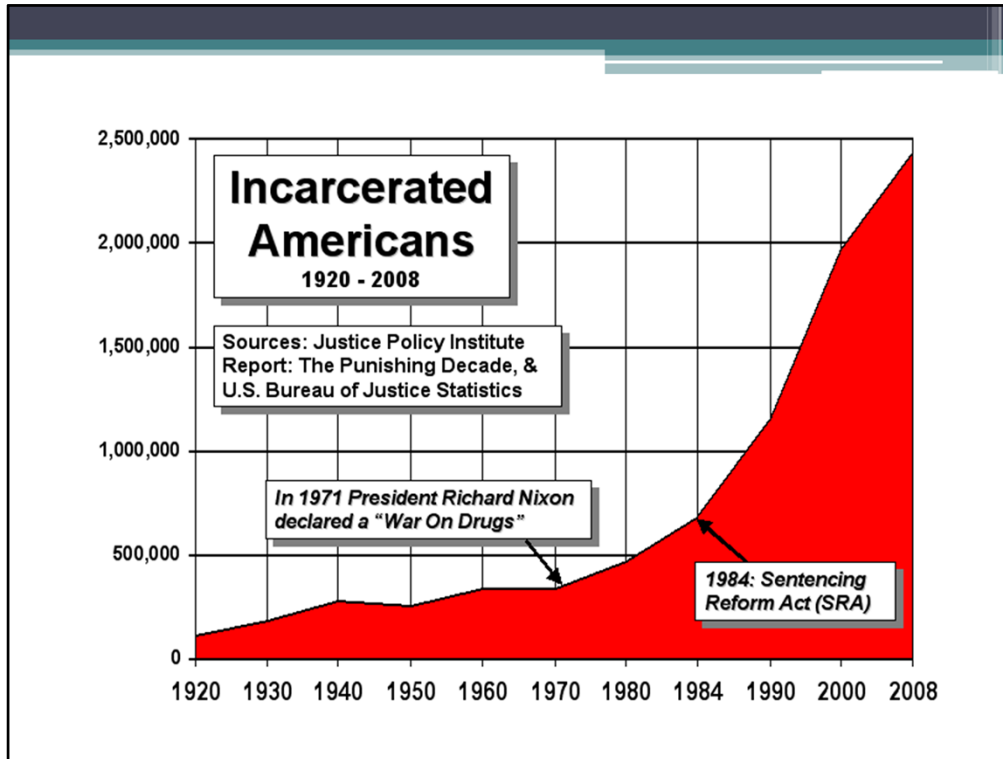
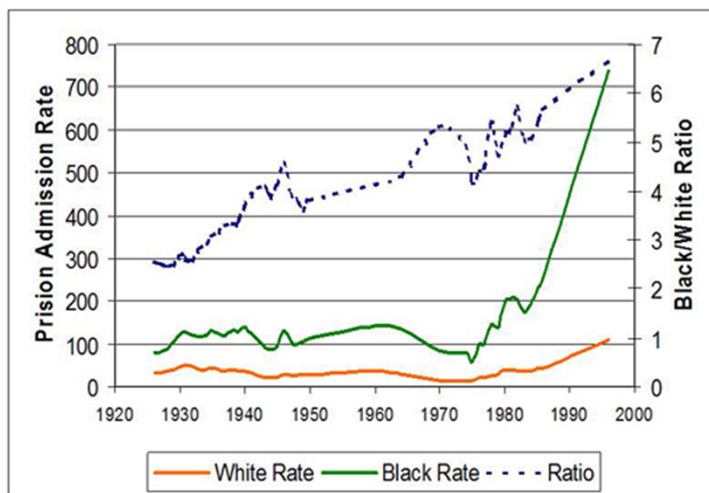


