**Godalming College**

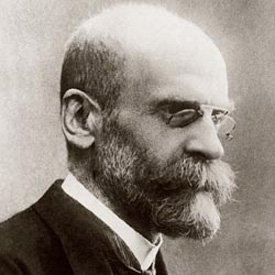
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**Sociology Department**

FUNCTIONALIST THEORIES OF DEVIANCE

[](http://www.google.co.uk/url?sa=i&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=images&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwi70c2Wh_fTAhWJAsAKHU4nDuIQjRwIBw&url=http://jewishcurrents.org/november-15-emile-durkheim/&psig=AFQjCNEIjvwXb-g3S3v7s_0kit4CwK8lPA&ust=1495114899814547)

**WORKBOOK 2**

Crime and Deviance

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Name: | Set: | Group: |

### Deviance: Functionalist Explanations

The Aim of this Unit:

**To introduce you to the contributions of writers working within or around the functionalist perspective in the analysis of Crime and Deviance.**

The Objectives of this Unit are:

* **To provide you with an outline and evaluation of the contribution of Emile Durkheim in studying deviance in general**
* **To allow an appreciation of both positive and negative functions of crime and deviance**
* **To look at the development of functionalist ideas within strain theory, e.g. the work of Robert K Merton**
* **To introduce functionalist subcultural strain theory, e.g., Cohen, Cloward and Ohlin, Miller and see how it relates to classic functionalism**
* **To review the development of an alternative “functionalist” theory (Hirshi’s social bonds theory) and links to the New Right**
* **To provide some framework for initial analysis and evaluation of this work**

*At times, a package deal is presented in which functionalist, positivism, empiricism, evolutionism, and determinism are collectively linked with a ‘consensus’ approach to social problems and a conservative approach to their solution*

*Being a peripheral and* ad hoc *modern day theory, functionalist criminology may be represented as a somewhat piecemeal accumulation of arguments. It is not integrated, organised or coherent, and it has not been the subject of long debate. Others may have criticised what it has done, but those who have been attacked have not usually turned round to amend, defend or clarify their work.*

**Downes and Rock, Understanding Deviance.**

**Introduction:**

Sociologists’ concern with the study of deviance, like many other ideas, issues and concepts, can be traced back to the thinking of **Emile Durkheim**. But is the **functionalist analysis still of value to sociologists?**

Looking at the quote, in other words much Functionalist theory has been **found wanting** in its explanation of society in recent years. It has become a ‘*routine concept folly for students to demolish before moving on towards more rewarding ground’***.**

# The Use of Functionalism

Despite this trend towards “*Functionalism bashing”*, its role in history of sociological debate is firmly secured. Equally its linkage with modern **liberal and conservative**-based approaches such as Neo-Functionalism and the New Right means that its history and heritage is still of relevance to the contemporary sociology syllabus.

# Issues with Functionalism

Unlike other major theoretical perspectives such as Marxism, **no specific structural-functionalist criminology exists *per se*,** with its own individual interpretations of criminal statistics, the source of criminality and potential policy solutions.

Functionalism takes a passing look at the issues of deviance in general, rather than crime in particular, while in the process **trying to explain whole social problems and patterns**. The explanation of deviance is essential to this macro-sociological analysis but it does not ‘break off’ into the distinctive field of criminology in its own right.

# Why it has not been ignored…

Whilst functionalist approaches to crime and deviance, especially in modern times, do not have a large, organised or particularly popular voice, this is not to say that within the work of **Durkheim** the concept of deviance has been ignored. This is also not to say that functionalist analyses have not informed and shaped non-functionalist or anti-functionalist perspectives in criminology since the idea of **anomie** had a great influence on many British and USA sub-cultural studies from the 1920’s to the 1950’s.

**Basic Ideas**

* Deviance is functional – within limits!
* Deviance acts in a positive way to reinforce ideas of right and wrong in society
* Deviance provides work.

**Rather** than looking at the **individual**, a structural-functionalist analysis of deviance begins with **society** as a whole. It looks for the **source of deviance** in the nature of society rather than the biological explanations or psychological nature of the individual.

**Emile Durkheim**

Durkheim’s own work is not representative of all functionalism, and equally functionalists have not necessarily used or recognised all that Durkheim wrote. But Durkheim does provide a foundation for later theory and the development of key concepts, most notably that of anomie.

