The Social Organization of Sex/Measuring and Labeling Deviance

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http://www.public.iastate.edu/~soc.134
Sexual satisfaction by type of union

Percent "extremely" or "very" satisfied with sexual relationship

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

✔ NHSLS 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

Women (8.6%)

- Desire: 59%
- Behavior: 13%
- Identity: 0%

Men (10.1%)

- Desire: 44%
- Behavior: 22%
- Identity: 2%

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 (relativist approach to deviance)
✓ 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)