A Level Sociology Knowledge Organiser
Victimology and preventing/punishing crime

Theories of victimology

Positivist victimology: Characteristics or circumstances of individual make some more likely to be victims of crime.
Victim proneness: identifying the characteristics of those likely to be 'prone' to crime (e.g. age, gender etc)
Victim precipitation: identifying how victims can contribute to their own victimisation (e.g. leaving a door open)
Hentig: research suggests victims are likely to be elderly and 'mentally subnormal'.
✗'Victim blaming' – can be seen to blame the victim rather than the offender, feminists argue this promotes patriarchy in society
✗Ignores structural factors in society which contribute to victimisation e.g. patriarchy, inequality
✗Not all crimes could have been 'precipitated' e.g. corporate or environmental crimes

Critical victimology: Focuses on 1) structural factors (e.g. patriarchy and power) and 2) the power of the state to label some as 'victims'
Structural factors – social deprivation means the weakest/most deprived are likely to be victims of crime, can be seen as a form of 'structural powerlessness', e.g. crimes against women could be seen as an expression of patriarchy
Power of the state – state can apply label of 'victim' to some but not others which can conceal crimes of the powerful e.g. labelling victims of health and safety crimes as 'accident prone' rather than victims.
✗Ignores the role that some may play in their own victimisation e.g. leaving a door unlocked, behaving aggressively
✗Evidence on victimisation does not support it is the 'weak' or powerless who are victims – young males are most likely to appear

The functions of the CJS

✻Deterrence – prevent from being tempted to commit crime
✻Public protection – maintain public order, prevent crime and catch offenders
✻Retribution – punish criminals appropriately for their crime
✻Rehabilitation – try to reform/help individuals so that they do not offend again

Patterns of victimisation

Gender	Males are more likely to be victims of violent crime and homicide Positivist: Men may initiate aggression, become involved in violent gangs
	Women are more likely to be victims of domestic violence /sexual crimes Positivist: Women make themselves vulnerable by dressing provocatively Critical: Women are victims due to patriarchy/powerlessness, may be less likely to report it due to fear/finances
	Women are more likely to be victims of people trafficking Critical: Demand for sex workers, more profitable than men
Age	Younger people (16-24) 9X more likely to be victims of personal crime Positivist: Younger people might put themselves in dangerous/risky situations, less likely to take care of possessions etc. Critical: Younger people may be vulnerable due to lacking power
	Younger people are more likely to be victims of violent crime Positivist: Put themselves in dangerous situations, act aggressively
Ethnicity	BAME individuals more likely to be victims of persona crime (23% of homicide victims are BAME) Positivist: May put themselves at risk in conflict and violent subcultures Critical: Could be due to racism, the police/CJS may not adequately protect BAME individuals
	BAME 14X more likely to be victims of racially motivated crimes Critical: Racism and discrimination in society, stereotyping

Issues: Statistics may not accurately represent victimisation due to dark figure of crime (those not reported/recorded)

Punishment and control

Functionalist: Punishment is positive, maintains solidarity and reinforces values, allows moral outrage and boundary maintenance. Punishment should focus on restitution (reform and rehabilitation rather than retribution.

Marxism: Punishment is an ideological tool to maintain w/c oppression, is part of repressive state apparatus, w/c criminals are scapegoated and blamed rather than society, prisons are 'dumping grounds' for the w/c.

Garland: Imprisonment leads to 'mass incarceration' and allows government to control some members of society e.g. black working class males.

Braithwaite: Restorative justice is more effective than imprisonment

Cohen: Community sanctions allow governments to have wider control

Foucault: Punishment now based on disciplinary not sovereign power

Crime prevention

Situational crime prevention (Right Realist): Make crime less attractive/more difficult to commit, reduce opportunity for crime, target hardening measures , 'designing out' features
✗Displacement theory: May not prevent crime but 'displaces it' onto another victim/area
✓Diffusion of benefits: Neighbouring areas also see crime reduction
✗Can increase inequality
✗Assumes offenders make a rational choice

Environmental crime prevention (Right Realist): Broken windows theory, prevention should focus on keeping communities/buildings in good order, deters crime
✗Only targets working class crime

Zero tolerance policing (Right Realist): Tackle all forms of 'petty crime' to deter from committing more serious offences
✓Supported by a study in New York – zero tolerance reduced crime

Social and community crime prevention (Left Realist): Multi-agency working, democratic and community policing, tackling social deprivation, parenting support (reduce inequality)
✓Supported by Perry pre school project
✗Too soft on crime/offenders

Surveillance (Foucault): Use of surveillance technologies to prevent crime e.g. use of CCTV as deterrent, encourages self-surveillance.
✗Not always effective, can avoid detection e.g. dark web
✗Moral and ethical concerns