

7TH EDITION

SOCIOLOGY

in our times

The Essentials

DIANA KENDALL



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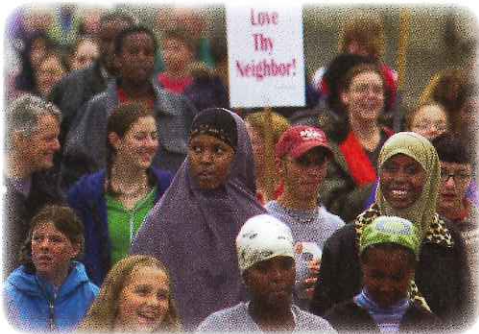
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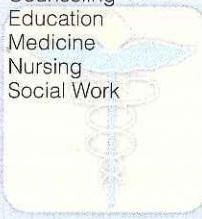

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Health and Human Services	Business	Communication	Academia	Law
Counseling Education Medicine Nursing Social Work 	Advertising Labor Relations Management Marketing 	Broadcasting Public Relations Journalism 	Anthropology Media Studies/ Communication Economics Geography History Information Studies Political Science Psychology Sociology 	Law Criminal Justice 

► **Figure 1.1** Fields That Use Social Science Research

In many careers, including jobs in academia, business, communication, health and human services, and law, the ability to analyze social science research is an important asset.

Source: Based on Katzer, Cook, and Crouch, 1991.

individual people usually commit the acts and *other individuals* suffer as a result of these actions.

Consequently, sociologists seek out the multiple causes and effects of suicide or other social issues. They analyze the impact of the problem not only from the standpoint of the people directly involved but also from the standpoint of the effects of such behavior on all people.

The Sociological Imagination

Sociologist C. Wright Mills (1959b) described sociological reasoning as the **sociological imagination—the ability to see the relationship between individual experiences and the larger society**. This awareness enables us to understand the link between our personal experiences and the social contexts in which they occur. The sociological imagination helps us distinguish between personal troubles and social (or public) issues. *Personal troubles* are private problems that affect individuals and the networks of people with whom they associate regularly. As a result, those problems must be solved by individuals within their immediate social settings. For example, one person being unemployed may be a personal trouble. *Public issues* are problems that affect large numbers of people and often require solutions at the societal level. Widespread unemployment as a result of economic changes such as plant closings is an example of a public issue. The sociological imagi-

nation helps us place seemingly personal troubles, such as losing one's job or feeling like committing suicide, into a larger social context, where we can distinguish whether and how personal troubles may be related to public issues.

Suicide as a Personal Trouble Many of our individual experiences may be largely beyond our own control. They are determined by society as a whole—by its historical development and its organization. In everyday life, we do not define personal experiences in these terms. If a person commits suicide, many people consider it to be the result of his or her own personal problems.

Suicide as a Public Issue We can also use the sociological imagination to look at the problem of suicide as a public issue—a societal problem. Early sociologist Emile Durkheim refused to accept commonsense explanations of suicide. In what is probably the first sociological study to use scientific research methods, he related suicide to the issue of cohesiveness (or lack of cohesiveness) in society instead of viewing suicide as an isolated

sociological imagination C. Wright Mills's term for the ability to see the relationship between individual experiences and the larger society.

WHAT IS DEVIANCE?

In this chapter, we look at some current trends in deviance and crime and examine issues of social control—that is, what societies do to attempt to curb deviance. Research on these and related issues is a major field within sociology. No one can offer definitive answers, but sociologists are frequently looked to for research on trends in deviance and criminal behavior and for explanations of these trends.

Deviance, broadly defined, is behavior that violates the norms of a particular society. But because all of us violate norms to some degree at some time or other, we must distinguish between *deviance* and *deviants*. Deviance can be something as simple as dyeing one’s hair purple, wearing outrageous clothing, or becoming tipsy at a stuffy party. Or it may be behavior over which the individual has little control, such as being homeless and living on the street, or it may consist of more strongly sanctioned departures from the society’s norms—such acts as rape, mugging, and murder. Not all deviance is considered socially wrong, yet it can have negative effects for the individual. For example, “whistle-blowers,” who publicize illegal or harmful actions by their employers, deviate from the norms of bureaucratic organizations and are often threatened with the loss of their jobs. Yet at the same time they benefit the public by calling attention to dangerous or illegal activities (Stevenson, 1992b).

A deviant person, by contrast, is someone who violates or opposes a society’s most valued norms, especially those that are valued by elite groups. Through such behavior, deviant individuals become disvalued people, and their disvalued behavior provokes hostile reactions (Davis, 1975; Goffman, 1963; Sagarin, 1975; Schur, 1984). *Deviant* may be a label attached to a person or group. Or the word may refer to behavior that brings punishment to a person under certain conditions.

The Social Construction of Deviance

Violations of social norms by people in powerful positions, such as influence peddling or extramarital sexual liaisons by government officials, raise an important question: What are the conditions under which violations of norms are punished? Here is an area of conduct in which there is often some uncertainty about what is legal and what is merely sleazy. Such questions reveal that deviance is not absolute. As sociologist Kai Erikson explains it, deviance “is not a property inherent in certain forms of behavior; it is a property conferred upon these forms by the audience which directly or indirectly witnesses them” (1962, p. 307). Some of

us may believe that influence peddling is deviant, whereas others may believe that it is acceptable. Which of our views become the norm—and which are to be enforced through rewards and punishments—is just as important as the behavior itself. This point is illustrated in Erikson’s classic study of deviance among New England’s Puritans during the infamous Salem witchcraft trials.

No one knows how the witchcraft hysteria began, but it originated in the home of the Reverend Samuel Parris, minister of the local church. In early 1692, several girls from the neighborhood began to spend their afternoons in the Parris kitchen with a slave named Tituba, and it was not long before a mysterious sorority of girls, aged between nine and twenty, became regular visitors to the parsonage. (Erikson, 1966, p. 141)

The girls quickly drew the concerned attention of Salem’s ministers and its doctor. Unable to understand much about their hysterical state or to deny their claim that they were possessed by the devil, the doctor pronounced the girls bewitched. This gave them the freedom to make accusations regarding the cause of their unfortunate condition.

Tituba was the first to be accused and jailed. She was followed by scores of others as the fear of witches swept through the community. Soon women with too many warts or annoying tics were accused, tried, and jailed for their sins. Then the executions began. In the first and worst of the waves of executions, in August and September of 1692, at least 20 people were killed, including one man who was pressed to death under piled rocks for “standing mute at his trial.”

For the sociologist, the Salem witch-hunt of 300 years ago has meaning for today’s world. Erikson showed that



The Trial of George Jacobs, August 5, 1692. Oil on canvas by T. H. Matteson, 1855. Jacobs was accused of witchcraft.

Crime Classifications and Statistics

Crime in the United States can be divided into different categories. We will look first at the legal classifications of crime and then at categories typically used by sociologists and criminologists.

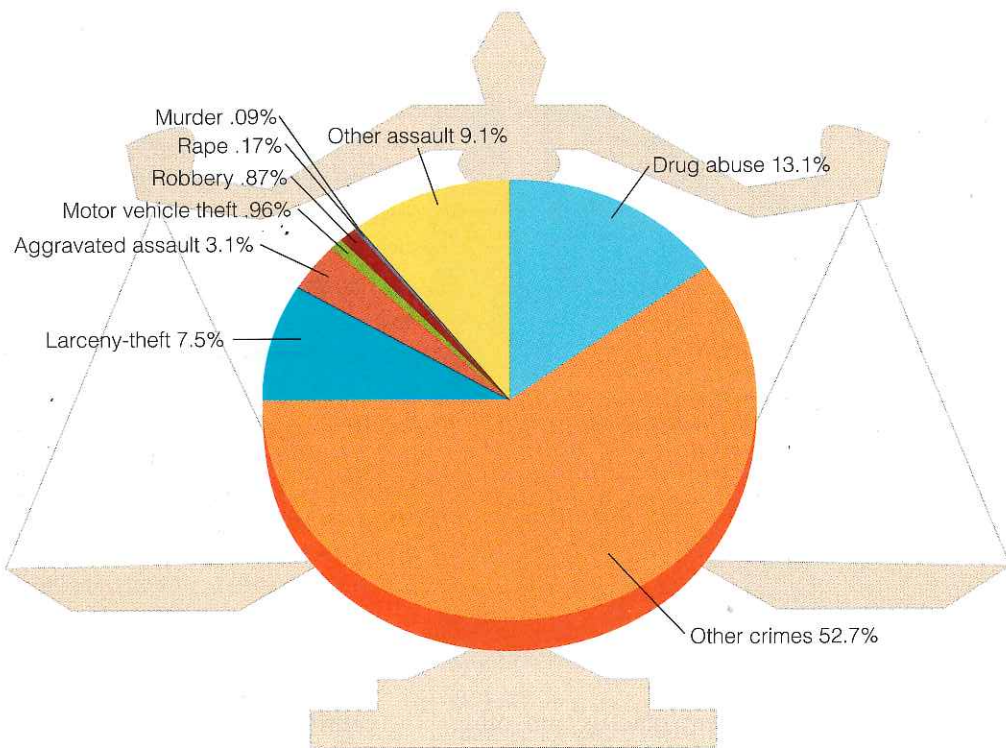
How the Law Classifies Crime

Crimes are divided into felonies and misdemeanors. The distinction between the two is based on the seriousness of the crime. A *felony* is a serious crime such as rape, homicide, or aggravated assault, for which punishment typically ranges from more than a year's imprisonment to death. A *misdemeanor* is a minor crime that is typically punished by less than one year in jail. In either event, a fine may be part of the sanction as well. Actions that constitute felonies and misdemeanors are determined by the leg-

islatures in the various states; thus, their definitions vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

Other Crime Categories

The *Uniform Crime Report* (UCR) is the major source of information on crimes reported in the United States. The UCR has been compiled since 1930 by the Federal Bureau of Investigation based on information filed by law enforcement agencies throughout the country. When we read that the rate of certain types of crimes has increased or decreased when compared with prior years, for example, this information is usually based on UCR data. The UCR focuses on violent crime and property crime (which, prior to 2004, were jointly referred to in that report as "index crimes"), but also contains data on other types of crime (see ► Figure 6.2). In 2006 about 14 million arrests were made in the United States for all criminal infractions (excluding traffic violations). Although the UCR gives some indication of crime in the United States,



► **Figure 6.2** Distribution of Arrests by Type of Offense, 2006

Source: FBI, 2007.

the figures do not reflect the actual number and kinds of crimes, as will be discussed later.

Violent Crime *Violent crime consists of actions—murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault—involving force or the threat of force against others.* Although only 4 percent of all arrests in the United States in 2006 were for violent crimes, this category is probably the most anxiety-provoking of all criminal behavior: Most of us know someone who has been a victim of violent crime, or we have been so ourselves. Victims are often physically injured or even lose their lives; the psychological trauma may last for years after the event (Parker and Anderson-Facile, 2000). Violent crime receives the most sustained attention from law enforcement officials and the media (see Warr, 2000).

