

Crime: Big Ideas

Crime

- Crime affects everyone in the United States
 - victims, criminals, bystanders.
- There are many different types of crimes, but five general categories:
 - 1. violent crime, 2. property crime, 3. victimless crime, 4. white-collar crime, 5. organized crime.
- Crime statistics are gathered and reported by two main sources:
 - *Uniform Crime Reports*, National Crime Victimization Survey.
- The criminal-justice system is made of:
 - police, the courts, corrections (deals with crimes that have been committed and reported)
- The U.S. criminal-justice system investigates, prosecutes, and punishes criminals

Vocabulary 😊


- Crime
- White-collar crime
- Crime syndicate
- Criminal-justice system
- Police discretion
- Racial profiling
- Plea bargaining
- Corrections
- Recidivism

Crime

Objectives 11-1-10

Content:

SWBAT

1. Define “crime” and explain who commits crime
 2. List the principal crimes in the U.S. and provide examples of each
 3. Explain how crime statistics are gathered and reported
 4. Explain the characteristics of the criminal-justice system
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Language:

By

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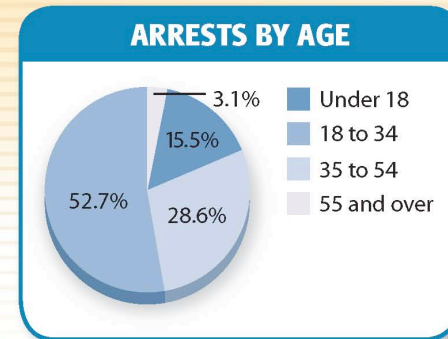
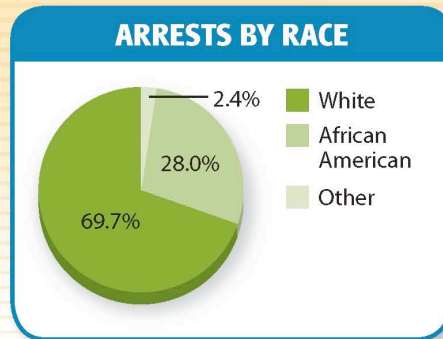
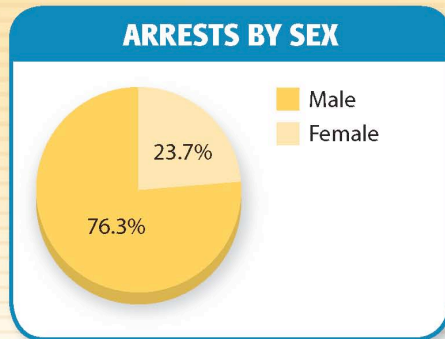
**How does the definition
of crime change with
time and circumstance?**

Crime and Criminals

- A **crime** is any act that is labeled “criminal” by those in authority and is prohibited by law.
- An act that is *immoral* is not necessarily *illegal*.
 - Ex: swimmer watches friend drown
- Criminals can be any age, gender, or race, although people under 35 are more likely to be involved in crime.

Statistically Speaking...

Arrests in the United States All types of people commit crimes. However, certain trends have developed in the characteristics of people who are arrested.



Skills Focus **INTERPRETING GRAPHS** What percentage of arrests involve people age 34 and younger? Why do you think this group accounts for the majority of arrests?

Note: Because of rounding, percentages may not add up to 100.0.
Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States*, 2006

Check for Understanding

What criteria are used to determine if an act is criminal?

Answer: *the act is labeled a crime by those in authority and is prohibited by law*

Types of Crime

Violent Crime

- Murder, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault
 - Make up small percentage of total crime rates, but still alarming
 - One every 22 seconds in the United States
- Most victims are African Americans
- Majority of murders committed with guns

Property Crime

- Burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson
- One every three seconds in the United States
 - People under 25 commit most crimes
- Many crimes committed by those on drugs

Victimless Crime

- Prostitution, illegal gambling, illegal drug use, and vagrancy
- Although classified as “victimless,” often have negative consequences for society

White-Collar Crime

- **White-collar crimes** include fraud, tax evasion, embezzlement, price-fixing, toxic pollution, insider trading, and political corruption
- Corporations can be charged with crimes, not just individuals

Organized Crime

- **Crime syndicate:** a large-scale organization of professional criminals that controls some vice or legitimate business through violence
- Legitimate businesses can serve as “fronts” for illegal activities

Reading Check

Analyze

Pick one type of crime and analyze its cost to society.

Answer: *Possible answer—victimless crime (prostitution): increased spread of contagious diseases such as STDs, increased health care costs due to sexually transmitted diseases, drug use, and violence on the streets.*

FBI CLASSIFICATIONS OF CRIME



The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) classifies crime into 29 categories. The eight Part I offenses, also called index crimes, are more serious than the Part II offenses. This dividing line varies somewhat from state to state.

