5. — G. MARINI, femme de brigand.   Fig. 6. — DESRUES, empoisonneur.

Impr. Camilla et Bertolero.

TYPES DE CRIMINELS.

Don't care

I don't care
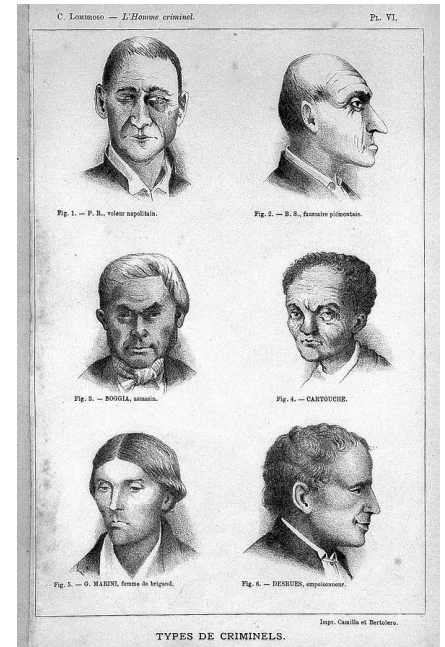
What are the consequences of maternal deprivation?

Inability to form attachments in the future, inability to feel remorse, delinquency, and problems with cognitive development

Why do people commit crime?

There are many different sociological explanations of crime. If a 12-mark questions arises asking for reasons people commit crime, you could put biological, psychological, and social explanations in conversation with one another.

Socialisation

Most people learn to conform by learning society's norms and values through the family, education, or the media. Others learn criminal norms and values from these agents of socialisation if they, for example, have criminal role models.

Criminal subcultures

Some sociologists understand peer group pressure to play a role in criminal activity. For example, when we feel a sense of belonging or loyalty to a group, we might be more inclined to take risks to prove we are a part of the group. Groups who develop alternative values to mainstream society are called subcultures. Subcultures help us understand crimes without financial gain, such as graffiti or trespassing, which might be the result of peer pressure.

Relative deprivation

Why do people who are relatively well-off commit crime? Reiner (2007) argues that our lack of resources in comparison to someone else leaves us feeling excluded and more likely to commit crime to attain these. For example, someone might have a home, clothes, and food, but still want Yeezy's and a BMW. To Marxists, this is because capitalist society is materialistic (based around material goods) and consumerist (wanting more and more). The media enforces these values through advertising, which can be hard to escape.

Labelling theory

Interactionists argue that people do not become criminals because of their social background, but argue instead that crime emerges from labelling. They suggest that crime is socially constructed (dependent on time, culture, and place), not everyone who is deviant gets labelled, and labelling has real consequences as it can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy.

"You are a criminal! That's all you'll ever be!"

Person becomes a criminal, or continues to engage in criminal acts.

Which of these social explanations best explains the following crimes:

- Theft
- Vandallism
- Sexual assault
- Fraud

A closer look: labelling theory

Writing from an interactionist perspective, Becker argued that an act only becomes deviant when others define it as such. Whether the 'label' of deviancy is applied depends on who commits the act, when and where it is committed, who observes the act, and the negotiations that take place between the various actors involved in the interaction. If, for example, the actions of young people are defined as delinquent and they are convicted for breaking the law, those young people have been labelled.

The agents of social control, for example the police and the courts, have the power to make the label stick. The label applied to the individual becomes a master status; the young people have become criminals and this label will affect how others see them and respond to them.

Assumptions will be made that the individuals concerned have the negative characteristics normally associated with the label. As a consequence, the individuals will begin to see themselves in terms of the label, producing a self-fulfilling prophecy. The individual who has been publically labelled as deviant is rejected from certain social groups on the basis of various negative assumptions about their future behaviour; this may well encourage further deviance, which in turn begins what Becker describes as the deviant career.

This career is completed when the individual joins an organised deviant group which develops a deviant subculture, this subculture develops beliefs and values which rationalise, justify and support deviant identities and behaviours.

'I conducted 50 interviews with marijuana users. I had been a professional dance musician for some years when I conducted this study and my first interviews were with people I had met in the music business. I asked them to put me in contact with other users who would be willing to discuss their experiences with me.'

Becker, H. (1997) Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance. London: Free Press, p45

In his book, Becker describes how he selected his sample and some of the methods he used.

List the strengths of his sampling and research methods.

List the weaknesses of his sampling and research methods.

Labelling theory is a 'theory of crime' alongside functionalism, Marxism, and feminism

Discuss how far sociologists agree that working class youth are more likely to be involved in the criminal justice system due to labelling. (12 marks)

Introduction	
Working class youth are involved in the CJS because of **labelling**	Working class youth are involved in the CJS for **other reasons**
Conclusion	

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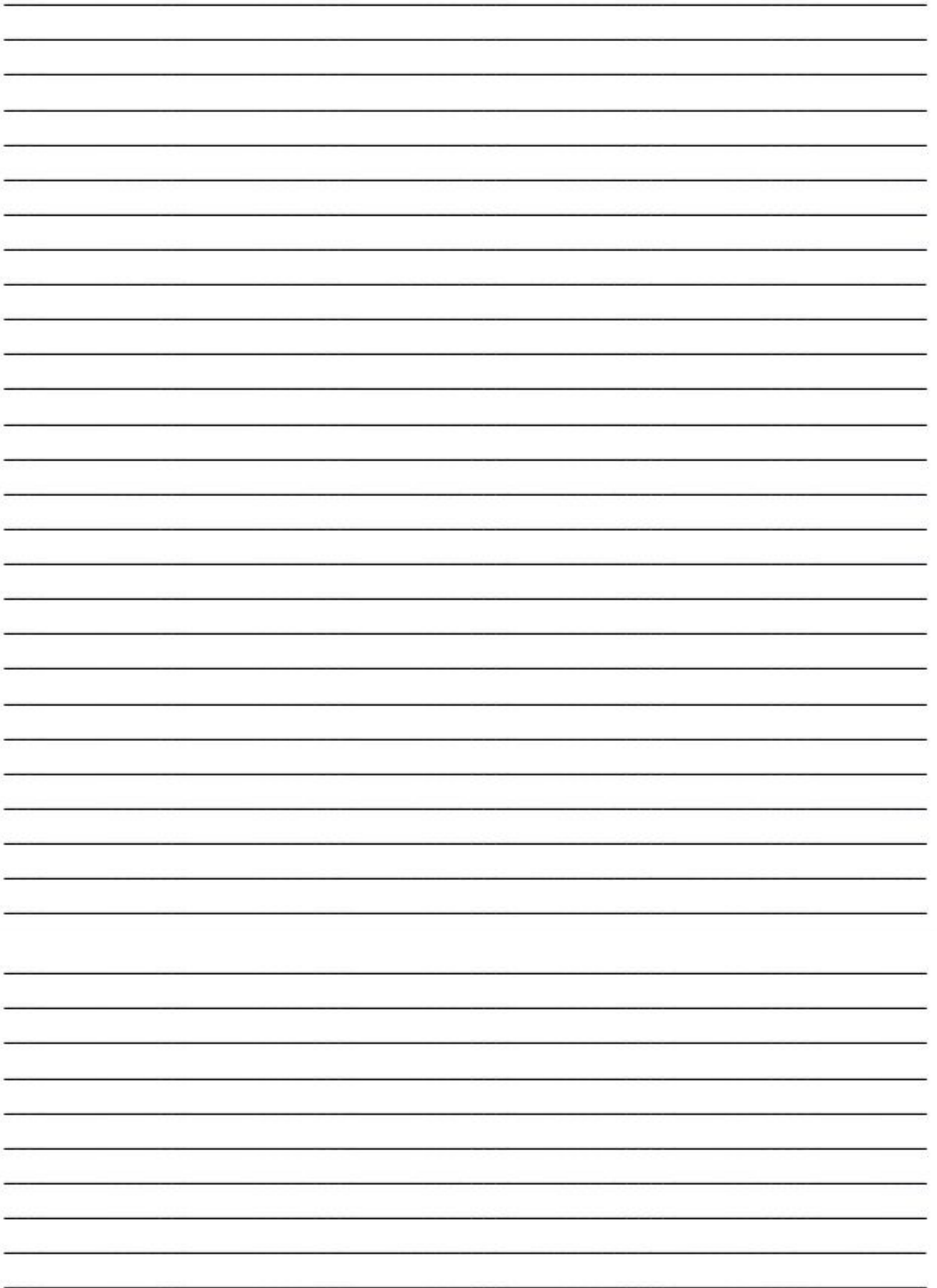
A closer look: Merton's 'strain theory'