Nationwide, there is growing concern over juvenile violence. Beginning in 1988, juvenile violent-crime arrest rates started to rise, a trend that has been linked by some scholars to gang membership (see Inciardi, Horowitz, and Pottieger, 1993; Thornberry et al., 1993). Fear of violence is felt not only by the general public but by gang members themselves, as Charles Campbell commented

The generation I'm in is going to be lost. Of the circle of friends I grew up in, three are dead, four are in jail, and another is out of school and just does nothing. When he runs out of money he'll sell a couple bags of weed. . . .

I would carry a gun because I am worried about that brother on the fringe. There are some people, there is nothing out there for them. They will blow you away because they have nothing to lose. There are no jobs out there. It's hard to get money to go to school. (qtd. in Lee, 1993: 21)

Property Crime *Property crimes include burglary (breaking into private property to commit a serious crime), motor vehicle theft, larceny-theft (theft of property worth \$50 or more), and arson.* Some offenses, such as robbery, are both violent crimes and property crimes. In the United States, a property crime occurs, on average, once every three seconds; a violent crime occurs, on average, once every twenty-two seconds (see ► Figure 6.3). In most property crimes, the primary motive is to obtain money or some other desired valuable.

Public Order Crime *Public order crimes* involve an illegal action voluntarily engaged in by the participants, such as prostitution, illegal gambling, the private use of illegal drugs, and illegal pornography. Many people assert that such conduct should not be labeled as a crime; these offenses are often referred to as *victimless crimes* because they involve a **willing exchange of illegal goods or services among adults**. However, morals crimes can include children and adolescents as well as adults. Young children and adolescents may unwillingly become child pornography “stars” or prostitutes.

Occupational and Corporate Crime Although the sociologist Edwin Sutherland (1949) developed the theory of white-collar crime about sixty years ago, it was not until the 1980s that the public became fully aware of its nature. *Occupational (white-collar) crime* comprises **illegal activities committed by people in the course of their employment or financial affairs**.

In addition to acting for their own financial benefit, some white-collar offenders become involved in criminal conspiracies designed to improve the market share or profitability of their companies. This is known as *corporate crime*—**illegal acts committed by corporate employees on behalf of the corporation and with its support**. Examples include anti-trust violations; tax evasion; misrepresentations in

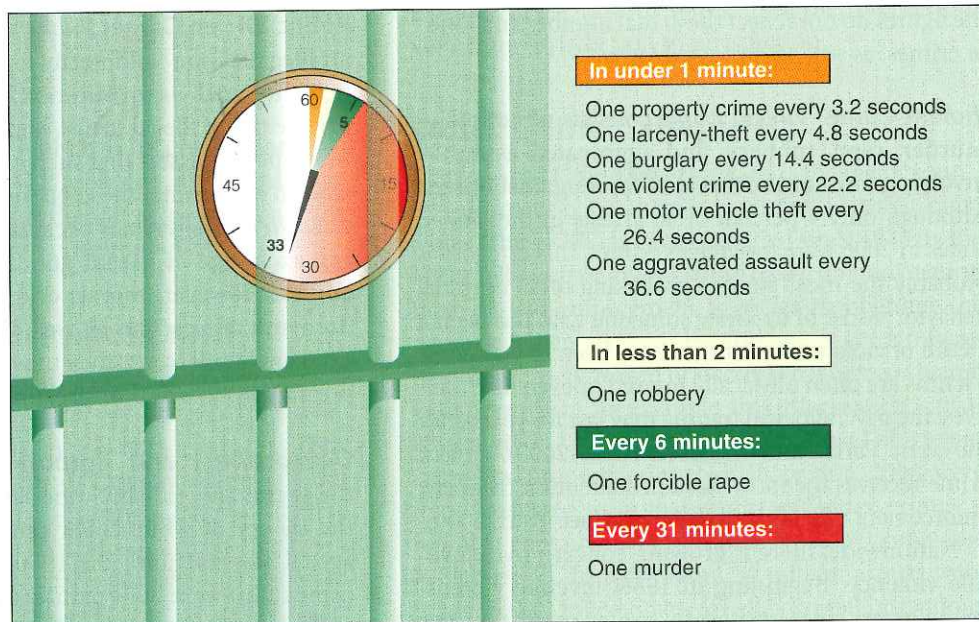
violent crime actions—murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault—involving force or the threat of force against others.

property crimes burglary (breaking into private property to commit a serious crime), motor vehicle theft, larceny-theft (theft of property worth \$50 or more), and arson.

victimless crimes crimes involving a willing exchange of illegal goods or services among adults.

occupational (white-collar) crime illegal activities committed by people in the course of their employment or financial affairs.

corporate crime illegal acts committed by corporate employees on behalf of the corporation and with its support.



► **Figure 6.3** The FBI Crime Clock

Source: FBI, 2007.

advertising; infringements on patents, copyrights, and trademarks; price fixing; and financial fraud. These crimes are a result of deliberate decisions made by corporate personnel to enhance resources or profits at the expense of competitors, consumers, and the general public.

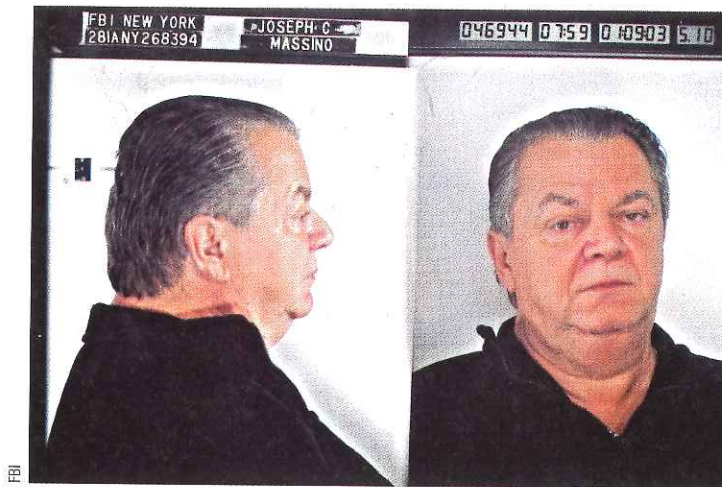
Although people who commit occupational and corporate crimes can be arrested, fined, and sent to prison, many people often have not regarded such behavior as “criminal.” People who tend to condemn street crime are less sure of how their own (or their friends’) financial and corporate behavior should be judged. At most, punishment for such offenses has usually been a fine or a relatively brief prison sentence.

Until recently, public concern and media attention focused primarily on the street crimes disproportionately committed by persons who are poor, powerless, and nonwhite. Today, however, part of our focus has shifted to crimes committed in corporate suites, such as fraud, tax evasion, and insider trading by executives at some large and well-known corporations. Bernard Ebbers, former chief executive officer of communications giant WorldCom, was convicted of fraud and conspiracy in connec-

tion with that company’s accounting scandal and was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Dennis Kozlowski, chief executive of Tyco International, and a subordinate were convicted of looting more than \$600 million from their company and were sentenced to up to 25 years in prison.

Corporate crimes are often more costly in terms of money and lives lost than street crimes. Thousands of jobs and billions of dollars were lost as a result of corporate crime in the year 2006 alone. Deaths resulting from corporate crimes such as polluting the air and water, manufacturing defective products, and selling unsafe foods and drugs far exceed the number of deaths due to homicides each year. Other costs include the effect on the moral climate of society (Clinard and Yeager, 1980; Simon, 1996). Throughout the United States, the confidence of everyday people in the nation’s economy has been shaken badly by the greedy and illegal behavior of corporate insiders.

Organized Crime *Organized crime is a business operation that supplies illegal goods and services for profit.* Premeditated, continuous illegal activities of organized crime include drug traffick-



Over the years, there have been many notorious leaders of organized crime syndicates. Shown here is Joseph (“Big Joey”) Massino, who was sentenced to prison for racketeering, murder, arson, and other charges. Does organized crime still exist today?

ing, prostitution, loan-sharking, money laundering, and large-scale theft such as truck hijackings (Simon, 1996). No single organization controls all organized crime; rather, many groups operate at all levels of society. Organized crime thrives because there is great demand for illegal goods and services. Criminal organizations initially gain control of illegal activities by combining threats and promises. For example, small-time operators running drug or prostitution rings may be threatened with violence if they compete with organized crime or fail to make required payoffs (Cressey, 1969).

Apart from their illegal enterprises, organized crime groups have infiltrated the world of legitimate business. Known linkages between legitimate businesses and organized crime exist in banking, hotels and motels, real estate, garbage collection, vending machines, construction, delivery and long-distance hauling, garment manufacture, insurance, stocks and bonds, vacation resorts, and funeral homes (National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 1969). In addition, some law enforcement and government officials are corrupted through bribery, campaign contributions, and favors intended to buy them off.

Political Crime The term *political crime* refers to illegal or unethical acts involving the usurpation of power by government officials, or illegal/unethical acts perpetrated against the government by outsiders seeking to make a political statement, undermine the government, or overthrow it. Gov-

ernment officials may use their authority unethically or illegally for the purpose of material gain or political power (Simon, 1996). They may engage in graft (taking advantage of political position to gain money or property) through bribery, kickbacks, or “insider” deals that financially benefit them. In the late 1980s, for example, several top Pentagon officials were found guilty of receiving bribes for passing classified information on to major defense contractors that had garnered many lucrative contracts from the government (Simon, 1996).

Other types of corruption have been costly for taxpayers, including dubious use of public funds and public property, corruption in the regulation of commercial activities (such as food inspection), graft in zoning and land-use decisions, and campaign contributions and other favors to legislators that corrupt the legislative process. Whereas some political crimes are for personal material gain, others (such as illegal wiretapping and political “dirty tricks”) are aimed at gaining or maintaining political office or influence.

organized crime a business operation that supplies illegal goods and services for profit.

political crime illegal or unethical acts involving the usurpation of power by government officials, or illegal/unethical acts perpetrated against the government by outsiders seeking to make a political statement, undermine the government, or overthrow it.

Some acts committed by agents of the government against persons and groups believed to be threats to national security are also classified as political crimes. Four types of political deviance have been attributed to some officials: (1) secrecy and deception designed to manipulate public opinion, (2) abuse of power, (3) prosecution of individuals due to their political activities, and (4) official violence, such as police brutality against people of color or the use of citizens as unwilling guinea pigs in scientific research (Simon, 1996).

Political crimes also include illegal or unethical acts perpetrated against the government by outsiders seeking to make a political statement or to undermine or overthrow the government. Examples include treason, acts of political sabotage, and terrorist attacks on public buildings.

Crime Statistics

How useful are crime statistics as a source of information about crime? As mentioned previously, official crime statistics provide important information on crime; however, the data reflect only those crimes that have been reported to the police. Although—except in 2001, when there was a slight rise—the rates have been decreasing slightly during the past few years, the UCR reflects that overall levels of crime have increased by nearly two-thirds over the past twenty-five years. However, this increase may reflect (at least partially) an increase in the number of crimes *reported*, not necessarily a change in the number of crimes *committed*. Why are some crimes not reported? People are more likely to report crime when they believe that something can be done about it (apprehension of the perpetrator or retrieval of their property, for example). About half of all assault and robbery victims do not report the crime because they may be embarrassed or fear reprisal by the perpetrator. Thus, the number of crimes reported to police represents only the proverbial “tip of the iceberg” when compared with all offenses actually committed. Official statistics are problematic in social science research because of these limitations.

