Using Independent Learning to Examine Global Crime and Deviance, Jill Swale, Kendrick School, Reading.

Aims

- To encourage independent study skills and implement the current 'students as teachers' strategy, drawing particularly on the knowledge of students from diverse backgrounds. Fully independent and structured approaches are offered.

- To update the teaching of crime and deviance by incorporating examples from recent news. In an article in Basia Spalek's Islam, Crime and Criminal Justice, (2002, Willan Publishing) Marie Macey deplores the lack of published research about Asian crime, some of it discouraged for fear of stirring up racial hatred, especially after September 11th, 2001. She argued that analysis and discussion are essential to inform realistic social policies. Macey's views about the need for a more open debate were echoed in August 2006, when Ruth Kelly, the Communities secretary, launched the government's new Commission for Integration and Cohesion. Item 6 attempts to break the 'conspiracy of silence' on a sensitive topic.

- To make synoptic links with World sociology, Politics and global and environmental themes.

Instructions

Stephen Cox of Osiris Educational advocates a radical approach to independent learning, which students enjoy because it enables them to research what most interests them and to cooperate in joint decision making. He takes Illich's view that students have become dependent consumers of education and have 'learned helplessness.' Teachers should occasionally restrain themselves from directing operations, acting as facilitators instead; the outcome is surprisingly productive and encourages creative 'flow'. To implement this fully independent learning approach:

- Randomly divide your class into groups of four or five.

- Give them the title Global Crime and Deviance and ask them to brainstorm and select a focus. Each group should pose questions and plan what each member needs to investigate to answer them.

- Without direction from you, students seek out suitable resources from those available in the teaching room, library and, if permitted, in the locality. Primary research for homework, such as conducting interviews with refugees, should ideally be included.

- Adhering to a fixed but longish time limit, students take responsibility for organising their final presentations to the class or a wider audience, using PowerPoint, video, OHP, leaflets and/ or wall display.

- Groups assess their own progress and adjust their plans during interim meetings which the teacher observes, and use self and peer assessment on completion of the project.

- The teacher acts as a facilitator, asking questions but not providing information.

For the less adventurous teacher, a more structured approach still offering opportunities for guided independent learning is offered below. Choose as many of the activities as time and group size permits.

- Whole or group brainstorm (the word 'brainstorm' is politically correct again!) the topic deviance from a global viewpoint. Establish interpretation of 'deviance'. List as many acts as possible that would be viewed as deviant in some parts of the world and not others, with details of places and reasons where possible.

- Item 1 in the Resources can then be used as a source of additional ideas. A group of students can further investigate some of these, for example using Internet searches, and present information to class.

- Whole class discussion. Consider the UK crime stories in Item 2 to identify their global connections. Draw out the point that, when studying crime, particularly where ethnic minorities are either victims or perpetrators, explanations based on twentieth century British and American sociology may no longer be adequate.

- Whole or group brainstorm to produce list of crimes likely to have increased as a result of global inequalities and globalisation. After a while use Item 3 to extend the activity. Any of these types of crime, particularly the drugs trade, could be investigated at length. A recommended source is Michael Smith's Why People Grow Drugs, published by Panos.

- Small group investigations of particular branches of global crime, with different students focussing on state, state-corporate/ TNC and green crimes, Items 4 and 5.

- Whole class discussion of possible motivation of British born terrorists using Item 6.

- Change of focus, brainstorming ways in which global cooperation can reduce crime.

- In groups detailed investigations of aspects of global action against crime, using Item 7.

- Plenary. Group presentations followed by making of mind maps pulling the whole topic together (Item 8).

- Recommended books for work on this topic, in addition to the above-mentioned and A2 books with good world sociology sections, include:

Giddens, A. (2006) Sociology, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Macionis, J. and Plummer, K. (2005) Sociology, a Global Introduction, Harlow: Pearson Education.

Naim, M. (2005) Illicit: How Smugglers, Traffickers and Copycats are Hijacking the Global Economy, London: Heinemann.

Global Crime and Deviance
Student Resources

Item 1   DEVIANCE FROM A GLOBAL VIEWPOINT.

Becker suggested acts are not intrinsically deviant but constructed as such by particular societies or groups.

- Investigate some of the acts listed below to discover the extent to which they are socially acceptable, deviant but legal, illegal but informally accepted or both illegal and socially unacceptable to people in different parts of the world, suggesting reasons for these cultural differences. Draw on the knowledge of group members to add examples of your own.

- Look up the term 'cultural relativism'. How do your findings relate to the implementation of international human rights and similar laws?

Female circumcision
Abortion of female foetuses
Scanty female dress
Drinking alcohol
Joining the Falun Gong sect
Listening to popular music
Homosexual acts between adult males
Arranged marriages
Sex between unmarried heterosexuals
Men shaving

Children working full time
Marriage to two or more wives concurrently
Eating pork
Crossing road without pedestrian green light
Women driving
Girls going to school
Women doing heavy manual paid work
Women holding professional roles
Having several children
Watching television

Item 2   GLOBAL BACKGROUND TO UK CRIME NEWS

2000 Killing of 10 year old Nigerian boy Damilola Taylor in Peckham, London.

January 2001 Couple convicted of murder of Victoria Climbie, brought from Ivory Coast for a 'better life' in Europe.