Merton argued that deviance results from the culture and structure of society. He starts from the standard functionalist position of value consensus – all members of society hold the same values. However, because members of society have different positions in the social structure, for example in terms of social class, Merton believed that they did not have the same opportunities to realise their shared goals. He also believed that American society was unbalanced because **greater importance was attached to success, than to the ways in which that success was achieved.** In the search for success by almost any means the danger is that the usual rules governing behaviour in society are abandoned, a situation of anomie (normlessness) results, where 'anything goes' in pursuit of wealth and material success. As such, individuals turn to **illegitimate means for material success**.

He described five possible ways in which individuals could respond to success goals in American society.
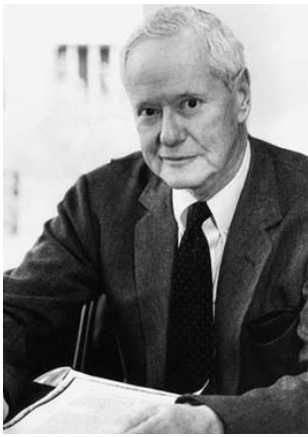
What are some of the criticism of Merton's strain theory?

Merton could not explain why those with opportunities and resources to achieve these goals *still* turn to crime.

Nor could he explain why more people do not turn to crime if so many of our opportunities are blocked. He effectively only explains utilitarian crimes committed by the working-class.

merton's 5 reactions to strain

Conformity — People continue to try and achieve their goals through legitimate means, through conforming to society's norms and values, e.g. working hard to get a promotion at work

Ritualism — People give up on their goals, but still continue to go through the motions of life, in a ritual like fashion, e.g. just turning up to work everyday

Innovation — People realise they will not achieve their goals through legitimate means, so innovate their means (often criminally) to achieve them. E.g. robbing a bank, rather than working in one

Retreatism — People give up on their goals, reject any means to reach them and so retreat from mainstream society. E.g. dropping out of work and becoming a drug addict

Rebellion — People reject society's goals and the means of achieving them, so rebel against society. E.g. dropping out of work to engage in terrorist activity

@allsociology

Strain theory sounds an awful lot like Marxism?!

➔ Strain theory is about how shared values (and therefore, goals) can lead to criminality
➔ It is rooted in the idea that a value consensus (shared norms and values) is weak
➔ Marxism is very much coming from an 'inequality' and 'class' point of view with its criticism of capitalism, whereas strain looks at many possible consequences that result from weak norms and values (e.g. innovation, ritualism, etc)
➔ Therefore, Marxists believe **crime is a natural consequence of capitalist society**, whereas **Merton believes society isn't working as it is meant to**, so we find strain

Key Study: **Merton**

In your own words, write a summary of the study.

Name the 5 responses to strain/anomie

Give an example of behaviour that may be shown by someone responding in each of these 5 ways.

Create 3 questions to test a friend about the study.

1.

2.

3.

Strengths of the study

Weaknesses of the study

Item B

Robert Merton wrote about deviance and how it related to the culture and structure of society. He believed that in society, all groups shared the same goals, but were prepared to use different and sometimes illegitimate means to achieve them.

The working of this process can be seen through some sporting examples where players use illegitimate but efficient means to win the game. For example, the star footballer who fakes injury in order to win a penalty, or the athlete who uses performance enhancing drugs. Winning the game becomes more important than playing by the rules.

Source: Robert Merton, Social Theory and Social Structure, New York Press (1968)

From **Item B**, identify and explain **one** factor which may explain why some people use illegitimate means of achieving their goals, including what you know of Merton's perspective.

[4 marks]

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A closer look: Cohen's 'status frustration'

As a functionalist, Cohen thinks that everyone learns the same values and goals through socialisation, part of creating a value consensus. In that way, working-class boys have the same life goals as middle-class boys. However, Cohen notes that working-class boys are much less likely to achieve at school than middle-class children. For Cohen, this is down to cultural deprivation - working-class attitudes to school and education - rather than a structural issue relating to capitalism or material deprivation.

Because pupils don't get the status they crave, they instead form delinquent subcultures. A subculture is a group with its own norms and values, separate from those of mainstream society. They seek status in an **alternative status hierarchy**. For Cohen, it was not that the members had not been socialised into mainstream values - they had - but to gain status they turned them on their head. So things that would be viewed as bad in mainstream society - like vandalism and truancy - are viewed as good within the subculture.

Albert Cohen Summary

The Process

| W.C taught M.C Norms and Values. | W.C children cant achieve M.C Norms and Values. | W.C suffer Status Frustration |
| This offers an alternative route to gain status. | Delinquent Subcultures Form (alternative status hierarchy) | W.C then reject M.C Norms and Values. |

These subculture commit non-financial and malicious crimes.

Cohen's theory is often referred to as status frustration and is used to explain why young working-class males are more likely to commit crimes than other people, why they do it in groups, and why it includes crimes that does not materially benefit them (i.e. why they might commit vandalism or fight).

Item B

Albert Cohen was interested in the reasons why boys committed crime. He argued that working-class boys were not just judged harshly by middle-class adults, but also by middle-class children – working-class boys were more likely to be seen as 'failures' by their peers. The standards that these middle-class children applied in terms of language, values and ambitions were likely to make their working-class peers feel inferior and inadequate. This led to status frustration for some working-class boys and they sought to gain status through deviant behaviour and breaking rules.

