

networks

There's More Online!

- ✓ **CARTOON** The Unpopular Shirt
- ✓ **GRAPHIC ORGANIZER** Deviance and Social Control
- ✓ **MAP** Violent Crime
- ✓ **SELF-CHECK QUIZ**



Reading **HELPDESK**

Academic Vocabulary

- violation
- stability

Content Vocabulary

- deviance
- negative deviance
- positive deviance
- deviant
- social control
- social sanctions

TAKING NOTES:

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

DESCRIBING As you read about deviance and social control, use a graphic organizer like the one below to record information and ideas.

Deviance	Social Control

LESSON 1

Deviance and Social Control

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS • *What is deviance?* • *Who defines deviance?*

IT MATTERS BECAUSE

If we want to reduce deviance, such as violent crime, we must first understand what deviance means and why it occurs. We must also understand current methods of controlling deviance to evaluate their effectiveness.

The Nature of Deviance

GUIDING QUESTION *What do sociologists mean by deviance?*

The term **deviance** refers to behavior that departs from societal or group norms. It can range from criminal behavior, such as theft and murder, to antisocial behavior, such as cheating and lying. Because deviance is subjective, or a matter of social definition, it can vary from group to group and from society to society. In fact, our ideas of deviance are relative to time, place, and social position. What is considered deviant in one time and place might be considered normal in another. Furthermore, the harmful behavior of people with high status in society might not be considered deviant in that society.

Thus, deviance is not always easy to identify. In a diverse society like that of the United States, it is often difficult to agree on what is deviant behavior. For instance, in a groundbreaking study, J. L. Simmons polled people on what constitutes deviant behavior:

PRIMARY SOURCE

“The sheer range of responses predictably included homosexuals, prostitutes, drug addicts, radicals, and criminals. But it also included liars, career women, Democrats, reckless drivers, atheists, Christians, suburbanites, the retired, young folks, card players, bearded men, artists, pacifists, priests, prudes, hippies, straights, girls who wear makeup, the President of the United States, conservatives, integrationists, executives, divorcees, perverts, motorcycle gangs, smart-alec students, know-it-all professors, modern people, and Americans.”

—J. L. Simmons, *Deviants*, 1969

To this list, researcher Leslie Lampert would add obese people. For a week, she wore a “fat suit,” adding 150 pounds to her normal body weight, to experience firsthand what it feels like to be an overweight woman in American society. She concluded that American “society not only hates

fat people, it feels entitled to participate in a prejudice that at many levels parallels racism and religious bigotry.”

Deviance may be either *negative* or *positive*. **Negative deviance** involves behavior that fails to meet accepted norms. People expressing negative deviance either reject the norms, misinterpret the norms, or are unaware of the norms. This is the kind of behavior popularly associated with the idea of deviance. There is, however, another type of deviance. **Positive deviance** involves over-conformity to norms, which leads to imbalance and extremes of perfectionism. Positive deviants idealize group norms. In its own way, positive deviance can be as disruptive and hard to manage as negative deviance. Think about the norms related to personal appearance in American society. The mass media are constantly telling young women that they can never be too thin. Negative deviants will miss the mark on the obese side. Positive deviants may push themselves to the point of anorexia. Most young people’s behavior will fall somewhere between these two extremes.

deviance behavior that departs from societal or group norms

negative deviance behavior that underconforms to accepted norms

positive deviance behavior that overconforms to social expectations

Connecting Sociology to Anthropology

MURDER IN CHEYENNE SOCIETY

Historically, the Cheyenne believed that when a member of the group committed murder, everyone in the group suffered the consequences. The punishment for this terrible crime was banishment. The ways in which the Cheyenne dealt with murder illustrate both deviance and social control.

PRIMARY SOURCE

“[The Cheyenne have] specific concepts related to the killing of a fellow tribesman and specific mechanisms for dealing with homicide when it does occur.

The first of these is purely mystical and relates to the major tribal fetish, the Four Sacred Arrows. A murderer becomes personally polluted, and specks of blood contaminate the features of the Arrows. . . .

On the legal level, the ostracism takes the form of immediate exile imposed by the Tribal Council sitting as a judicial body. The sentence of exile is enforced, if need be, by the military societies. The rationalization of the banishment is that the murderer’s stink is noisome to the buffalo. As long as an unatoned murderer is with the tribe, ‘game shuns the territory; it makes the tribe lonesome.’ Therefore, the murderer must leave.

Banishment is not itself enough, however. His act has disrupted the fabric of tribal life. Symbolically, this is expressed in the soiling of the Arrows, the allegorical identity of the tribe itself. As long as the Arrows remain polluted, bad luck is believed to dog the tribe. Not only does the spectre of starvation threaten, but there can be no success in war or any other enterprise. The earth is disjointed and the



Group of three Cheyenne warriors on horseback

tribe out of harmony with it. The Arrow Renewal is the means of righting the situation. The oneness of the tribe is reasserted in the required presence at the ceremony of every family—save those of murderers.”

—from E. Adamson Hoebel, *The Cheyennes: Indians of the Great Plains, 1960*

DBQ CRITICAL THINKING

- 1. Summarizing** What are the two components of the Cheyenne response to a murder described in this excerpt?
- 2. Constructing Arguments** Why do you think the Cheyenne would regard all members as somehow guilty and in need of atonement following a murder?

