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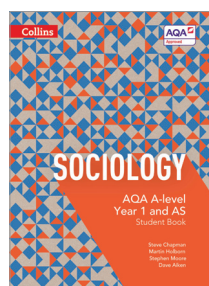
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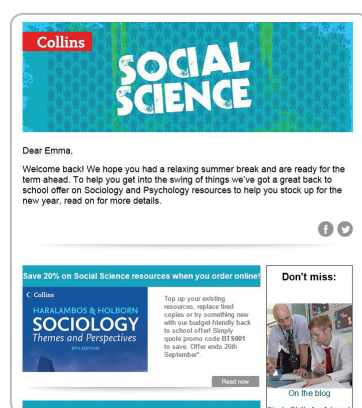
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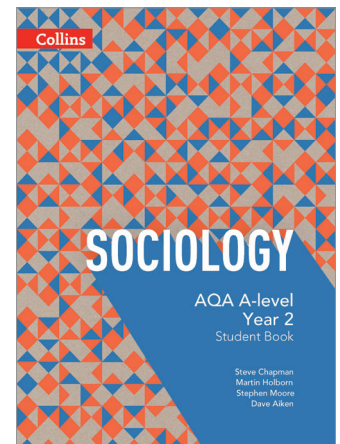
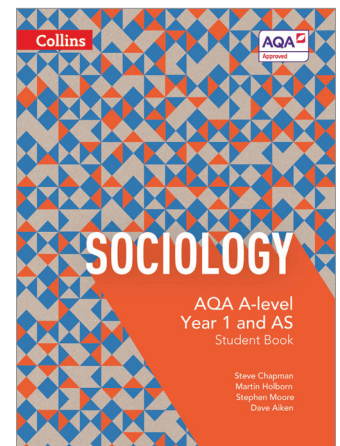


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TOPIC 1 EDUCATION

The National Curriculum itself has also been criticised for being ethnocentric – especially in its focus on British History and Literature. Geography also emphasises Britain's positive contribution to the rest of the world, rather than the negative consequences of unfair trade and employment practices. Changes introduced by the Coalition government in 2014 marked a renewed emphasis on a traditional curriculum (for example, studying Shakespeare and British Literature in English) leaving even less room for a multicultural curriculum.

Tilly et al. (2006), in their study of 30 comprehensive schools, found that a significant number of African Caribbean pupils noted their invisibility in the curriculum and were exasperated by the White European focus. Moreover, when Black History was acknowledged within the curriculum, many pupils reported their frustration with the tendency to focus on slavery.

However, while the curriculum may be ethnocentric, it is unlikely that this is the only factor in the underachievement of ethnic minorities, as it is not the case that all pupils from ethnic-minority backgrounds underachieve to similar degrees. Indian and Chinese pupils' achievement, for example, is above the national average.

To what extent should the content of the curriculum in British schools reflect the ethnic diversity of Britain? For example, how far should pupils concentrate on British History and 'classic' English literature (largely written by 'dead white men')?

CONCLUSIONS

Although ethnicity may be less important than social class in influencing patterns of educational achievement, it remains a significant factor. The evidence suggests that material differences between ethnic groups partly, but not wholly, explain differences in achievement. Other factors outside the education system, such as cultural factors, may partly explain differential achievement by ethnic group, but they interact with factors inside the education system, including institutional racism. Ethnicity also interacts with both gender and social class in affecting achievement. To complicate matters further, there can be diversity within ethnic groups, and the dividing lines between ethnic groups are not always clear-cut. For example, an increasing number of households are headed by parents from different ethnic backgrounds.

CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING

1. Identify one ethnic group that does better than average at GCSE and one group that does less well than average at this level.
2. Identify the ethnic group most likely to be entitled to free school meals and the ethnic group most likely to be entitled to them.
3. Briefly define 'ethnicity'.
4. Explain what is meant by 'institutional racism'.
5. Outline the attitudes of Chinese parents towards the education of their children based upon the research of Archer and Francis.
6. Explain the link between family life and low achievement among male Black African pupils suggested by Tony Sewell.
7. Identify and briefly explain four factors internal to the education system that might shape patterns of educational achievement within different minority ethnic groups.
8. Explain three ways in which African Caribbean pupils may be disadvantaged by the operation of the educational system in Britain.
9. Explain two reasons why the relationship between ethnicity and educational achievement is far from straightforward and needs to take account of other social differences.
10. "Factors internal to education largely determine the educational success of ethnic groups." Evaluate this claim.