Source: Cohen, A, Delinquent Boys, (1955)

From **Item B**, identify and describe **one** reason why working-class boys develop status frustration according to Cohen, including what you know of his sociological perspective.

[4 marks]

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Theories of Crime: Functionalism

Durkheim's functionalist theory of crime

Functionalists see the aim of society as to encourage value consensus, which means individuals must agree to conform and comply with the same values, norms and goals of acceptable behaviour, rather than their own. By bringing individuals together to agree on the same core principles, this will help bring about a harmonious and cohesive society.

Durkheim reasons why crime occurs:

Durkheim (1858-1917), argues not everyone can comply with the rules of society which is why crime will occur. He suggests crime and deviance are not only 'normal' but a universal and inevitable part of all societies. Some of the reasons why individuals do not conform to the core values are:

- **Socialisation.** Successful socialisation occurs when individuals conform to the values and norms of acceptable social behaviour in society. Socialisation is very important as it helps maintain social order and control in society. Not everyone is socialised effectively (e.g. poor upbringing) in sharing the same basic values everyone agrees to which may result in a rise in crime and deviance.

- **Social change.** Durkheim was writing at a time of considerable change when Western societies were moving from a pre-industrial state of existence towards industrial expansion. The rapid rise of industrialisation and the demand for division of labour (specialised jobs) led to the rise of an individualistic lifestyle, as well as the decline of religious influence and control. This resulted in society becoming fragmented which made it hard for its members to comply with the same rules as in pre-industrial societies.

Informal agents of social control became less influential and therefore were unable to control behaviour.

The consequence of rapid social change resulted in anomie (normlessness, i.e. 'lawlessness'). Individual moral constraints to comply with the agreed values are weakened, as people become different from each other in a modern society, leading to individual desires and expressionism. This, according to Durkheim, could lead to the rise of crime and deviant behaviour. Therefore, he saw the growth of modern industrial societies as one of the causes for the breakdown of social cohesion resulting in anomie.

Durkheim identified four functions of crime in society:

Reaffirming boundaries of society - When a crime occurs and individuals are punished, it becomes clear to the rest of society that the particular action concerned is unacceptable. In contemporary society newspapers also help to perform the publicity function, with their often-lurid accounts of criminal acts. In effect, the courts and the media are 'broadcasting' the boundaries of acceptable behaviour, warning others not to breach the walls of the law (and therefore society). For example, the 9/11 terrorist attacks reinforces the commitment to shared values.

Changing values - Every so often, when someone is charged, the public expresses a degree of sympathy about whether it was fair or not. When the law is clearly out of step with the feelings and values of the majority, legal reform is necessary. Criminals therefore, perform a crucial service in helping the law to reflect the wishes of the population and legitimising social change. For example, many denounced Martin Luther King at the time but his deviance became crucial to change values.

Social cohesion - Some crimes trigger a strong reaction from the public. For example, when particularly horrific crimes have been committed the whole community joins together in outrage and the sense of belonging to a community is therefore strengthened.

Safety valve - Deviant acts can 'release pressure' in society. Deviance can allow people to express themselves and their beliefs which might be against the status-quo. This could be in the form of a non-violent protest or demonstration, which avoids more serious criminal behaviour. The government can then react to the public's demands. You could also use the example of sex work as it can release pressures from the strains of life without threatening the family.

Evaluation of the Durkheim theory

✓ **A useful explanation.**
A strength of the Durkheim's theory of crime is it offers a social explanation for the causes of crime as opposed to a crime being biologically (genetic) and psychologically (maternal deprivation) determined, which were prevalent at that time. The implication for society is that crime levels can be controlled by social engineering (i.e. social policies).

✗ **It ignores social differences**
A limitation of Durkheim's theory of crime is it fails to explain the social differences of crime. It does not account for why certain individuals (based on class inequality, ethnicity, or gender) are more prone to commit crime than others. This suggests Durkheim's theory offers only a partial explanation of crime as it cannot account for the social differences that can influence who commits a crime or not.

✗ **It ignores the crimes of the powerful**
Marxists are critical of Durkheim's theory because it fails to explain the relationship between power and crime. [1] It fails to acknowledge criminal laws are made to benefit powerful social groups; [2] the bias of law enforcement agencies (the police and the courts) is against the lower-working-classes. For example, the police are more likely to focus on working-class crimes, which class are more likely to be arrested and prosecuted than those crimes committed by the powerful (e.g. business activities). This shows Durkheim's theory does not account for the fact that those in power can influence the social distribution of crime in society, which leads to a biased view of the criminal statistics of working-class people.

Theories of Crime: Marxism

• Marxism is a structural theory which explains crime in terms of how society is structured.

• They relate crime to the structure of society (classes) and blame capitalism whereby a small group of wealthy individuals (bourgeoisie) own all the means of production and exploit the poorer working class people (proletariat) to make more profit.

• Capitalism is based on

- • Materialism (valuing individual possessions)

- • Consumerism (wanting the latest goods e.g. mobile phones)

- • Competition between individuals

• Marxists argue that the media reinforce these values through advertising. Not everyone can afford material goods so turn to illegal means to keep-up.

Furthermore, the values of capitalism are, potentially, criminal values: that the aim of capitalist society is to get as much money and wealth as possible, irrespective of how that might harm other people. This encourages crimes of the rich (fraud, etc.), and of less fortunate others who are persuaded this is an appropriate way to behave.

Marxism and law enforcement

• Argue that certain crimes are the focus e.g. those protecting personal property

• White collar crimes are ignored e.g. benefit fraud is penalised more than tax evasion

• Certain types of crime are more likely to be targeted e.g. street crime

• Certain people are more likely to be targeted e.g. working-class

Pearce (1976) argued that even laws that appeared to help workers really helped the bourgeoisie. His focus was on health and safety laws which provided the ruling class with a healthy workforce.

Research examples of white-collar crime.
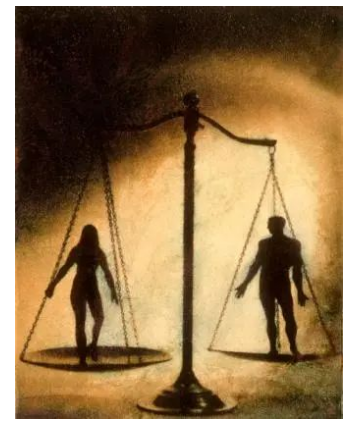
Research examples of corporate crime.

Theories of Crime: Feminism

Until the 1970s, women were ignored from crime statistics. Approx 80% offenders are men.

Women commit the same amount of crime as men Chivalry suggests that women who commit crime are awarded more lenient sentences than males who commit crime. One possible reason for the lenient sentencing is that women are generally viewed as the caregiver, or the loving mother. Mostly-male law enforcement officers tend to attempt to protect women from the criminal justice system out of gentlemanliness.

Do you think that women are getting more opportunities to commit crime in modern society?