The *National Crime Victimization Survey* was developed by the Bureau of Justice Statistics as an al-

ternative means of collecting crime statistics. In this annual survey, the members of 100,000 randomly selected households are interviewed to determine whether they have been the victims of crime, even if the crime was not reported to the police. The most recent victimization survey indicates that 51 percent of all violent crimes and 62 percent of all property crimes are not reported to the police and are thus not reflected in the UCR (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007).

Studies based on anonymous self-reports of criminal behavior also reveal much higher rates of crime than those found in official statistics. For example, self-reports tend to indicate that adolescents of all social classes violate criminal laws. However, official statistics show that those who are arrested and placed in juvenile facilities typically have limited financial resources, have repeatedly committed serious offenses, or both (Steffensmeier and Allan, 2000). Data collected for the Juvenile Court Statistics program also reflect class and racial bias in criminal justice enforcement. Not all children who commit juvenile offenses are apprehended and referred to court. Children from white, affluent families are more likely to have their cases handled outside the juvenile justice system (for example, a youth may be sent to a private school or hospital rather than to a juvenile correctional facility).

Many crimes committed by persons of higher socioeconomic status in the course of business are handled by administrative or quasi-judicial bodies, such as the Securities and Exchange Commission or the Federal Trade Commission, or by civil courts. As a result, many elite crimes are never classified as “crimes,” nor are the businesspeople who commit them labeled as “criminals.”

Terrorism and Crime

In the twenty-first century, the United States and other nations are confronted with a difficult prospect: how to deal with terrorism. **Terrorism is the calculated, unlawful use of physical force or threats of violence against persons or property in order to intimidate or coerce a government, organization, or individual for the purpose of gaining some political, religious, economic, or social ob-**

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What effects might a mother's imprisonment have on the future of her infant?

jective. How are sociologists and criminologists to explain world terrorism, which may have its origins in more than one nation and include diverse “cells” of terrorists who operate in a somewhat gang-like manner but are believed to be following directives from leaders elsewhere? In order to deal with the aftermath of terrorist attacks, government officials typically focus on “known enemies” such as Osama bin Laden. The nebulous nature of the “enemy” and the problems faced by any one government trying to identify and apprehend the perpetrators of acts of terrorism have resulted in a global “war on terror.” Social scientists who use a rational choice approach suggest that terrorists are rational actors who constantly calculate the gains and losses of participation in violent—and sometimes suicidal—acts against others. Chapter 13 (“Politics and the Economy in

Global Perspective”) further discusses the issue of terrorism.

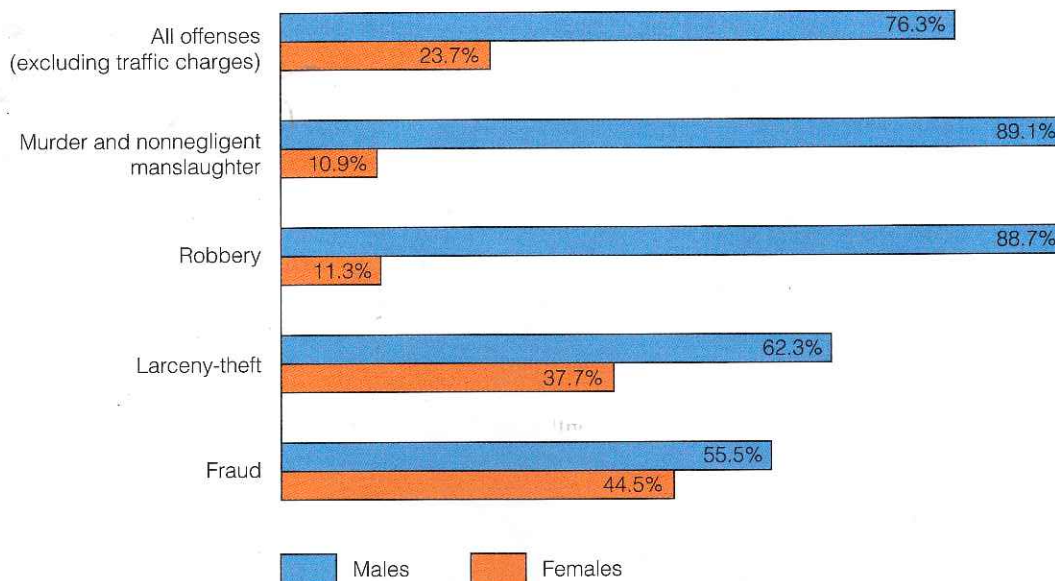
Street Crimes and Criminals

Given the limitations of official statistics, is it possible to determine who commits crimes? We have much more information available about conventional (street) crime than elite crime; therefore, statistics concerning street crime do not show who commits all types of crime. Gender, age, class, and race are important factors in official statistics pertaining to street crime.

Gender and Crime Before considering differences in crime rates by males and females, three similarities should be noted. First, the three most common arrest categories for both men and women are driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs (DUI), larceny, and minor or criminal mischief types of offenses. These three categories account for about 40 percent of all male arrests and about 46 percent of all female arrests. Second, liquor law violations (such as underage drinking), simple assault, and disorderly conduct are middle-range offenses for both men and women. Third, the rate of arrests for murder, arson, and embezzlement is relatively low for both men and women (Steffensmeier and Allan, 2000).

The most important gender differences in arrest rates are reflected in the proportionately greater involvement of men in major property crimes (such as robbery and larceny-theft) and violent crime, as shown in ► Figure 6.4. In 2006, men accounted for almost 89 percent of robberies and murders and

terrorism the calculated unlawful use of physical force or threats of violence against persons or property in order to intimidate or coerce a government, organization, or individual for the purpose of gaining some political, religious, economic, or social objective.



► **Figure 6.4** Arrest Rates by Sex, 2006 (Selected Offenses)

Source: FBI, 2007.

more than 62 percent of all larceny-theft arrests in the United States. Of those types of offenses, males under age 18 accounted for approximately 20 percent of the 2006 arrests. The property crimes for which women are most frequently arrested are nonviolent in nature, including shoplifting, theft of services, passing bad checks, credit card fraud, and employee pilferage. When women are arrested for serious violent and property crimes, they are typically seen as accomplices of the men who planned the crime and instigated its commission (Steffensmeier and Allan, 2000). However, one study found that some women play an active role in planning and carrying out robberies (Sommers and Baskin, 1993).

Age and Crime Of all factors associated with crime, the age of the offender is one of the most significant. Arrest rates for violent crime and property crime are highest for people between the ages of 13 and 25, with the peak being between ages 16 and 17. In 2006, persons under age 25 accounted for more than 45 percent of all arrests for violent crime and almost 55 percent of all arrests for property crime (FBI, 2007). Individuals under age 18 accounted for over 28 percent of all arrests for robbery and 26 percent of all arrests for larceny-theft.

Scholars do not agree on the reasons for this age distribution. In one study, the sociologist Mark Warr (1993) found that peer influences (defined as exposure to delinquent peers, time spent with peers, and loyalty to peers) tend to be more significant in explaining delinquent behavior than age itself.

The median age of those arrested for aggravated assault and homicide is somewhat older, generally in the late twenties. Typically, white-collar criminals are even older because it takes time to acquire both a high-ranking position and the skills needed to commit this particular type of crime.

Rates of arrest remain higher for males than females at every age and for nearly all offenses. This female-to-male ratio remains fairly constant across all age categories. The most significant gender difference in the age curve is for prostitution (a non-violent crime). In 2006, 57 percent of all women arrested for prostitution were under age 35. For individuals over age 45, many more men than women are arrested for sex-related offenses (including procuring the services of a prostitute). This difference has been attributed to a more stringent enforcement of prostitution statutes when young females are involved (Chesney-Lind, 1997). It has also been suggested that opportunities for prostitution are

greater for younger women. This age difference may not have the same impact on males, who continue to purchase sexual services from young females or males (see Steffensmeier and Allan, 2000).

Social Class and Crime Individuals from all social classes commit crimes; they simply commit different kinds of crimes. Persons from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to be arrested for violent and property crimes. By contrast, persons from the upper part of the class structure generally commit white-collar or elite crimes, although only a very small proportion of these individuals will ever be arrested or convicted of a crime.

What about social class and recent violence by youths? Between 1992 and 2005, there were 582 violent deaths in U.S. schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). Most of these deaths were not attributed to lower-income, inner-city youths, as popular stereotypes might suggest. Instead, some of these acts of violence were perpetrated by young people who lived in houses that cost anywhere from \$75,000 to \$5 million or more.

Similarly, membership in today's youth gangs cannot be identified with just one social class. The U.S. Department of Education estimates that 50 percent of gang members are part of the nation's underclass—the class comprising those persons who are poor, seldom employed, and caught in long-term deprivation—but that 35 percent are working class, 12 percent are middle class, and 3 percent are upper-middle class (Egley, 2000). Today, females are more visible in some previously all-male gangs as well as in female gangs (Egley, 2000).

In any case, official statistics are not an accurate reflection of the relationship between social class and crime. Self-report data from offenders themselves may be used to gain information on family income, years of education, and occupational status; however, such reports rely on respondents to report information accurately and truthfully.

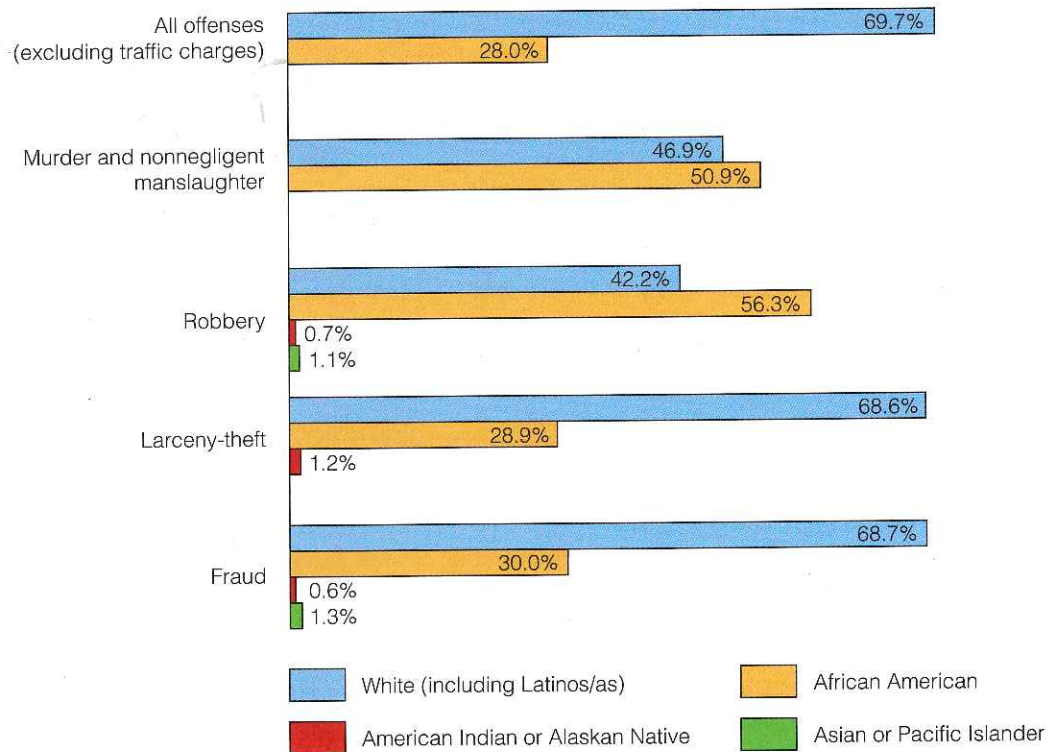
Race and Crime In 2006, whites (including Latinos/as) accounted for almost 70 percent of all arrests, as shown in ► Figure 6.5. Compared with African Americans, arrest rates for whites were higher for nonviolent property crimes such as fraud and larceny-theft but were lower for violent crimes such

as robbery. In 2006, whites accounted for about 68 percent of all arrests for property crimes and about 59 percent of arrests for violent crimes. African Americans accounted for 39 percent of arrests for violent crimes and 29 percent of arrests for property crimes (FBI, 2007).