TAKE IT FURTHER

Analyse the content of a sample of text books at your school or college. Focus on visual images, examples and case studies. To what extent do they recognise the variety and contribution of ethnic groups in contemporary Britain? Is there any evidence of an ethnocentric (pro-White British) bias in the curriculum?

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ETHNICITY AND EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT 1.3

FOCUS ON SKILLS: INSTITUTIONAL RACISM AND HISTORY TEACHING



Only three black people who want to be history teachers were accepted for postgraduate teacher-training courses last year, according to damning statistics that critics claim expose 'institutional racism' in the British education system.

The figures are part of a wider picture in which just 17.2% of black African applicants and 28.7% of black Caribbean applicants were taken on by teacher training institutions across all subjects, against 46.7% of white applicants.

The revelation provoked claims of racism in the system, with one of Britain's first black professors calling for the government to do some 'soul searching' over the state of the profession.

According to the annual statistical report by the Graduate Teacher Training Registry (GTR) published last week, 30 black Caribbean, African or mixed-race people applied to read for a postgraduate certificate in education in history in 2013. One mixed-race applicant was accepted as were up to two black Caribbean or black African applicants – at best a 10% success rate. This stands in stark contrast to the 506 white people accepted for history teacher-training courses from the 1,937 who applied – a 26% success rate. A further 19 applicants from other ethnic minority groups, including Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi, were awarded places. The ethnicity of 13 successful applicants was unknown.

Professor Heidi Mirza, who is of Caribbean origin, said that the government should be concerned by both the low number of black applicants and the lack of success of those that apply. Nationally, while 17% of pupils in the UK are from black, Asian and ethnic minority backgrounds, only about 7% of teachers are.

Mirza, author of *Respecting Difference: Race, Faith and Culture for Teacher Educators*, said: 'Diversity in our teacher workforce is crucial if British children are to be well prepared to be global citizens and successfully compete on the world stage.

'We need to do some soul searching in our teacher education provision and look at the insidious ways institutional racism keeps potential black, minority ethnic and refugee teachers from getting on and through their courses. I do think there is a hidden crisis in teacher education, which has slipped under the wire of Gov's reforms in education.'

Professor John Howson, blogger and a former government adviser on teacher recruitment, said that he was particularly concerned by the lack of black history teachers because it limited the variety of perspectives being heard in classrooms on Britain's colonial heritage. A poem from John Agard, 'Checking out my history', about the dominance of the history of white males in classrooms resonates deeply with many in the black community.

Mirza said there was significant evidence that discrimination was a major factor. She cited a survey on 'Leadership aspirations and careers of black and minority teachers' in which more than half of the sample reported some sort of discrimination. Another survey found that black and Asian teachers were half as likely to be head teachers and deputy head teachers as white teachers.

Source: Boffey, D. 'Institutional racism and history teaching' *The Observer*, 22 March 2014

Questions

1. Identify and summarise evidence in this article that suggests there may be institutional racism in teacher recruitment, training and career progression.
2. Analyse the effects that this might have on different ethnic groups in the education system. (Do you think, for example, that other ethnic minorities are likely to become history teachers?)
3. Analyse what effect this might have on the curriculum. (For example, is the history of other minority groups prominent in the history curriculum?)
4. Evaluate the strength of the evidence of racism in schools, based on this article. (How convincing and how broad is the evidence?)

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Take it further and research design activities challenge students to build their sociological research skills through active involvement in the research process

Focus on research boxes provide in-depth exploration of new and classic research studies with questions to develop critical skills


TOPIC 1 EDUCATION

to provide space to study, desks, computer and internet access for their children, and most of the children had their own rooms. Parents expected their children to work hard and, many being well qualified themselves, actively helped their children with their studies.