Incarceration as a Turning Point

Crime and the Life Course
SOC 401D



Black-White Ratio of Incarceration 1920-2000



Black-White Disparities in Incarceration

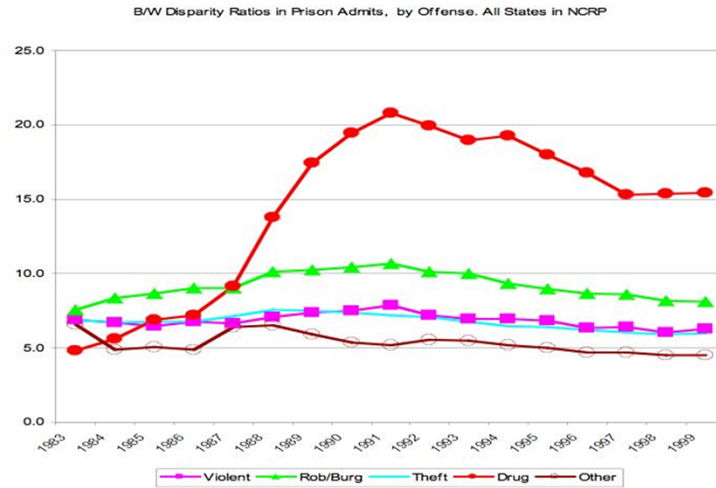
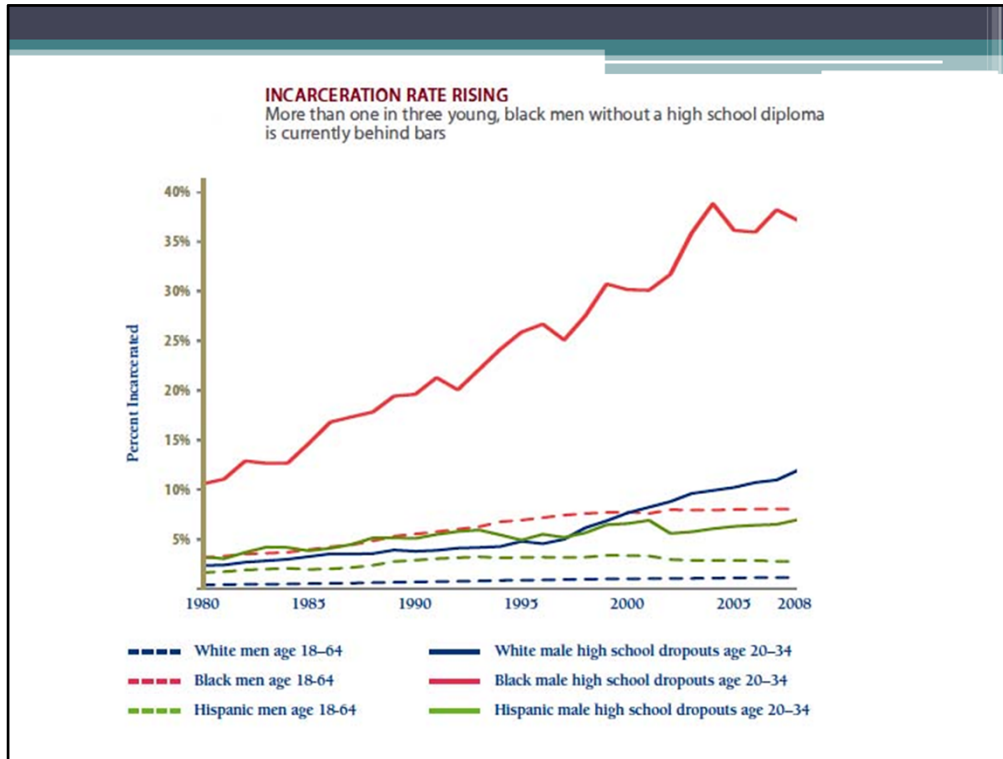
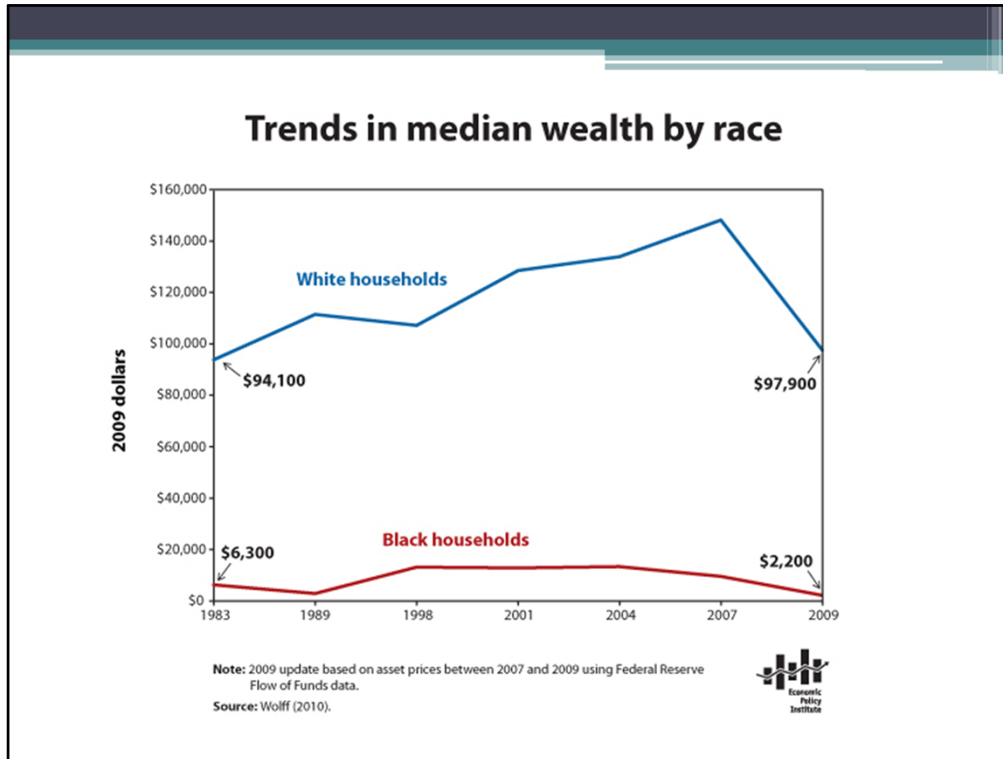


