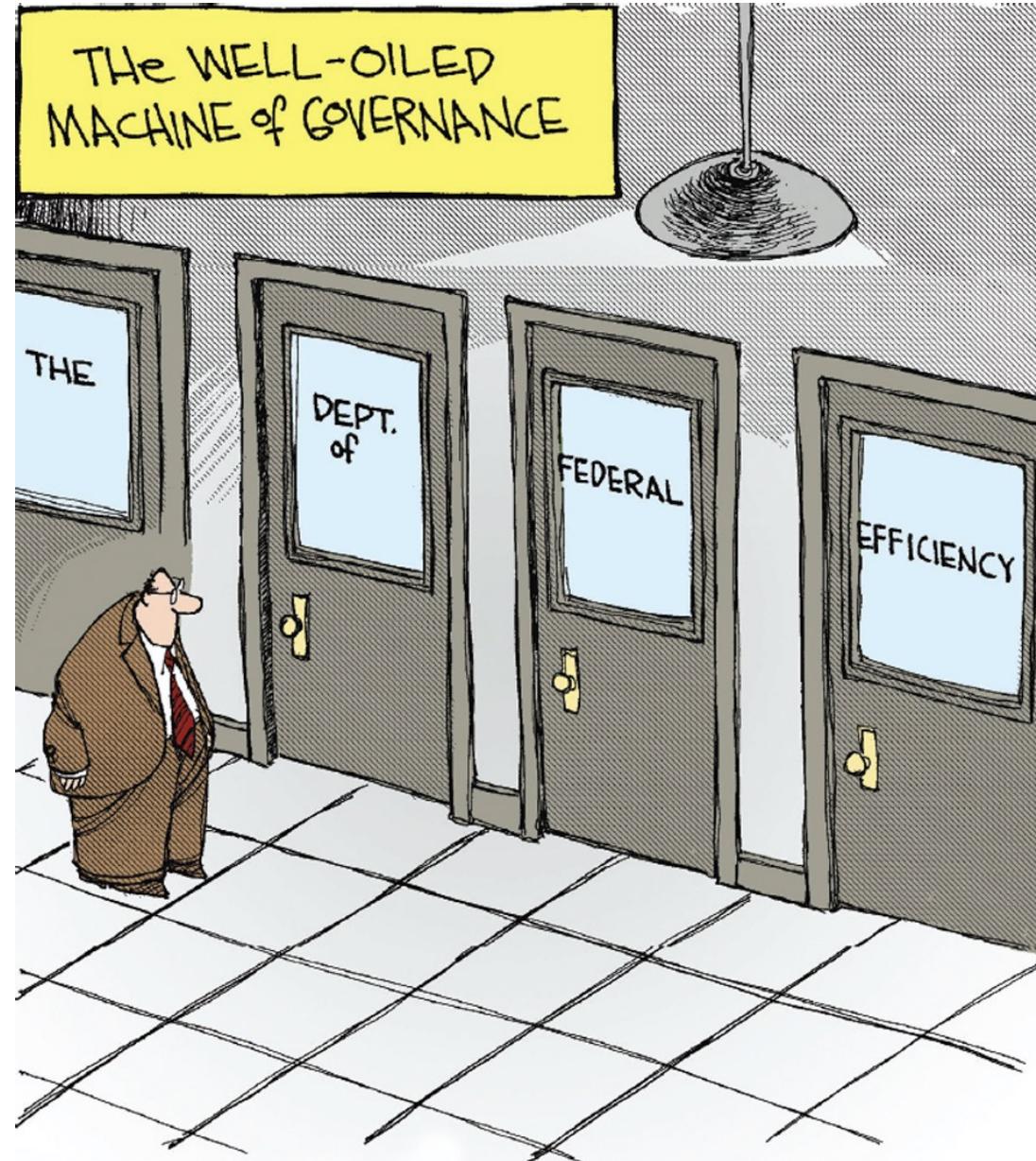

Networks, Groups, and Organizations

Learning Objectives

- Learn Michel Foucault's theory of surveillance. Understand the importance of social networks and the advantages they give some people.
- Learn what the term "McDonaldization" means. Understand how social networks can influence you in unexpected ways. Discover how the Internet has transformed relationships between groups and social networks.
- Learn what Robert Michels meant by the iron law of oligarchy. Consider how information and communication technology is transforming organizations.