# Why Durkheim is Concerned with Deviance

Durkheim’s major concern was with the **analysis of social order**; how **stability is created** and **how the collective will is maintained** in the face of **individualism**. These concerns were hardly surprising given the specific socio-cultural context within which Durkheim worked (at the ned of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century in France. Thus, Durkheim’s work was an attempt to engage with the problems of the era (industrialisation, the end of traditional communities, social dislocation and accelerating change) so solutions could be found.

**Basic Ideas….**

**Durkheim** believes that societies are held together by **shared values**, and **economic interdependence**. There is always, according to Durkheim, the possibility of social collapse if values are **not constantly reaffirmed** and passed from one generation to another. Therefore, the **maintenance of values** is a crucial **‘functional prerequisite’** of society.

However, people are individuals - they are naturally self-seeking and prefer to look after their own interests at the expense of others. What stops social dissolution is the **law** and **primary socialisation** from the family. Institutions such as religion or the education system foster an idea of **collective conscience**. The law is less powerful than the power of this belief in collectivism, which helps, instil the pervasive ‘self control’ that we all learn.

However, in periods of great social strain or dramatic change, the power of the collective conscience is weakened. When Durkheim was writing, there was great fear that community life had been shattered by the growth of major cities and industrialisation. As communities collapsed under the weight of dramatic change brought about by these processes, so the collective conscience was weakened.

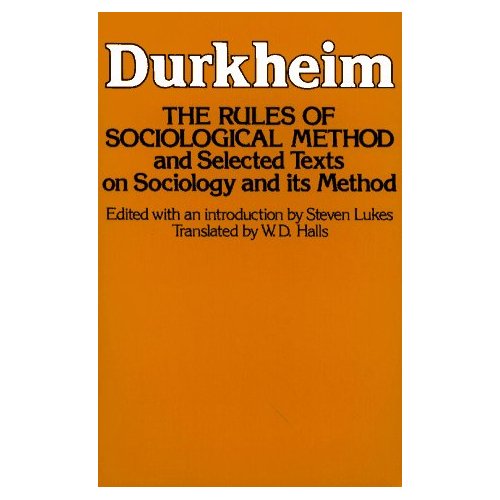
**Anomie**

The result of this process, according to Durkheim, was the development **anomie**. In essence, this means that people **regard the social expectations** to respect the rights and the needs of others **as unimportant** and prefer to look after their own interests even at their neighbour’s expense. They return to a more ‘natural’ state of greed and self-interest. For society his heralds the long term collapse of order and harmony. **Anomie, then, is dangerous and harmful to all**.

## Defences against Anomie

## There are a number of ways in which societies reaffirm their values and ensure continuing social cohesion. The most obvious ways include....

* **Education**: the teaching of a common language, history, social studies etc.
* **Religion**: through the process of collective worship of a common God that in some sense symbolises the community.

***The Rules of Sociological Method***

It seems strange to argue that **deviance is a necessary part** of **all societies**, and that it performs positive functions for the social system. Deviance breaks the norms and challenges the values of society; it can therefore pose a threat to social order, and therefore to society. All functionalists agree those social control mechanisms such as the police and the courts

MCj02818280000[1]However, Durkheim developed this argument with his discussion of crime in ***The Rules of Sociological Method***. He argued that crime is an **inevitable** and **normal aspect of social life**. *A limited amount of crime* is **necessary** and **beneficial to society**, so much so that society could not exist without **some form of deviance**. It is **inevitable** because **not every member of society** can be **equally committed** to the **collective sentiments** (the shared values and moral beliefs of society). Since individuals are exposed to different influences and circumstances, and it is ‘impossible for all to be alike’, therefore, not everyone is equally reluctant to break the law.

Durkheim imagines a ‘**society of saints’** populated by perfect individuals. In such a society there might be no murder or robbery, but there would still be deviance. The general standards of behaviour would be **so high** that the slightest slip would be regarded as a **serious offence**. Thus the individual who simply showed bad taste, or was merely impolite, would attract strong disapproval.

## Functions and Dysfunction of Crime

According to Durkheim, there are two crucial elements in understanding crime, which at first sight appear to be slightly contradictory. A **limited** amount of crime is functional and beneficial to society, so much so that society could not exist without some form of deviance. On the other hand, **too much** crime is dysfunctional for society and can hasten its collapse.

