Chapter 2 Crime and Deviance

Topic 7 Crime and the Media

Answers to QuickCheck Questions on page 129

1. Immediacy; dramatisation; personalisation; any of the news values listed on page 124.

2. Violent crime is over-represented; police success is exaggerated; victims and criminals are seen as older and more middle-class than those who appear in the official statistics; crimes are often represented as daring and ingenious; crimes by strangers are over-represented.

3. The media may promote fear of crime by exaggerating the amount and seriousness of crime and the risks to groups such as young women and old people.

4. By imitation, arousal, desensitisation, or any of the other ways listed on page 120.

5. The media increase the sense of relative deprivation among poor and marginalised social groups. They present everyone with images of a 'good life' to which they should conform which stimulates relative deprivation and social exclusion felt by marginalised groups who cannot afford these goods.

6. Corporations and advertisers use media images of crime to sell products, especially in the youth market. Crime and deviance become commodities to be consumed.

7. The amount of deviance increasing or appearing to increase. The media contribute to deviance amplification by highlighting deviant behaviour and by calling for measures to control it, which may produce a self-fulfilling prophecy.

8. Exaggeration/distortion; prediction; symbolisation; linking unconnected events; by calling for a crackdown; by defining deviant identities and providing deviant role models.

9. McRobbie and Thornton argue that moral panics are less likely nowadays because audiences are accustomed to exaggerated shock stories and don't 'panic'. There is less agreement in society about what is deviant. It is not clear why some problems are amplified and others not. It is not clear why the reaction should be seen as 'disproportionate' rather than rational.

10. Hacking; spreading viruses; identity theft; internet pornography; cyber-stalking.