Formal and Informal Relations within Bureaucracies

- **Formal relations:** Relations that exist in groups and organizations, as laid down by the norms, or rules, of the official system of authority.
- **Informal relations:** Relations that exist in groups and organizations developed on the basis of personal connections; ways of doing things that depart from formally recognized modes of procedure.



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Theories of Groups, Organizations, and Networks

Other consequences of the “rationalization of society”:

- The Control of Time and Space (Foucault)
 - Timetables
 - regularize activities across time and space
 - Surveillance
 - Supervising activities of individuals or groups to ensure compliant behavior

The Control of Time and Space

- **Surveillance:** The supervising of the activities of some individuals or groups by others in order to ensure compliant behavior.
- **Timetables:** The means by which organizations regularize activities across time and space.



Dream Pictures/Shannon Faulk/Getty Images

Table 6.1

APPLYING SOCIOLOGY TO NETWORKS, GROUPS, AND ORGANIZATIONS

| THEORY | APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING GROUPS | CONTEMPORARY APPLICATION |
|---|--|--|
| Weber's theory of organizations and bureaucracy | A bureaucracy is a type of organization with a clear hierarchy of authority, written rules of procedure, and full-time, salaried officials. | Students at a large university may be frustrated by red tape and bureaucracy, as they consult many different offices before arriving at an answer to a question about their tuition bill. |
| Foucault's theory of surveillance | In hierarchical organizations, persons with lower levels of authority and status are especially susceptible to surveillance, including direct oversight by superiors, and the monitoring of one's personal records like employment history. | Salesclerks at discount chain stores are monitored by hidden cameras, by having managers check to make sure their cash drawers equal their sales each night, and other forms of oversight. |
| Simmel's theory of group size | Human interactions are shaped by group sizes. Larger groups have less intense interactions, because a larger number of potential smaller group relationships exist as outlets for individuals who are not getting along with other members of the group. | A college student is nervous about living with just one roommate (dyad), in case they don't get along, and two roommates (triad), in case the other two "gang up" on her. A larger setting, like a group house or sorority, provides a greater number of less intense social ties. |
| Merton's reference group theory | Reference groups provide a standard for judging one's attitudes or behaviors. Humans use as reference groups people they know as well as people they don't (e.g., media figures). | A star high school athlete feels very confident in their abilities, as they rank first in their school. However, when they compare their feats to Olympians their age, or when they compete in varsity sports in college, their own skills may feel less stellar in comparison. |

6.3 Contemporary Research on Groups

The “McDonaldization” of Society?

- George Ritzer defined McDonaldization as the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant are coming to dominate more and more sectors of American society as well as the rest of the world.
- Guiding principles are efficiency, calculability, uniformity, and control through automation.
- Ritzer argues that McDonaldization is making social life more homogenous, more rigid, and less personal.



Michael Nagle/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Personal Taste

- Though we tend to think of taste as an individual choice, our tastes are actually impacted by our social networks.
- In an experiment conducted by Matthew Salganik, Peter Dodds, and Duncan Watts, it was found that the “intrinsic” quality of music mattered less than the number of people in each world who were listening to, rating, and downloading a song.

Obesity

- Human health and health behaviors are powerfully shaped by one's peers and significant others, and people may model and influence each other's behaviors.
- In their study of obesity, Nicholas Christakis and James Fowler found that if one person became obese, then persons closely connected to him or her had a greater chance of becoming obese.
- However, some of their critics have argued most of the association they found was due to error.

6.4 Unanswered Questions

Is Democracy Meaningless in the Face of Increasingly Powerful Bureaucratic Organizations?