Thus Durkheim is suggesting that crime is inevitable **and** only becomes **dysfunctional** when its **rate** is unusually **high or low**. He argues that all social change begins with some form of deviance. In order for changes to occur, yesterday’s deviance must become today’s normality. Since a certain amount of change is healthy for society, so is deviance. If the collective sentiments are too strong there will be little deviance, but neither will there be any change, or any progress. The collective sentiments must have, therefore, only ‘moderate energy’ so they do not crush individuality; both the originality of the criminal, and the originality of the genius.

To make progress individual originality must be able to express itself. In order that the originality of the idealist who dreams transcend this century may find expression it is necessary that the originality of the criminal, who is below the level of his time, shall also be possible. One does not occur without the other.

Thus the collective sentiments must be too powerful to block expression of people like Jesus, Martin Luther King, and Mother Teresa.

Durkheim regarded some crime as ‘***an anticipation of the morality of the future’***. In this way, terrorists or freedom fighters may represent the future established order.

Evaluating Durkheim

* Durkheim’s writing represented a major breakthrough in the understanding of deviance. Most late 19th Century writers on crime were trying to find out what was wrong with criminals and deviants. Durkheim argued that crime and deviance are not created by a small number of sick individuals, nor is it in any way unnatural, rather they are an integral part of society which performs an absolutely crucial function.

**Problems**

* He does not explain why certain people are more likely to commit crimes than others. He appears not concerned with this problem, he was most interested in the nature of the relationship between deviance and order in society. However, if questioned on individual motivations of criminals, he would probably have invoked their lack of socialisation.
* He stresses harmony of society and the belief that the law reflects the interests and views of the majority of the population. He seems to ignore the concept of power. It is generally accepted that in all societies some groups have greater ability than the bulk of the population to influence the law making process.

Other important writers who take a Functionalist perspective include, **Merton**, who further developed **Strain Theory**, and **Hirshi**.

## STUDENT ACTIVITY 1

Are the following sentences strengths or weaknesses of Durkheim’s work? Add the perspective from which the criticism/positive evaluation is likely to come.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| STATEMENT | POSITIVE OR NEGATIVE? | PERSPECTIVE? |
| 1. Durkheim suggests that there is a purpose to the existence of all social phenomena, the necessary purpose of deviance being to bond the social group. This is difficult to imagine because it treats society as a living thing, an object which forces individuals to follow, like sheep or robots, the wider social pattern |  |  |
| 1. His influence on sociology has been immense and even those who disagree with him have generally fallen into dialogue with his views. |  |  |
| 1. He does not explain why certain people are more likely to commit crimes than others. |  |  |
| 1. It is difficult to test the theory of crime. It seems to be a ‘have your cake and eat it theory’, where crime may invalidate the functionalist claims of social stability, but it seen to ‘really’ function to create such stability by showing people how not to behave. Thus functionalists are able to ‘prove’ stability in life, even where conflict is shown to exist |  |  |
| 1. He seems to ignore the concept of power. It is generally accepted that in all societies some groups have greater ability than the bulk of the population to influence the law making process. |  |  |
| 1. Functionalism fails to provide an answer to the question ‘Functional for whom?’. |  |  |
| 1. Durkheim’s work was perhaps the first to analyse deviance in terms of a broad sociological theory. |  |  |

## STUDENT ACTIVITY 2

**Complete the following sentences by picking the correct words jumbled up below.**

1. Deviance in all societies is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ However, Durkheim stressed that although certain types of deviance may occur normally in a given society, levels can reach abnormal proportions.
2. Durkheim also believed that occasionally deviant behaviour can be functional by contributing to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. He used the concept of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to explain how societies undergoing rapid social change can experience confusion over right and wrong behaviour. This sort of analysis can be applied to modern affluent societies undergoing rapid change where there is a confusion over common values. The successful businessperson might be admired until it is discovered that his/her dealings are fraudulent. How do we react to this? Does success in business excuse fraudulent behaviour as a legitimate means or end? Or do we see all fraud as wrong and worthy of punishment?
4. Durkheim argued that deviance can be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to society providing it does not reach excessive proportions.
5. Deviance contributes to the ‘normal evolution of law and morality by stimulating social \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and thus causing normally acceptable behaviour to be affirmed.
6. Moreover, for Durkheim a small amount of deviance can have a reinforcing function in bonding society together against a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
7. For Durkheim crime is behaviour that contradicts the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the group.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| universal | Morality and Law | Uncommon enemy |
| unilateral | Collective sentiments. | Atomic |
| Disapproval | Anomie | Dysfunctional |
| Common enemy | Functional | Approval |