July 2001 Riots in Bradford and other Northern cities. The Cantle Report blamed segregated communities and right wing agitators.

September 2001 19 men connected with Al-Qaeda hijacked four airliners, crashing two into the World Trade Centre in New York and one into the Pentagon in Washington DC. Over 3000 people killed or listed missing. Repercussions included increased Islamophobia with attacks on individual Muslims or suspected Muslims in USA and Britain and war with Afghanistan. Subsequent Iraq war indirectly connected.

2002 Home Office study found black youths, often operating in gangs, behind the 'overwhelming majority' of mobile phone thefts and robberies in inner cities.

2003 Jamaican-born Toni-Ann Byfield, 7 years old, shot dead in London with her supposed father, a convicted Jamaican crack cocaine dealer. Incident led to media descriptions of violent black culture imported by drug dealers from Jamaica and the influences on the black community of poverty, single parenthood and educational failure.

2004 Boom in cyber crime, attacking websites with viruses and robbing bank accounts. See http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/4105007.stm for details.

2005 London tube and bus bombings by four British Muslims followed by religiously motivated attacks on Muslims and supposed Muslims throughout Britain. Anti-terror laws extended permission to hold suspects without charging them to 28 days.

2006 Arrest of 23 people, largely of Islamic background, in investigation of alleged plot to bomb transatlantic planes.

Item 3 HOW DO GLOBAL INEQUALITIES AND GLOBALISATION INCREASE CRIME?

Discuss how global inequalities increase certain types of crime

What is meant by **globalisation**? Giddens provides a useful definition. Which aspects of globalisation make certain crimes easier to commit?

Investigate some of the following, finding recent examples where possible. Decide whether they are brought about by global inequalities, ease of international travel and communication or both.

- Illegal immigration, including transporting people by dangerous methods and exploiting immigrant workers, such as the Morecambe Bay cockle pickers (2004).

- Tricking migrant jobseekers into prostitution and ill-treating children such as Victoria Climbie, sent to developed countries for an education.

- Sex tourism.

- Sale of organs for transplants and unwanted children for adoption.

- Internet pornography

- International terrorism

- Drug trafficking

- Smuggling of weapons and endangered species

- Exploitation of workers or consumers in developing countries by transnational corporations, (e.g. Nestle baby milk).

- Pollution and dangerous practices in developing countries by TNCs (e.g. Bhopal disaster 1984).

Item 4 STATE CRIMES

Use Wikipedia and other sources to find a definition of state crime.

Conduct a search for the following to discover what happened (some may be controversial) and decide whether or not they can be described as state crimes. You will need to decide whether the government or leader was responsible for or aware of the act and to what extent governments can be held responsible for the actions of state employees.

- Lockerbie disaster 1988

- Gassing of Kurds in Iraq 1988

- Imprisonment of terror suspects at Guantanamo Bay

- Camelford water scandal 1988

- Iraqi invasion of Kuwait 1990

- Massacres in Srebrenica 1995

- Iraq War 2003

- Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse

- Extraordinary rendition of terrorist suspects by USA.

State-corporate crimes result from the relationship between the policies of a state and a corporation. Green and Ward (2004) give the example of a developing nation so crippled with debt repayment that it allows TNCs offering prospects of capital growth to conduct business, even though they are breaking environmental and safety regulations. Of course governments in developed countries might equally ignore dangerous practices by foreign companies that offer local employment or some other benefits.

EXTRACT FROM EUROPEAN COMMISSION WEBSITE 2003

The Council of Ministers has approved measures to protect the environment by encouraging Member States to crack down on green crimes by making them punishable offences in their criminal codes. European foreign ministers meeting in Brussels recently adopted a Framework Decision on the protection of the environment through criminal law. "Each Member State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that environmental crimes are punishable by effective, proportionate and dissuasive penalties," they agreed.

The EU hopes to combat environmental degradation by imposing legal penalties, such as fines or even imprisonment, for serious environmental offences.

The decision requires Member States to define as criminal intentional conduct that causes harm to the environment. Offences that should be classified as criminal include the unlawful discharge of polluting substances into the air, soil or water.

They also include the handling of radioactive materials that can cause substantial environmental damage, injury or even death.

Investigate the following topics to decide whether they come into the category of state-corporate crimes and which could be described as **green crimes**. Why would it be difficult to establish that a government was 'turning a blind eye' to corporate crime?

- The diamond trade's sale of 'conflict diamonds' or 'blood diamonds'.

- Mercury pollution caused by gold mining in many countries.

- Disastrous Northwick Park hospital drugs trial 2006.

- Soy production in Amazon rainforest by American corporation, Cargill.

- Sale of timber from endangered forests.

- Exploitation of endangered animal species.