- Weber was disturbed by the prospect of rule by faceless bureaucrats.
- Robert Michels invented a phrase for this: “Who says organization says oligarchy.”
- **Iron law of oligarchy:** A term coined by Weber’s student Robert Michels meaning that large organizations tend toward centralization of power, making democracy difficult.
- **Oligarchy:** Rule by a small minority within an organization or society.

How Are Late-Modern Organizations Reinventing Themselves?

- Many organizations are turning to “horizontal” collaborative models to be more responsive to fluctuating markets.
- **Information and communication technology:** Forms of technology based on information processing and requiring micro-electronic circuitry
- Now more than ever, more people are working remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Can the Traditional Organization Survive?

- The physical boundaries and missions of organizations are no longer clearly defined.
- Alliances between companies and decentralization contribute to organizational networks.
- Networked organizations foster the flow of information and enhance creativity.

Review of Theoretical Approaches

- Symbolic Interactionism
 - Exchanges of **symbols** through social interaction
 - How symbols/meanings are socially constructed

Review of Theoretical Approaches

- Functionalism
 - Society is made up of parts that carry out functions and play different roles in creating social order
 - Sees morality as the foundation for social order

Review of Theoretical Approaches

- Marxism and Class Conflict
 - **Conflict** is a normal feature of society
 - Individuals and groups use **power** to promote their interests
 - Power is exerted through force, rules, laws, and ideologies

Review of Theoretical Approaches

- Rational Choice Theory
 - Self Interest lies in the heart of most behavior
- Postmodern Theory
 - Social life has no “grand narrative”, no “progress”

Conformity, Deviance, and Crime

Opening Question

Members of the Mafia commit crimes in order to

- A. terrorize other citizens.
- B. become respectable members of society.
- C. extort money.
- D. destroy communities and the government.

Learning Objectives (1 of 2)

- Learn how we define deviance and how it is related to social power and social class. Recognize the ways in which we encourage conformity.
- Know the leading sociological theories of crime and how each is useful in understanding deviance.

Learning Objectives (2 of 2)

- Familiarize yourself with some of the varieties of crime.
- Explore the different explanations for the decline in crime. Think about the best solutions to reduce crime. Consider the ways in which individuals and governments can address crime.

Norms

- **Norms:** Rules of conduct that specify appropriate behavior in a given range of social situations.
- A norm either prescribes a given type of behavior or forbids it.
- All human groups follow definite norms, which are always backed by sanctions of one kind or another, varying from informal disapproval to physical punishment.

7.1 Basic Concepts

What Is Deviance?

- **Deviance:** Modes of action that do not conform to the norms or values held by most members of a group or society.
- What is regarded as deviant is as variable as the norms and values that distinguish different cultures and subcultures from one another.
- Forms of behavior that are highly esteemed by one group may be regarded negatively by others.

