Chapter Four: Deviance and Social Control

Social Control

- **Social control**: techniques and strategies for preventing deviant behavior in any society
  - Obeying parents
  - Peer groups
    - Introduce informal norms
  - Bureaucratic workers have formal rules and regulation
  - Government legislates and enforces social norms

Social Control

- **Sanctions**: penalties and rewards for conduct concerning a social norm
  - Ultimate formal sanction is death penalty
  - People often receive competing messages about how to behave
  - Functionalists: people must respect social norms if a society is to survive

Social Control

- **Conformity**: going along with peers who have no special right to direct behavior
- **Obedience**: compliance with higher authorities in an hierarchical structure
Social Control

- **Informal social control**: used casually to enforce norms
- **Formal social control**: carried out by authorized agents

Law and Society

- Some norms are so important to a society that they are formalized into laws
  - **Law**: governmental social control
    - Legal order reflects values of those in position to exercise authority
    - Socialization is the primary source of conforming and obedient behavior, including obedience to law

What is Deviance?

- **Deviance**: behavior that violates the standards of conduct or expectations of a group or society
  - Involves violation of group norms, which may or may not be formalized into law
  - **Stigma**: labels society uses to devalue members of certain social groups

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Functionalist Perspective

- **Durkheim’s Legacy**
  - Punishments established within a culture help define acceptable behavior and contribute to stability
  - If improper acts are not sanctioned, people might stretch standards of appropriate conduct
  - **Anomie**: loss of direction felt in society when social control of individual behavior has become ineffective

Functionalist Perspective

- **Merton’s Theory of Deviance**
  - **Anomie Theory of Deviance**: how people adapt in certain ways by conforming to or by deviating from cultural expectations
    - Conformist
    - Innovator
    - Ritualist
    - Retreatist
    - Rebel
Table 4-1: Merton's Modes of Individual Adaptation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mode</th>
<th>Institutionalized Mean (Hard Work)</th>
<th>Societal Goal (Acquisition of Wealth)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nondeviant</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformity</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deviant</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ritualism</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retraction</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebellion</td>
<td>−</td>
<td>−</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: + indicates acceptance; − indicates rejection; 0 indicates replacement with new means and goals.

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Interactionist Perspective

- **Cultural Transmission Theory**
  - Cultural transmission: one learns how to behave in social situations, whether properly or improperly
  - Differential association: process through which exposure to attitudes favorable to criminal acts leads to the violation of rules (Sutherland)

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Interactionist Perspective

- **Social disorganization theory**: attributes increases in crime and deviance to the absence or breakdown of communal relationships and social institutions

Some claim social disorganization theory seems to "blame the victim"

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Interactionist Perspective

- **Labeling theory**: attempts to explain why certain people are viewed as deviants while others are not; also known as social reaction approach

Response to an act, not the behavior, determines deviance

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Interactionist Perspective

- **Labeling and Agents of Social Control**
  - Some individuals or groups have the power to define labels and apply them to others
    - Police, psychiatrists, judges, teachers, employers, school officials
    - Racial profiling

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Interactionist Perspective

- **Labeling and Sexual Deviance**
  - Definition of deviant sexual behavior varied significantly over time and from culture to culture
    - Use of terms, even in positive way, still implies human sexuality can be confined in neat, exclusive categories
    - Definition of sexual deviance seems to change with each generation

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Conflict Theory

- People with power protect their own interests and define deviance to suit their needs
  - Criminal law reflects competing values and interests

Feminist Perspective

- Adler and Chesney-Lind suggest that many approaches to deviance and crime were developed with men in mind
  - Society tends to treat women in stereotypical fashion
  - Cultural views and attitudes toward women influence how they are perceived and labeled

Table 4-2: Approaches to Deviance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Perspective</th>
<th>Proponent</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anomie</td>
<td>Functionalist</td>
<td>Emile Durkheim</td>
<td>Adherence to societal norms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural transmission</td>
<td>Interactionist</td>
<td>Robert Kropit</td>
<td>Parents learned through others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social organization</td>
<td>Interactionist</td>
<td>Clifford Shaw, Henry McKay</td>
<td>Cultural relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labeling/social control</td>
<td>Interactionist</td>
<td>Howard Becker</td>
<td>Societal response to acts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>Conflict</td>
<td>Richard Quinney</td>
<td>Deviance by authorized agents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feminist</td>
<td>Conflict/feminist</td>
<td>Freda Adler, Meda Chesney-Lind</td>
<td>Role of gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Women as victims and perpetrators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Crime

- Crime: violation of criminal law for which some governmental authority applies formal penalties
  - Key ingredients in incidence of street crime appear to be drug use and widespread firearms

Crime

- Types of Crime
  - Victimless crime
    - Willing exchange among adults of widely desired, but illegal, goods and services
  - Professional crime
    - Professional criminal: person who pursues crime as day-to-day occupation

- Types of Crime
  - Organized crime
    - Work of a group that regulates relations between various criminal enterprises involved in various illegal activities
  - White-collar and technology-based crime
    - White-collar crime: illegal acts committed in the course of business activities
  - Transnational crime
    - Crime that occurs across multiple national borders
Table 4-3: Types of Transnational Crime

- Bankruptcy and insurance fraud
- Computer crime
- Money laundering
- Environmental crime
- Hijacking of airplanes ("skyjacking")
- Illegal drug trade
- Illegal money transfers ("money laundering")
- Illegal sales of firearms and ammunition
- Infiltration of legal businesses
- Intellectual property crime
- Money-laundering of criminal organizations
- Sea piracy
- Terrorism
- Theft of art and cultural objects
- Trafficking in body parts (includes illegal organ transplant)
- Trafficking in human beings (includes prostitution)

Sources: Compiled by the author based on Weiler 2001 and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2010).

Crime Statistics

- Crime statistics are not as accurate as social scientist would like, but relate to issue of grave concern to people
- Serve as an indicator of police activity

Understanding Crime Statistics

- Even with current declines, reported crimes well above those of other nations
- Explanations of decline in violent crime nationwide
- Community-oriented policing and crime prevention programs
- New gun control laws
- Massive increase in the prison population preventing inmates from committing crimes outside the prison

Table 4-4: National Crime Rate and Percentage Change

Understanding Crime Statistics

- Reported crime very high in U.S.
- International Crime Rates
  - Violent crimes much more common in U.S. than Western Europe in 1980s and 1990s

Disturbing increases in violent crime are evident in other Western societies

Figure 4-2: Victimization Rates, 1973-2007

- Victimization rates reached their peak in 1981—more than twice as high as in 2007.
Understanding Crime Statistics

International Crime Rates

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