PART I OFFENSES (More Serious)

- 1. Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter** willful killing of one human being by another
- 2. Forcible Rape** sexual violation of a person by force and against the person's will
- 3. Robbery** use of the threat of force to take anything of value from a person
- 4. Aggravated Assault** unlawful attack on another person for the purpose of causing great bodily injury
- 5. Burglary (breaking and entering)** attempted or actual unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or theft
- 6. Larceny (theft, except auto)** unlawful taking of property without using force or fraud, such as pocket picking
- 7. Motor Vehicle Theft** unlawful stealing or driving away and abandoning of a motor vehicle
- 8. Arson** attempted or willful burning

PART II OFFENSES (Less Serious)

- 9. Other Assaults** attacks of a less-serious nature than aggravated assault
- 10. Forgery and Counterfeiting** attempting to or making or possessing anything false that seems true to deceive
- 11. Fraud** use of false pretenses to obtain money or property
- 12. Embezzlement** misappropriation or misuse of money or property entrusted to an individual's care or custody
- 13. Stolen Property** attempting to or buying, receiving, or possessing stolen property
- 14. Vandalism** willful or vicious destruction, injury, disfigurement, or defacement of property
- 15. Weapons** all violations of regulations related to manufacturing, carrying, possessing, or using firearms
- 16. Prostitution and Commercialized Vice** sex offenses of a commercialized nature
- 17. Sex Offenses** attempts at or consensual sex with someone underage or offenses against common decency
- 18. Drug Abuse Violations** unlawful possession, sale, or use of narcotics
- 19. Gambling** promoting, permitting, or engaging in illegal gambling
- 20. Offenses Against Family and Children** nonsupport, neglect, desertion, or abuse of family and children
- 21. Driving Under the Influence** driving or operating any motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- 22. Liquor Laws** violations of state or local liquor laws
- 23. Drunkenness** intoxication
- 24. Disorderly Conduct** breach of the peace
- 25. Vagrancy** includes vagabondage, begging, and loitering
- 26. Suspicion** arrests for no specific offense, followed by release without placing charges
- 27. Curfew and Loitering Laws (juveniles)** violations of local curfew and loitering laws, where such laws exist
- 28. Runaways (juveniles)** limited to juveniles taken into custody under local statutes as runaways
- 29. All Other Offenses** all violations of state and local laws except traffic laws and those listed here

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation

Crime Statistics

- **The Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) is published annually by the FBI.**
 - Uses data from local police departments
 - **Factors that limit reporting of crimes:**
 - Not all complaints make it into a formal report.
 - Less likely to report own friend or family member.
 - Police more likely report when crime is against high-profile person
 - Victims less likely to report some forms of crime
- **The National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) is published by the Bureau of Justice Statistics.**
 - Uses data from crime victims about reported and unreported crimes
 - Relies on interviews with representative sample (~50,000 people)

TECHNOLOGY FOCUS

Futuristic Crime Fighting

Police departments and security agencies in the United States are already using technology to detect and prevent crime. For example, millions of video cameras monitor our activities in public spaces. Researchers are already working on improving the capabilities of video surveillance. One recently developed software uses a complex equation to analyze streaming video and detect suspicious activities. The software's ability to flag activity that may be criminal addresses the difficulty of monitoring several screens of video footage at the same time.

As technology advances, however, the potential applications seem to stray into the realm of science fiction. What if authorities could see beyond what is visible to a video camera and read someone's mind? Government and university researchers are working



on technology that would allow them to remotely detect brain activity. And scientists have already made progress toward decoding what they might find there. In a 2007 study, neuroscientists were able to look at brain scans and determine whether an individual given two numbers intended to add or subtract them. It was the first time scientists were able to determine intentions. As the technology continues to progress, some believe that police may one day be able to apply it to detect thoughts of criminal behavior.

Thinking Critically

Make Generalizations What are some of the ethical implications of these technologies and their application as crime-prevention tools?

Reading Check

Summarize

What circumstances may limit the filing of formal crime reports?



Answer: *Individuals are less likely to report a crime if family or friends are involved. The police are more likely to file a formal report if the victim is in a higher social class.*

The Criminal-Justice System

Police

- Control over who is arrested
- **Police discretion:** the ability to decide who is actually arrested
- **Racial profiling:** the practice of assuming that nonwhite Americans are more likely to commit crimes

Courts

- Hold trials to determine guilt or innocence
- If guilty, assign punishments
- **Plea bargaining:** the process of legal negotiation that allows a guilty plea in return for a lighter sentence

Corrections

- **Corrections:** Imprisonment, parole, probation, community service
- Functions: retribution, deterrence, rehabilitation, social protection
- **Recidivism:** repeated criminal behavior

Juvenile-Justice System

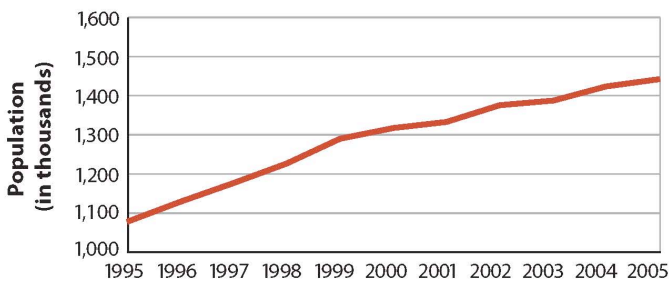
- Young offenders cannot be expected to be as responsible as adults
- New laws ensure juveniles receive fair treatment
- Some places treat young as adults

Click on the image below to play the Interactive.

