

**Sources of data into crime:**

- Victim Surveys
- Self-report studies
- Crime Survey
- National Statistics

**How useful are statistics recorded by the police?**

- If a crime isn't witnessed it won't be reported.
- Many crimes are witnessed and not reported.
- **The dark figure of crime**



Official statistics	Victim surveys	Self-report studies
<p>Police- recorded crime statistics allow researchers to compare the crime-rate in different areas and to identify trends over time. Official statistics of police-recorded crime provide an inaccurate picture of the total amount of crime committed - they do not record the DARK FIGURE OF CRIME.</p> <p><u>Problems with official statistics on crime:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doesn't record undiscovered crime (e.g. white-collar crime) and unreported (e.g. through embarrassment).</li> <li>• Police do not record all crime – seen as too trivial or doubt its accuracy.</li> <li>• <u>Feminism:</u> The statistics under-record incidents of violence against women, including domestic violence.</li> <li>• <u>Marxism:</u> The statistics reflect the class-based nature of capitalist society. White-collar and corporate crime are not policed effectively and are under- represented in the statistics.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Victim surveys</u> ask people about their experiences of crime.</li> <li>• The annual Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) interviews respondents over the phone about whether they have experienced particular crimes during the last 12 months and if so, which crimes and whether they reported them to the police.</li> </ul> <p><u>Advantages of CSEW:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides data on offences that are not counted in police-recorded crime statistics.</li> </ul> <p><u>Disadvantages of CSEW:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not cover all police recorded crimes. E.g. it excludes murder.</li> <li>• It is a household survey – doesn't cover people living in care homes or student halls.</li> </ul>	<p><u>Self- report studies</u> ask people about their offending – e.g. on drug use.</p> <p><u>Advantages:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides data on some offenders and offences that were not dealt with by the police or courts.</li> </ul> <p><u>Disadvantages:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only interviews people in households – not those in care homes or student halls.</li> </ul>

**Social Control:**  
Much of our behaviour is socially controlled.

**Formal Social Control:** Based on written rules and laws.

- Agencies of formal social control:**
- Houses of Parliament
  - The police force
  - Judiciary
  - The prison service.

- The class deal & the gender deal.**
- Most people conform to the rules because of the 'deals' that offer them rewards.
  - **Class Deal:** Material rewards if you work for your wage
  - **Gender deal:** Material & emotional rewards if you live with a male breadwinner within the family.

**Informal Social Control:** Based on unwritten rules and processes such as approval & disapproval

- Agencies of informal social control:**
- Family members
  - Peers
  - Teachers
  - Work colleagues

**Refusing the class deal:** Not found legitimate ways of earning a decent living. More to gain than to lose by offending.

**Refusing the gender deal:** Supposed to be rewarded with happiness & fulfilment from family life. Many women may be abused, no bonds with family & friends. Nothing to lose and everything to gain.

**Those at high risk from crime:**  
**Class:** The poor, living in private rented housing  
**Gender:** Males  
**Age:** The Young  
**Ethnicity:** Minority ethnic groups.



**Crime:**  
An illegal act punishable by law.

**Deviance:**  
Behaviour that does not conform to society's rules and norms.

**White Collar Crime:**  
Crimes committed by people in relatively high-status positions. E.g. tax evasion, fraud, misuse of expense account



### Mass Media & Deviancy Amplification

(Stan Cohen 1972):

- The media creates **moral panics**- exaggerating the extent and significance of a social problem.
- A particular group is set as **folk devil**- a threat to society's values.
- The media distorts the events and incidents and create a false image of young people and their activities.
- This can encourage other young people to behave in the way the media portrays.
- Recent moral panics: school violence, bullying & shootouts, benefit cheats and single mothers, refugees & asylum seekers.

#### Debate: The media:

1. **Are the media biased in their presentation of crime?**
2. **Does the media create crime in society?**

#### 1. Are the media biased in their presentation of crime?

- When individuals do not have direct knowledge or experience of what is happening, they rely on the media to inform them.
- The media set the agenda in terms of what is considered to be important.
- The editors filter what they see as newsworthy (news value) they tend to include and emphasis elements of a story for their audience. Stories they are more likely to report (news value) are stories involving children, violence, celebrities, if the event has occurred locally, easy to understand and if graphic images are involved.
- 46% of media reports are about violence or sexual crimes, yet these only make up for 3% of crime recorded by the police (Ditton & Delphy 1983)
- Deviancy amplification is usually used to describe the impact of the media on the public perception of crime.

#### 2. Does the media create crime?

- Media content can have a negative impact on the behaviour of young people, particularly children.
- It is suggested that some people may imitate violence and immoral or antisocial behaviour seen in media. The media are regarded as a powerful secondary agent of socialisation.
- Video games are often blamed as a link between increased aggressive behaviour and crime.

