

lecture 6:

*part III: Methods
government/official statistics and
surveys*

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111 1

Part III: how do we know the social facts?

- varieties:
 - government and official statistics
 - FBI's UCR, EEOC, Census...
 - surveys
 - GSS, MTF, NLSY
 - experiments
 - Supported Work, Audits, survey experiments
 - range of qualitative approaches
 - field research, intensive interviews, archival work ...
- bias, validity and reliability

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111 2

official statistics

- Adlers:
 - cheap/easy (?)
 - often include population/not sample
 - validity and systematic biases
 - "shallow and unreliable"
- Uggen:
 - extremely valuable (e.g., incarceration, turnout rates)
 - often very reliable
 - changes tell us a lot about deviance

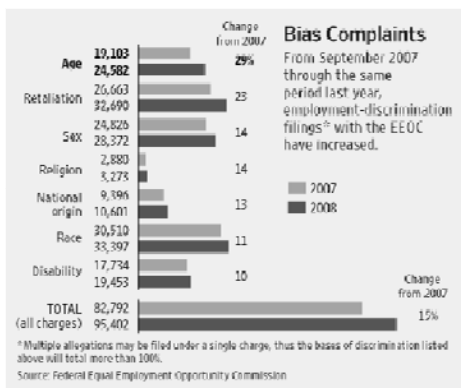
Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111 3

examples

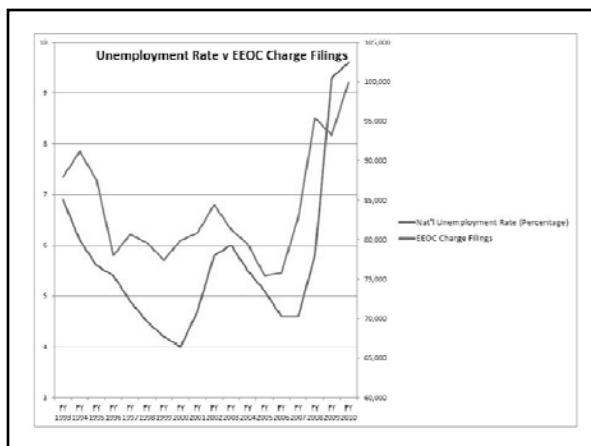
- EEOC – equal employment opportunity commission
 - discrimination as deviance
 - changes in who files and why
- UCR – uniform crime reports
- Imprisonment
- Suicide (NIMH)
- Priest sexual abuse (?)
- MN voting and recidivism records

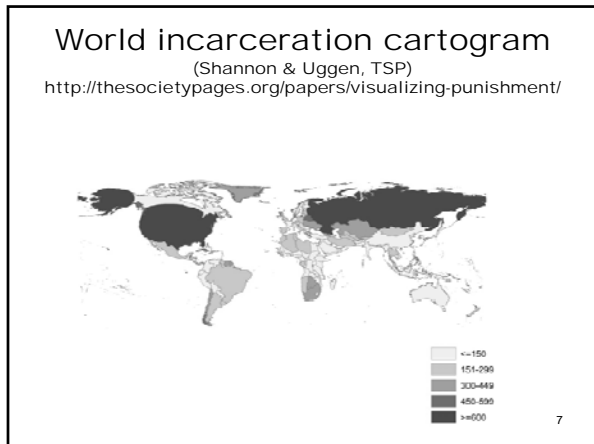
Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111

