



ISD Virtual Learning

Sociology: Conflict Theory and Deviance

May 7, 2020



Sociology: Conflict Theory and Deviance

Lesson 34: May 7, 2020

Objective/Learning Target: The student will be able to explain the Conflict Theory view of Deviance and why it is important.

Warm Up

Read the following quote from, Karl Marx:

“The ruling ideas of each epoch (era) are always and always have been the ideas of the ruling class.”

What do you think Marx meant by this statement?

Warm-Up Follow-Up

“The ruling ideas of each epoch (era) are always and always have been the ideas of the ruling class.”

One way to think about what Marx was saying is that what we define as right or good is in line with the interests of the ruling class (those with power), and what is wrong or bad is anything that opposes the ruling class (those without power).

This is the essence of Conflict Theory and its view on deviance.

Conflict Theory

Conflict Theory says that laws and norms reflect the interests of the powerful members of society (government officials, business owners, wealthy, etc.).

Those with power define what is deviant and are less likely to be labeled as “deviant” even if they are suspected to have done something that violates the laws or norms of society.

- The powerful define what is deviant which in turn influences reactions to deviance.
- They also have the resources to resist deviant labels.
 - A wealthy businessman may embezzle a lot of money and nothing happens.
 - A clerk at the same businessman’s work may steal from the register the get fired, arrested, and jailed.

Competition and conflict are used by the elite to maintain the social order they desire.

We see the inequality of power in a variety of areas such as gender, race, and economic status.

Practice

Answer each of the following on a piece of paper.

1. Conflict Theory emphasizes the _____ between groups in society.
a. Communication b. Inequality c. Disagreement d. Balance
2. Which of the following would be the least likely to be labeled as a deviant?
a. Homeless man b. Single mom c. Car Salesman d. Government Official
3. Why did you answer the way you did on number 2?
4. Competition and conflict are two ways those with power try to maintain the social order they want to have.
a. True b. False

Practice - Answer Key

Answer each of the following on a piece of paper.

1. Conflict Theory emphasizes the _____ between groups in society.
a. Communication **b. Inequality** c. Disagreement d. Balance
2. Which of the following would be the least likely to be labeled as a deviant?
a. Homeless man b. Single mom c. Car Salesman **d. Governor**
3. Why did you answer the way you did on number 2?
a. Government officials have the ability to influence or control the laws & norms we follow and we if don't follow those things they create, we consider it deviant.
4. Competition and conflict are two ways those with power try to maintain the social order they want to have.
a. **True** b. False

Additional Resources

To learn more about Conflict Theory and Deviance, check out the following links:

VIDEO: [Crash Course Sociology - Theory and Deviance](#)

ARTICLE: [Boundless Sociology - The Conflict Perspective on Deviance](#)