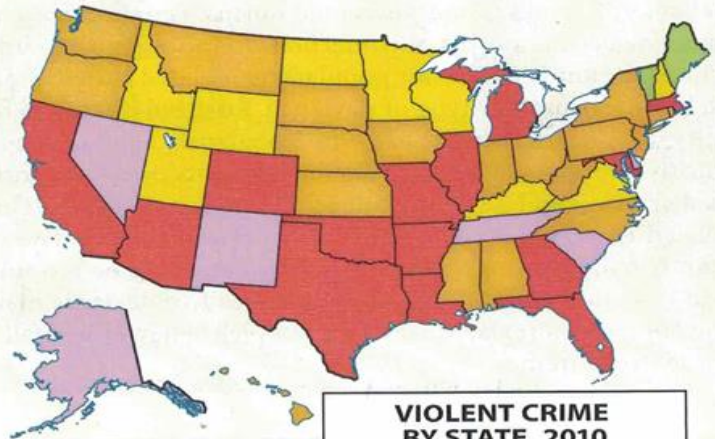
A Diverse America

VIOLENT CRIME

Although it has experienced a sharp and steady decline in recent years, the United States is still a leader among the major industrialized countries in rates of crimes such as murder. Crime rates in the United States differ greatly from state to state. This map indicates the number of violent crimes by state per 100,000 residents.

Geography Connection

- Places and Regions** Which states had the highest crime rates in 2010? Which states had the lowest rates?
- Places and Regions** What was the rate of violent crime in your state in 2010?
- Human Systems** What factors do you think play a role in producing higher or lower rates of violent crime in different states?



VIOLENT CRIME BY STATE, 2010
(per 100,000 population)



* Washington, D.C., is the only location with more than 700 violent crimes per 100,000 inhabitants.

SOURCE: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports, 2010.

violation the act of breaking or discarding

deviant a person who breaks significant societal or group norms

Minor instances of behavior that some might consider deviant occur frequently in modern societies. For that reason, sociologists generally reserve the term *deviance* for **violations** of significant social norms. Significant norms are those that are highly important either to most members of a society or to the members with the most power. For a sociologist, a **deviant** is a person who has acted in violation of one or more of society's most highly valued norms. Reactions to deviants are usually negative and usually involve attempts to change or control the deviant behavior.

READING PROGRESS CHECK

Analyzing Why are ideas about what constitutes deviant behavior not the same everywhere and at all times?

Social Control

GUIDING QUESTION How do internal social control and external social control differ?

stability reliability; resistance to sudden change

social control ways to encourage conformity to society's norms

All societies have ways to promote order, **stability**, and predictability in social life. We feel confident that drivers will stop for red lights, waiters will not pour soup in our laps, and store clerks will give us the correct change. Without **social control**—ways to promote conformity to norms—social life would be unpredictable, even chaotic. Through social control, life has **stability**, which makes us more comfortable. There are two broad types of social control: *internal* and *external*.

Internal Social Control

Internal social control lies within the individual. It is developed during the socialization process. You are practicing internal social control when you do something because you know it is the right thing to do or when you don't do something because you know it would be wrong.

For example, most people most of the time do not steal. They act this way not just because they fear arrest or lack the opportunity to steal but because they consider theft to be wrong. The norm against stealing has become a part of them. This is known as the *internalization* of social norms.

External Social Control

The process of socialization does not ensure that all people will conform all the time, however. For this reason, external social control must also be present. It helps produce stability. External social control is based on **social sanctions**—rewards or punishments designed to encourage desired behavior.

Positive sanctions, such as awards, increases in allowances, promotions, and smiles of approval, are used to encourage conformity. Negative sanctions, such as criticism, fines, and imprisonment, are intended to stop socially unacceptable behavior by punishing violations of norms. Sanctions may be formal or informal. Ridicule, gossip, and smiles are examples of informal sanctions. Imprisonment, low grades, and official awards are formal sanctions.

Social Control and Power

Both internal and external social control, of course, are shaped heavily by those in power in a society. For instance, in a high school, administrators, who generally have more power than other individuals in the school, develop the rules, which are imposed through the use of formal sanctions. Similarly, the students who are seen as “popular,” or having more power, often disproportionately influence the norms for social interaction, which are maintained through the use of informal sanctions.

✓ READING PROGRESS CHECK

Assessing When, in relation to internal social control, does external social control come into play?



“Did you hear? *Everybody's* talking about how you might actually wear that horrible mistake of a shirt today!”

^ CARTOON

THE UNPOPULAR SHIRT

Conformity is encouraged through social sanctions such as ridicule, criticism, encouraging smiles, and positive rewards.

► CRITICAL THINKING

- 1. Assessing** What type of social control is being exerted in the cartoon?
- 2. Drawing Conclusions** Why are sanctions used as part of societal behavior?

social sanctions rewards or punishments that encourage conformity to social norms

LESSON 1 REVIEW

Reviewing Vocabulary

- 1. Specifying** What is the term sociologists use for behavior that violates societal or group norms?
- 2. Identifying** What is the purpose of a *social sanction*?

Using Your Notes

- 3. Summarizing** Use your notes from your graphic organizer to write a statement summarizing why it may sometimes be difficult to identify deviance.

Answering the Guiding Questions

- 4. Identifying** What do sociologists mean by *deviance*?

- 5. Differentiating** How do internal social control and external social control differ?

Writing Activity

- 6. Informative/Explanatory** At some point in growing up, nearly everyone engages in some minor deviant behaviors, such as cutting class or telling a lie. Getting caught in such behaviors often results in attempts at social control. Recall such an instance from your own life. How successful were the social controls at changing your behavior? Be specific about the type of social control used and its effect on you.