Although official arrest records reveal certain trends, these data tell us very little about the actual dynamics of crime by racial-ethnic category. According to official statistics, African Americans are overrepresented in arrest data. In 2006, African Americans made up about 12 percent of the U.S. population but accounted for 28 percent of all arrests. Latinos/as made up about 13 percent of the U.S. population and accounted for about 13 percent of all arrests. Over two-thirds of their offenses were for nonviolent crimes such as alcohol- and drug-related offenses, and disorderly conduct. In 2006, about 1 percent of all arrests were of Asian Americans or Pacific Islanders, and about 1 percent were of Native Americans (designated in the UCR as “American Indian” or “Alaskan Native”). For the general population, the majority of arrests were for larceny-theft, assaults, vandalism, and alcohol- and drug-related violations (FBI, 2007).

Criminologist Coramae Richey Mann (1993) has argued that arrest statistics are not an accurate reflection of the crimes actually committed in our society. Reporting practices differ in accordance with race and social class. Arrest statistics reflect the UCR's focus on violent and property crimes, especially property crimes, which are committed primarily by low-income people. This emphasis draws attention away from the white-collar and elite crimes committed by middle- and upper-income people (Harris and Shaw, 2000). Police may also demonstrate bias and racism in their decisions regarding whom to question, detain, or arrest under certain circumstances (Mann, 1993).

Another reason that statistics may show a disproportionate number of people of color being arrested is because of the focus of law enforcement on certain types of crime and certain neighborhoods in which crime is considered more prevalent. As discussed previously, many poor, young, central-city males turn to forms of criminal activity due to their belief that no opportunities exist for them to earn a living wage through legitimate employment. Because



► **Figure 6.5 Arrests by Race, 2006 (Selected Offenses)**

Note: Classifications as used in Uniform Crime Report

Source: FBI, 2007.

of the trend of law enforcement efforts to focus on drug-related offenses, arrest rates for young people of color have risen rapidly. These young people are also more likely to live in central-city areas, where there are more police patrols to make arrests.

Finally, we should remember that being arrested does not mean that a person is guilty of the crime with which he or she has been charged. In the United States, individuals accused of crimes are, at least theoretically, “innocent until proven guilty” (Mann, 1993).

Crime Victims

Based on the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), men are more likely to be victimized by crime, although women tend to be more fearful of crime, particularly crimes directed toward them, such as forcible rape (Warr, 2000). Victimization surveys indicate that men are the most frequent vic-

tims of most crimes of violence and theft. Among males who are now 12 years old, an estimated 89 percent will be the victims of a violent crime at least once during their lifetime, as compared with 73 percent of females. The elderly also tend to be more fearful of crime but are the least likely to be victimized. Young men of color between the ages of 12 and 24 have the highest criminal victimization rates.

A study by the Justice Department found that Native Americans are more likely to be victims of violent crimes than are members of any other racial category and that the rate of violent crimes against Native American women was about 50 percent higher than that for African American men (Perry, 2004). During the period covered in the study (from 1992 to 2002), Native Americans were the victims of violent crimes at a rate more than twice the national average. They were also more likely to be the victims of violent crimes committed by members of a race other than their own (Perry, 2004). There

has been a shift over the past twenty years in which more Native Americans have moved from reservations to urban areas. In the cities, they do not tend to live in segregated areas, so they come into contact more often with people of other racial and ethnic groups, whereas African Americans and whites are more likely to live in segregated areas of the city and commit violent crimes against other people in their same racial or ethnic category. According to the survey, the average annual rate at which Native Americans were victims of violent crime—101 crimes per 1,000 people, ages 12 or older—is about two-and-a-half times the national average of 41 crimes per 1,000 people who are above the age of 12. By comparison, the average annual rate for whites was 41 crimes per 1,000 people, for African Americans, 50 per 1,000, and for Asian Americans, 22 per 1,000 (Perry, 2004).

The burden of robbery victimization falls more heavily on some categories of people than others. NCVS data indicate that males are robbed at almost twice the rate of females. African Americans are more than twice as likely to be robbed as whites. Young people have a much greater likelihood of being robbed than do middle-age and older persons. Persons from lower-income families are more likely to be robbed than people from higher-income families (U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2007).

The Criminal Justice System

Of all of the agencies of social control (including families, schools, and churches) in contemporary societies, only the criminal justice system has the power to control crime and punish those who are convicted of criminal conduct. The **criminal justice system refers to the more than 55,000 local, state, and federal agencies that enforce laws, adjudicate crimes, and treat and rehabilitate criminals.** The system includes the police, the courts, and corrections facilities, and it employs more than 2,000,000 people in 17,000 police agencies, nearly 17,000 courts, more than 8,000 prosecutorial agencies, about 6,000 correctional institutions, and more than 3,500 probation and parole departments. More than

\$150 billion is spent annually for civil and criminal justice, which amounts to more than \$500 for every person living in the United States (Siegel, 2006).

The term *criminal justice system* is somewhat misleading because it implies that law enforcement agencies, courts, and correctional facilities constitute one large, integrated system when, in reality, the criminal justice system is made up of many bureaucracies that have considerable discretion in how decisions are made. *Discretion* refers to the use of personal judgment by police officers, prosecutors, judges, and other criminal justice system officials regarding whether and how to proceed in a given situation (see ► Figure 6.6). The police are a prime example of discretionary processes because they have the power to selectively enforce the law and have on many occasions been accused of being too harsh or too lenient on alleged offenders.

The Police

The role of the police in the criminal justice system continues to expand. The police are responsible for crime control and maintenance of order, but local police departments now serve numerous other human service functions, including improving community relations, resolving family disputes, and helping people during emergencies. It should be remembered that not all “police officers” are employed by local police departments; they are employed in more than 25,000 governmental agencies ranging from local jurisdictions to federal levels. However, we will focus primarily on metropolitan police departments because they constitute the vast majority of the law enforcement community.

Metropolitan police departments are made up of a chain of command (similar to the military), with ranks such as officer, sergeant, lieutenant, and captain, and each rank must follow specific rules and procedures. However, individual officers maintain a degree of discretion in the decisions they make as they respond to calls and try to apprehend fleeing or

criminal justice system the more than 55,000 local, state, and federal agencies that enforce laws, adjudicate crimes, and treat and rehabilitate criminals.



Police

- Enforce specific laws
- Investigate specific crimes
- Search people, vicinities, buildings
- Arrest or detain people



Prosecutors

- File charges or petitions for judicial decision
- Seek indictments
- Drop cases
- Reduce charges
- Recommend sentences



Judges or Magistrates

- Set bail or conditions for release
- Accept pleas
- Determine delinquency
- Dismiss charges
- Impose sentences
- Revoke probation

► **Figure 6.6** Discretionary Powers in Law Enforcement

violent offenders. The problem of police discretion is most acute when decisions are made to use force (such as grabbing, pushing, or hitting a suspect) or deadly force (shooting and killing a suspect). Generally, deadly force is allowed only in situations in which a suspect is engaged in a felony, is fleeing the scene of a felony, or is resisting arrest and has endangered someone's life.

Although many police departments have worked to improve their public image in recent years, the practice of *racial profiling*—the use of ethnic or racial background as a means of identifying criminal suspects—remains a highly charged issue. Officers in some police departments have singled out for discriminatory treatment African Americans, Latinos/as, and other people of color, treating them more harshly than white (Euro-American) individuals. However, police department officials typically contend that race is only one factor in determining why individuals are questioned or detained as they go about everyday activities such as driving a car or walking down the street. By contrast, equal-justice advocacy groups argue that differential treatment of minority-group members amounts to a race-based double standard, which they believe exists not only in police work but throughout the criminal justice system (see Cole, 2000).

The belief that differential treatment takes place on the basis of race contributes to a negative image of police among many people of color who believe that they have been hassled by police officers, and this assumption is intensified by the fact that police departments have typically been made up of white male personnel at all levels. In recent years, this sit-

uation has slowly begun to change. Currently, about 22 percent of all *sworn officers*—those who have taken an oath and been given the powers to make arrests and use necessary force in accordance with their duties—are women and minorities (Cole and Smith, 2004). The largest percentage of minority



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In 2008, actor Wesley Snipes was convicted on federal income tax evasion charges in Ocala, Florida. Conflict theorists believe that people of color face discrimination in the legal system but that celebrities often receive advantages that others don't. The interplay of these two factors was debated extensively before, during, and after Snipes's trial.

and women police officers are located in cities with a population of 250,000 or more. African Americans make up a larger percentage of the police department in cities with a larger proportion of African American residents (such as Detroit), but Latinos/as constitute a larger percentage in cities such as San Antonio and El Paso, Texas, where Latinos/as make up a larger proportion of the population. Women officers of all races are more likely to be employed in departments in cities of more than 250,000 (where they make up 16 percent of all officers) as compared with smaller communities (cities of less than 50,000), where women officers constitute only 2 to 5 percent of the force (Cole and Smith, 2004). In the past, women were excluded from police departments and other law enforcement careers largely because of stereotypical beliefs that they were not physically and psychologically strong enough to enforce the law. However, studies have indicated that as more females have entered police work, they receive similar evaluations to male officers from their administrators and that fewer complaints are filed against women officers, which some researchers believe is a function of how female officers more effectively control potentially violent encounters (Brandl, Stroshine, and Frank, 2001).

In the future, the image of police departments may change as greater emphasis is placed on *community-oriented policing*—an approach to law enforcement in which officers maintain a presence in the community, walking up and down the streets or riding bicycles, getting to know people, and holding public service meetings at schools, churches, and other neighborhood settings. Community-oriented policing is often limited by budget constraints and the lack of available personnel to conduct this type of “hands-on” community involvement. In many jurisdictions, police officers believe that they have only enough time to keep up with reports of serious crime and life-threatening occurrences and that the level of available personnel and resources does not allow officers to take on a greatly expanded role in the community.

