

Teacher's Notes

TEN WEBSITES FOR A LEVEL SOCIOLOGY BY CHRIS LIVESEY

Chris has written a very useful guide which can be given out to students to encourage them to use these particular sites and to suggest some of the things that can be done with them

PATTERNS OF CRIME AND THE SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFENDERS: GENDER AND ETHNICITY BY JILL SWALE, KENDRICK SCHOOL READING

This scheme of work uses the 5 thinking skills recommended by QCA, indicated 'A-E' on the worksheet.

STARTER ACTIVITY

- Recap the Marxist view of crime, labelling theory and/or the findings of the British Crime Survey.
- Elicit from the class the notion that statistics may be misleading and explore some reasons why.
- Point out that statistics are essential to measure changes in behaviour and to develop social policies.
- Point out that some men's prisons recently had to be converted for women's use.

MAIN INTERACTIVE ACTIVITY

- Divide the class into two groups, one to work on gender, the other on ethnicity. If the group is small, keep one topic for later.
- Hopefully the class will realise statistical patterns may occur because of differential treatment by police and courts, or because the various groups actually offend at different rates, or both.
- If actual offence rate is different this could be due to differences of socialization, culture, supervision, opportunity, leisure patterns, type of employment, relative deprivation, status, psychology, hormones, physique etc.

PLENARY

- Ensure that students have enough recent statistics and research findings and that they appreciate that statistics may be inaccurate because of different patterns of reporting, recording and action by the courts. A good example is in Moore's 'Investigating Crime and Deviance'.
- British Chinese crime rates are low because the Chinese community prefer to deal with matters themselves whenever possible.

- Encourage 'metacognition' or awareness of not only what has been learnt, but how it relates to other topics.
- EXTENSION ACTIVITY:** Students could collect information about gender or ethnic patterns of victims of crime. The Stephen Lawrence websites are interesting. This could lead to discussion about how changes in policing activity as a result of the MacPherson Report may have increased the seriousness with which racial attacks are now taken. For further discussion of this issue see Jill Swale's account of the Damilola Taylor case in 'Sociology Review', September 2001

STRUCTURALIST PERSPECTIVES ON CRIMINOLOGY: AN A LEVEL ESSAY WRITING FRAME BY JANIS GRIFFITHS

This activity should be appropriate to both OCR and AQA. A2. The frame needs to be blown up to A3 to give students enough space to plan their answer in the paragraph boxes. The title is wide-ranging, so students need to force themselves to be very concise in their answers.

RESEARCH REPORT: ER: MEDICAL DRAMA AS EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE BY SOLANGE DAVIN

Solange's report on her Phd thesis makes a very useful handout for the Media part of the A level course because it will introduce students to some interesting new research and give them ideas for research of their own.

CLASSIC TEXT; C. WRIGHT MILLS THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMAGINATION REVIEWED BY STEPHEN THOMAS

Mills' book is neglected and does not seem to find a place in current exam specifications very easily. This resource aims to encourage students to read it but can also be used as a handout in its own right to introduce them to some key issues about the role of Sociology and to some of the criteria by which we should judge 'good sociology'.

BRIEFING: PATTERNS OF MOBILE PHONE USE BY STEPHEN THOMAS

A useful and interesting piece of research on the impact of mobile phones on interaction



Patterns Of Crime And The Social Characteristics Of Offenders: Gender And Ethnicity

AIM

(1) To get you to think about some important dimensions of crime and deviance.

(2) To help you to develop five important thinking skills:

- INFORMATION PROCESSING
- REASONING
- ENQUIRY
- EVALUATION
- CREATIVE THINKING

(3) To make a presentation to your class based on your findings -

WEBSITES AND OTHER SOURCES

- www.cre.gov.uk/pdfs/wom_FS.PDF.
- www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs/r94.pdf
- www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rdsfs/r39.pdf.
- Alternatively, find your own websites using a search engine such as Google with key words such as 'ethnic minority crime statistics'
- Blackwell Dictionary of Criminology
- Haralambos and Holborn: 'Sociology: Themes and Perspectives', Collins
- Moore: 'Investigating Crime and Deviance', 2nd Edition, Collins, 1996
- Relevant cuttings, articles and TV documentaries
- Visit a local Magistrates or Crown Court to observe how different types of peoples are treated. Anyone over 14 is allowed to sit in Public Gallery of courts.

A. INFORMATION PROCESSING

- Search for recent statistics for patterns of offending by gender or by comparing whites and ethnic minorities in the U.K.
- Look for different types of statistics, e.g. arrests, imprisonment rates, cautions, different types of crimes.
- Look at variables such as age and at the smaller ethnic minority groups such as the Chinese, if possible.
- Compare and contrast the statistics different members of the group have found.
- Make bullet points of the major trends. (It is useful to simplify the trends, for example, 'There are roughly twice as many...', 'The figures trebled between certain dates'.)



B. REASONING

- Without using textbooks, try to work out reasons why the proportions of some ethnic minorities in prison or the two sexes in prison vary so much...
- Draw up a list of the possible reasons.
- Work out what kind of information you might need to support each of these possibilities.
- Discuss how you might go about investigating each of these possibilities, if you were a professional researcher.
- What obstacles might there be to carrying out these investigations?
- Discuss your hypotheses and suggestions with your teacher before proceeding further.

C. ENQUIRY

- Split your group into students who will look for evidence for each of the reasons listed above.
- Use textbooks and websites such as :
www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/seu/2000/bmezip/03.htm.
- Make photocopiable or OHP notes on the views of researchers with the titles of their books and dates (so you can judge how up to date the research is). Some of the researchers that it might be useful to look up are:

GENDER: Campbell, Carlen, Farrington and Morris, Heidensohn, McRobbie, Pollak, Smart.

ETHNICITY: Gaskill and Smith, Gilroy, Hall, Lea and Young, Morris, Pryce, Scarman Report, Sivanandan, Stevens and Willis.

D. EVALUATION

- Get your group together and evaluate the research different members have found out about.
- Are you convinced that all of it is still valid nowadays?
- Is it all based on value free, carefully conducted research?
- What methods did the researchers use? Were their samples large and representative enough?
- Reach a conclusion about the main reasons why the crime figures vary so much by gender/ ethnicity. Write bullet points.
- Give reasons why you found some of the research less convincing, or why you found it all convincing.

E. THINK CREATIVELY

- Discuss how crime figures might change if women or ethnic minorities became more influential or successful in career terms and justify your answer, perhaps by looking at changes in their crime figures over recent years.
- Does power and economic success make a group more or less likely to commit crime? Might it affect the different types of crime they commit?
- Jot down your ideas to share with the class.

PLENARY

- Present your findings to the class using OHP, photocopied notes, posters etc