Statistically Speaking...

The American Prison System Despite having less than 5 percent of the world's population, the United States has almost 25 percent of the world's prisoners. Compared to other industrialized nations, the United States has a high rate of violent crime. Also, people convicted of nonviolent crimes in the United States are more likely to be sentenced to prison than those convicted in other countries. In addition, American prison sentences tend to be longer, which drives up the incarceration rate. This rate varies by state due to several factors, such as the crime rate, the effectiveness of law enforcement, and variations in state laws.

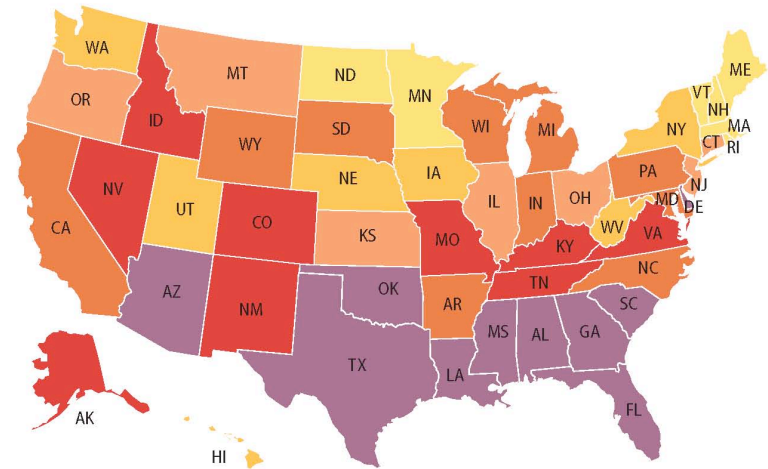
UNITED STATES PRISON POPULATION



Source: Bureau of U.S. Justice Statistics

INTERACTIVE

INCARCERATION RATES, 2005



Inmates per 100,000 population

- 399 and under
- 400 to 499
- 500 to 599
- 600 to 699
- 700 to 799
- 800 and over

Thinking Critically **INTERPRETING GRAPHS** About how much did the prison population increase between 1995 and 2005?

Interactive Feature



thinkcentral.com

Reading Check

Summarize

What role does each component of the criminal-justice system serve?

Answer: *police—decide whether to arrest those who commit a crime; courts—determine the guilt or innocence of the accused and assign a punishment; corrections—carry out the punishment*

Sociology in Today's World

Identity Theft

Identity theft occurs when a criminal uses another person's name and financial standing to buy items or complete financial transactions. Victims of identity theft often lose their financial standings because of the crime.

- Identity thieves may rent an apartment, get medical services, make large purchases, or use another's name while being arrested.
- Federal Trade Commission estimates there are more than 9 million cases a year.
- Methods of theft include stealing wallets or phishing.
- Prevention methods include shredding documents and monitoring bank statements.

Police discovered these stolen identification cards and credit cards during a raid.



THE STATS ON IDENTITY THEFT

3.7% of American adults fell victim to identity theft in 2005.

\$3,257 was the average amount of money lost in each case of identity theft in 2006, up from \$1,408 the year before.

166,248 unique phishing messages were detected by Symantec, an Internet security company, in the last six months of 2006.

72% of Americans are concerned about their personal records being stolen over the Internet.

Sources: Federal Trade Commission, 2007; Gartner, 2007; Symantec Internet Security Threat Report, 2007; ABC News poll, 2005

Thinking Critically

- In what category of crime does identity theft belong?
- How might the different theoretical perspectives on deviance explain identity theft?

Experiment: Applying What You've Learned

How to Be an Ethnomethodologist

What role do norms play in your everyday life?

1. Introduction


- In this experiment, you will examine the norms you have internalized by choosing one to break.
- Ethnomethodology is the study of how people do things.
- Ethnomethodologists deliberately break norms in order to define them.

2. Choosing a Norm

- Identify a norm you can break, resulting in unique but harmless behavior that is atypical for you.
- Once you identify a norm, break it. Observe the people around you. If possible, repeat the experiment in different settings.
- Write notes about your experience.

Experiment (*cont.*)

3. Record Your Observations

- **Using your notes, write a report of your experiment that answers the following questions:**
 - What norm did you choose?
 - What setting did you choose?
 - What kind of people witnessed your experiment?
 - How did people respond?
 - How did you feel while breaking the norm?
- 

4. Role-play Your Experience

- In small groups, create role-playing scripts for one of the group members' experiment.
- Choose a spokesperson to present the skit and describe the possible effects on society if others broke the same norm.

Experiment (*cont.*)

5. Discussion

- **What did you learn from this experiment? As a group, discuss the following:**
- Which norm breaking was most interesting?
- What emotions did you experience?
- Was your behavior seen by an authority figure?
- Did you experience any sanctions for your behavior?
- Did you think of yourself as deviant?