Deviant Subculture

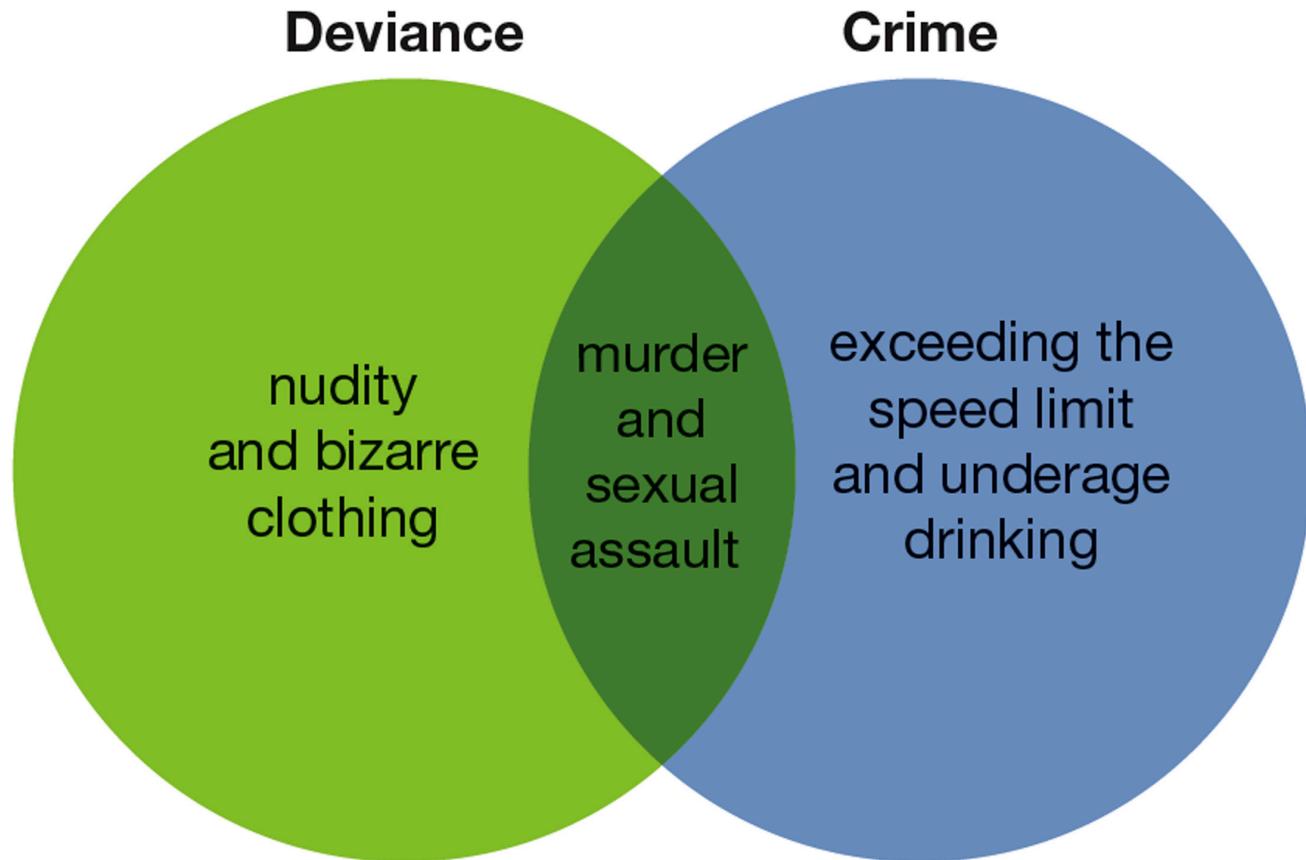
- Deviance is not limited to individuals; it concerns the activities of groups as well.
- **Deviant subculture:** A subculture whose members hold values that differ substantially from those of the majority.
- An example of a deviant subculture is Heaven's Gate, a cult established in the early 1970s led by Marshall Herff Applewhite, whose ideas resulted in a mass suicide of his followers in 1997.

Norms and Sanctions

- All social norms carry sanctions that promote conformity and protect against nonconformity.
- **Sanction:** A mode of reward or punishment that reinforces socially expected forms of behavior.
- **Laws:** Rules of behavior established by a political authority and backed by state power.
- **Crime:** The result of any action that contravenes the laws established by a political authority.

Figure 7.1

INTERSECTION OF DEVIANCE AND CRIME



7.2 Society and Crime: Sociological Theories

Sociological Theories of Deviance & Crime

- Overview

(What makes sociological theories “sociological”?)

- Definition of crime depends on a society’s culture and social institutions
- Social context is important
- People decide collectively what is or is not criminal
- Powerful people and groups have greater influence over definition of crime

Introduction To Theories of Social Deviance



Theories attempt to explain what deviance and crime mean to society

Theories are grouped based on the following sociological paradigms:

- **Functionalism:** concern with roles and norms
- **Symbolic Interactionism:** labeling and symbols are important
- **Conflict Theory:** focus on power and inequality

Functionalist Theories

- Functionalist theories argue that crime occurs when the aspirations of individuals and groups do not coincide with available opportunities.
- Two main functionalist theorists were Émile Durkheim and Robert K. Merton.