**Functionalist Strain Theory Merton**

Read the extract from Browne pp.451

**STUDENT ACTIVITY 3**

Fill in the gaps with the most appropriate word or phrase.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ritualism** | **legitimate means** | **equal means** | **innovation** |
| **rebellion** | **sudden social change** | **retreatism** | **innovate** |
| **conformity** | **social structure** | **conformists** | **goals** |



**Robert K. Merton : Anomie theory**

Robert K. Merton, an American sociologist, borrowed Durkheim's concept of anomie to form his own theory, called Strain Theory. It differs somewhat from Durkheim's in that Merton argued that the real problem is not created by a\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ as Durkheim proposed, but rather by a social structure that holds out the same\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to all its members without giving them\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to achieve them. It is this lack of integration between what the culture calls for and what the structure permits that causes deviant behaviour. Deviance then is a symptom of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Merton borrowed Durkheim's notion of **anomie** to describe the breakdown of the normative system.

Merton's theory does not focus exclusively upon crime, but rather upon various acts of deviance, which may be understood to lead to criminal behaviour. Merton notes that there are certain goals which are strongly emphasised by society. Society emphasises certain means to reach those goals (such as education, hard work, etc.,) However, not everyone has the equal access to the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_to attain those goals. The stage then is set for anomie.

Merton presents five modes of adapting to strain caused by the restricted access to socially approved goals and means. He did not mean that everyone who was denied access to society's goals became deviant. Rather the response, or modes of adaptation, depend on the individual's attitudes toward cultural goals and the institutional means to attain them.

1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_is the most common mode of adaptation. Individuals accept both the goals as well as the prescribed means for achieving those goals. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_will accept, though not always achieve, the goals of society and the means approved for achieving them.
2. Individuals who adapt through\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ accept societal goals but have few legitimate means to achieve those goals, thus they \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (design) their own means to get ahead. The means to get ahead may be through robbery, embezzlement or other such criminal acts.
3. In, the third adaptation\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ individuals abandon the goals they once believed to be within their reach and dedicate themselves to their current lifestyle. They play by the rules and have a daily safe routine
4. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is the adaptation of those who give up not only the goals but also the means. They often retreat into the world of alcoholism and drug addiction. They escape into a non-productive, non-striving lifestyle.
5. The final adaptation, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ , occurs when the cultural goals and the legitimate means are rejected. Individuals create their own goals and their own means, by protest or revolutionary activity.

###### **Fill in the gaps in this summary table using Browne p.451**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Adaptation** | **Example** | **Means** | **Goals** |
| Rebel |  |  |  |
| **Ritualist** |  |  |  |
| **Innovator** |  |  |  |
| **Conformist** |  |  |  |
| **Retreatist** |  |  |  |

How might each of the following be classified in Merton’s typology

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Type** | **Classification** |
| Successful banker |  |
| Drug-dealer |  |
| Monk living in a monastery |  |
| Exam cheat |  |
| Shoplifter |  |
| Drug addict |  |
| Indifferent job centre clerk |  |

**Problems with Merton’s Strain Theory**

Note the points from Browne, p.452

|  |
| --- |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |

Because of these criticisms, functionalist theory has responded with two specific approaches:

1. **Subcultural theories**
2. **Social Bonds Theory**

The first of these has concentrated on **group** responses to society, creating deviant groups, the second on the problem of why people choose **not** to be deviant.

**FUNCTIONALIST SUBCULTURAL STRAIN THEORIES**

**Using pp 452 Browne, outline briefly the work of the following theorists.**

**What are subcultural strain theories?**

**A K Cohen: Status Frustration** p 452-453 Browne

Outline what Cohen means by the following two key terms:

1. **Status frustration** –
2. **Alternative status hierarchy** –

In what ways does Albert Cohen agree with Merton?

In what way does he disagree with Merton?

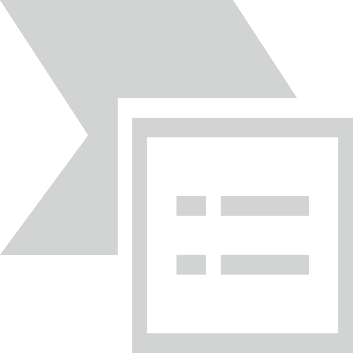
1.