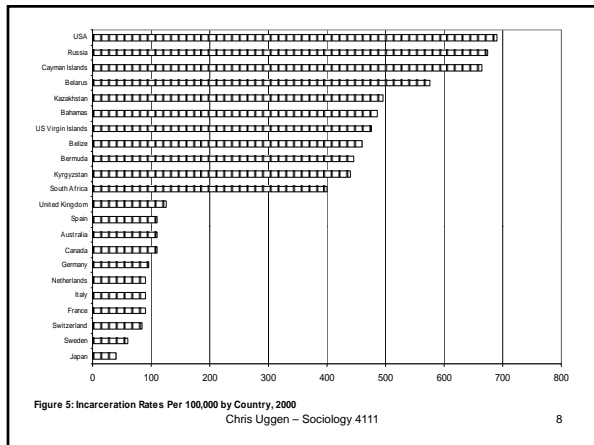
4

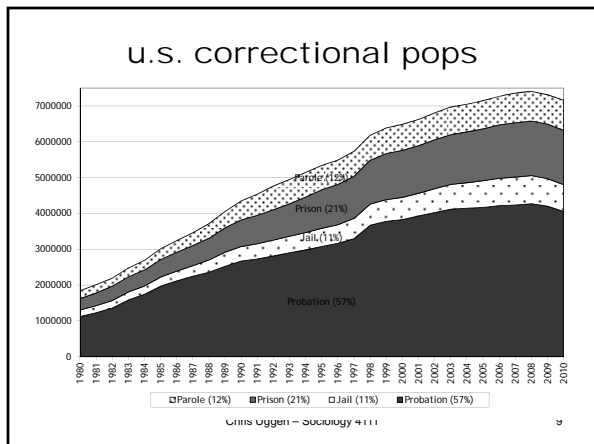


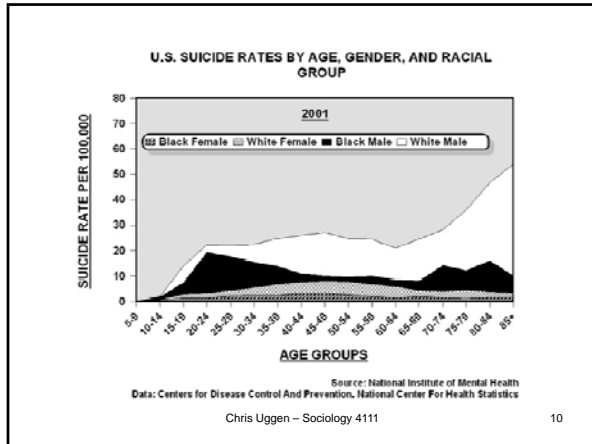
5

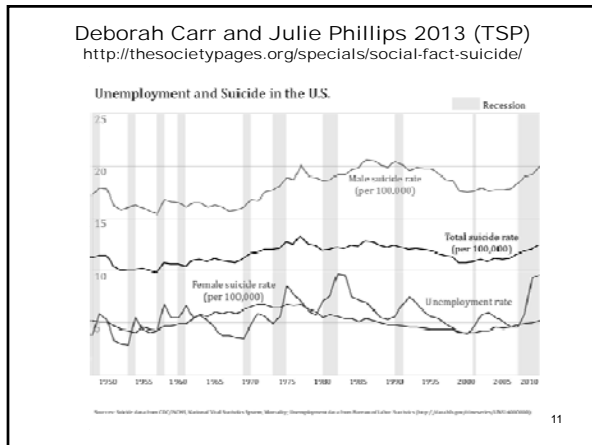


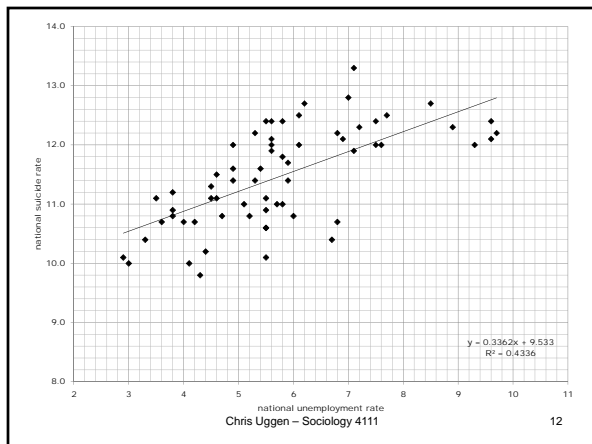












child abuse reporting

Douglas Besharov and Lisa Laumann 1996

- “measurement artifact” in reporting trends
 - legal change: professionals (who?) must report physical abuse and neglect, sexual abuse, maltreatment
 - reported cases rose from 150,000 in 1960 to 3,000,000 in 1993
 - but deaths fell from 5,000 to 1,000 per year
- Underreporting (50%?) vs. rising number of unsubstantiated cases (65%)
- 25-50% of child abuse deaths were cases previously known to authorities

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111 13

summary

- value of “official data”
 - a “baseline” that must be defended and addressed (e.g., threat to DOJ/BJJS)
 - managing bias
 - magnitude and direction
 - need for social science data series
 - deviance and deviance statistics are both social constructions
 - weak or non-existent for some purposes
- supplementing with independent sources of data

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111 14

II. surveys on deviance

- sampling
- response bias and internal validity
- “operationalization”
 - “drinks or dinner”
- Causality: Adlers v. Uggen (p. 112)
 - Experiments best (JEHT stigma example)
- But longitudinal surveys can speak to causality (evidence drugs *cause* crime)
 - Matrix reloaded

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111 15

(Ed.) Laumann's 1992 Sex Survey

- National Health and Social Life Survey
 - sampling: EPSEM
 - sample size (n) = 3,432
 - response rate: 80%
 - mode: face-to-face
 - cost: \$450/interview; 220 interviewers
 - training: neutral
 - terminology: non-technical
 - confidentiality
- General public will talk about sex

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111

16

Sexual norms in NHSLS (% agree)