Basit comments that: 'It was strikingly clear that education was viewed as capital that would transform the lives of the younger generation. This educational capital was believed to be the most significant asset a young person could acquire and the families provided a range of support mechanisms to enable the young people to realise this aspiration' (p. 719). While all the grandparents were from working-class backgrounds, some of the parents had gained middle-class jobs (albeit usually modestly paid ones) via educational success, and they wanted, and expected, their children to be at least as successful. Although the parents could not afford to move to expensive areas to gain access to the best schools, they did try to help their children

get into selective schools, sometimes by arranging private tuition.

The research on British Chinese and British Asian families suggests that stable, supportive families who are very keen on educational achievement may be the key to understanding the relative success of some minority ethnic groups in education. However, some research suggests that all minority ethnic groups are enthusiastic about education compared to the White British ethnic majority. Research by Connor et al. (2004) found that among Year 13 students positive attitudes to education were strongest among Black African students planning to go on to higher education.



Despite apparently strong encouragement from families, African Caribbean pupils and students have tended to do less well in education than those of Indian origin. According to a DfE report (Wales Report, 1997) Black pupils, (particularly boys):

- are significantly more likely to be permanently excluded from school than other ethnic groups
- are 1.5 times as likely as White British pupils to be identified with behaviour-related special needs
- are disproportionately put in bottom sets even though this does not reflect ability
- are much less likely than average to be identified as gifted and talented.

Some sociologists have attributed these problems partly to cultural factors outside schools. Tony Sewell (1997) argues that they are related to the relatively high proportion of Black African pupils raised in lone-parent families (see Chapter 5 for details). Basing his ideas on research with 11–16-year-old pupils in a London school,

UNDERSTAND THE CONCEPT

Focus groups are a type of group interview in which a carefully selected group of people are asked to discuss particular issues. They allow a more in-depth exploration of group attitudes than individual interviews and they reflect the ways in which interaction with others affects opinions in social life.

BUILD CONNECTIONS

Changes in family life will clearly have an impact on the relationship between family and education. The increased diversity of families (see Topic 4, Chapter 5) has been most discussed in relation to White British families, but there is also some evidence that diversity is increasing within minority ethnic groups as well. For example, there may have been some increase in divorce and lone parenthood among British Asian families and this could affect the relationship between family life, culture, ethnicity and educational achievement. There is family diversity within, as well as between, ethnic groups, and this illustrates the danger of making generalisations about culture and education.

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TOPIC 1 EDUCATION

FOCUS ON RESEARCH: CHAVS, CHARVERS AND TOWNIES



Research by Hollingworth and Williams (2009) examined the way in which some working-class pupils were labelled and devalued as 'chavs' by their middle-class peers. The study involved interviews with white, urban, middle-class families whose students went to one of three inner-city comprehensive schools: 'Norton' (in north-east England), 'Riverton' (in south-west England) and a London school.

They interviewed 124 families with parents and children together, 100 mothers or fathers individually and 68 students individually. The students were aged between 12 and 25, and those who had left school talked about their previous school experience. In all the schools the students could identify distinct subcultures: 'hippies' or 'poshies' (Norton), 'goths' and 'emos' (Norton and Riverton), 'skaters' or 'jitters' (Norton and Riverton), 'rockers' and 'gangsters' (London), and 'townies' or 'chavs' or 'charvers' (predominantly Norton and Riverton) (Hollingworth and Williams, 2009, p. 470). Most of these groups were predominantly middle-class, but those seen as chavs, charvers or townies were invariably working class. None of the working-class pupils gave themselves these labels – they were imposed on them by others from non-working-class backgrounds, and the middle-class students were keen to emphasise that they did not belong to these three groups. Indeed they looked down on what they saw as their immoral, anti-social behaviour and their poor taste. They saw them as arrogant, lazy, loud, uninterested in learning and lacking in self-control. While the middle-class students saw themselves as investing in their educational future, they saw the working-class pupils who were chavs, charvers or townies as lacking in the desire to succeed and therefore likely to fail.

