

## **Crime and Deviance - Essay Question Section**

**a. 10 marks = Describe – 10 mins**

**b. 10 marks = Explain – 10 mins**

**c. 20 marks = Discuss – 20 mins**

- For the (c) question 20 marks you need to be aware of the three views below and be able to express how **at least one of these type of sociologists** would view a situation. You might need to do the same for the (b) question but rarely for the (a) question.
- Remember in the essay style questions they DO NOT ask for your opinion so say something like, 'Some sociologists would say.....' Then put your comment in a neutral way e.g. 'This is a very interesting point because .....
- In this way you develop an argument without getting too personal

**Marxist** – Believe society is split into two groups. The ruling class and the working class. Society is run by the ruling class so everything in society is purposefully organised to benefit the ruling class who are allowed to increase in capital (money and possessions) and disadvantage the working class. They would argue that the laws are passed to keep the working class in their place and laws are often not passed to deal with the upper classes. They would say crime statistics are wrong because they focus on working class crime when they should focus on all the white collar and corporate crime of the middle and upper classes

**Feminist** – Society is split into two groups. Men and women. Society is run by men (Patriarchy), so everything in society is organised to benefit men and disadvantage women. They would say that women are often the victims of crime but these crimes go unreported because women have been socialised not to mention things like domestic abuse.

**Functionalists** – Society and its structures (e.g. education, police, media etc) is ordered to be functional, to bring about order for as many as possible. They would not agree with the Marxist or Feminist. They would say the norms of society are set by society so no one is favouring anyone. They believe in firm punishments to keep society functioning well.

## Past Questions to think about and practice

### 2013

- a. Describe what is meant by Deviancy Amplification? (10)
- b. Explain why corporate crime sometimes goes unreported (10)
- c. Discuss explanations of youth crime (20)

### 2012

- (a) Describe what is meant by **white collar crime**. [10]
- (b) Explain why we have a police service in the UK. [10]
- (c) Using sociological knowledge, discuss reasons why some people are more likely to be convicted of crime than others. [20]

### 2011

- (a) Describe the meanings of the terms **crime** and **deviance**. [10]
- (b) Explain the role of the Police. [10]
- (c) Using sociological knowledge, discuss problems with the accuracy of official statistics of crime. [20]

### Exemplar

- (a) Describe the difference between crime and deviance. [10]
- (b) Explain why men are more likely to be convicted of crime than women. [10]
- (c) Using sociological knowledge, outline and explain reasons why we need to have social control in our society. [20]

## Reporting of Crime

### Types of Crime

**White Collar Crime** – Fiddling expenses, tax evasion, taking company products home. These are often seen as minor and often don't result in prosecution. Why ? **Marxist Sociologists** would say it is because they are committed by the middle and upper classes so somehow become perceived as acceptable whereas the working classes are more likely to commit 'real crime' where the figures are recorded.

**Corporate Crime** - Crimes committed with the approval of the bosses of a big company usually to maximise profits. E.g. Purposely using slave labour in India to keep costs down.

**Governmental Crime** – The breaking of international law. E.g. Using torture in prison system.

### Crime Figures

**1950 – 500,000 crimes**

**1992 – 5.6 million**

**2012 – 5.1 million**

Most crimes are committed by young men from working class backgrounds.

Plus the % of black young men convicted are over represented in the population

### Crime Figures – Can we trust them?

- The figures are just the crimes that are recorded by the police (see white collar crime)
  - There could be more going unrecorded
  - The police might not record them because of lack of evidence
- It is in the police's interest not to record certain crimes so they look like they are solving more

### **The Dark / Hidden Figure**

The **British Crime Survey** (A Survey of 47,000 people) shows that the actual crime figure is **much higher** than what the police record. **It says 10 million crimes not the 5 million the police say.**

- It shows that police are accurate in recording 'violent crimes' but not so with lesser crimes like theft. Interestingly it is easier to solve the violent crimes than theft.

### **Why the difference in between the PRC (Police recorded Crime) and the BCS (British Crime Survey)?**

- Some crimes **NOT REPORTED** – e.g. people are scared, don't think anything will be done etc

- Some crimes **NOT RECORDED** – e.g. Police record 10 houses being burgled as one house

**Self Report Studies** - People given an anonymous questionnaire asking them what crimes they have committed. Usually it is done with teenagers. These reveal a much higher percentage of minor crimes being committed in GB.