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. Premarital sex is always wrong: | 20% |
| 2. Premarital sex among teenagers is always wrong | 61% |
| 3. Extramarital sex is always wrong | 77% |
| 4. Same-gender sex is always wrong | 65% |
| 5. There should be laws against the sale of pornography to adults | 34% |
| 6. I would not have sex with someone unless I was in love with them | 66% |
| 7. A woman should be able to obtain a legal abortion if she was raped | 88% |
| 8. A woman should be able to obtain a legal abortion if she wants for any reason | 52% |

-source: Michael et al., 1994

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111

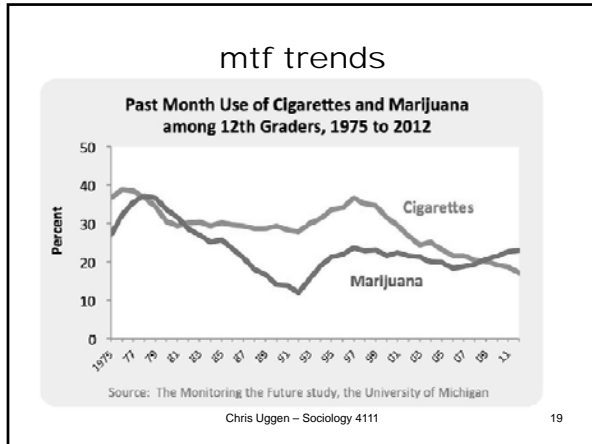
17

substance use - Michigan's "Monitoring the Future" survey

- Sample: 50,000 students in 400 schools each year since 1975
- Data: use, availability, perceived dangerousness, and disapproval
- Trends: illicit use peaked around 1980, declined until 1992, rose to 1996, decline since
 - Lifetime meth use declining - from 8.2% in 1999 to 3% in 2008 (<1% in past 30 days)

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111

18



lifetime use: 2012 12th graders

• Alcohol	69% (-1% since 2011)
• Cigarettes	40% (-1%)
• Any illicit drug	49% (-1%)
• Marijuana	45% (-.3%)
• Vicodin	8% (-.6%)
• Cocaine	5% (-.3%)
• MDMA (X)	7% (-1%)
• LSD	4% (-.2%)
• OxyContin	4% (-.6%)
• Methamphetamine	2% (-.4%)
• Steroids	2% (flat)

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111

- ### summary
- critique
 - Internal validity (sometimes external)
 - Reporting biases
 - value
 - External validity/generalizability
 - Independent of social control
 - How else would we know?
- Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111

lecture 6B:

*participant observation, interviews,
and other qualitative methods*

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111 22

qualitative methods

- Adlers:
 - Problems with surveys and official
 - Need “deeper” or “richer” data
- Field research – observe deviance in its natural setting
 - degrees of participation
 - *Tearoom Trade* and covert participation
 - degrees of subjectivity

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111 23

varieties

- case studies (e.g., a life history)
- focus groups (e.g., community standards)
- passive observation
- intensive interviewing (e.g., harassers or harassed)
- qualitative historical and comparative work (but hist/comp can also be quantitative)
- many more...

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111 24

adler: dealers and smugglers

- Field research - "only way to acquire accurate knowledge about deviant behavior" (?)
 - "difficult hours and dangerous situations"
 - participation and lawbreaking
 - safety and trust
 - 1 ton pot/week; 40 kilos of coke every few months
- taped life histories (10-30 hours; 6 yrs)
- sampling: snowball
- managing bias?

Chris Uggen - Sociology 4111

25

jody miller - girls in gangs

- Multi-method: survey and intensive interviews with 46 female gang members and non-members
 - Learning from interviews v. surveys
- Violence: protection and victimization
 - Status: violence and connections
 - Gender inequality and devaluation
 - Consequences of "sexed in" v. beat in;
 - violent gang rape - "could have just killed her"
 - Subcultural norms: "weak" v. "hard"

Chris Uggen - Sociology 4111

26

methods summary

- Judge method and data
 - relative to existing knowledge
 - likely magnitude and direction of bias
 - right tool for the job?
- More multi-method work today
 - Sexual harassment: survey (1000), plus interview with 33 based on responses
 - Voting:
 - official statistics on those affected
 - surveys to predict voting; attitudes; recidivism; public opinion
 - qualitative historical research to get laws, interviews with prisoners to get meaning

Chris Uggen - Sociology 4111

27

methods exercise

- Work together in groups of 3-5 to answer the questions
- The goal is to get you thinking concretely about how we learn the social facts in (your) specific area of deviance
- Turn in one sheet signed by all

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111 28

next

- Midterm!
 - Catch up on any reading you missed
 - Study notes (preferably with others)
 - Prep questions on review guide

Chris Uggen – Sociology 4111 29