Questions

1. Examine the subcultures (if there are any) in your own school or college. What are the similarities and differences compared to the subcultures found in this research?
2. Evaluate whether the type of school used in the research (inner-city comprehensives) could explain the similarities and differences you discussed in answering question 1.
3. Identify the possible advantages and disadvantages of using interviews to study subcultures?
4. Suggest an alternative research method for this type of research and explain why it might be useful.
5. On the basis of this research, explain the view that it is not just teachers who can give pupils negative labels.
6. Applying this research, analyse how the labels attached to some working-class pupils might affect their educational progress.

Research by Mairan Mac an Ghall (1996) examined working-class students in a Midlands comprehensive. Because the school divided pupils into three sets, three distinct male, working-class peer groups developed rather than two:

- 1. In the lowest set the main subculture was that of the 'macho lads'. They were academic failures who became hostile to the school, showed little interest in school work, and were usually from less skilled working-class backgrounds.
- 2. In the highest set, the predominant subculture was of the 'academic achievers'. They were academic 'successes' usually from more skilled working-class backgrounds. They tried hard at school and were aiming to progress to higher levels of study.
- 3. The middle set was dominated by the 'new enterprisers'. They had a positive attitude to school and school work, but they saw the vocational curriculum as a route to career success rather than academic subjects.

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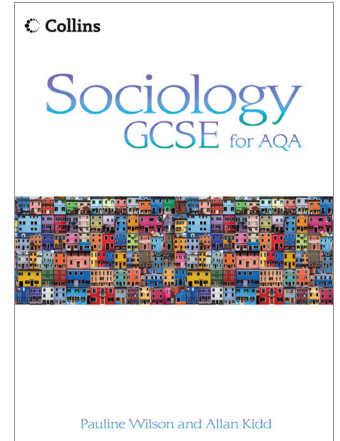
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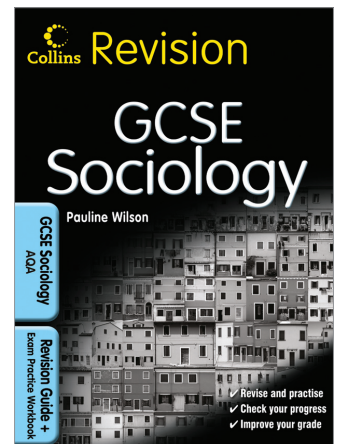
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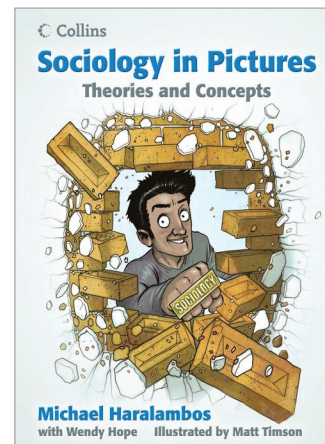
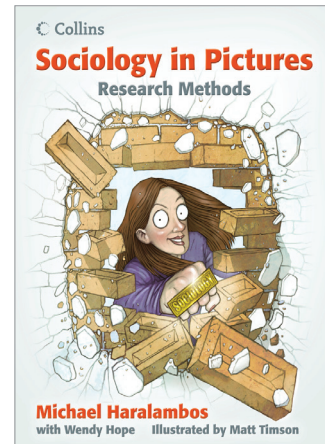
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MARKSISM

Karl Marx (1818-1883), the founder of Marxism, believed that the economic system – the forces of production – shaped the rest of society. If everybody owns the forces of production, the result is an equal society. But if they are owned by a minority, society is made up of two main social classes – a rich and powerful ruling class and a relatively poor and powerless subject class. Marx saw the ruling class as exploiting and oppressing the subject class.

FEBDALISM

In medieval Europe, the land – the main force of production – was owned by the lords (the ruling class) and farmed by serfs (the subject class). The serfs paid taxes to the lords for cash and protection. This system is called feudalism.

CAPITALISM

In industrial society, the forces of production – the factories and raw materials – are owned by the capitalist ruling class. The workers – the subject class – produce the goods but their wages are only a small part of the value of those goods. Most of the value is taken away in the form of profits by the capitalists. Marx saw this as exploitation.