## **Dealing with Offences**

**Sentences:** Absolute Discharge, Conditional Discharge, Fine, Probation Order, Community Service Order, Combination Order, Prison

**The Penal System** – How criminals are punished. It is Prison and Probation Service. The aim: Punish, Reform, Deter

**Cost:** Probation=£183 a month    Prison= £2070 a month

**Types:** From Open Prison to Maximum Security depending on severity of crime

### **Problems with Prison:**

- Prisoners begin to conform to the norms and values of other prisoners, sometimes making them worse.
- Prisoners get institutionalised and struggle to adapt when they are released
- Reoffending is as high with people who go to prison as with probation

**Social Control** – How society tries to make people conform to the norms, values, rules and laws

**Formal Social Control**– Laws and rules with consequences given out by the police, judges and prison.

**Informal Social Control** – Are the same as agencies of Socialisation: Family, education, peer groups, work, media and religion.

### **The Police**

- Small traditional societies (e.g. Tribal) do not have police forces. Informal Social Control is usually enough
- First police force in London – 1829
- 200 separate forces in GB by 1850

- Over 100,000 police in GB now

Role: Prevent crime, Protect Property, Maintain public order

**Marxists Sociologists** see the police force as a tool of the ruling (upper) classes. They think to advance capitalism (wealth making) the ruling classes needed a force to keep the lower classes in their place. E.g. Margaret Thatcher used police to suppress the miner's strike in the 1980s. Is this a fair portrayal of the police? You decide.

## **Reasons why people commit crime**

### **Biological Explanations why people commit crime**

Lambroso – 1850s said that criminals could be identified by their looks, particularly their jaws. (Although this theory is outdated – note the appearance of criminals in films plays to this stereotype)

Modern Day – Scientific tests are revealing certain types of criminals have higher *testosterone* levels (leading to aggression) and lower levels of *serotonin* (leading to lack of empathy) than others. Experiments on psychopathic killers have revealed the development of their frontal lobes, in their brains are underdeveloped.

ETHICAL QUESTIONS – Should such people with a certain genetic disposition be 'dealt with' before they commit a crime? E.g. Minority Report. Would this lead to a superior race?

### **Psychological Explanations why people commit crime – Similar to Biological**

Hans Eysenck (Psychologist) – Extroverts are more likely to commit crime because they are risk takers.

Certain mental conditions cause people to commit crime. E.g. schizophrenia, kleptomania, etc. These psychologists believe much crime is not crime because people cannot help themselves. They are ill.

### **Sociological Explanations of Crime and Deviance**

#### **General Socialisation**

Crime and Deviance occur as a result of a failure of socialisation, a failure of norms and values being transferred properly. E.g. For boys without a father around can lead to anti-social behaviour.

Problem children tend to grow into problem adults and then produce problem children. Peer Group influences norms and values more than primary socialisation (family). Lack of opportunity – e.g. poor education, no jobs – causes people to lose hope but still clamour for status that can only be achieved through crime.

### **Functionalist / Sub-Cultural View – Albert Cohen**

- People can't achieve society's norms, values and goals of health wealth and happiness. They have little status!
- They feel blocked (Anomie) and have '**status frustration**' so they feel the need to get their **status** from being deviant and committing crime.
- They either commit crime so they can get money or they commit crime to get their status from a gang / sub-culture.
- That's why gangs form and they commit crime like vandalism and graffiti.

### **Interactionist View – Howard Becker (The Labelling Cycle)**

- **Labelling**- Stereotyping of a person because of the way they behave. E.g. Known as a family of thieves because dad went to jail for stealing
- **Master Status** – The label that people give a person 'sticks' and this *defines who they are*. They often then become that label. E.g. Labelled as a trouble maker because brother was then become a trouble maker.
- **Deviant Career** – They feel they might as well be what people say they are and they become what they have been labelled as

### **Interactionist View – Deviancy Amplification and Moral Panics – Stan Cohen**

- Whole groups get 'labelled' as bad by the media even though they aren't e.g. Mods n Rockers. They become 'folk devils'
- The public get worried and a MORAL PANIC happens where the public want action against them
- The police clamp down but this causes a reaction
- This leads to 'Deviancy Amplification' – the original deviancy which wasn't that bad become worse and worse.
- An example of this is the London Riots of 2011

### **Marxist View**

- A society that is built on competition and gaining wealth (capitalism) is bound to lead to more crime as those who are 'not succeeding' (i.e. gaining more wealth) want what others have got and in the end will do it by any means.
- The crime figures aren't right because they are controlled by the upper classes and most 'corporate crime and white collar crime are not recorded.

## **Who Commits Crime?**

### **Gender and Crime**

#### **Why do women commit 5X less crime than men?**

- Socialisation – girls expected to be more passive, boys expected to be tough
- Opportunity – Girls tend to be more closely supervised (protected). Boys given more freedom
- Biology – Are boys more susceptible to testosterone and aggression?