Émile Durkheim

- **Anomie:** A concept first brought into wide usage in sociology by Durkheim to refer to a situation in which social norms lose their hold over individual behavior.
- Durkheim believed anomie situations made people feel disoriented and anxious; anomie therefore heightens dispositions to suicide.
- Durkheim saw crime and deviance as inevitable elements in modern societies, where there is more room for individual choice.

Necessary Deviance

- Durkheim believed deviance was necessary to introduce new ideas and social challenges to bring about change, and to promote social boundary maintenance between “good” and “bad” behavior.

Robert K. Merton

- According to Merton, deviance is a byproduct of economic inequalities.
- Merton split people into five possible types based on how they responded to the tensions between socially endorsed values and the limited means of achieving them.
- Those five types are conformist, innovator, ritualist, retreatist, rebel.

Merton's Five Groups (1 of 2)

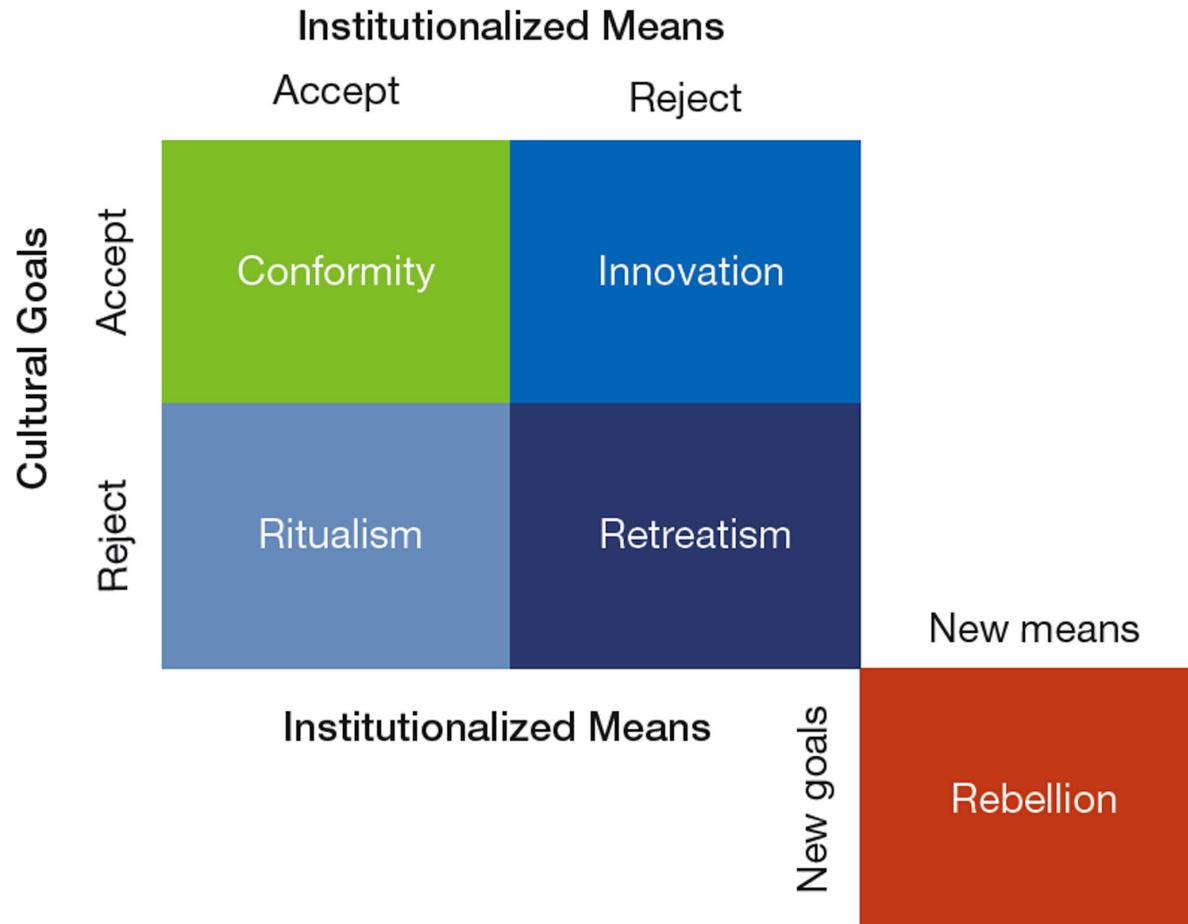
- *Conformists* accept generally held values and the conventional means of realizing them, regardless of whether they meet with success.
- *Innovators* accept socially approved values but use illegitimate or illegal means to follow them.
- *Ritualists* conform to socially accepted standards, though they have lost sight of their underlying values.