The Courts

Criminal courts determine the guilt or innocence of those persons accused of committing a crime. In theory, justice is determined in an adversarial pro-

cess in which the prosecutor (an attorney who represents the state) argues that the accused is guilty, and the defense attorney asserts that the accused is innocent. In reality, judges wield a great deal of discretion. Working with prosecutors, they decide whom to release and whom to hold for further hearings, and what sentences to impose on those persons who are convicted.

Prosecuting attorneys also have considerable leeway in deciding which cases to prosecute and when to negotiate a plea bargain with a defense attorney. As cases are sorted through the legal machinery, a steady attrition occurs. At each stage, various officials determine what alternatives will be available for those cases still remaining in the system.

About 90 percent of criminal cases are never tried in court; instead, they are resolved by plea bargaining, a process in which the prosecution negotiates a reduced sentence for the accused in exchange for a guilty plea (Senna and Siegel, 2002). Defendants (especially those who are poor and cannot afford to pay an attorney) may be urged to plead guilty to a lesser crime in return for not being tried for the more serious crime for which they were arrested. Prison sentences given in plea bargains vary widely from one region to another and even from judge to judge within one state. For example, although women typically commit less serious crimes than men, they do not fare as well as men in negotiating or bargaining for sentence reductions (Chesney-Lind, 1997).

Those who advocate the practice of plea bargaining believe that it allows for individualized justice for alleged offenders because judges, prosecutors, and defense attorneys can agree to a plea and to a punishment that best fits the offense and the offender. They also believe that this process helps reduce the backlog of criminal cases in the court system as well as the lengthy process often involved in a criminal trial. However, those who seek to abolish plea bargaining believe that this practice leads to innocent people pleading guilty to crimes they have not committed or pleading guilty to a crime other than the one they actually committed because they are offered a lesser sentence (Cole and Smith, 2004).

More serious crimes, such as murder, felonious assault, and rape, are more likely to proceed to trial than other forms of criminal conduct; however,

many of these cases do not reach the trial stage. For example, one study of 75 of the largest counties in the United States found that only 26 percent of murder cases actually went to trial. By contrast, only about 6 percent of all other cases proceeded to trial (Reaves, 2001).

One of the most important activities of the court system is establishing the sentence of the accused after he or she has been found guilty or has pleaded guilty. Typically, sentencing involves the following kinds of sentences or dispositions: fines, probation, alternative or intermediate sanctions (such as house arrest or electronic monitoring), incarceration, and capital punishment (Siegel, 2006).

Punishment and Corrections

Punishment is any action designed to deprive a person of things of value (including liberty) because of some offense the person is thought to have committed (Barlow and Kauzlarich, 2002). Historically, punishment has had four major goals:

1. *Retribution* is punishment that a person receives for infringing on the rights of others (Cole and Smith, 2004). Retribution imposes a penalty on the offender and is based on the premise that the punishment should fit the crime: The greater the degree of social harm, the more the offender should be punished. For example, an individual who murders should be punished more severely than one who shoplifts.
2. *General deterrence* seeks to reduce criminal activity by instilling a fear of punishment in the general public. However, we most often focus on *specific deterrence*, which inflicts punishment on specific criminals to discourage them from committing future crimes. Recently, criminologists have debated whether imprisonment has a deterrent effect, given the fact that high rates of those who are released from prison become recidivists (previous offenders who commit new crimes).
3. *Incapacitation* is based on the assumption that offenders who are detained in prison or are executed will be unable to commit additional crimes. This approach is often expressed as “lock ‘em’ up and throw away the key!” In recent years, more emphasis has been placed on *selective incapacitation*, which means that offenders who repeat cer-

tain kinds of crimes are sentenced to long prison terms (Cole and Smith, 2004).

4. *Rehabilitation* seeks to return offenders to the community as law-abiding citizens by providing therapy or vocational or educational training. Based on this approach, offenders are treated, not punished, so that they will not continue their criminal activity. However, many correctional facilities are seriously understaffed and underfunded in the rehabilitation programs that exist. The job skills (such as agricultural work) that many offenders learn in prison do not transfer to the outside world, nor are offenders given any assistance in finding work that fits their skills once they are released.

Recently, newer approaches have been advocated for dealing with criminal behavior. Key among these is the idea of *restoration*, which is designed to repair the damage done to the victim and the community by an offender’s criminal act (Cole and Smith, 2004). This approach is based on the *restorative justice perspective*, which states that the criminal justice system should promote a peaceful and just society; therefore, the system should focus on peacemaking rather than on punishing offenders. Advocates of this approach believe that punishment of offenders actually encourages crime rather than deterring it and are in favor of approaches such as probation with treatment. Opponents of this approach suggest that increased punishment of offenders leads to lower crime rates and that the restorative justice approach amounts to “coddling criminals.” However, numerous restorative justice programs are now in operation, and many are associated with community policing programs as they seek to help offenders realize the damage that they have done to their victims and the community and to be reintegrated into society (Senna and Siegel, 2002).

Instead of the term *punishment*, the term *corrections* is often used. Criminologists George F. Cole and Christopher E. Smith (2004: 409) explain corrections as follows:

Corrections refers to the great number of programs, services, facilities, and organizations responsible for the management of people accused or convicted of criminal offenses. In addition to prisons and jails, corrections includes probation,

halfway houses, education and work release programs, parole supervision, counseling, and community service. Correctional programs operate in Salvation Army hostels, forest camps, medical clinics, and urban storefronts.

As Cole and Smith (2004) explain, corrections is a major activity in the United States today. Consider the fact that about 6.5 million adults (more than one out of every twenty men and one out of every hundred women) are under some form of correctional control. The rate of African American males under some form of correctional supervision is even greater (one out of every six African American adult men and one out of every three African American men in their twenties). Some analysts believe that these figures are a reflection of centuries of underlying racial, ethnic, and class-based inequalities in the United States as well as sentencing disparities that reflect race-based differences in the criminal justice system. However, others argue that newer practices such as determinate or mandatory sentences may help to reduce such disparities over time. A *determinate sentence* sets the term of imprisonment at a fixed period of time (such as three years) for a specific offense. *Mandatory sentencing guidelines* are established by law and require that a person convicted of a specific offense or series of offenses be given a penalty within a fixed range. Although these practices limit judicial discretion in sentencing, many critics are concerned about the effects of these sentencing approaches. Another area of great discord within and outside the criminal justice system is the issue of the death penalty.

Historically, removal from the group has been considered one of the ultimate forms of punishment. For many years, capital punishment, or the death penalty, has been used in the United States as an appropriate and justifiable response to very serious crimes. About four thousand persons have been executed in the United States since 1930, when the federal government began collecting data on executions.

In 1972 the U.S. Supreme Court ruled (in *Furman v. Georgia*) that *arbitrary* application of the death penalty violates the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution but that the death penalty itself is not unconstitutional. In other words, determining who receives the death penalty and who receives a

prison term for similar offenses should not be done on a “lotterylike” basis. To be constitutional, the death penalty must be imposed for reasons other than the race/ethnicity, gender, and social class of the offender.

The ex-slave states are more likely to execute criminals than are other states (see ▶ Figure 6.7). African Americans are eight to ten times more likely to be sentenced to death for homicidal rape than are whites (non-Latinos/as) who have committed the same crime (Marquart, Ekland-Olson, and Sorensen, 1994).

People who have lost relatives and friends as a result of criminal activity often see the death penalty as justified. However, capital punishment raises many doubts for those who fear that innocent individuals may be executed for crimes they did not commit. For still others, the problem of racial discrimination in the sentencing process poses troubling questions.

Deviance and Crime in the United States in the Future

Two pressing questions pertaining to deviance and crime will face us in the future: Is the solution to our “crime problem” more law and order? Is equal justice under the law possible?

Although many people in the United States agree that crime is one of the most important problems in this country, they are divided over what to do about it. Some of the frustration about crime might be based on unfounded fears; studies show that the overall crime rate has been decreasing slightly in recent years.

One thing is clear: The existing criminal justice system cannot solve the “crime problem.” If roughly 20 percent of all crimes result in arrest, only half of those lead to a conviction in serious cases, and less than 5 percent of those result in a jail term, the “lock ‘em up and throw the key away” approach has little

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in high-income nations such as the United States and Canada are often suspicious of law enforcement agencies in low-income countries, believing that these law enforcement officers are corrupt. Regulation by the international community (for example, through the United Nations) would also be necessary to control global criminal activities such as international money laundering and trafficking in people and controlled substances such

as drugs and weapons. However, development and enforcement of international agreements on activities such as the smuggling of migrants or the trafficking of women and children for the sex industry have been extremely limited thus far. Many analysts acknowledge that economic globalization has provided great opportunities for wealth through global organized crime (Castells, 1998; United Nations Development Programme, 1999).

Chapter Review

• How do sociologists view deviance?

Sociologists are interested in what types of behavior are defined by societies as “deviant,” who does that defining, how individuals become deviant, and how those individuals are dealt with by society.

• What are the main functionalist theories for explaining deviance?

Functionalist perspectives on deviance include strain theory and opportunity theory. Strain theory focuses on the idea that when people are denied legitimate access to cultural goals, such as a good job or a nice home, they may engage in illegal behavior to obtain them. Opportunity theory suggests that for deviance to occur, people must have access to illegitimate means to acquire what they want but cannot obtain through legitimate means.

• How do conflict and feminist perspectives explain deviance?

Conflict perspectives on deviance focus on inequalities in society. Marxist conflict theorists link deviance and crime to the capitalist society, which divides people into haves and have-nots, leaving crime as the only source of support for those at the bottom of the economic ladder. Feminist approaches to de-

viance focus on the relationship between gender and deviance.

• How do symbolic interactionists view deviance?

According to symbolic interactionists, deviance is learned through interaction with others. Differential association theory states that individuals have a greater tendency to deviate from societal norms when they frequently associate with persons who tend toward deviance instead of conformity. According to social control theories, everyone is capable of committing crimes, but social bonding (attachments to family and to other social institutions) keeps many from doing so. According to labeling theory, deviant behavior is that which is labeled deviant by those in powerful positions.

• What is the postmodernist view on deviance?

Postmodernist views on deviance focus on how the powerful control others through discipline and surveillance. This control may be maintained through largely invisible forces such as the Panopticon, as described by Michel Foucault, or by newer technologies that place everyone—not just “deviants”—under constant surveillance by authorities who use their knowledge as power over others.