CAPITALIST INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

SUPERSTRUCTURE

RELIGION, THE STATE, EDUCATION, SOCIAL JUSTICE, POLITICAL IDEOLOGY

INFRASTRUCTURE

FACTORIES, EQUIPMENT, RAW MATERIALS, OWNED BY CAPITALISTS, WAGES PAID TO WORKERS

Marx believed that the economic base of society, the infrastructure, largely shapes the rest of society, the superstructure. This means that the economic relationships between the ruling and subject class will be reflected in the superstructure. For example, the state will support the ruling class and pass laws to reinforce their economic power and control.

RULING CLASS IDEOLOGY

THE RULING CLASS BELIEVES IN THE VALUE OF PROFIT. THEY WANT TO ENRICH THEMSELVES AT THE EXPENSE OF THE SUBJECT CLASS.

THE SUBJECT CLASS BELIEVES IN THE VALUE OF WAGES. THEY WANT TO ENRICH THEMSELVES AT THE EXPENSE OF THE RULING CLASS.

According to Marx, the ideas and beliefs in society reinforce and justify ruling class power and bind the subject class to their exploitation. Marx called these ideas and beliefs ruling class ideology. The new ideology is producing a false consciousness – a distorted and untrue view of the way things are.

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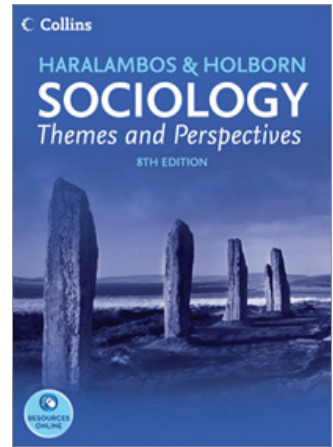
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SOCIOLOGY THEMES AND PERSPECTIVES Chapter 8 Families, households and personal life 3

8 Families, households and personal life

It is no longer possible to pronounce in some binding way what family, marriage, parenthood, sexuality or love mean, what they should or could be, rather these vary in substance, norms and morality from individual to individual and from relationship to relationship. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1995

Introduction
The family has often been regarded as the cornerstone of society. In pre-modern and modern societies alike it has been seen as the most basic unit of social organization and one that carries out vital tasks, such as socializing children. Until the 1960s few sociologists questioned the importance or the benefit of family life. Most sociologists agreed that family life was evolving as modernity progressed, and that these changes involved making the family better suited to meeting the needs of society and of family members. A particular type of family, the nuclear family (based around a two-generation household of parents and their children), was seen as well adapted to the demands of modern societies.

From the 1960s, an increasing number of critical thinkers began to question the assumption that the family was necessarily a beneficial institution. Feminists, Marxists and critical psychologists began to highlight what they saw as some of the negative effects and the 'dark side' of family life.

In the following decades the family was not just under attack from academic writers. Social changes also seemed to be undermining traditional families. Rising divorce rates, cohabitation before marriage, increasing numbers of single-parent families and single-person households, and other trends all suggested that individuals were basing their lives less and less around conventional families. Some have seen these changes as a symptom of greater individualism within modern societies. They have welcomed what appears to be an increasing range of choice for individuals. People no longer have to base their lives around what may be outmoded and, for many, unsuitable conventional family structures. Others, however, have lamented the changes and worried about their effect on society. Such changes are seen as both a symptom and a cause of instability and insecurity in people's lives and in society as a whole. Traditionalists who want a return to the ideal of the nuclear family have held this view. For them, many of society's problems are a result of increased family instability.

Some postmodernists argue that there has been a fundamental break between the modern family and the postmodern family. They deny that any one type of family can be held up as the norm against which other family types can be compared. While modern societies might have had one central, dominant family type, this is no longer the case. As a result, it is no longer possible to produce a theory of 'the family'. Different explanations are needed for different types of family.