Women commit less crime than men Control Theory - However, in Heidensohn's (1985) view, women commit less crime because they are controlled by their fathers and relatives as young girls and later by their husbands once they get married. Men have opportunities to commit crime in the public sphere (patriarchal society) whilst women are kept at home or performing primary socialisation. The corresponding lack of supervision or control by authoritative figures in the case of men could therefore be responsible for their high levels of delinquent and/or criminal behaviour.

At work women are controlled by male-dominated hierarchies and workers organisations. In public, women are controlled by the threat of male sexual violence and by the idea that inappropriate behaviour may bring loss of reputation and shame upon their families. The idea of separate spheres emphasises women's place as being in the home, those who attempt to raise concerns in public are subject to ridicule and told to return to where they belong. At work women are controlled by male-dominated hierarchies and workers organisations. They are subject to intimidation by various forms of sexual harassment. Heidensohn has been criticised for making generalisations that do not apply to all women and for not always supporting her claims with strong research-based evidence.
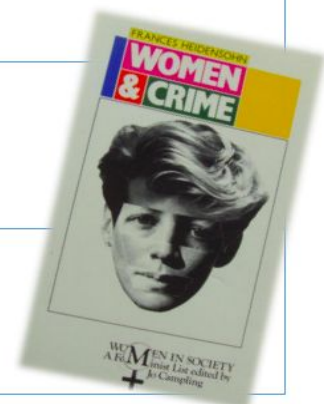
Using the information above, provide examples of how women are controlled in each of the places identified in the table.

Where?	How?
At home	
At work	
In public	

Based on what you know about Heidensohn's control theory, annotate the item with ways Rosa is controlled.

Item B

This extract is adapted from a book by the sociologist Frances Heidensohn:

'I first knew Rosa when she was an art student. She discussed her life with me and gave me this account of her career. I have added a few explanations.'

"I was born working class. On a big estate – slum clearance – in the North. It was pretty rough and my mum watched us. Well, I was watched more. She wouldn't let me play out. My brother was allowed out. He'd cycle round and round the estate on his bike and I'd stay in. So of course I'd do my homework, nothing else to do. I wasn't clever. [Rosa had passed her 11+ and gone to grammar school]. I was a big girl and I could fight, the boys were scared. They were all too small.

I knew some rotten men but Steve was marvellous." [Rosa worked for several years as a graphic artist and met Steve, a younger man who depended on her a good deal. Her flat was raided during a party and marijuana was found. Rosa was charged with illegal possession and threatened with possible drug dealing charges.] "It wasn't even my party. Boring people, I think I had gone to bed. Well it was my flat and I was older." 'But it was what counted later. It was really the start [of her involvement with crime].'

From **Item B**, identify and describe the method used by Frances Heidensohn including what you know of her perspective on female criminal behaviour.

[4 marks]

Theories of Crime: Feminism

Writing from a feminist perspective, Carlen studied a group of mostly working class women aged between 15 and 46 who had been convicted of one or more crimes. She carried out in-depth, unstructured interviews with each of the women, a number of whom were in prison or youth custody at the time. Carlen uses control theory as the basis for her approach, this starts from the assumption that human beings are neither naturally good nor bad but will make a rational decision to turn to crime when the advantages outweigh the disadvantages. In Carlen's view, working-class women have been controlled through the promise of rewards. They make a class deal which offers respectable working class women consumer goods in return for their wage. They make a gender deal for the psychological and material rewards offered by male breadwinners in return for their love and domestic labour. When these rewards are not available or prove to be illusory, then criminality becomes a viable alternative. Carlen's work was based on a relatively small sample (39 women) but it supports the view that criminal behaviour becomes more likely when social control breaks down.

Carlen was interested in explaining female criminality, and conducted ground-breaking research.

She conducted her research using unstructured interviews with 39 women between the ages of 15 and 46, all of whom had been convicted of one or more crimes. According to Carlen, four major reasons were given by the women as to the cause of their criminality: poverty; being in residential care; drug and alcohol addiction; and the quest for excitement.

Although all the women had committed at least one crime for financial gain, most of them agreed that it was one of these four factors which led them to develop criminal careers.

Source: Carlen, P, Women, Crime and Poverty, (1988)

From **Item B**, identify and describe the research method used by Carlen, including what you know of her perspective on female criminality.

[4 marks]

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What is the relationship between gender and crime?		How does this explain differences in crime rates? Which kind of crimes?
Socialisation and gender roles	Girls and boys are socialised into gender roles. For example, girls are taught to be passive, fragile, and care for others, whereas boys are encouraged to be protective and play outdoors. McRobbie uses the term 'bedroom culture' to describe how girls spend their youth indoors, on the phone, reading, and writing.	
Employment differences	Fewer women than men work and, when they do, they experience the 'glass ceiling effect'. This is the idea that women cannot rise through companies because of sexism or bias towards men. Men makeup ⅔ of the management positions in the UK. Some sociologists say women are closely monitored at work, and therefore have less opportunity for some crimes.	
Chivalry thesis	This argument suggests women commit as much crime as men, but are awarded more lenient sentences than males who commit crime, i.e. because they are seen as loving mothers. This occurs because men are socialised to act 'gentlemanly' towards women, party because they are labelling women as innocent and incapable of harm.	
Hegemonic masculinity	Messerschmidt suggests men have to 'perform' masculinity to be seen as men. They have to prove their manliness to others through drinking, fighting, and engaging in sexual intercourse. Therefore, this pressure might result in crime. On the other hand, crime is not associated with femininity.	
Control theory	Heidensohn's control theory suggests that patriarchal control of women leaves them with less opportunity in their public and private lives to commit crime. There are more opportunities to commit crime in public and at work, but because women are confined to the home, they do not have the same opportunities as men. Therefore, patriarchy controls women and reduces their opportunities to commit crime.	