Glossary

absolute poverty a level of economic deprivation that exists when people do not have the means to secure the most basic necessities of life.

achieved status a social position that a person assumes voluntarily as a result of personal choice, merit, or direct effort.

acute diseases illnesses that strike suddenly and cause dramatic incapacitation and sometimes death.

ageism prejudice and discrimination against people on the basis of age, particularly against older people.

agents of socialization the persons, groups, or institutions that teach us what we need to know in order to participate in society.

aggregate a collection of people who happen to be in the same place at the same time but share little else in common.

alienation a feeling of powerlessness and estrangement from other people and from oneself.

animism the belief that plants, animals, or other elements of the natural world are endowed with spirits or life forces having an effect on events in society.

anomie Emile Durkheim's designation for a condition in which social control becomes ineffective as a result of the loss of shared values and of a sense of purpose in society.

anticipatory socialization the process by which knowledge and skills are learned for future roles.

ascribed status a social position conferred at birth or received involuntarily later in life based on attributes over which the individual has little or no control, such as race/ethnicity, age, and gender.

assimilation a process by which members of subordinate racial and ethnic groups become absorbed into the dominant culture.

authoritarian leaders people who make all major group decisions and assign tasks to members.

authoritarian personality a personality type characterized by excessive conformity, submissiveness to authority, intolerance, insecurity, a high level of superstition, and rigid, stereotypic thinking.

authoritarianism a political system controlled by rulers who deny popular participation in government.

authority power that people accept as legitimate rather than coercive.

beliefs the mental acceptance or conviction that certain things are true or real.

bilateral descent a system of tracing descent through both the mother's and father's sides of the family.

blended family a family consisting of a husband and wife, children from previous marriages, and children (if any) from the new marriage.

body consciousness a term that describes how a person perceives and feels about his or her body.

bureaucracy an organizational model characterized by a hierarchy of authority, a clear division of labor, explicit rules and procedures, and impersonality in personnel matters.

bureaucratic personality a psychological construct that describes those workers who are more concerned with following correct procedures than they are with getting the job done correctly.

capitalism an economic system characterized by private ownership of the means of production, from which personal profits can be derived through market competition and without government intervention.

capitalist class (or bourgeoisie) Karl Marx's term for the class that consists of those who own and control the means of production.

caste system a system of social inequality in which people's status is permanently determined at birth based on their parents' ascribed characteristics.

category a number of people who may never have met one another but share a similar characteristic, such as education level, age, race, or gender.

charismatic authority power legitimized on the basis of a leader's exceptional personal qualities or the demonstration of extraordinary insight and accomplishment that inspire loyalty and obedience from followers.

chronic diseases illnesses that are long term or lifelong and that develop gradually or are present from birth.

church a large, bureaucratically organized religious organization that tends to seek accommodation with the larger society in order to maintain some degree of control over it.

civil disobedience nonviolent action that seeks to change a policy or law by refusing to comply with it.

civil religion the set of beliefs, rituals, and symbols that makes sacred the values of the society and places the nation in the context of the ultimate system of meaning.

class conflict Karl Marx's term for the struggle between the capitalist class and the working class.

class system a type of stratification based on the ownership and control of resources and on the type of work that people do.

cohabitation a situation in which two people live together, and think of themselves as a couple, without being legally married.

collective behavior voluntary, often spontaneous activity that is engaged in by a large number of people and typically violates dominant-group norms and values.

community a set of social relationships operating within given spatial boundaries or locations that provides people with a sense of identity and a feeling of belonging.

comparable worth (or pay equity) the belief that wages ought to reflect

the worth of a job, not the gender or race of the worker.

conflict perspectives the sociological approach that views groups in society as engaged in a continuous power struggle for control of scarce resources.

conformity the process of maintaining or changing behavior to comply with the norms established by a society, subculture, or other group.

conglomerate a combination of businesses in different commercial areas, all of which are owned by one holding company.

content analysis the systematic examination of cultural artifacts or various forms of communication to extract thematic data and draw conclusions about social life.

contingent work part-time work, temporary work, or subcontracted work that offers advantages to employers but that can be detrimental to the welfare of workers.

control group in an experiment, the group that contains the subjects who are not exposed to the independent variable.

core nations according to world systems theory, dominant capitalist centers characterized by high levels of industrialization and urbanization.

corporate crime illegal acts committed by corporate employees on behalf of the corporation and with its support.

corporations large-scale organizations that have legal powers, such as the ability to enter into contracts and buy and sell property, separate from their individual owners.

correlation a relationship that exists when two variables are associated more frequently than could be expected by chance.

counterculture a group that strongly rejects dominant societal values and norms and seeks alternative lifestyles.

credentialism a process of social selection in which class advantage and social status are linked to the possession of academic qualifications.

crime behavior that violates criminal law and is punishable with fines, jail terms, and other sanctions.

criminal justice system the more than 55,000 local, state, and federal agencies that enforce laws, adjudicate crimes, and treat and rehabilitate criminals.

criminology the systematic study of crime and the criminal justice system, including the police, courts, and prisons.

crowd a relatively large number of people who are in one another's immediate vicinity.

crude birth rate the number of live births per 1,000 people in a population in a given year.

crude death rate the number of deaths per 1,000 people in a population in a given year.

cult a religious group with practices and teachings outside the dominant cultural and religious traditions of a society.

cultural capital Pierre Bourdieu's term for people's social assets, including values, beliefs, attitudes, and competencies in language and culture.

cultural imperialism the extensive infusion of one nation's culture into other nations.

cultural lag William Ogburn's term for a gap between the technical development of a society (material culture) and its moral and legal institutions (nonmaterial culture).

cultural relativism the belief that the behaviors and customs of any culture must be viewed and analyzed by the culture's own standards.

cultural universals customs and practices that occur across all societies.

culture the knowledge, language, values, customs, and material objects that are passed from person to person and from one generation to the next in a human group or society.

culture shock the disorientation that people feel when they encounter cultures radically different from their own and believe they cannot depend on their own taken-for-granted assumptions about life.

demedicalization the process whereby a problem ceases to be defined as an illness or a disorder.

democracy a political system in which the people hold the ruling power either directly or through elected representatives.

democratic leaders leaders who encourage group discussion and decision making through consensus building.

democratic socialism an economic and political system that combines private ownership of some of the means of production, governmental distribution of some essential goods and services, and free elections.

demographic transition the process by which some societies have moved from high birth rates and death rates to relatively low birth rates and death rates as a result of technological development.

demography a subfield of sociology that examines population size, composition, and distribution.

denomination a large, organized religion characterized by accommodation to society but frequently lacking in ability or intention to dominate society.

dependency theory the belief that global poverty can at least partially be attributed to the fact that the low-income countries have been exploited by the high-income countries.

dependent variable in an experiment, the variable assumed to be caused by the independent variable(s).

deviance any behavior, belief, or condition that violates significant social norms in the society or group in which it occurs.

differential association theory the proposition that individuals have a greater tendency to deviate from societal norms when they frequently associate with persons who are more favorable toward deviance than conformity.

disability a physical or health condition that stigmatizes or causes discrimination.

discrimination actions or practices of dominant-group members (or their representatives) that have a harmful effect on members of a subordinate group.

division of labor how the various tasks of a society are divided up and performed.

domestic partnerships household partnerships in which an unmarried couple lives together in a committed, sexually intimate relationship and is granted the same rights and benefits as those accorded to married heterosexual couples.

dominant group a group that is advantaged and has superior resources and rights in a society.

dramaturgical analysis the study of social interaction that compares everyday life to a theatrical presentation.

drug any substance—other than food and water—that, when taken into the body, alters its functioning in some way.

dual-earner marriages marriages in which both spouses are in the labor force.

dyad a group composed of two members.

ecclesia a religious organization that is so integrated into the dominant culture that it claims as its membership all members of a society.

economy the social institution that ensures the maintenance of society through the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.

education the social institution responsible for the systematic transmission of knowledge, skills, and cultural values within a formally organized structure.

egalitarian family a family structure in which both partners share power and authority equally.

ego according to Sigmund Freud, the rational, reality-oriented component of personality that imposes restrictions on the innate pleasure-seeking drives of the id.

elite model a view of society that sees power in political systems as being concentrated in the hands of a small group of elites whereas the masses are relatively powerless.

endogamy cultural norms prescribing that people marry within their social group or category.

environmental racism the belief that a disproportionate number of hazardous facilities (including indus-

tries such as waste disposal/treatment and chemical plants) are placed in low-income areas populated primarily by people of color.

ethnic group a collection of people distinguished, by others or by themselves, primarily on the basis of cultural or nationality characteristics.

ethnic pluralism the coexistence of a variety of distinct racial and ethnic groups within one society.

ethnocentrism the practice of judging all other cultures by one's own culture.

ethnography a detailed study of the life and activities of a group of people by researchers who may live with that group over a period of years.

ethnomethodology the study of the commonsense knowledge that people use to understand the situations in which they find themselves.

exogamy cultural norms prescribing that people marry outside their social group or category.

experiment a research method involving a carefully designed situation in which the researcher studies the impact of certain variables on subjects' attitudes or behavior.

experimental group in an experiment, the group that contains the subjects who are exposed to an independent variable (the experimental condition) to study its effect on them.

expressive leadership an approach to leadership that provides emotional support for members.

extended family a family unit composed of relatives in addition to parents and children who live in the same household.

face-saving behavior Erving Goffman's term for the strategies we use to rescue our performance when we experience a potential or actual loss of face.

families relationships in which people live together with commitment, form an economic unit and care for any young, and consider their identity to be significantly attached to the group.

family of orientation the family into which a person is born and in which early socialization usually takes place.

family of procreation the family that a person forms by having or adopting children.

fecundity the potential number of children who could be born if every woman reproduced at her maximum biological capacity.

feminism the belief that all people—both women and men—are equal and that they should be valued equally and have equal rights.

feminization of poverty the trend in which women are disproportionately represented among individuals living in poverty.

fertility the actual level of childbearing for an individual or a population.

folkways informal norms or everyday customs that may be violated without serious consequences within a particular culture.

formal organization a highly structured group formed for the purpose of completing certain tasks or achieving specific goals.

functionalist perspectives the sociological approach that views society as a stable, orderly system.

Gemeinschaft (guh-MINE-shoft) a traditional society in which social relationships are based on personal bonds of friendship and kinship and on intergenerational stability.

gender the culturally and socially constructed differences between females and males found in the meanings, beliefs, and practices associated with “femininity” and “masculinity.”

gender bias behavior that shows favoritism toward one gender over the other.

gender identity a person's perception of the self as female or male.

gender role the attitudes, behavior, and activities that are socially defined as appropriate for each sex and are learned through the socialization process.

gender socialization the aspect of socialization that contains specific messages and practices concerning the nature of being female or male in a specific group or society.

gendered racism the interactive effect of racism and sexism on the exploitation of women of color.

generalized other George Herbert Mead's term for the child's awareness of the demands and expectations of the society as a whole or of the child's subculture.

genocide the deliberate, systematic killing of an entire people or nation.

gentrification the process by which members of the middle and upper-middle classes, especially whites, move into a central-city area and renovate existing properties.