However, some sociologists believe that such theories fail to capture the extent to which connections within families, and other aspects of personal life, continue to be central to the lived experience of members of society. They neglect, for example, the importance of emotional responses to personal life – emotions which may be as strong as love and hate. Both postmodernists and critics of their theories, though, have increasingly recognized that families cannot be fully understood without also looking at other intimate relationships and aspects of personal life that are connected to family life, such as friendship and even the keeping of pets.

Alongside these developments in society and sociology, family life has become a topic of political debate. What was once largely seen as a private sphere, in which politicians should not interfere, is now seen as a legitimate area for public debate and political action. As concern has grown in some quarters about the alleged decline of the family, politicians have become somewhat more willing to comment on families. Sometimes they have devised policies to try to deal with perceived problems surrounding the family.

In short, the family has come to be seen as more problematic than it was in the past. The controversies that have come to surround families, households and personal life are the subject of this chapter. We begin by examining the assumption of the 'universality' of the family.

Is the family universal?

George Peter Murdock: the family – a universal social institution

In a study entitled *Social Structure* (1949), George Peter Murdock examined the institutions of the family in a wide range of societies. Murdock took a sample of 250 societies, ranging from small hunting and gathering bands to large-scale industrial societies. He claimed that some form of family existed in every society, and concluded, on the evidence of his sample, that the family is universal.

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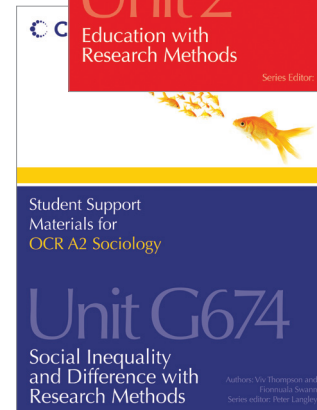
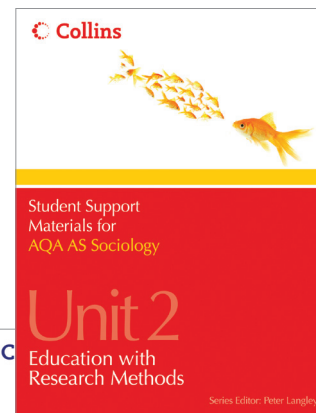
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The social distribution of crime and deviance

Essential notes
Young people may commit a range of crimes, but a group of crimes collectively known as **juvenile delinquency** have been singled out by some sociologists. Young people may commit these crimes, which generally do not involve financial reward, because of boredom, a search for excitement and, sometimes, malice. The crimes usually committed by subcultures or gangs include joy-riding, tagging, anti-social behaviour such as harassing members of the community, hooliganism, vandalism, territorial gang violence and drug taking.

It is important to understand that most theories of crime are aimed at explaining male criminality. Some feminist sociologists argue that this 'malestream' criminology reflects patriarchal inequality. However, it also reflects the reality that, in 2008, there were 4.5% women in prison out of a total prison population of more than 85 000 – a mere 5.4%.

Distribution of crime and deviance by social group

An examination of statistics relating to police stops and arrests, convictions in the courts and the prison population suggests that some social groups tend to be more criminal than others.

Age
Approximately 90% of all crimes are committed by young people – statistical evidence shows that the older a person gets, the less likely he or she is to commit a crime. Most burglary, street robbery, violence against the person, shoplifting and criminal damage is committed by young people aged 17–24. The peak age for male offenders is 18, compared to 15 for females.

Gender
About 80% to 90% of offenders found guilty or cautioned are male. As a result, male crime is said to outnumber female crime by an approximate ratio of 5 to 1. At least one-third of men are likely to be convicted for a criminal offence, compared to only 8% of women.

It has been found that men and women are convicted for different types of offences. For example, males dominate all offences but female conviction is likely to be for theft, particularly shoplifting. However, in recent years there has been a rapid rise in violence committed by young women (although it is still vastly outnumbered by male violent offences).

The following graph shows the relationships between age, gender and crime.

Fig 1
Offenders as a percentage of the population by age (2008, England and Wales)

Essential notes
Robert Reiner notes that there is a working-class bias in the prison population. Prior to being imprisoned, 74% were either unemployed or employed at the lowest occupational levels. Ann Haggel and Tim Newburn's study of youth detention centres found that only 8% of persistent offenders came from middle-class backgrounds. (Hence can also be differentiated by social class. Middle-class offenders tend to be associated with white-collar crime, fraud and tax evasion; working-class offenders are found guilty mainly of burglary and street crime.)