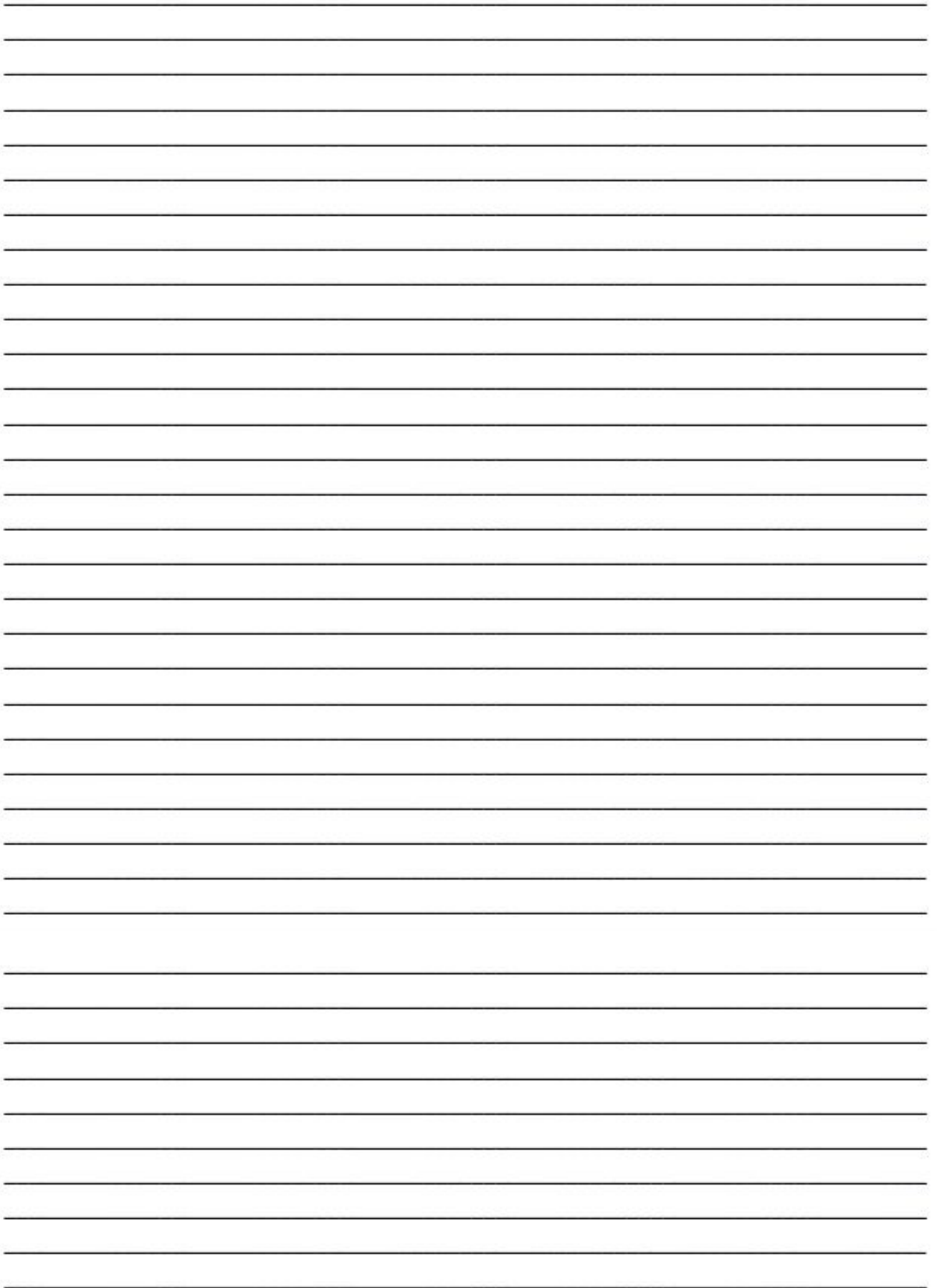| Explaining the growth of female crime In recent years, women have been committing more offences relating to theft and sex work.		What evidence do you have to support this argument?
Women are more likely to experience poverty 	A high divorce rate, low-paid jobs, and lone-parenthood leave many women vulnerable and feeling as though they have to turn to crime to support their families.	
Double deviance 	Heidensohn suggests that when women commit crime, they are on trial for the 'crime' and for their 'femininity' - in other words, the courts operate a double standard. This means that women are treated more harshly because their crime is breaking feminine gender norms.	
Changes in the position of women 	As women's social roles have changed and become more like men (going to work), the number of crimes they commit would increase. Adler argues that only when society is truly equal will women commit as much crime as men. In other words, as women become more liberated from patriarchy, they will commit more crime.	

Discuss how far sociologists would agree that women are less likely to commit crime than men. (12 marks)

Introduction	
Women are less likely than men to commit crime	Women are just as likely/more likely than men to commit crime
Conclusion	

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Crime and Ethnicity

In 2019, people from a BAME background made up...

16%	of the general population
23%	of people arrested
24%	of people remanded by magistrates' courts
26%	of people remanded by the Crown Court
23%	of people prosecuted
21%	of people convicted
22%	of people sentenced to immediate custody
27%	of people in prison
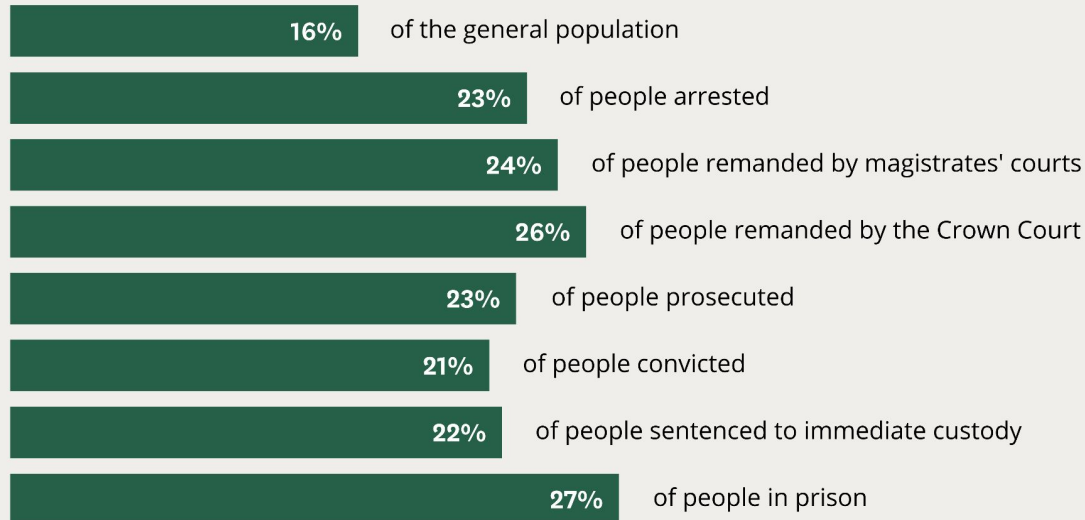
Source: Ministry of justice, Criminal justice statistics quarterly December 2019, Outcomes by offence data tool
Notes: BAME stands for Black, Asian or Minority Ethnicity

What is the relationship between involvement in crime and ethnicity? Members of some ethnic groups are overrepresented while others are underrepresented in the prison population relative to their proportion in the general population.

How do we explain the patterns in statistics on crime and ethnicity? Crime statistics are seen as reflecting policing methods and bias within the criminal justice system.

According to the Ministry of Justice, compared to white people, black people were:

- 2x more likely to be cautioned by the police
- 3x more likely to be arrested
- More likely, if arrested, to be charged, remanded in custody and face court proceedings *than* to receive a caution
- More likely, if found guilty, to receive a prison sentence
- 5x more likely to be in prison

Compared to white people, Asian people were likely to:

- Be charged and face court proceedings than to receive a caution
- Receive a prison sentence if found guilty

Hood (1992) stressed that even after taking the seriousness of an offence and previous convictions into consideration, Black men were almost five times more likely to get jail sentences of about 3 months, while Asians were jailed an average of 9 months - both longer sentences than White people got on average.

Discuss how far sociologists would agree that institutional racism remains an issue in the criminal justice system.

