

GCSE SOCIOLOGY – CRIME KEY STUDIES

| NAME(S) | PERSPECTIVE | RESEARCH METHOD | KEY FINDINGS |
|--|----------------|--|--|
| 1 Merton's (1938) strain theory | Functionalist | Work of other sociologists | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People's aspirations and goals are shaped by their culture eg American Dream = economic success • Some people experience a strain between the goals of society and the means of achieving them. This may lead to anomie (normlessness) • They may seek out an illegitimate route to economic success eg crime |
| 2 Becker's (1963) interactionist perspective | Interactionist | Work of other sociologists | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argues deviance is created by society • Powerful social groups create deviance by making the rules and applying these to others • People can develop deviant careers if labelled as deviant • The deviant label can become a master status (main identity) • Labelling can lead to the self-fulfilling prophecy |
| 3 Heidensohn's (1985) control theory | Feminist | Data from her study of delinquent girls; secondary sources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women commit less crime because they are more closely controlled in society • In a patriarchal society, women have stronger social control placed on them which can reduce opportunities for crime • At home, women are controlled by domestic responsibilities, at work by fear of damaging reputation and in public by fear of male violence |
| 4 Carlen's (1988) class and gender deal | Feminist | Unstructured interviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carlen explains why working-class women commit crime • She argues they are promised two rewards for conforming- 'class deal' (money and material items from working hard) and 'gender deal' (happy domestic life with husband and children) • She found WC women committed crime when these rewards were blocked due to: poverty, living in care, drug addiction. • They had nothing to lose and everything to gain |
| 5 Cohen's (1955) subcultural theory | Functionalist | Work of other sociologists | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argues delinquency is carried out by groups not individuals, and that groups often commit non-utilitarian (not motivated by money) crimes • Working class boys experience status frustration at not succeeding in middle class school • They join/ form a delinquent subculture with an alternative status hierarchy where they will gain status for deviance |