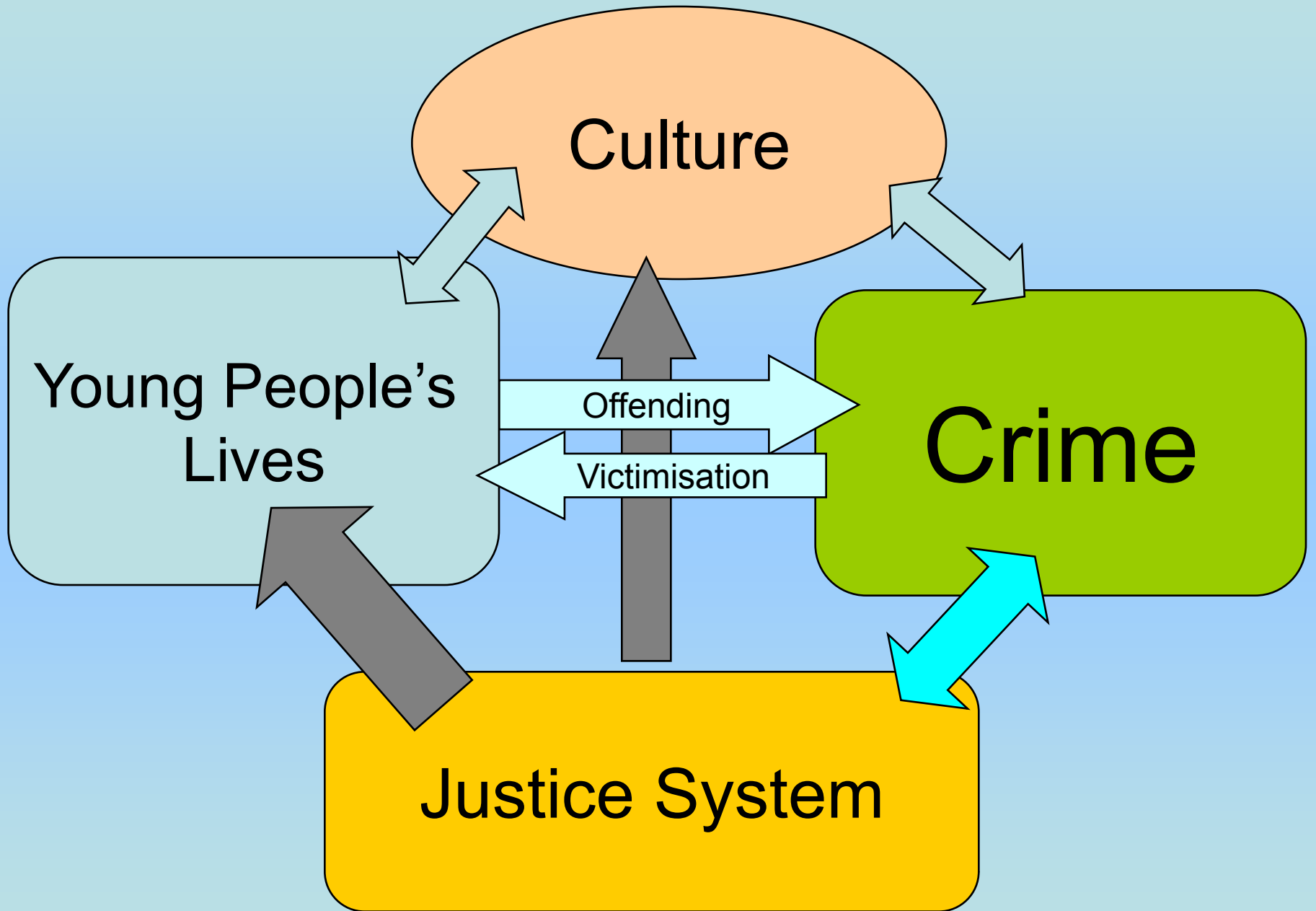


Troubles of Youth: Young People, Crime and Justice

Introductory Lecture
29TH September 2008

Lecture Outline

- An overview of our concerns
- Unit Administration
- Next Week



Troubles of Youth

- Key areas of concern
 - Unpacking the “youth-crime” nexus
 - Locating youthful offending and victimisation within a wider context of the diverse experiences of youth
 - Social construction of young people, and their cultural responses to the issues faced
 - Analysing the breadth of policy responses to the range of youth and crime related problems
 - Considering the impact of key institutions in young people’s lives

