FEARING “RANDOM CRIME”

- People most fear “random crime” (Joel Best)
- Patternless: It can happen to anyone
- Increasing: Crime is getting worse
- Pointless: Criminal motives make no sense
- But none of these claims are true
- Crime is not random: it is stratified by gender, race, class and age
- Official crime has been declining over the past decade or longer (but may have risen slightly in recent years)
- Criminals have reasons for committing crimes

VIOLENT CRIME RATES, 1973-2005 (NCVS)

PROPERTY CRIME RATES, 1973-2005 (NCVS)
LABELING THEORY

- Labeling theory: theory which states that deviance is the consequence of the application of rules and sanctions to an offender; a deviant is an individual to whom the identity “deviant” has been successfully applied.
- Two types of deviance:
  - Primary deviance: routine instances of norm violation that may or may not result in labeling
  - Secondary deviance: deviance following and resulting from the label
- Reasons why label may lead to deviance:
  - 1. Cut off from participation in conventional groups
  - 2. Treatment may produce increasing deviance
  - 3. Labeled person may believe the label

DEVIANCE BY SOC 134 STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Not arrested</th>
<th>Arrested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underage alcohol purchase</td>
<td>59.5%</td>
<td>41.1%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smoked marijuana</td>
<td>38.7%</td>
<td>58.9%</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drunk driving (DUI)</td>
<td>49.4%</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drug racing</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>77.6%</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driving without license</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
<td>78.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DEVIANCE BY SOC 134 STUDENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Not arrested</th>
<th>Arrested</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fake ID</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>76.8</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoplifting under $20</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoplifting over $20</td>
<td>88.7</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vandalized property</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stole from hotel room</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**THE SAINTS AND THE ROUGHNECKS**

- Participant observation study by William Chambliss
- Shows role of class in labeling
- **Saints**
  - Eight white, upper-middle class boys
  - Constantly occupied with truancy, drinking, theft & vandalism
  - Never arrested
- **Roughnecks**
  - Six white, lower class boys
  - Engaged in fighting, drinking and theft; less delinquent overall
  - Constantly in trouble with police & community

Why were the Saints and Roughnecks treated differently?
- **Visibility:** Saints owned their own cars and were able to leave town
- **Demeanor:** Saints were apologetic and penitent; Roughnecks hostile and disdainful
- **Bias:** Community is biased against type of delinquency committed by Roughnecks
- The delinquent label reinforced the Roughneck's delinquency
- Predictions about boys' futures were correct