

lecture 11:

finish: social control & learning

part III: Methods
government/official statistics and surveys

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social control theory

- background: Hobbes, Durkheim
 - “We are moral beings to the extent that we are social beings”
- assumptions
 - Normative consensus (“central value system”)
 - Lack of controls cause deviance
 - “given that man is an animal...”
 - Little variation in motivation
- concepts – social bond
 - 4 elements: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief

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critique and extensions

- critique
 - subcultures and peers?
 - deviant as “detached drifter”
 - cracks in consensus assumption
 - role of power?
- extensions
 - Gottfredson & Hirschi: self-control
 - Sampson & Laub: age-graded informal social controls
- value
 - empirical support (surveys/minor)

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differential association & learning

- background
- assumptions
 - normative conflict
 - change in human behavior
 - deviance is learned
 - deviance is group behavior
- concepts
 - culture and subculture
 - DA process
 - differential social organization

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extensions and policy

- extensions
 - Ron Akers- differential association /reinforcement theory (e.g., drug use)
- critique
 - tautology
 - differential receptivity
 - origins of definitions
 - testable?
 - deterministic (oversocialized)
- value
 - best for peers and subcultural deviance
 - compatible with later labeling ideas (deviance as conformity to subculture, labeled deviant by others)

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joel best - labeling under attack

- conflict critique
 - study elite deviance, not “nuts, sluts, & perverts”
 - platt’s *child savers*, UK criminologists
- feminist critique
 - women’s victimhood, survivorship
 - rapist vs. labeling image of deviance
- identity politics critique
 - political movements challenge concept of deviance
 - GLBT - “deviant” as pejorative
- mainstream sociology critique
 - labeling ignores initial causes
 - mixed evidence on labeling effects

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how do we know the social facts?

- **3 basic sources**
 - government and official statistics
 - FBI's UCR, EEOC, Census...
 - surveys
 - GSS, MTF, NLSY,
 - qualitative approaches
 - field research, intensive interviews, archival work ...
- **Bias, validity and reliability**

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official statistics

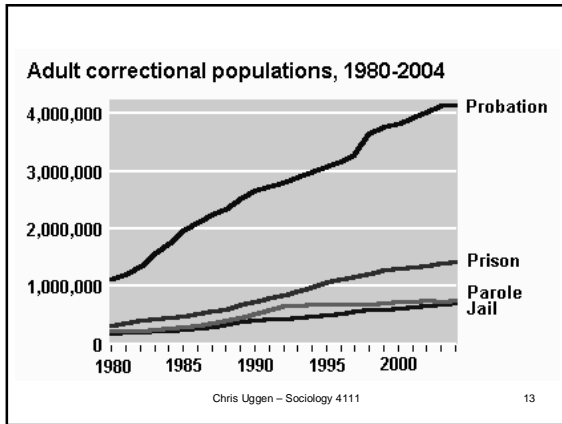
- **Adlers:**
 - cheap/easy (?)
 - often include population/not sample
 - validity and systematic biases
 - "shallow and unreliable"
- **Uggen:**
 - extremely valuable
 - often very reliable
 - changes tell us a lot about deviance

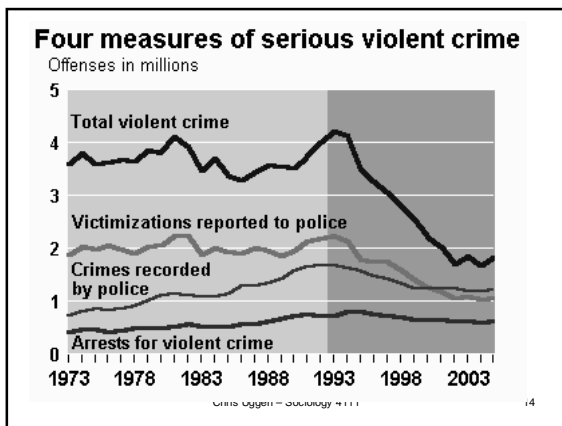
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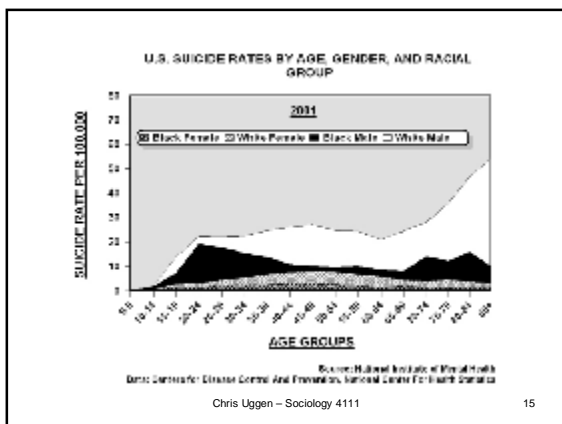
examples

- **EEOC - equal employment opportunity commission**
 - discrimination as deviance
 - changes in who files and why
- **UCR - uniform crime reports**
- **Imprisonment**
- **Suicide (NIMH)**
- **Priest sexual abuse (?)**
- **MN voting and recidivism records**

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child abuse reporting

Douglas Besharov and Lisa Laumann 1996

- “measurement artifact” in reporting trends
 - legal change: professionals (who?) must report physical abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, maltreatment
 - reported cases rose from 150,000 in 1960 to 3,000,000 in 1993
 - but deaths fell from 5,000 to 1,000 per year
- Underreporting (50%?) vs. rising number of unsubstantiated cases (65%)
- 25-50% of child abuse deaths were cases previously known to authorities

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summary

- value of “official data”
 - a “baseline” that must be addressed
 - managing bias
 - magnitude and direction
 - need for social science data series
 - deviance and deviance statistics are both social constructions
 - weak or non-existent for some purposes
- supplementing with independent sources of data

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next - *Methods III*

Participant Observation, Interviews and other Qualitative Approaches

- *Adler, Researching Dealers and Smugglers pp. 118-133*
- *Miller, Young Women in Gangs pp. 361-74*
- *Best, Labeling’s Legacy pp 53-70*

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