2.

Evaluation of Cohen’s theory:

**Cloward & Ohlin : Differential Opportunity Theory (An Internal Critique of Merton)** p.453 Browne

Using the material on p453 to help you, complete the following using the most appropriate word or phrase:

[](http://http/t1.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:gZTh-mMl4rHg-M:http://www.columbia.edu/cu/news/01/08/images/richardCloward.jpg)In 1959, Richard Cloward noted that Merton's anomie theory specified only one structure of opportunity. He, however, argued for two and not one. He thus proposed that there are also \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ within the structure, in addition to legitimate ones. In 1960 he and Lloyd Ohlin worked together and proposed a theory of delinquent gangs known as Differential Opportunity Theory. This theory, like Cohen's theory, combines the strain, differential association as well as the social disorganization perspectives.

Delinquent subcultures, according to Cloward and Ohlin, flourish in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_and take particular forms so that the means for\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are no more equally distributed than the means for\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

They argued that the types of criminal subcultures that flourish depend on the area in which they develop. They propose three types of delinquent gangs.

1. The first, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ emerge in areas where conventional as well as non conventional values of behavior are integrated by a close connection of illegitimate and legitimate businesses. This type of gang is stable than the ones to follow. Older criminals serve as role models and they teach necessary criminal skills to the youngsters.
2. The second type, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is non stable and non integrated, where there is an absence of criminal organization resulting in instability. This gang aims to find a reputation for toughness and destructive violence.
3. The third and final type, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ is equally unsuccessful in legitimate as well as illegitimate means. They are known as double failures, thus retreating into a world of\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Cloward and Ohlin further state that the varying form of delinquent subcultures depended upon the degree of integration that was present in the community

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **illegitimate success** | **the conflict or violent gang/subculture** | **the lower-classes** | **the criminal gang/subculture** |
| **legitimate success** | **illegitimate avenues** | **the retreatist gang/subculture** | **sex, drugs, and alcohol** |

**Evaluation of Cloward and Ohlin**

Using page 453, explain the following evaluation points in your own words:

***+ Cloward and Ohlin, unlike Merton, demonstrate a variety of different group responses***

***- Cloward and Ohlin tend to exaggerate differences between subcultures***

**Walter B Miller p.453**

**How does Miller’s work significantly differ from other functionalist subcultural theory?**

**Hirschi and Control Theory**

This approach (sometimes called attachment theory or social bonds theory) begins from a different point of view. Instead of taking for granted the idea that we all tend to live within a single value consensus and therefore need only to explain why some drift from that consensus, it asks rather what forces bind communities and therefore what reasons individuals and groups might have for not engaging in deviant behaviour. Hirschi argues that criminal activity occurs when the individual attachment to society is weakened, and he identifies four key social bonds:

1. **Belief**: Refers to a person’s conviction that they should obey the rules of society.
2. **Attachment**: Concerns the extent to which we care about other people’s opinions and wishes. For example, psychopaths far characterised by lack of concern for the welfare or views of other people.
3. **Commitment**: Refers to the personal investments that each of us makes in our lives. The person with less to lose is the one more likely to turn to crime.
4. **Involvement**: Describes a person’s level of activity or business interests. A person who is extremely busy with a wide range of legitimate activities may be too preoccupied to engage in deviancy.

Hirschi’s work has proved especially influential on the New Right.**What’s wrong with Functionalism?**

Explain the following general criticisms of classical functionalist theory on deviance using p.454

1. It assumes value consensus
2. It stigmatises the working-class
3. It regards official statistics as valid and reliable
4. It overestimates the prevalence of delinquency
5. It sees delinquents as uniquely different

**Activity: Use this framework as a summary of the contribution made by Functionalism - use this booklet, textbooks, class discussion and your notes. You are welcome to write this in another format if you wish e.g. mindmap, flashcards**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Issue** |  |
| **FUNCTIONALISM** | |
| **How does FUNCTIONALISM define deviance** |  |
| **Outline Durkheim’s view of crime and deviance** |  |
| **What are the problems with his approach?** |  |
| **STRAIN THEORY** | |
| **What does Robert Merton believe is the cause of crime and deviance?** |  |
| **How is Merton different to Durkheim?** |  |
| **What are the problems with his approach?** |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SUBCULTURAL STRAIN THEORIES** | |
| **What are subcultural strain theories, how do they differ to traditional functionalist and strain approaches?** |  |
| **Albert Cohen** |  |
| **Cloward and Ohlin** |  |
| **Miller** |  |
| **Problems with subcultural strain theories** |  |
| **General Evaluation Points of Functionalist based explanations** | |
| 1 |  |
| 2 |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 3 |  |
| 4 |  |
| 5 |  |
| **Key Concepts associated with functionalist based theories** |  |
| 1 |  |
| 2 |  |
| 3 |  |
| 4 |  |
| **Perspective Evaluation** |  |
| Marxists |  |
| Feminism |  |
| New Right |  |
| Social Policy Implications |  |