Images, Constructions and Realities

- ["Thugs" - Jack White](#)
- ["Young Crime" - Janine Irons](#)
- [Police Comments 1](#)
- [Police Comments 2](#)
- [Sex Pistols](#)
- [Kevin and Perry](#)
- [Vicki Pollard](#)

What is youth?

- Transition
 - childhood -> youth -> adulthood
 - All “up for debate”
 - Changing “Rites of passage”
- Storm and Stress
- **Uncontrolled freedom**; irresponsibility; vulgarity; rebellion; dangerousness
- **Deficiency**: vulnerability; neglect; deprived; immature

Crime not the only popular concern

- Education – declining standards; reliance on TV etc.
- Health – childhood obesity, mental health
- Family – decline of the nuclear family
- Culture – celebrity obsessed, materialistic
- Disconnected / disengaged
- Generalized Risk
- Machismo
- De-feminised female youth
- Sexual Behaviour – STDs, teen pregnancies

Crime not **our** only concern

Key Institutions

- the family
- communities
- peer groups
- education
- work
- leisure
- culture and subculture
- the Criminal Justice System

An especially British Concern?

Dimensions of Well-being	Average ranking for all 6 dimensions
Netherlands	4.2
Sweden	5
Finland	7.5
Spain	8
Switzerland	8.3
Italy	10
Ireland	10.2
Germany	11.2
Canada	11.8
France	13
Portugal	13.7
Hungary	14.5
United States	18
United Kingdom	18.2

Six dimensions of well-being:

1. Material Well-being;
2. Health and Safety;
3. Educational Well-being;
4. Family and peer relationship;
5. Behaviours and Risks;
6. Subjective well-being

“The true measure of a nation’s standing is how well it attends to its children – their health and safety, their material security, their education and socialization, and their sense of being loved, valued, and included in the families and societies into which they are born.”

Social Problems

- growing youth related social problems
- anomic young people, disconnected from mainstream society
- Social change hitting youth hardest
- Cultural adaptations work to exacerbate problem
- Positive interventions in communities & society: little hope for rehabilitation

Diversity of Youth

- Some young people are vulnerable: both to offending and victimisation
- Media focus on worst aspects
- The problems of young people are often exacerbated by formal and informal censure, but can work to reintegrate
- Social isolation can result in a downward spiral

Historical Myopia

- Young people are problematic, but have ever been so
- the contemporary reality is just a modern manifestation of the same social phenomenon
- Intervention acts to stigmatise young people
- moral panics have served to demonise youth

Moral Decline

- an irreversible and unprecedented shift to 'feral' 'out-of-control' youth
- education, family, religion, and social control meaningless and powerless in underclass
- youth culture triggering deviance
- punitive responses: beyond rehabilitation



Administration

- Lecture and Seminar every week starting next week
- Except:
 - No Seminar this week
 - Week Beginning 3rd November and 9th February Study Week

Wiki Site

- <http://troublesofyouth.pbwiki.com>
- Lots of useful information
- Please let me know what you think

Assessment

- **Assessment One: due Feb 2009:**
Essay (2500 words)
- **Assessment Two: due April 2009:**
Policy Case Study (2500 words)
- No exam

Next Week

- Before Seminar:
- Access Wiki site, and use the email registration
- Check which seminar group you are in
- Go to seminar
- Lecture: Application of Criminological Theory to issues of youth