**Self Report Studies** - Recent studies suggest women are engaging in more delinquent behaviour (minor crime). Why?

- A change in socialisation (Increase in feminism and the need for women to be assertive and equal to men)
- Increasing opportunity and freedom

### **Women's treatment as criminals and victims**

- Women often given lighter sentences (Possibly because of traditional view that men have to look after women) - **the Chivalry factor**
- Women given harsh sentences if it is child neglect (Possibly because of traditional view that women are homemakers)
- Women more likely to be victims of sexual abuse and not likely to report it

**Feminists say** that the figures for sexual crimes against women are much higher than recorded but women do not report them because they believe they will not be taken seriously. Feminists say this is evidence that GB is still a sexist country!

### **Age and Crime**

**Juvenile Delinquency** – Undesirable and anti-social behaviour by young people, some including minor crime. (E.g. swearing, graffiti, being loud, littering, sexual promiscuity)

### **Average age of Criminal is 18 – Why?**

Possible Causes: Family issues, poor education, alcohol and drugs, peer groups, sub-cultures

**See Functionalist / Sub- Cultural view and Interactionist View** for more detail

**Sociologist Albert Cohen says:** Delinquents are those who are not gaining recognition through normal ways, e.g. at school, in a sports team etc so get recognition from peers for being rebellious

**Sociologist David Matza says:** Most older people have a rebellious streak but they have learnt when and where they can show this. (E.g. when it is ok to be loud, swear etc) Juvenile delinquents haven't yet learnt this but usually will.

### **Minority Ethnic Groups and Crime**

**Afro-Caribbean** people are **7X** more likely to go to prison. Why?

- More likely to commit crime for certain reasons



- Children of Immigrants so lacked opportunity,
- Deep racism in the past has led to lack of opportunities for this group,
- High level of family breakdown within this group
- The Criminal Justice system is/was racist
  - The MacPherson report in 1998 concluded that this was true

**Asians are** no more likely to end up in prison as rest of population. Why?

- Strong family ties (Thus good socialisation)
- Strong community ties (Thus good socialisation)
- Good economic success
- Religious Belief

**Joseph Rowntree Foundation** – In 1999 this research found that for many Black and Asian people verbal abuse was common place and they had to learn ways to cope with it

### **Racism Corruption and the Police**

- The police are human beings with ‘power’ and this sometimes leads to ‘bent coppers’, police who: take bribes, keep stolen goods, organise protection, assault suspects.
- **The MacPherson Report** – Stephen Lawrence (A black teenager) was murdered in 1993 and the MacPherson report concluded in 1998 that the Police Force was ‘institutionally racist.’ (The whole police force had a racist tendency) This was because as Stephen lay dying the police officers automatically thought because he was black he must have brought the knifing on himself. They didn’t even try to save him.
- Since 1998 there have been major changes in the attitudes of the police force. They can even report a ‘bent copper’ secretly (anonymously)

### **Terms**

**Crime** – Breaking of the ‘laws’ of a society.

**Deviance** – Behaviour that ‘most’ people in society disapprove of, where the ‘norms’ and ‘values’ are broken. (Doesn’t necessarily mean it is a crime) e.g. swearing loudly at a posh dinner.

**Rules** – Norms and Values are unwritten rules. Rules are written and explicit. E.g. No using mobile phones in hospital.

**Sanctions** – The punishments for breaking the norms, values or a crime. E.g. 25 years in prison for murder or a ‘tut’ and a shake of the head for breaking wind in a posh dinner.

*Deviance changes over time and in different countries and cultures – e.g. swearing in public was deviant 50 years ago in GB. Now it generally isn’t!*

*Crime is different in different cultures – e.g. drinking alcohol in Saudi Arabia is against the law.*

## **Crime and the Future**

### **Change in formal social control:**

- Private Security Firms being hired by companies and neighbourhoods to protect as police funds are cut
  - How will they be monitored? Could they employ the wrong people?
- Because of Prisons being so expensive – possibly turning to Restorative Justice (As in South Africa in 1994)
  - Will this really work? Will people just say sorry to stop going to prison? Is it just a cost cutting exercise?
- Increased reliance on technology to prevent crime. (CCTV, DNA, eye scanning technology etc)
  - Will the price of security be our loss of freedom? Will we turn into a Big Brother state where everyone lives in fear of stepping out of line?

### **Globalisation and Crime**

The Internet has meant that global connections have massively increased in good and ‘bad’ ways.

- The Drugs Trade, Terrorism, Slave Trade, Internet Theft and Scams

How will global crime be policed? A new international law? A new International Police Force? What if a country doesn’t comply?