Table 4
Percentage of ethnic groups at different stages of the criminal justice process compared to the ethnic breakdown of the general population, England and Wales 2007–08

Note: Figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Fig 2
Recorded crime rates per 10 000 population by area type (2008–09)

Examiners' notes
All the factors – age, gender, ethnicity, locality and social class – may prompt many questions that require you to explain why certain groups seem to commit more crime than others. Be aware that you can combine some of these factors. For example, female criminality is more likely to be committed by working-class girls, whereas most black teenagers who commit crime in inner-city areas come from deprived backgrounds.

Table 4

	White	Mixed	Black	Asian	Chinese or other	Not stated	Total
General population aged 16+ over (2008 census)	81.3	1.3	3.2	4.4	9.9	9.9	100
Stop and search ^a	68.1	2.9	11.1	8.1	1.2	7.6	100
Arrest ^b	78.3	2.8	7.1	5.1	1.1	4.8	100
Cautioned ^c	82.5	3.5	6.5	4.5	1.5	5.0	100
Youth offences ^d	84.8	3.5	5.8	3.0	0.4	2.5	100
Fined or given a court ^e	72.5	14.0	9.0	4.4	—	—	100
Prison reception ^f	63.6	2.5	6.3	4.6	1.2	1.8	100
Prison completion ^g	79.1	2.9	10.6	5.9	—	0.2	100

Locality
Urban areas, especially inner-city areas and council estates, have higher rates of crime than suburbs or rural areas. (Refer to the following bar chart.) Therefore, inner-city and council estate residents (the urban poor), especially the elderly, are more likely than other social groups to be the victims of crime.

Essential notes provide supporting commentary to aid students' understanding

Hints and tips from the examiners identify common mistakes and offer advice on how to maximise marks

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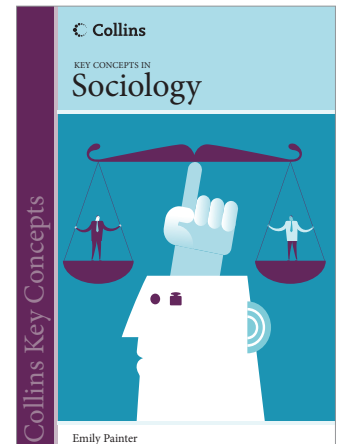
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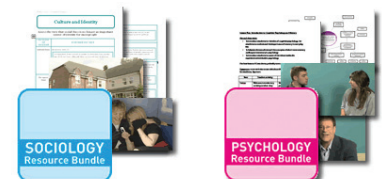
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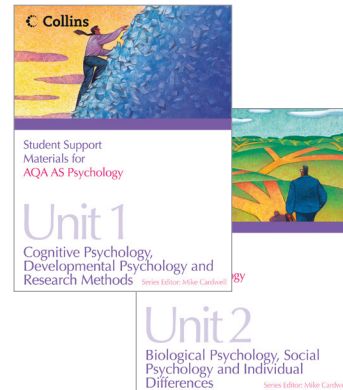
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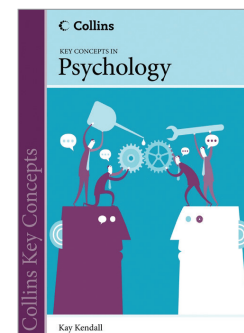
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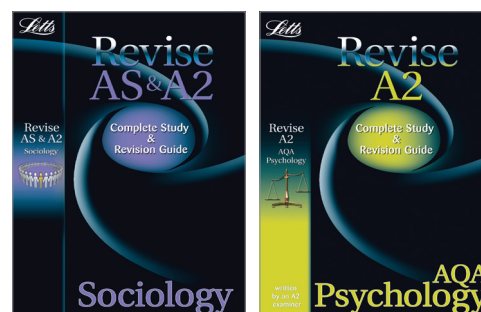
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