Merton's Five Groups (2 of 2)

- *Retreatists* have abandoned the competitive outlook, rejecting both the dominant values and the approved means of achieving them.
- *Rebels* reject both the existing values and the means of achieving them but work to substitute new ones and reconstruct the social system.

Figure 7.2

MERTON'S DEVIANCE TYPOLOGY



Merton and Relative Deprivation

- Merton answered the question: At a time when society as a whole was becoming more affluent, why did crime rates continue to rise?
- He identified that the contrast between rising aspirations and persistent inequalities resulted in the recognition that one has less than their peers.
- **Relative deprivation:** Deprivation a person feels by comparing himself with a group.
- Merton saw this relative deprivation as an important factor in deviance.

Subcultural Explanations

- Individuals follow rules when they have the opportunity to do so and break rules when they do not.
- Subcultures with deviant values develop in response to a lack of legitimate opportunities for success as defined by the wider society.
- However, we should not presume that middle-class values are accepted throughout society.

Sociological Theories of Deviance & Crime

- Critiques of Functionalist Theories
 - Functionalist theories falsely assume that people in poorer communities aspire to the same things as more affluent people
 - i.e. falsely assuming a middle-class norm
 - Falsely assume that only the less privileged are more prone to deviance and crime
 - e.g. white-collar crimes are less likely to be reported
 - Does not question how “crimes” are defined and by whom.
 - Lack of attention to power

Interactionist Theories

- Focus on deviance as a socially constructed phenomenon
- Sociologists studying deviance reject the idea that some types of conduct are inherently deviant.
- Instead, they ask why only some groups get labeled as deviant.

Differential Association

- **Differential association:** An interpretation of the development of criminal behavior proposed by Edwin H. Sutherland, according to whom criminal behavior is learned through association with others who regularly engage in crime.
- The term *differential* refers to the ratio of deviant to conventional social contacts.
- We become deviant when exposed to a higher level of deviant persons and influences, compared with conventional influences.

Labeling Theory

- **Labeling theory:** An approach to the study of deviance that suggests that people become “deviant” because certain labels are attached to their behavior by political authorities and others.
- **Primary deviation:** According to Edwin Lemert, the actions that cause others to label one as a deviant.
- **Secondary deviation:** According to Edwin Lemert, following the act of primary deviation, secondary deviation occurs when an individual accepts the label of deviant and acts accordingly.

Labeling Theory

- Interactionist Theories
 - Labeling Theory
 - How deviance is defined reflects the power structure of the society; rules framed by more powerful groups
 - The process of “learning to be deviant” tends to be reinforced by the “correctional” institutions such as the prison
 - Critique: “Labeling” itself does not cause deviance behavior; Neglects the processes that lead to acts being defined as deviant: differences in socialization, attitudes, and opportunities

Conflict Theory

- **Conflict theory:** The argument that deviance is deliberately chosen and often political in nature.
- As inequalities increase between the ruling class and the working class, law becomes the key instrument for the powerful to maintain order.
- Crime occurs in the context of inequalities and competing interests among social groups.



Tomas Munita/The New York Times/Redux

Control Theory

- **Control theory:** The theory that views crime as the outcome of an imbalance between impulses toward criminal activity and controls that deter it.
- Control theorists hold that criminals are rational beings who will act to maximize their own reward unless they are rendered unable to do so through either social or physical controls.