Chart shows ratio of Black to White rates of new prison sentences by offense group. Calculated by Pamela Oliver from National Corrections Reporting Program data on admissions to state prisons.





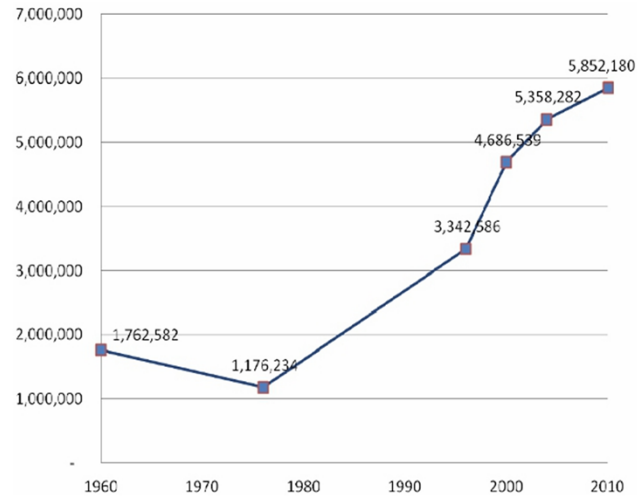
Theoretical Framework: Braithwaite's Reintegrative Shaming

- Need to Avoid the Negative Effects of Labeling
 - Stigmatizing the offender
 - Cut offenders off from conventional society
- Alternative: Reintegrative Shaming
 - Shame the offender informally
 - Community expresses disapproval
 - Get the offender to repent
 - Forgive and forget
 - Reintegrate back to society
 - Restore individual rights of citizenship
 - Educational programs
 - Jobs programs
 - Restorative justice
- Ideal: Japanese Society

Current Situation in the United States: Jobs

- Around 12 Million Felons of Working Age
- Difficult for Ex-Felons to Obtain Jobs
 - EEO & Civil Rights Laws prevent employment discrimination against felons when it results in a racial disparity.
 - Unless business necessity is shown
 - Typically, felons are barred from occupations requiring a license
 - Some states bar felons from certain jobs (e.g., health care); a few have barred felons from all public jobs
- Devah Pager: Audit Study
 - Felons significantly less likely to get a call back
 - Blacks significantly less likely to get a call back
- Result: Felons are unlikely to obtain steady employment

