

Answer Key for In-Text Questions Chapter 5

Title: Chapter 5 Questions for Review

Question/Prompt: 1. What is the difference between deviance and crime?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Deviance is any behaviour that diverges from usual or accepted standards, and, in doing so, violates social norms. Crime is behaviour that violates criminal laws.

Question/Prompt: 2. When Canada legalized cannabis, did cannabis use become normalized?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Yes, when Canada legalized cannabis, cannabis use became normalized. Increased acceptance and reduced social stigma around cannabis made it less culturally deviant, which led to increased use, which led to legal changes to make its use no longer criminally deviant. This legal change is expected to further reduce the stigma of using cannabis and its labelling as deviant, with an aim of reducing use by teenagers. This example shows how deviance and criminality can influence and affect one another.

Question/Prompt: 3. What is meant when conflict theorists call crime an “innovation”?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Some conflict theorists view criminal behaviour as a creative adaptation to limited opportunities for lawful success. Criminal “innovation” does not necessarily mean devising new criminal tactics or using new criminal technology. It merely means behaving in ways that violate social norms that happen to be codified in criminal law.

Question/Prompt: 4. How is strain theory used to explain why crime occurs?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Strain theory contends that deviant behaviour is a response to the gap between ambitions for success and access to lawful means of achieving it. In this way, criminal behaviour, such as theft and robbery, may result from the lack of legitimate opportunities combined with a wish for material success.

Question/Prompt: 5. Describe labelling theory in the context of deviance.

Correct Answer Example(s):

Symbolic interactionists argue that deviance is a social label that some groups use to stigmatize and dominate other groups. They developed labelling theory to study how people define deviance and who gets to decide what is deviant. This theory argues that we increase the risk of deviant behaviour when we label someone a deviant.

Question/Prompt: 6. Do all nonviolent crimes have a victim?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Yes, all nonviolent crimes have a direct or indirect victim. For example, corporate crime victimizes millions of people by robbing businesses of billions of dollars and undermining the legitimacy of public institutions.

Question/Prompt: 7. Are crimes committed using technology (cybercrimes) punished as severely as street crimes?

Correct Answer Example(s):

It is much more difficult to punish cybercrimes than street crimes. First, cybercrimes can victimize millions of people at once. In addition, cybercriminals are very difficult to catch and are often able to stay one step ahead of new technological defences. National law enforcement and judicial systems alone may not be strong or organized enough to combat this transnational crime.

Title: Chapter 5 Questions for Critical Thought

Question/Prompt: 1. Why aren't sociologists especially interested in studying the "criminal mind?" What other factors besides the criminal mind affect someone's likelihood of committing a crime?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Sociologists who study deviance and crime assume that deviance is the unusual (and occasional) behaviour of ordinary people, or the usual behaviour of people in deviant roles or strange settings. Deviance may even be rational for people who lack an equal opportunity to benefit from the existing rules of society. Thus, sociological approaches to deviance and crime are different from psychological approaches and look for answers outside the individual actors. Sociologists focus on how careers, cultures, and communities affect someone's likelihood of committing a crime.

Question/Prompt: 2. Which approach to crime and deviance would likely be most attentive to the problems and concerns of marginalized (minority) groups?

Correct Answer Example(s):

The conflict theory approach would likely be most attentive to the problems and concerns of marginalized groups. Some conflict theorists view criminal behaviour as rational behaviour under conditions of limited economic opportunity and the pressure to achieve material success. In other words, given the universal (culturally learned) wish for material success, marginalized people who lack socially acceptable opportunities use crime as an “innovative” adaptation in response to this gap.

Question/Prompt: 3. Why would a conflict theorist be interested in cybercrime? Be sure to include motivation and opportunity in your discussion.

Correct Answer Example(s):

In today’s digital society, cybercrime is increasingly common. Some victims of cybercrime are large companies or businesses whose profits are big enough to tempt ambitious cybercriminals. However, small businesses, which lack the funds to properly protect themselves, are more often the victims of cybercrime.

Opportunities occur whenever a suitable target is regularly in the presence of a motivated offender. Smaller companies do not have a lot of capital to invest in cyberdefence systems and are essentially “sitting ducks” for hackers and cybercriminals. Unfortunately, these crimes can have very serious and expensive consequences. Around 60 per cent of small businesses fail financially within six months of a cyberattack.

Question/Prompt: 4. What type of deviance is the least well analyzed by the four main sociological frameworks we have discussed? Does this suggest other ways of analyzing crime and deviance?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- white collar crime; most of the four main theories focus on the circumstances that create or encourage violent crime and street crime; but it is only recently that sociological theorists have started to study and theorize around white-collar or corporate crime.

Question/Prompt: 5. What are the social factors that increase the crime in a society? By comparison, what are the technological factors that increase the crime? Which is more influential?

Correct Answer Example(s):

Your answer should include or relate to the following points:

- Crime is more likely when society lacks stable, accepted, nonviolent means of preserving the peace. If a state is weak, provides few opportunities, and lacks a social welfare net, civility decreases and crime increases. Age and gender are other social factors that influence crime: young men are more likely than older men or women of any age to commit violent acts. However, studies show the connection between the serious crime rate and age structure is much weaker than many have asserted. These studies claim that the real problem is poverty, and poor populations tend to have a young age structure.
- As we increasingly become a globalized information society, more technology-related crimes will occur. Online shopping and companies' ability to digitally store their customers' credit card information have opened card users to vast new threats. In addition, innovative methods of online payment, like PayPal, may make our lives easier, but they unfortunately also make the illegal activities of cybercriminals and hackers much easier as well.
- Technological factors that increase crime are more influential because they have far-reaching, global effects and can victimize millions of people. In addition, they are harder to combat, as cybercriminals and hackers are often able to stay one step ahead of technological defenses and law enforcement.