SYNOPTIC LINKS WITH AREAS OF SOCIOLOGY YOU HAVE ALREADY STUDIED

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Issue** | **Links up to** | **Supporting study / Theory** |
| **Education** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Family** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Methods** |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Other** |  |  |
|  |  |  |

**50:50 Extension Tasks**

To help reinforce your learning and understanding in A-Level Sociology it is important to go beyond the set homework. Knowledge only stays in our heads if it is regularly reinforced and built upon. These tasks will help you do so. It is up to you what you do as people learn in different ways but it is important that you spend the same time on your work as you do in lessons, so 50:50

Tasks:

* Practice short questions from the end of the booklet and from throughout the textbooks.
* Plan and write an essay (you can replace ‘strain theories’ with functionalism or subcultural theories).
* Undertake additional reading to reinforce your understanding and develop your notes:

Haralambos and Holborn, ‘Sociology Themes and Perspectives’, 8th edition, pp.347-352

Webb, ‘AQA A Level Sociology, Book Two’, pp.71-76

* Create a quizlet or Kahoot for the different theories https://quizlet.com/en-gb <https://kahoot.com/>
* Write the key concepts (which can be found in the booklet) as flashcards or as a quizlet.

**Exam practice**

* Outline two reasons why functionalists see crime as inevitable [4]
* Outline three reasons why some crime and deviance may be necessary and beneficial for the well-being of society [6]

Item A: Many people see deviance as being dysfunctional and negative for society because it represents the potential for social breakdown. However, some sociologists suggest that deviance might actually be functional for society and act as a warning. For example, imprisonment, fines, and so on are not simply there to punish offenders; they convey other messages as well. Society’s values are also not fixed and new ideas sometimes emerge to challenge existing values.

**Applying material from item A, analyse two functions of deviance [10]**

Item B: Strain theories focus on the ways in which people may resort to crime of deviance when they are unable to achieve socially approved goals by legitimate means. For example, Merton argues American culture emphasises achieving success, but an unequal structure limits some individuals’ opportunity to do so legitimately. This may induce frustration in the individuals concerned. Some strain theorists see the response to this situation as a group reaction, in which individuals create or join deviant subcultures.

**Applying material from Item B and your knowledge, evaluate the contribution of strain theories to our understanding of crime and deviance [30 marks]**

**Planning the 30 mark question:**

*Proposed essay structure*

**Introduction:**

* ‘As the Item states...’
* Outline the debate – view in the question VS opposing view.

**Main Body:**

* 3 paragraphs on the view in the question (including AO2 & AO3 )
* 2 paragraph on opposing view
* 1 paragraph on other possible views/ arguments.

[However, if you want to evaluate within the paragraphs as you go that is fine]

**Conclusion:**

* Discuss main strengths and weaknesses of the arguments, say something new

**Suggestion to help plan:** Consider the different strain theories, focusing most of your attention on Merton’s strain theory and subcultural strain theories of A K Cohen and Cloward and Ohlin, but mention recent strain theories too.

Para 1: Examine Merton’s idea of the ‘strain to anomie’ and his typology of adaptations to strain- give examples. Link to how he is different to Durkheim.

Para 2: Use Merton’s focus on the individual and utilitarian adaptations to lead into subcultural strain theories, explaining how they criticise and build on his ideas (Cohen). Evaluate Cohen.

Para 3: Do this again with Cloward and Ohlin. Evaluate Cloward and Ohlin.

Para 4: Evaluate using Miller and Hirschi – use issues such as determinism, neglect of power, and who makes the law, and reliance on official statistics.

Para 5: If possible (although we haven’t covered it yet) consider other theory’s views e.g. Marxists- you could do some additional reading.

Conclusion: are strain theories useful to understand crime and deviance.