[12 marks]

Why do differences between ethnicities exist?	
	How can you explain these factors?
Labelling *Are ethnic minority groups more likely to be labelled?*	
Institutional racism Research: *The Macpherson Report*	
Marxist explanations *Are black individuals more likely to be in poverty? If so, how does this explain their crime?*	
Functionalist explanations	
Media reinforcing views *Does the media portray a negative depiction of Black people?*	Hall et al (1979) argues that the idea of 'mugging' was associated with young black men by the media and politicians. This was to scapegoat them and distract people from realising the 'crisis of capitalism' at the time. People began to blame black people for society's issues which led to more policing of black communities.

What was the Macpherson Report?

In 1993, an 18-year-old man called Stephen Lawrence was murdered by a racist gang. The subsequent police inquiry was hugely unsuccessful (nobody was successfully prosecuted until nearly 19 years later despite lots of evidence including video footage of the gang bragging and planning how they would kill a black man) and crucially didn't acknowledge the racist motives of the killers. A subsequent inquiry into the investigation reported in 1999. It made many recommendations relating to police reform and famously described the Metropolitan Police as being *institutionally racist*.

THE STEPHEN LAWRENCE INQUIRY

REPORT OF AN INQUIRY
BY SIR WILLIAM MACPHERSON OF CLUNY

ADVISED BY

TOM COOK, THE RIGHT REVEREND DR JOHN SENTAMU, DR RICHARD STONE

Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Command of Her Majesty.

February 1999

Cm 4262-I

Crime and Age

Why do young people commit more crime than older people?

- More young people live in urban areas which provides more opportunities for crime: more shops, offices, businesses, cars, houses, etc.
- *Fewer* opportunities for serious work-related crimes because young people are rarely in positions of authority.
- *More* opportunities for work-related crime for older people.
- Middle class youth have fewer opportunities for crime because they are more-likely to be in full-time education.
- Working class youth more-likely to be in low-paid, low skill work (or unemployed). Criminal behaviour may be used as a source of excitement as well as money.
- Influenced by peer pressure (subcultures)

Functionalism - Cohen (1955) Status Frustration

Young, working class *boys* who cannot achieve goals through legitimate means struggle to attain status in conventional ways. They experience status frustration.

This leads them to create their own status through subverting norms and values in what is called an alternative status hierarchy.

Marxism

- Youth do not have financial responsibilities, therefore they are resisting and rebelling against capitalist society *before* they are stuck in the repetitive cycle of work.
- People have more to lose when they begin work and have families.

Interactionism

Edgework describes the way in which crime is alluring and people commit crime because they get a buzz from it, rather than because of socialisation, subcultures or deprivation.

Lyng recognises that people like taking risks because doing so is fun. The risk of being caught is part of the appeal. This is a meaning they attach to crime.

- Labelling - young people are more likely to be labelled negatively by the CJS. Circourel's work on typifications.

Ladettes

Of course, across all age groups, males commit more crime. But why is female crime increasing?

Jackson (2006) found many girls between 13-14 years old "act hard, smoke, swear, fight occasionally, drink, disrupt lessons, are cheeky and/or rude to teachers, are open about (heterosexual) sex, and are loud or 'gobby'."

Girls are more likely to engage in risk-taking behaviour and adopt the values of a ladette culture.

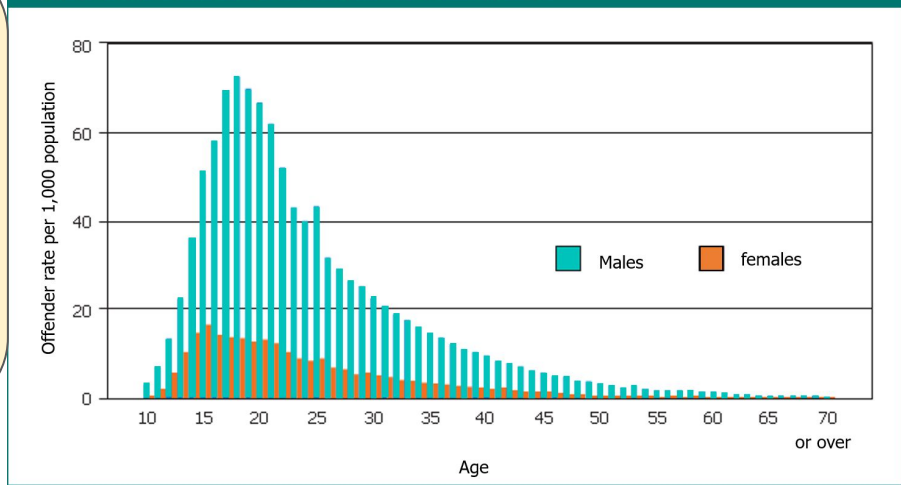## What is delinquency and drift (Matza, 1964)?

Intro
What is the debate regarding? Could you include a statistic? What will this essay argue?

Conclusion
Come down on one side - is labelling the best explanation? Why?

Discuss how far sociologists would agree that youth crime can be explained by negative labelling. (12)

Figure 1: Age-Crime Curve for England and Wales in 2000

PARAGRAPH 1 • Interactionism eg many people commit criminal acts but only some people are caught and labelled for it – in this case young people

PARAGRAPH 2 • Functionalism eg the work of Cohen, who suggests that crime is caused by frustration at the lack of opportunity some young people face

PARAGRAPH 3 • Marxism eg crime is a reaction to class-based inequality and economic exploitation as opposed to labelling.
OR
• Alternative explanations eg edgework, socialisation, lack of educational attainment/opportunity etc.

How do I analyse/evaluate? You do this by picking apart the argument you have just laid out. For example, interactionists argue that young people are labelled as criminals which makes it appear like they commit more crime than they do. However, this takes blame away from young offenders for the crime they do commit.

Crime and Class

Maguire (2007) – There are many more males, young people, black people, poor people and poorly educated people in the prison system, relative to the general population.

Crime statistics do not show the social class of those convicted. However, research has shown that the working-class are more likely to be convicted and sent to prison than the middle- or upper-class. Does this mean the working-class commit more crime? Not necessarily.