Crime Prevention through Control Theory

- Target hardening is an approach to crime prevention that makes it more difficult for criminals to commit crimes by minimizing their opportunities to do so and intervening in potential crime situations.
- Target-hardening techniques and zero-tolerance policing have been successful at curtailing crime in some contexts.
- But these measures do not address the underlying causes of crime and instead are aimed at protecting and defending certain elements of society from its reach.

The Theory of Broken Windows

- Target hardening and zero-tolerance policing are based on the theory of *broken windows*, which arose from a study by the social psychologist Philip Zimbardo.
- While efforts to maintain public order have been shown to reduce the occurrence of some more serious crimes, it remains unclear whether the theory is generalizable to all sorts of crime.

Theoretical Conclusions

- Criminal and “respectable” behavior exist on a continuum.
- Whether someone engages in a criminal act or comes to be regarded as a criminal is influenced by social learning and social surroundings.
- The way in which crime is understood directly affects the policies developed to combat it.

Crips and Bloods: Made in America

When people are excluded from mainstream organizations they may form alternative organizations in their place.

"Crips and Bloods: Made in America" produced by Baron Davis, Dan Halsted, and Stacy Peralta, distributed by Bullfrog films.

<https://digital.wwnorton.com/introsoc12seagull>

Table 7.1

APPLYING SOCIOLOGY TO CRIME

| THEORY | APPROACH TO UNDERSTANDING DEVIANC E | CONTEMPORARY APPLICATION |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Functionalist Theory | Deviance serves the function of creating solidarity among the larger society. | In 2019, when a group of affluent parents that included Lori Loughlin was caught attempting to gain admission for their children to prestigious universities through a scheme of bribery and deception, parents and children across the country together shared outrage over this act of deviance. |
| Interactionist Theory | No act is objectively deviant—to understand the nature of deviance, we must understand the process through which some people get labeled deviant. | Diagnostic labels for certain psychiatric disorders—e.g. ADHD and depression—may add to the stigma associated with certain behaviors |
| Conflict Theory | The poor disproportionately violate norms and laws in response to their unequal position in society. | Immigrants without papers feel compelled to work “off the books.” |
| Control Theory | Crime results from lack of social and physical controls that deter it. | Street sensors and cameras and other surveillance systems have contributed to lower crime rates in many cities |
| Broken Windows Theory | Minor acts of deviance must be controlled in order to avoid a spiral of crime and social decay. | Proactive policing focused on graffiti or drinking in public is believed by some to have the effect of lowering violent crime. |

7.3 Research on Crime and Deviance Today

Crimes against Women

- Only about a third of instances of rape and sexual assault are reported to the police (in US in 2018).
- It is estimated that one-quarter of women are victims of violence at some point, but all women face the threat of such crimes directly or indirectly.
- Rape is generally recognized in law as a type of criminal violence, not just as a sexual offense.



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W_ZPHPutN-c

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMnpnd0T4gE>

Crimes of the Powerful

- Crimes by people in positions of power and wealth can have farther-reaching consequences than petty crimes often committed by the poor.
- **White-collar crime:** Criminal activities carried out by those in white-collar, or professional, jobs.
- Most white-collar crimes do not appear in official statistics; perpetrators rarely go to jail.



Corporate Crime

- **Corporate crime:** Offenses committed by large corporations in society.
Examples of corporate crime include pollution, false advertising, and violations of health and safety regulations.
- Six types of violations: administrative, environmental, financial, labor, manufacturing, unfair trade practices
- The effects of corporate crime disproportionately affect those who are disadvantaged by other socioeconomic inequalities.



Jeff Holt/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Cybercrime

- **Cybercrime:** Criminal activities by means of electronic networks or involving the use of information technologies.
- Electronic money laundering, personal identity theft, electronic vandalism, and monitoring electronic correspondence are all emergent forms of cybercrime.
- The majority of cyber crimes against American companies go unreported.