Gesellschaft (guh-ZELL-shoft) a large, urban society in which social bonds are based on impersonal and specialized relationships, with little long-term commitment to the group or consensus on values.

global stratification the unequal distribution of wealth, power, and prestige on a global basis, resulting in people having vastly different lifestyles and life chances both within and among the nations of the world.

goal displacement a process that occurs in organizations when the rules become an end in themselves rather than a means to an end, and organizational survival becomes more important than achievement of goals.

gossip rumors about the personal lives of individuals.

government the formal organization that has the legal and political authority to regulate the relationships among members of a society and between the society and those outside its borders.

groupthink the process by which members of a cohesive group arrive at a decision that many individual members privately believe is unwise.

health a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being.

health care any activity intended to improve health.

health maintenance organizations (HMOs) companies that provide, for a set monthly fee, total care with an emphasis on prevention to avoid costly treatment later.

hermaphrodite a person in whom sexual differentiation is ambiguous or incomplete.

hidden curriculum the transmission of cultural values and attitudes, such as conformity and obedience to authority, through implied demands

found in rules, routines, and regulations of schools.

high culture classical music, opera, ballet, live theater, and other activities usually patronized by elite audiences.

high-income countries (sometimes referred to as **industrial countries**) nations with highly industrialized economies; technologically advanced industrial, administrative, and service occupations; and relatively high levels of national and personal income.

holistic medicine an approach to health care that focuses on prevention of illness and disease and is aimed at treating the whole person—body and mind—rather than just the part or parts in which symptoms occur.

homogamy the pattern of individuals marrying those who have similar characteristics, such as race/ethnicity, religious background, age, education, or social class.

homophobia extreme prejudice directed at gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and others who are perceived as not being heterosexual.

human ecology the study of the relationship between people and their physical environment.

hypothesis a statement of the expected relationship between two or more variables.

id Sigmund Freud's term for the component of personality that includes all of the individual's basic biological drives and needs that demand immediate gratification.

ideal type an abstract model that describes the recurring characteristics of some phenomenon (such as bureaucracy).

illegitimate opportunity structures circumstances that provide an opportunity for people to acquire through illegitimate activities what they cannot achieve through legitimate channels.

impression management (presentation of self) Erving Goffman's term for people's efforts to present themselves to others in ways that are most favorable to their own interests or image.

income the economic gain derived from wages, salaries, income transfers (governmental aid), and ownership of property.

independent variable in an experiment, the variable assumed to be the cause of the relationship between variables.

individual discrimination behavior consisting of one-on-one acts by members of the dominant group that harm members of the subordinate group or their property.

industrial society a society based on technology that mechanizes production.

industrialization the process by which societies are transformed from dependence on agriculture and handmade products to an emphasis on manufacturing and related industries.

infant mortality rate the number of deaths of infants under 1 year of age per 1,000 live births in a given year.

informal side of a bureaucracy those aspects of participants' day-to-day activities and interactions that ignore, bypass, or do not correspond with the official rules and procedures of the bureaucracy.

ingroup a group to which a person belongs and with which the person feels a sense of identity.

institutional discrimination the day-to-day practices of organizations and institutions that have a harmful impact on members of subordinate groups.

instrumental leadership goal- or task-oriented leadership.

intergenerational mobility the social movement (upward or downward) experienced by family members from one generation to the next.

interlocking corporate directorates members of the board of directors of one corporation who also sit on the board(s) of other corporations.

internal colonialism according to conflict theorists, a practice that occurs when members of a racial or ethnic group are conquered or colonized and forcibly placed under the economic and political control of the dominant group.

interview a research method using a data-collection encounter in which an interviewer asks the respondent questions and records the answers.

intragenerational mobility the social movement (upward or down-

ward) of individuals within their own lifetime.

invasion the process by which a new category of people or type of land use arrives in an area previously occupied by another group or land use.

iron law of oligarchy according to Robert Michels, the tendency of bureaucracies to be ruled by a few people.

job deskilling a reduction in the proficiency needed to perform a specific job that leads to a corresponding reduction in the wages for that job.

juvenile delinquency a violation of law or the commission of a status offense by young people.

kinship a social network of people based on common ancestry, marriage, or adoption.

labeling theory the proposition that deviants are those people who have been successfully labeled as such by others.

laissez-faire leaders leaders who are only minimally involved in decision making and who encourage group members to make their own decisions.

language a set of symbols that expresses ideas and enables people to think and communicate with one another.

latent functions unintended functions that are hidden and remain unacknowledged by participants.

laws formal, standardized norms that have been enacted by legislatures and are enforced by formal sanctions.

life chances Max Weber's term for the extent to which individuals have access to important societal resources such as food, clothing, shelter, education, and health care.

life expectancy an estimate of the average lifetime of people born in a specific year.

looking-glass self Charles Horton Cooley's term for the way in which a person's sense of self is derived from the perceptions of others.

low-income countries (sometimes referred to as **underdeveloped countries**) nations with little industrialization and low levels of national and personal income.

macrolevel analysis an approach that examines whole societies, large-scale social structures, and social systems.

managed care any system of cost containment that closely monitors and controls health care providers' decisions about medical procedures, diagnostic tests, and other services that should be provided to patients.

manifest functions functions that are intended and/or overtly recognized by the participants in a social unit.

marginal jobs jobs that differ from the employment norms of the society in which they are located.

marriage a legally recognized and/or socially approved arrangement between two or more individuals that carries certain rights and obligations and usually involves sexual activity.

mass a number of people who share an interest in a specific idea or issue but who are not in one another's immediate vicinity.

mass behavior collective behavior that takes place when people (who often are geographically separated from one another) respond to the same event in much the same way.

mass media large-scale organizations that use print or electronic means (such as radio, television, film, and the Internet) to communicate with large numbers of people.

master status the most important status that a person occupies.

material culture a component of culture that consists of the physical or tangible creations (such as clothing, shelter, and art) that members of a society make, use, and share.

matriarchal family a family structure in which authority is held by the eldest female (usually the mother).

matriarchy a hierarchical system of social organization in which cultural, political, and economic structures are controlled by women.

matrilineal descent a system of tracing descent through the mother's side of the family.

matrilocal residence the custom of a married couple living in the same household (or community) as the wife's parents.

mechanical solidarity Emile Durkheim's term for the social cohesion in preindustrial societies, in which there is minimal division of labor and people feel united by shared values and common social bonds.

medical-industrial complex local physicians, local hospitals, and global health-related industries such as insurance companies and pharmaceutical and medical supply companies that deliver health care today.

medicalization the process whereby nonmedical problems become defined and treated as illnesses or disorders.

medicine an institutionalized system for the scientific diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of illness.

meritocracy a hierarchy in which all positions are rewarded based on people's ability and credentials.

metropolis one or more central cities and their surrounding suburbs that dominate the economic and cultural life of a region.

microlevel analysis sociological theory and research that focus on small groups rather than on large-scale social structures.

middle-income countries (sometimes referred to as **developing countries**) nations with industrializing economies, particularly in urban areas, and moderate levels of national and personal income.

migration the movement of people from one geographic area to another for the purpose of changing residency.

military-industrial complex the mutual interdependence of the military establishment and private military contractors.

mixed economy an economic system that combines elements of a market economy (capitalism) with elements of a command economy (socialism).

mob a highly emotional crowd whose members engage in, or are ready to engage in, violence against a specific target—a person, a category of people, or physical property.

modernization theory a perspective that links global inequality to different levels of economic development and suggests that low-income economies can move to middle- and

high-income economies by achieving self-sustained economic growth.

monarchy a political system in which power resides in one person or family and is passed from generation to generation through lines of inheritance.

monogamy a marriage between two partners, usually a woman and a man.

mores strongly held norms with moral and ethical connotations that may not be violated without serious consequences in a particular culture.

mortality the incidence of death in a population.

neolocal residence the custom of a married couple living in their own residence apart from both the husband's and the wife's parents.

nonmaterial culture a component of culture that consists of the abstract or intangible human creations of society (such as attitudes, beliefs, and values) that influence people's behavior.

nonverbal communication the transfer of information between persons without the use of speech.

norms established rules of behavior or standards of conduct.

nuclear family a family composed of one or two parents and their dependent children, all of whom live apart from other relatives.

occupational (white-collar) crime illegal activities committed by people in the course of their employment or financial affairs.

occupations categories of jobs that involve similar activities at different work sites.

official poverty line the federal income standard that is based on what is considered to be the minimum amount of money required for living at a subsistence level.

oligopoly a condition existing when several companies overwhelmingly control an entire industry.

organic solidarity Emile Durkheim's term for the social cohesion found in industrial societies, in which people perform very specialized tasks and feel united by their mutual dependence.

organized crime a business operation that supplies illegal goods and services for profit.

outgroup a group to which a person does not belong and toward which the person may feel a sense of competitiveness or hostility.

panic a form of crowd behavior that occurs when a large number of people react to a real or perceived threat with strong emotions and self-destructive behavior.

participant observation a research method in which researchers collect data while being part of the activities of the group being studied.

patriarchal family a family structure in which authority is held by the eldest male (usually the father).

patriarchy a hierarchical system of social organization in which cultural, political, and economic structures are controlled by men.

patrilineal descent a system of tracing descent through the father's side of the family.

patrilocal residence the custom of a married couple living in the same household (or community) as the husband's family.

pay gap a term used to describe the disparity between women's and men's earnings.

peer group a group of people who are linked by common interests, equal social position, and (usually) similar age.

peripheral nations according to world systems theory, nations that are dependent on core nations for capital, have little or no industrialization (other than what may be brought in by core nations), and have uneven patterns of urbanization.

personal space the immediate area surrounding a person that the person claims as private.

pink-collar occupations relatively low-paying, nonmanual, semiskilled positions primarily held by women, such as day-care workers, checkout clerks, cashiers, and waitpersons.

pluralist model an analysis of political systems that views power as widely dispersed throughout many competing interest groups.

political action committees organizations of special interest groups that solicit contributions from donors and fund campaigns to help elect

(or defeat) candidates based on their stances on specific issues.

political crime illegal or unethical acts involving the usurpation of power by government officials, or illegal/unethical acts perpetrated against the government by outsiders seeking to make a political statement, undermine the government, or overthrow it.

political party an organization whose purpose is to gain and hold legitimate control of government.

political socialization the process by which people learn political attitudes, values, and behavior.

politics the social institution through which power is acquired and exercised by some people and groups.

polyandry the concurrent marriage of one woman with two or more men.

polygamy the concurrent marriage of a person of one sex with two or more members of the opposite sex.

polygyny the concurrent marriage of one man with two or more women.

popular culture the component of culture that consists of activities, products, and services that are assumed to appeal primarily to members of the middle and working classes.

population composition the biological and social characteristics of a population, including age, sex, race, marital status, education, occupation, income, and size of household.

population pyramid a graphic representation of the distribution of a population by sex and age.

positivism a term describing Auguste Comte's belief that the world can best be understood through scientific inquiry.

postindustrial society a society in which technology supports a service- and information-based economy.

postmodern perspectives the sociological approach that attempts to explain social life in modern societies that are characterized by postindustrialization, consumerism, and global communications.

power according to Max Weber, the ability of people or groups to achieve their goals despite opposition from others.

prejudice a negative attitude based on faulty generalizations about members of selected racial and ethnic groups.

prestige the respect or regard with which a person or status position is regarded by others.

primary deviance the initial act of rule-breaking.

primary group Charles Horton Cooley's term for a small, less specialized group in which members engage in face-to-face, emotion-based interactions over an extended period of time.

primary labor market the sector of the labor market that consists of high-paying jobs with good benefits that have some degree of security and the possibility of future advancement.

primary sector production the sector of the economy that extracts raw materials and natural resources from the environment.

primary sex characteristics the genitalia used in the reproductive process.

profane the everyday, secular, or "worldly" aspects of life.

professions high-status, knowledge-based occupations.

propaganda information provided by individuals or groups that have a vested interest in furthering their own cause or damaging an opposing one.

