

# Chronology of Ideas

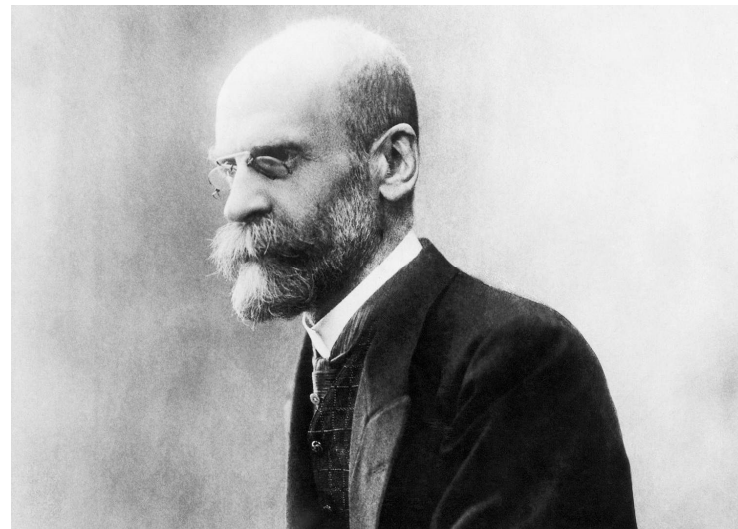
- Classical / Positivist Criminology 1764 and 1876 respectively
- Functionalist Sociology 1893 to 1960s
- Symbolic Interactionism 1960s to 1980s
- Radical / feminist Criminology 1970s to 1980s
- Administrative Criminology 1980s to present

\*The time periods are conceptual categories developed to demonstrate the currency and influence of the ideas of crime at a particular socio-historical era

# Lecture Topic 3: Durkheimian Theory: Functionalism, Deviance and Control

- Emergence of Sociology of Deviance & Crime
- Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) and the Work of Functionalist Sociologists
- Durkheim's Contribution to Sociology of Deviance and Crime
- Durkheim's Theory of Anomie

his focus is on social solidarity & cohesion



# Durkheim

THE RULES OF  
SOCIOLOGICAL METHOD  
and Selected Texts  
on Sociology and its Method

Edited with an introduction by Steven Lukes

Translated by W. D. Halls

CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORY

## THE DIVISION OF LABOR IN SOCIETY

Emile Durkheim

Fp

A FREE PRESS PAPERBACK  
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY

## EMILE DURKHEIM

# SUICIDE

A STUDY IN SOCIOLOGY

Translated by John A. Spaulding  
and George Simpson

Edited with an introduction by  
George Simpson

# Emile Durkheim

using health and science to look at society, "determining the

- 'Normality' and 'Pathological'
- Refer to the pervasiveness or otherwise of particular social phenomena in societies of similar complexities

'Normality' possesses the following attributes:

- the phenomenon exists in all known societies
- the phenomenon contributes to the 'conditions necessary for group life' – pointing to the functionality of the phenomenon

# Emile Durkheim

“Crime is present not only in the majority of societies of one particular species but in all societies of all types. There is no society that is not confronted with the problem of criminality. Its form changes, the acts thus characterized are not the same everywhere; but, everywhere and always, there have been men who have behaved in such a way as to draw upon themselves penal repression...In the first place crime is normal because a society exempt from it is utterly impossible”

# Emile Durkheim

“Crime, for its part, must no longer be conceived as an evil that cannot be too much suppressed. There is no occasion for self-congratulation when the crime rate drops noticeably below the average level for we may be certain that this apparent progress is associated with some social disorder”

crime -> Normality -> Functionality  
--> Contributes to social solidarity <-\  
--> Promotes social change <-/

# Emile Durkheim

“Imagine a society of saints, a perfect cloister of exemplary individuals. Crimes, properly so called, will there be unknown but faults which appear trivial to the layman will create there the same scandal that the ordinary offence does in ordinary consciousness. If, then, this society has the power to judge and punish, it will define these acts as criminal and will treat them as such”

crime helps to maintain a boundary,  
that there are markers

state embodies the collective will of the people  
defendant is the person that is deviance,  
violation of norms