Inaccurate statistics	Lower-class criminals may commit crimes that are more identifiable and more likely to be targeted by the police, therefore more likely to be arrested and prosecuted.
Socialisation	**Inadequate socialisation** into criminal norms and values means some children do not learn right from wrong. Shared norms and values should create consensus and therefore less crime, so when children do not learn these they are more likely to grow into criminals.
Functionalist explanations	• **Merton's** strain theory - the WC are more likely to experience strain because they have unequal opportunities to achieve legitimate goals. **Anomie** is normlessness - when society is no longer held together with common norms and values. Anomie occurs when there is a mismatch between goals and the means to achieve goals. For example, turning to crime to achieve material goals. • As a functionalist, **Cohen** thinks that everyone learns the same values through socialisation, part of creating a value consensus. In that way, working-class boys have the same life goals as middle-class boys. However, Cohen notes that working class boys are much less likely to achieve at school than middle-class children due to cultural deprivation - working-class attitudes to school and education. Because pupils don't get the status they crave, they instead form delinquent subcultures which have an **alternative status hierarchy**. In simple terms, this means the subculture values crime and deviance, not academic success. The more criminal behaviour the boys do, the more status they earn in the subculture.
Marxist explanations	Marxists argue capitalism is criminogenic - it *produces* crime. For example, capitalism is working properly when there is a class of people whose wages are low because of exploitation. Therefore, the WC will always feel inclined to commit crime in order to survive. Marxists also suggest that in our capitalist society, white-collar and corporate crimes are ignored because they are committed by the wealthy.
Interactionist explanations	The heart of labelling theory is actually quite a simple idea: what makes something deviant is the fact that other people say it is deviant. As such, it was not the deviant act itself but the reaction to it. An example to explain this could be the ultimate deviant or illegal act: killing someone. Initially, we might think that killing someone would always be deemed deviant, but actually it depends on the context: for soldiers in a war, for example, killing someone is part of their job: it is normal. So it is not the act itself which is deviant - what matters is where it is happening, who is doing it, who is observing it, how agents of social control (e.g. the police) respond to it, etc. It is the agents of social control who have the ability to make a label stick, and do their labelling in public. Once someone has been labelled as a deviant, there are a number of possible consequences. The first is that it could become their **master status** - the way they see themselves - and this can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy where people end up living up to their label, starting a **deviant career** and ending up part of a deviant subculture. It also has the effect that people might want to socialise with that person, or offer them work, and this too can affect the likelihood of them following a deviant career. How can you apply this to working-class crime? What stereotypes do agents of social control use?

Debates: Treatment of Young Offenders
Should young people be criminally responsible for their crimes?

In England and Wales, the age of criminal responsibility is 10 years old. Between 10 - 17 years old, you be given a fine, referral order, youth rehabilitation order, custodial sentences, or civil injunctions.

Fine	responsibility of the parent
Referral order	the offender attends a youth offender panel who agree a contract which will last between three months and a year. The aim is for the offender to undo the harm they caused. They might also undertake a programme to correct this.
Youth rehabilitation order	a community sentence that could involve a curfew, supervision, electronic monitoring, or unpaid work, along with education and health support.
Custodial sentence	incarceration
Civil injunction	for example, Community Protection Notices (CPN) are issued to those who are a public nuisance.

Should young people be put in custody?

They **should** be put in prison:

✓ They must take the punishment

✓ If they are danger the public needs to be protected

✓ They need to learn society's norms & values - if they do not learn and accept these, they risk creating conflict and disrupting social harmony.

They **should not** be put in prison:

- 40% of young people reoffend within a year - this suggests sentencing is not effective
- The average cost in a Young Offender Institute (YOI) is £76,000
- Too much money is spent on youth offender institutes
- Education would be better for them - they need opportunities to leave a life of crime (links to material deprivation and the impacts of this)
- Vulnerable young offenders are at risk of serious and long-term problems because the system fails them and their needs. The Ministry of Justice (2018) revealed that the average number of young people self in custody self harming is 106 per month
- About a quarter of young offenders have some kind of learning difficulty, while an extremely high number have emotional and mental health needs.

Should young people be put in custody? Outline your argument.

Debates: Prison System, Rehabilitation, and Punishment

Change in the UK prison population since 1900
Annual figures, by UK jurisdiction
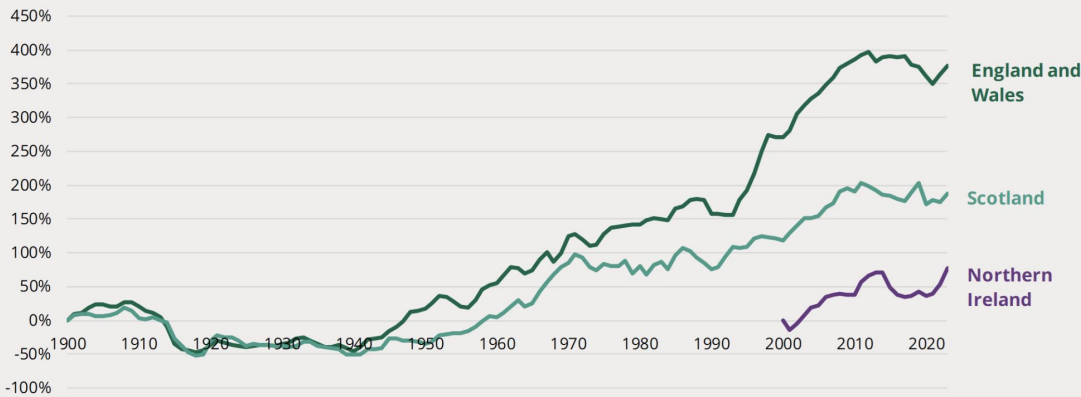
Source: MoJ (England and Wales) *Offender Management Statistics Quarterly* ; Scottish Government, *Prison statistics and population projections* ; DoJ (Northern Ireland) *The Northern Ireland Prison Population* .

What is rehabilitation?

...given the opportunity to change our behaviour and become productive members of society. This could involve addressing drug or alcohol issues, helping with employment skills, or improving offenders' relationships with family and peers.

Should people be punished or rehabilitated?

As of June 2023, the UK had a total prison population of approximately 95,526 people

At the most recent estimate, there were 159 prisoners per 100,000 of the population in England and Wales

- The prison population is ageing: in 2002, 15% were under the age of 21 compared with 4% in 2023 and the number over the age of 50 went from 7% in 2002 to 17% in 2023,
- Prison sentences have been lengthening, with 56% of prison sentences being over 4 years compared with 40% in 2013
- Minority ethnic groups made up 27% of the prison population compared with 13% of the general population.

Offenders should be incarcerated	Offenders should be rehabilitated
- Criminals deserve to be shamed and punished. Loss of freedom is an effective way of doing this. - Prison acts as a deterrent (links to functionalist ideas about *reaffirming society's boundaries*) - Prison is essential to keep people safe from criminals - Incarceration means criminals are not able to commit *more* crime	- Prison does not make people take responsibility; it just takes away their freedoms - The re-offending rate is 40% suggesting that prison does not change offenders - Structured regimes within prisons damage offenders' ability to think and act, which is an issue when they re-integrate into society (e.g. employment) - Prisons damage relationships with family and friends

Debates: Prison System, Rehabilitation, and Punishment

What are the alternatives to prison?

…can repair harms suffered by victims, provide benefits to the community, treat the drug-addicted or mentally ill, and rehabilitate offenders. Alternatives can also reduce prison and jail costs and prevent additional crimes in the future.

Some sociologists believe avoiding prison at all costs is important to tackle the structural inequalities that cause people to commit crime. For example, an electronic tag is a cheap, effective way to help shape behaviour.

Prisoners should not be taken away from their family and friends, who provide them support and comfort.

They give courts more sentencing options. Courts can better tailor a cost-effective sentence that fits the offender and the crime, protects the public, and provides rehabilitation.