property crimes burglary (breaking into private property to commit a serious crime), motor vehicle theft, larceny-theft (theft of property worth \$50 or more), and arson.

public opinion the attitudes and beliefs communicated by ordinary citizens to decision makers.

punishment any action designed to deprive a person of things of value (including liberty) because of some offense the person is thought to have committed.

qualitative research sociological research methods that use interpretive description (words) rather than statistics (numbers) to analyze underlying meanings and patterns of social relationships.

quantitative research sociological research methods that are based

on the goal of scientific objectivity and that focus on data that can be measured numerically.

race a category of people who have been singled out as inferior or superior, often on the basis of physical characteristics such as skin color, hair texture, and eye shape.

racial socialization the aspect of socialization that contains specific messages and practices concerning the nature of one's racial or ethnic status.

racism a set of attitudes, beliefs, and practices that is used to justify the superior treatment of one racial or ethnic group and the inferior treatment of another racial or ethnic group.

rationality the process by which traditional methods of social organization, characterized by informality and spontaneity, are gradually replaced by efficiently administered formal rules and procedures.

rational-legal authority power legitimized by law or written rules and regulations.

reference group a group that strongly influences a person's behavior and social attitudes, regardless of whether that individual is an actual member.

relative poverty a condition that exists when people may be able to afford basic necessities but are still unable to maintain an average standard of living.

reliability in sociological research, the extent to which a study or research instrument yields consistent results when applied to different individuals at one time or to the same individuals over time.

religion a system of beliefs, symbols, and rituals, based on some sacred or supernatural realm, that guides human behavior, gives meaning to life, and unites believers into a community.

representative democracy a form of democracy whereby citizens elect representatives to serve as bridges between themselves and the government.

research methods specific strategies or techniques for systematically conducting research.

resocialization the process of learning a new and different set

of attitudes, values, and behaviors from those in one's background and experience.

riot violent crowd behavior that is fueled by deep-seated emotions but is not directed at one specific target.

role a set of behavioral expectations associated with a given status.

role conflict a situation in which incompatible role demands are placed on a person by two or more statuses held at the same time.

role exit a situation in which people disengage from social roles that have been central to their self-identity.

role expectation a group's or society's definition of the way that a specific role *ought* to be played.

role performance how a person *actually* plays a role.

role strain a condition that occurs when incompatible demands are built into a single status that a person occupies.

role-taking the process by which a person mentally assumes the role of another person in order to understand the world from that person's point of view.

routinization of charisma the process by which charismatic authority is succeeded by a bureaucracy controlled by a rationally established authority or by a combination of traditional and bureaucratic authority.

rumor an unsubstantiated report on an issue or subject.

sacred those aspects of life that are extraordinary or supernatural.

sanctions rewards for appropriate behavior or penalties for inappropriate behavior.

Sapir-Whorf hypothesis the proposition that language shapes the view of reality of its speakers.

scapegoat a person or group that is incapable of offering resistance to the hostility or aggression of others.

second shift Arlie Hochschild's term for the domestic work that employed women perform at home after they complete their workday on the job.

secondary analysis a research method in which researchers use ex-

isting material and analyze data that were originally collected by others.

secondary deviance the process that occurs when a person who has been labeled a deviant accepts that new identity and continues the deviant behavior.

secondary group a larger, more specialized group in which members engage in more-impersonal, goal-oriented relationships for a limited period of time.

secondary labor market the sector of the labor market that consists of low-paying jobs with few benefits and very little job security or possibility for future advancement.

secondary sector production the sector of the economy that processes raw materials (from the primary sector) into finished goods.

secondary sex characteristics the physical traits (other than reproductive organs) that identify an individual's sex.

sect a relatively small religious group that has broken away from another religious organization to renew what it views as the original version of the faith.

secularization the process by which religious beliefs, practices, and institutions lose their significance in sectors of society and culture.

segregation the spatial and social separation of categories of people by race, ethnicity, class, gender, and/or religion.

self-concept the totality of our beliefs and feelings about ourselves.

self-fulfilling prophecy the situation in which a false belief or prediction produces behavior that makes the originally false belief come true.

semiperipheral nations according to world systems theory, nations that are more developed than peripheral nations but less developed than core nations.

sex the biological and anatomical differences between females and males.

sex ratio a term used by demographers to denote the number of males for every hundred females in a given population.

sexism the subordination of one sex, usually female, based on the assumed superiority of the other sex.

sexual orientation a person's preference for emotional-sexual relationships with members of the opposite sex (heterosexuality), the same sex (homosexuality), or both (bisexuality).

shared monopoly a condition that exists when four or fewer companies supply 50 percent or more of a particular market.

sick role the set of patterned expectations that defines the norms and values appropriate for individuals who are sick and for those who interact with them.

significant others those persons whose care, affection, and approval are especially desired and who are most important in the development of the self.

slavery an extreme form of stratification in which some people are owned by others.

small group a collectivity small enough for all members to be acquainted with one another and to interact simultaneously.

social bond theory the proposition that the probability of deviant behavior increases when a person's ties to society are weakened or broken.

social change the alteration, modification, or transformation of public policy, culture, or social institutions over time.

social construction of reality the process by which our perception of reality is shaped largely by the subjective meaning that we give to an experience.

social control systematic practices developed by social groups to encourage conformity to norms, rules, and laws and to discourage deviance.

social Darwinism Herbert Spencer's belief that those species of animals, including human beings, best adapted to their environment survive and prosper, whereas those poorly adapted die out.

social devaluation a situation in which a person or group is considered to have less social value than other individuals or groups.

social epidemiology the study of the causes and distribution of health, disease, and impairment throughout a population.

social facts Emile Durkheim's term for patterned ways of acting, thinking, and feeling that exist *outside* any one individual but that exert social control over each person.

social group a group that consists of two or more people who interact frequently and share a common identity and a feeling of interdependence.

social institution a set of organized beliefs and rules that establishes how a society will attempt to meet its basic social needs.

social interaction the process by which people act toward or respond to other people; the foundation for all relationships and groups in society.

social mobility the movement of individuals or groups from one level in a stratification system to another.

social movement an organized group that acts consciously to promote or resist change through collective action.

social stratification the hierarchical arrangement of large social groups based on their control over basic resources.

social structure the stable pattern of social relationships that exists within a particular group or society.

socialism an economic system characterized by public ownership of the means of production, the pursuit of collective goals, and centralized decision making.

socialization the lifelong process of social interaction through which individuals acquire a self-identity and the physical, mental, and social skills needed for survival in society.

socialized medicine a health care system in which the government owns the medical care facilities and employs the physicians.

society a large social grouping that shares the same geographical territory and is subject to the same political authority and dominant cultural expectations.

sociobiology the systematic study of how biology affects social behavior.

socioeconomic status (SES) a combined measure that, in order to determine class location, attempts to classify individuals, families, or households in terms of factors such as income, occupation, and education.

sociological imagination C. Wright Mills's term for the ability to see the relationship between individual experiences and the larger society.

sociology the systematic study of human society and social interaction.

sociology of family the subdiscipline of sociology that attempts to describe and explain patterns of family life and variations in family structure.

split labor market a term used to describe the division of the economy into two areas of employment, a primary sector or upper tier, composed of higher-paid (usually dominant-group) workers in more-secure jobs, and a secondary sector or lower tier, composed of lower-paid (often subordinate-group) workers in jobs with little security and hazardous working conditions.

state the political entity that possesses a legitimate monopoly over the use of force within its territory to achieve its goals.

status a socially defined position in a group or society characterized by certain expectations, rights, and duties.

status set all the statuses that a person occupies at a given time.

status symbol a material sign that informs others of a person's specific status.

stereotypes overgeneralizations about the appearance, behavior, or other characteristics of members of particular categories.

strain theory the proposition that people feel strain when they are exposed to cultural goals that they are unable to obtain because they do not have access to culturally approved means of achieving those goals.

subcontracting an agreement in which a corporation contracts with other (usually smaller) firms to provide specialized components, products, or services to the larger corporation.

subculture a group of people who share a distinctive set of cultural beliefs and behaviors that differs in some significant way from that of the larger society.

subordinate group a group whose members, because of physical or cultural characteristics, are disadvantaged and subjected to unequal treatment by the dominant group and who regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination.

succession the process by which a new category of people or type of land use gradually predominates in an area formerly dominated by another group or activity.

superego Sigmund Freud's term for the conscience, consisting of the moral and ethical aspects of personality.

survey a poll in which the researcher gathers facts or attempts to determine the relationships among facts.

symbol anything that meaningfully represents something else.

symbolic interactionist perspectives the sociological approach that views society as the sum of the interactions of individuals and groups.

taboos mores so strong that their violation is considered to be extremely offensive and even unmentionable.

technology the knowledge, techniques, and tools that allow people to transform resources into a usable form and the knowledge and skills required to use what is developed.

terrorism the calculated unlawful use of physical force or threats of violence against persons or property in order to intimidate or coerce a government, organization, or individual for the pur-

pose of gaining some political, religious, economic, or social objective.

tertiary deviance deviance that occurs when a person who has been labeled a deviant seeks to normalize the behavior by relabeling it as nondeviant.

tertiary sector production the sector of the economy that is involved in the provision of services rather than goods.

theory a set of logically interrelated statements that attempts to describe, explain, and (occasionally) predict social events.

theory of racial formation the idea that actions of the government substantially define racial and ethnic relations in the United States.

total institution Erving Goffman's term for a place where people are isolated from the rest of society for a set period of time and come under the control of the officials who run the institution.

totalitarianism a political system in which the state seeks to regulate all aspects of people's public and private lives.

tracking the assignment of students to specific curriculum groups and courses on the basis of their test scores, previous grades, or both.

traditional authority power that is legitimized on the basis of long-standing custom.

transnational corporations large corporations that are headquartered in one country but sell and produce goods and services in many countries.

transsexual a person who believes that he or she was born with the body of the wrong sex.

transvestite a male who lives as a woman or a female who lives as a man but does not alter the genitalia.

triad a group composed of three members.

underclass those who are poor, seldom employed, and caught in long-term deprivation that results from

low levels of education and income and high rates of unemployment.

unemployment rate the percentage of unemployed persons in the labor force actively seeking jobs.

universal health care system a health care system in which all citizens receive medical services paid for by tax revenues.

urbanization the process by which an increasing proportion of a population lives in cities rather than in rural areas.

validity in sociological research, the extent to which a study or research instrument accurately measures what it is supposed to measure.

value contradictions values that conflict with one another or are mutually exclusive.

values collective ideas about what is right or wrong, good or bad, and desirable or undesirable in a particular culture.

variable in sociological research, any concept with measurable traits or characteristics that can change or vary from one person, time, situation, or society to another.

victimless crimes crimes involving a willing exchange of illegal goods or services among adults.

violent crime actions—murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault—involving force or the threat of force against others.

wealth the value of all of a person's or family's economic assets, including income, personal property, and income-producing property.

welfare state a state in which there is extensive government action to provide support and services to the citizens.

working class (or **proletariat**) those who must sell their labor to the owners in order to earn enough money to survive.

zero population growth the point at which no population increase occurs from year to year.