Item 6 WHY DO SOME BRITISH BORN MUSLIMS SUPPORT TERRORISM?

Understanding the motives behind the formation of terrorist groups around the world requires too much knowledge of the history and politics of the nations concerned to discuss here. However of great sociological interest and public concern is why a few British-born Muslims were prepared to murder fellow citizens in the London bombings of 2005 and alleged attempts to blow up transatlantic flights in 2006. It is too early for detailed sociological studies to be conducted, various theories have been suggested. Examine the suggestions below, find out about them and discuss which are the most convincing and why.

- Many Muslims have been alienated by British foreign policy, especially since the Iraq war. Though the government denies a connection between this and Islamic militancy, imams at universities have described the frustration and anger of the young as their views on Iraq, the Israeli-Palestinian question and the conflict in Lebanon have been ignored. They say faith in Western democracy has been lost.

- Muslims feel threatened by UK police and the government they represent, especially since the shooting of innocent men at Stockwell station and Forest Gate. Stops and searches of people of Asian appearance have increased enormously, and they can now be held for 28 days without charge. Since Forest Gate many Asians reject British media reports as distorted and are turning increasingly to Islamic media.

- Britain has failed to integrate its Muslim 1.5 million-strong community, of whom around 750,000 are of Pakistani origin. They have been allowed to live in 'ghettoes', often attending single faith schools, in the interests of multiculturalism.

- British lack of tolerance for alternative views is to blame for Islamophobia and **Orientalism** (viewing people from the east as inferior and 'other'). The resulting rejection forces minorities into oppositional groupings.

- **Ahmed Versi, Editor of Muslim News:** 'Except in a few cases, Muslims are very well integrated in [British] society. The idea of non-integration is part of a stereotype that portrays Muslims as outside mainstream society'. Claims that Muslims put their religion before their nationality are based on surveys asking people to make a false choice, as the majority see no conflict between the two.

- **Jason Burke of *The Observer*:** 'It is indeed possible that it is the uncertainty brought by the loss of the hierarchies and values of traditional societies such as that of rural Pakistan, of the Punjab or Kashmir, from where most British Muslim Pakistani immigrants originally came, that is behind some of the militancy.' How does this theory reflect Durkheim's concept of anomie?

- Ian Reader of Lancaster University: Islamic networks in the UK are behaving like cults, distancing members from normal social contacts, creating closed societies where they generate an intense fanaticism and dedication. Disillusioned young men are drawn initially to non-violent groups such as Tabligh Jamaat, which promotes a rigorous and conservative personal vision of Islam, then progress to more extreme mosques, study groups, militant politicised training abroad and into terrorist cells.

- **Fred Halliday of the London School of Economics:** Gory material circulated on the internet and through recruitment videos can be very important in quickly radicalising young people from relatively calm backgrounds. Those arrested for the failed London bombings on 21st July, 2005 admitted watching videos of civilian deaths in Iraq.

- There are many different styles of Islam practised in the UK. While the first large wave of South Asian immigrants followed a tolerant non-political style, strands associated with the Taliban, Saudi Arabian conservatism and the creation of modern Islamic states have become more influential in British Islamic seminaries, radicalising the teaching at some mosques.

- **Psychiatrist Mark Sagemen:** 'Foreign policy did not create al-Qaeda but has expanded the pool of people who want to do things. Local grievances acquire a global element and people are more willing to sacrifice themselves for a global vision.' What 'local grievances' might he have in mind?

Item 7 WAYS IN WHICH GLOBAL COOPERATION CAN REDUCE CRIME

Organisations that have tried to combat torture, imprisonment without trial and other human rights abuses include non-governmental organisations (NGOs) such as Amnesty International and international government organisations (IGOs) such as the United Nations, with its Human Rights Council and War Crimes Tribunal. Greenpeace, the international pressure group, campaigns against environmental abuse and acts of aggression even by the largest super power.

- Visit the site of the U. N. Human Rights Council and follow the leads to see the range of issues covered by the various bodies receiving its support. http://www.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/

- Visit the Greenpeace website to discover examples of Greenpeace action against green crime and its protests against perceived state aggression.

- Investigate international attempts to ban land mines.

- Use a web search to investigate the history of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and assess how successful international attempts have been to control 'rogue states' in this respect.

- Use a source such as Wikipedia to find out what is entailed in world government. Is this the best way to combat major problems such as international terrorism, drug trading and environmental degradation?

Item 8 MIND MAP OF GLOBAL CRIME AND DEVIANCE

(1) Produce a mind map to help you draw together and organise the various aspects of the topic you have just studied, either using ICT or by hand. One side of the map might represent deviance and the other crime. Crime could be subdivided, for example into state crime, TNC crime, green crime and organised international crime such as drug trafficking and terrorism. Each major branch should be a different colour with suitable symbols or pictures to make it memorable, and specific examples or studies will form smaller branches.

(2) Now consider whether aspects of sociology you learnt earlier, for example Marxist dependency, modernisation or feminists theories or concepts such as anomie, social construction and cultural imperialism have any relevance to the mind map.