They save taxpayers money. Also helping prevent prison overcrowding.

They strengthen families and communities. Prison or jail time separates the offender from his or her spouse and children, sometimes for decades at a time.
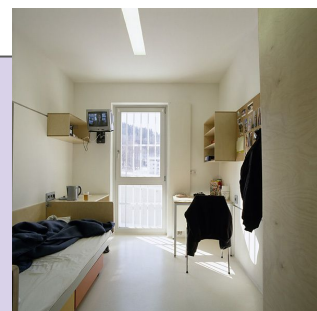
They protect the public by reducing crime. Over 40% of all people leaving prison will reoffend and be back in prison within three years of their release. Drug and mental health courts are proven to confront the underlying causes of crime.

Research the following:

Austria's *Justizzentrum Leoben*

Bastøy Prison

Debates: Violent Crime and Sentencing

Should violent criminals be sentenced to life imprisonment? While some believe this is the only option, others believe it is too harsh and that there are other ways to ensure offenders are held accountable.

What is violent crime? It covers 30 crimes, including grievous bodily harm, assault, kidnap, child abduction, harassment, and threats to kill.

The Ministry of Justice (2019) found that

- 11% of violent criminals convicted for first-time offences are imprisoned
- 44% of first-time sex offenders are imprisoned

What is life imprisonment?

Life imprisonment is a sentence that lasts until the death of the prisoner, although in most cases the prisoner will be eligible for early release after a minimum term. In exceptional cases a judge may impose a "whole life order", meaning no parole.

*'Anyone who commits **two** very serious sexual or violent offences will get a life sentence'*

- 'Two strikes' - mandatory life sentence for people convicted of a second very serious sexual or violent offence
- New sentence for dangerous criminals convicted of serious sexual and violent crimes with no automatic release from prison halfway through their sentence

The **Crime Survey for England and Wales (2016)** found that people are worried about crime.

- 60% of people thought crime in the UK had increased over the past few years
- Media is used as a source to inform people about national crime levels
- 11% of non-victims had 'high worries' over violent crime, compared to 6% about car crime
- Around 1 in 5 *thought* they would be a victim of crime in the next year

Today's inmates serving life terms are more likely to have been convicted younger, more likely to be from ethnic minority backgrounds and less likely to be 'professional criminals'.

Life sentences are justified	Life sentences are **not** justified

Debates: The Media

Media: A medium of communication, designed to enable a person or group to communicate information and ideas to an audience.

The media is an important agent of socialisation. Whether and how it influences is a topic sociologists are interested in. There are two important debates:

    a.   **Are the media biased in their presentation of crime?**
    b.   **Do the media create crime in society?**

When individuals do not have direct knowledge of what is happening, they rely on the media to inform them. Crime is in the media a lot – and people are only able to discuss and form opinions about the crime they are informed about. This means that people's perceptions of crime and deviance are influenced by what the media choose to include.

Do the media present an accurate picture of crime?

Media coverage is filtered through what is newsworthy - this means an event has to be a good story that media audiences want to know about. There are values and assumptions that guide how editors and journalists choose to report. Crimes are more likely to be reported if:

- Children, violence, or celebrities are involved
- The event has occurred locally
- The event is easy to understand
- Graphic images are involved

Ditton and Duffy (1983) found that 46% of media crime reports were about violent or sexual crimes, however these only made up 3% of all crimes recorded by the police. This links with the increase in people's worry about crime. For example, people are much less likely to be worried about fraud, despite being more likely to experience this.

Debates: The Media

What is deviancy amplification?

This is a term used by interactionists to describe how media reporting can contribute to the increase in criminal behaviours.

When reporting on this new information, the media convey that the number of instances of the original action is growing faster than it really is. People who are more likely to engage in criminal conduct in the first place may also flock toward the locations where it is being reported, which might result in the phenomena occurring more often.

For example, the unrest in the United Kingdom during the summer of 2011, which started in one neighborhood of London but swiftly extended over the whole city and subsequently to neighboring counties, began in one area of London. The reporting of the first deviance exacerbated it, which is why subsequent offenders were only aware of the riots via its broadcasting on 24-hour news broadcasts.
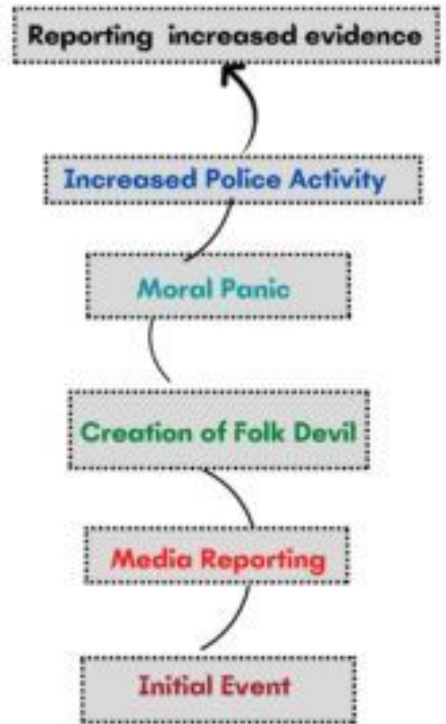
Do the media create crime in society?

There has been concern that media content has a negative effect on the behaviour of young people. It is suggested that some individuals may imitate violence and immoral behaviour seen in the media

Copycat crime occurs where individuals 'imitate' (copy) the criminal or deviant behaviour on screen.

Anderson (2003) argues that media violence increases the likelihood of aggressive and violent behaviour, both immediately and in the long term. The **Jamie Bulger murder case** spiked the moral panic regarding the influence of violent media.

However, this begs a few questions: why don't more people commit crime? Are there any other influences - such as socialisation, peer groups, or labelling? Many of the studies that show a link between crime and the media have been conducted in laboratory conditions, which do not reflect real life.

Also, those who watch violent content might *already* be violent so it is difficult to say the media *causes* crime.

Reporting increased evidence

↑

Increased Police Activity

Moral Panic

Creation of Folk Devil

Media Reporting

Initial Event

Murdered boy's parents demand action over horrific images

BAN THESE EVIL GAMES

What term is commonly used by sociologists to describe the amount of crime that goes unreported to the police?

[1 mark]

A Dark figure ⬭

B Estimated figure ⬭

C Official figure ⬭

D Recorded figure ⬭

What term is commonly used by sociologists to describe the system of law enforcement in the United Kingdom?

[1 mark]

A Anti-social behaviour system ⬭

B Community justice system ⬭

C Criminal justice system ⬭

D Deviant behaviour system ⬭

What term is used by sociologists to describe crimes committed by large companies?

A Corporate crimes ⬭

B Official crimes ⬭

C Recorded crimes ⬭

D Victimless crimes ⬭

[1 mark]

Which of the following is described by sociologists as a formal agency of social control?

A Family ⬭

B Local community ⬭

C Peer group ⬭

D Police ⬭

[1 mark]