The Social Organization of Sex/ Defining and Measuring Deviance

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Measuring homosexuality

- Kinsey emphasized continuum of sexuality
- Lifetime male-male sexual contact (37%)
- 10% had only homosexual experience during any three-year period between 16-55
- 4% reported sex only with men since adolescence
- NHSSLS studied three aspects of homosexuality
  - Desire: same-sex sexual attraction
  - Behavior: having same-sex sex
  - Identification

Different measures of homosexuality

The 2002 National Study of Family Growth found higher rates of identification: 3 times for women and 1.5 times for men.

Interrelations of components of homosexuality

Social control

Social control: various means by which a society encourages conformity to its rules and expectations
### Defining deviance

- **Deviance:** behavior, belief or condition that violates social norms
  - By defining what is normal, society defines what is deviant
- **Origin of term** is in statistics—“deviation” is the difference between the value of a given case and the group average
- Sociologists began using “deviance” in 1950s to encompass four major topics—crime and delinquency, mental illness, drug use/addiction, sexual misbehavior
- **Different approaches** to studying deviance:
  - Why do people commit deviant acts? (causation approach)
  - Why are some people labeled as deviant and what are effects of label? (labeling theory)
  - Why do rules and punishments benefit some groups more than others? (conflict theory)
  - Why are some forms of deviance considered problems and others are not? (social problems approach)

### Crime statistics

- **Two major sources** of crime statistics
  - Uniform crime reports (FBI): based on reports from police departments on reported crimes
  - National Crime Victimization Survey: household survey of crime victimization
- **Limitations of crime statistics**
  - Some crimes aren’t measured at all (one goal of moral entrepreneurs is to have their targeted form of deviance measured)
  - The two major sources miss some crime
  - Reported crime rate includes just eight index crimes