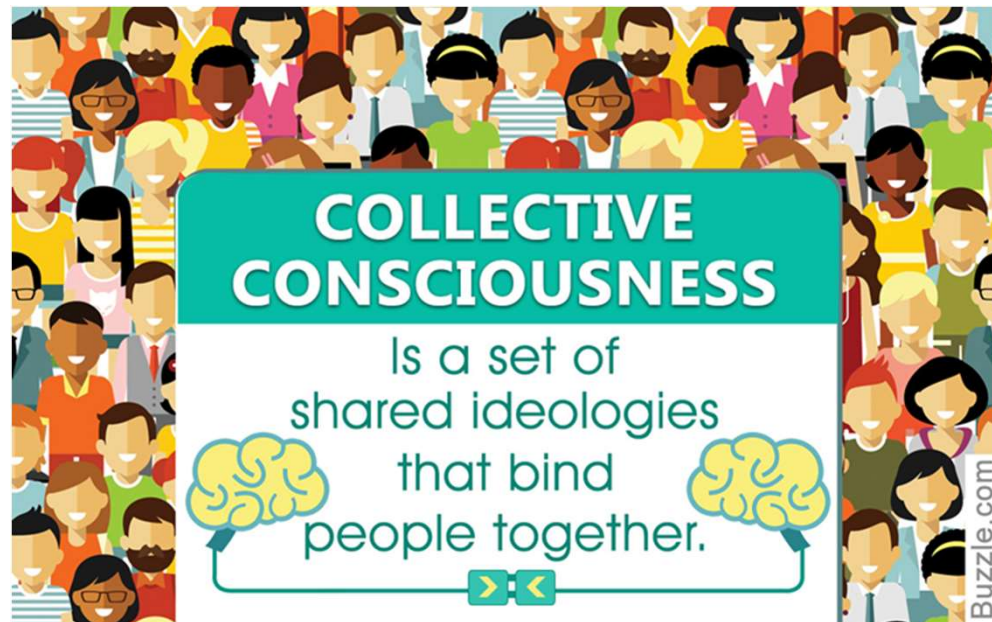
can see society at work in the court house



# Emile Durkheim

protective factor and risk factor  
(vulnerability)  
protective factor is basically social  
control

- Crime is functional because it contributes to social solidarity change and promotes social change
- Crime as a 'moral marker' of society
- Crime serves as **boundary** maintenance between the norm and the unacceptable; between the conformist and deviant
- Symbolic and communicative features of crime





# Emile Durkheim

- Crime is acknowledged as the basis of social innovation
- Without crimes and criminals, society will be static and stagnant
- We need individuals (deviants) in our society to think outside the box



# Emile Durkheim

“Contrary to current ideas, the criminal no longer seems a totally unsociable being, a sort of parasitic element, a strange and unassimilated body, introduced into the midst of society.”

# Emile Durkheim

- Durkheim's Ideas about Crime and Deviance
- Deviance is universal yet variable
- Deviance is a social phenomenon
- Social groups make rules and enforce their definition on others through judgment and social sanctions

affirmative action - support for vulnerable groups  
(works to uplift a certain ethnoracial group, it  
discriminates others)

# Emile Durkheim

- Deviance is a social invention
- Deviance is situational
- Definitions of deviance involves power

# Emile Durkheim

- Durkheim's Contribution to Sociology of Deviance
- Emphasized the importance of a scientific methodology rather than speculation or moral outrage of the kind associated with descriptions of criminals as primitive beings.
- Saw deviance and crime as socially constructed rather than deriving from the intrinsic wickedness or personal deficiency of the deviant or criminal
- Established the social normality and functionality of crime in the context understanding social solidarity and social change

# Emile Durkheim

- Saw crime and deviance as being valuable to effecting change and correcting inequalities or rigidities in society
- Argued for a degree of flexibility in the moral order to enable progress, and thus making room for a category of deviance between difference crime and deviance

# Durkheim (Anomie Theory)

- Durkheim's Theory of Anomie
- In Division of Labour (1893) – refers to the pathological state of the economy
- 'this sphere of collective life which is in large part freed from the moderating action of [moral] regulation'...