Felony Disenfranchisement 1960-2010

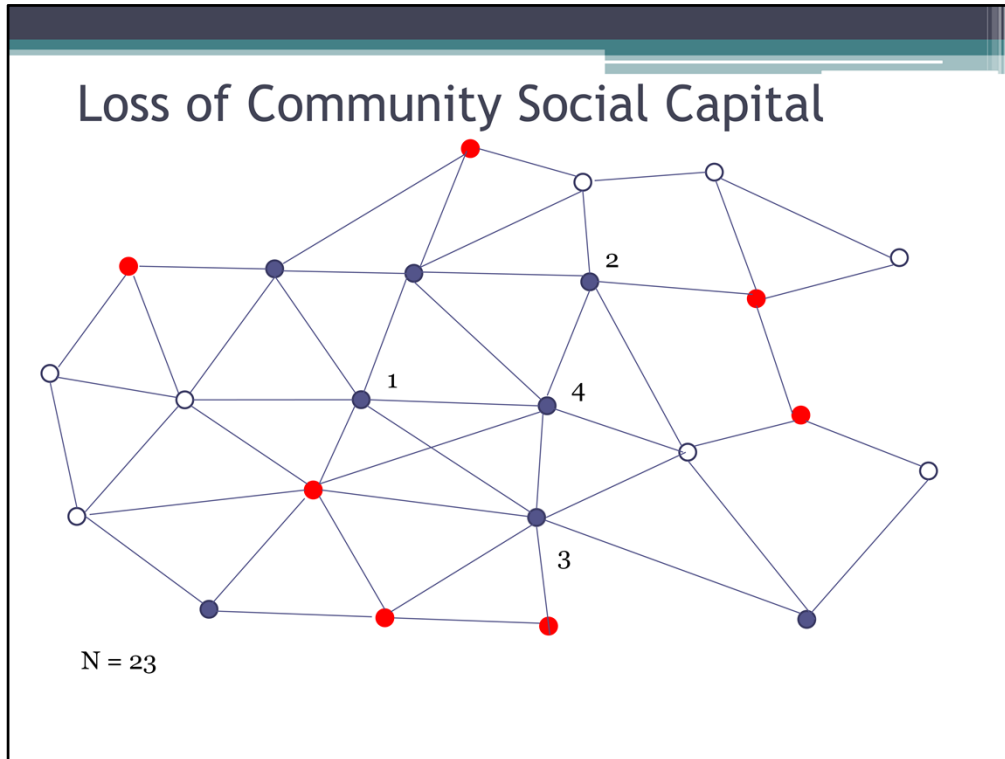


Civic Disenfranchisement

- About 5 million ex-felons in the US lack right to vote
 - Laws vary by states
 - Maine & Vermont: unrestricted voting rights to felons
 - 13 states: voting rights after incarceration is complete
 - Most states: voting rights returned after successful parole or probation
 - Disproportionately affects blacks
- Most western nations allow ex-felons to vote
- Uggen & Manza: Had felons been allowed to vote, several presidential and senatorial races would have reversed
 - Felons more likely to vote Democrat
 - Gore would have been President over Bush
 - Senate races would have gone Democrat in Texas (1978), Kentucky (1984, 1992), Florida (1988, 2004), Georgia (1992)
- Not represented in the political process
 - Inmate rights
 - Felony drug laws

Collateral Consequences: Families & Communities

- Disproportionately affects lower class black families & communities
- Father absence
 - Fewer resources, role models
 - Children poorer health, more problems, delinquency
- Loss of community social capital
 - Loss of social ties (resources), collective efficacy
 - Loss of economic resources
 - Trade-off: criminality vs. positive resources



Incarceration as a Turning Point

- 32% of noncollege black males have gone to prison by mid-thirties
 - 14% have served in the military
- 60% of black male high school dropouts will serve time in their lifetimes
- Experience of prison – time out
 - Total institution – loss of identity
 - Gangs, violence
 - Prison rape
- Ex-Felons have trouble getting jobs
- Cut off from conventional society

Incarceration as a Turning Point

- Some positive examples
 - Ex-felons take advantage of jobs programs, family support, turn their lives around
 - Drug rehabilitation
 - Cognitive behavioral therapy
 - Destructive self-talk, perseveration
 - Consistent with symbolic interactionism
 - “I can’t do it”
 - Significantly reduces recidivism for parolees
 - Hook for change, cognitive transformation, new self
 - One day at a time
- But all conditioned by opportunity structures for reentry

Conclusions

- Currently, criminologists are discussing community supervision over incarceration
 - Mass incarceration has failed
 - Politicians becoming more open to the idea
 - Community programs
- Last three years: incarceration rate has fallen slightly
- Changes in drug laws
 - Sentences for crack cocaine and powder are more similar
 - Reform of drug laws