7.4 Unanswered Questions

Can We Reduce Crime through New Policing Techniques?

- A new sociological perspective suggests that policing is now less about controlling crime and more about detecting and managing risks by communicating knowledge about those risks to other institutions (such as the public health system, insurance agencies, and the court system).
- Punitive policing, like stop-and-frisk, creates a culture of mistrust and resistance to authority.
- It is not clear that a greater police presence translates into lower crime rates.

Stop-and-Frisk

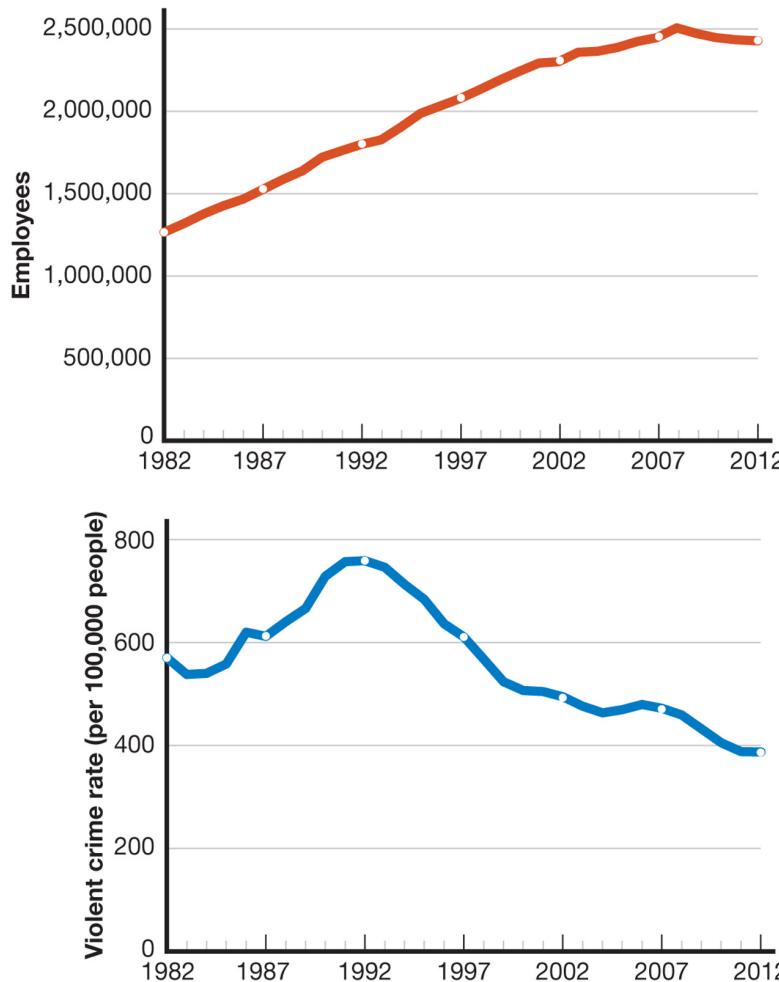
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Duc3R-Xu_jw



Michael Matthewq - Police Images/Alamy Stock Photo

Figure 7.7
JUSTICE EMPLOYMENT AND CRIME RATES, 1982–2012

Although the number of police steadily increased between 1982 and 2012, the crime rate dropped, increased, and dropped again during this period. Therefore, no causal link can be made between the number of police and the crime rate.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2011, 2014a, 2014b.

Will New Surveillance Technologies Eliminate Deviance?

- In some cases, not complying with the rules may facilitate social interaction, reduce power inequalities, or enable positive social change.
- New high rates of data collection have raised new concerns about a citizen's right to privacy in the contemporary age.

Can We Prevent Crime by Building Stronger Communities?

- **Community policing:** A renewed emphasis on crime prevention rather than law enforcement to reintegrate policing within the community.
- **Shaming:** A way of punishing criminal and deviant behavior based on rituals of public disapproval rather than incarceration. The goal of shaming is to maintain the ties of the offender to the community.



ZUMAPress, Inc./Alamy Stock Photo