crime statistics as a moral  
barometer



# Durkheim (Anomie Theory)

- latent or active, the state of war is necessarily chronic' ...  
'each individual find himself in a state of war with every other...'
- In Suicide (1897), **anomie** refers to the pathological mental state of the individual who is **insufficiently regulated by society** and suffers from 'the illness of infinite aspiration' – characterised by weariness, disillusionment, disturbance, agitation and discontent

his philosophy of human nature

happy person is in balance with their desires and fulfilling them  
- must have desires then recognise the possibility of achieving those desires  
- not to achieve them but to know whether can or cannot achieve and whether should or should not push for it

# Durkheim (Anomie Theory)

“Inextinguishable thirst is constantly renewed torture...To pursue a goal which is by definition unattainable is to condemn oneself to a state of perpetual unhappiness”

## Durkheim in *Suicide* (1897)

another philosophy of human nature

- not our habit to impose restraints on ourselves, and therefore we rely on external regulating forces to establish limits of what is possible and what is not

- looking at society for guidance (ie: family, religion, community)

normative institutions in our society apply external forces to curb our aspirations - placing a social lid on our desires

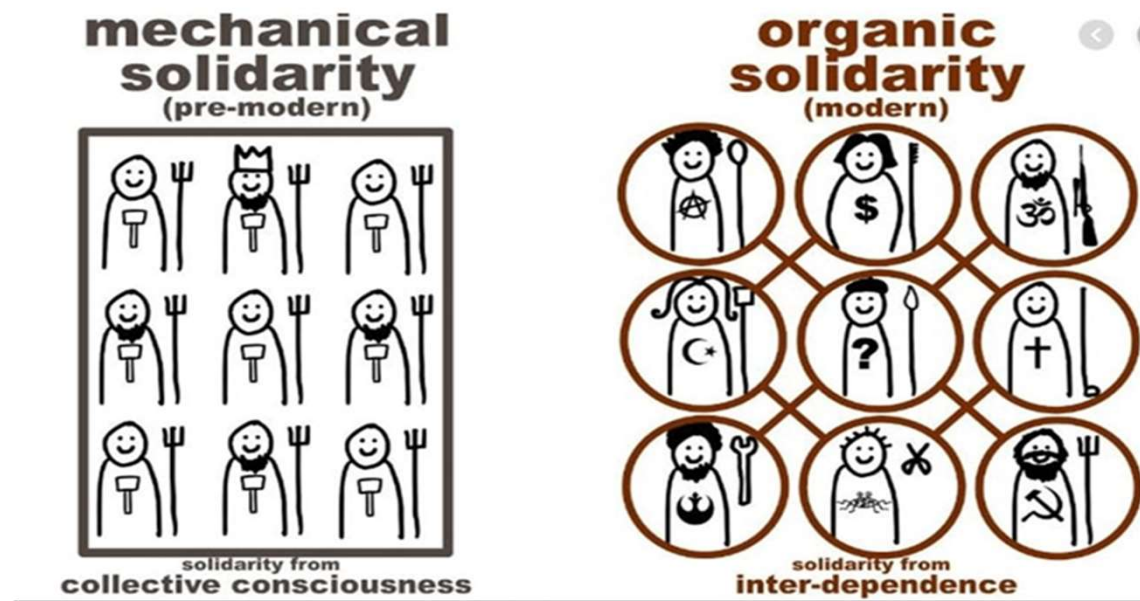
must have clear normative restrictions and prescriptions

but during time of rapid social transitions,

then normative institutions will "take a hit" because they themselves are in a state of flux, undergoing the same rapid changes themselves, then normative restrictions become blurred and hence the individual has limited capacity to recognise what is possible or not

# Durkheim (Anomie Theory)

- Located the problem of crime in the structural changes a society experiences as it transits from 'mechanical' to 'organic' solidarity
- Developed the 'anomie' theory of crime



# Durkheim (Anomie Theory)

- Anomie – the result of moral deregulation and diminishing capacity of key social institutions e.g. role of family to governing individuals' conduct and their desires for material mass consumption
- Decline of social and moral control
- Proliferation of middle-class and working class crimes

# Durkheim (Anomie Theory)

- Anomie theory resonates with the 'decline of moral values' discourse
- Examination of social policies based on the conception of anomie e.g. changes to law enforcement, housing policies, pastoral care, strengthening of family unit etc.