

# Marxism, Crime & Deviance

The background of the slide is a solid light beige color. In the bottom right corner, there are several overlapping, wavy, light grey lines that create a sense of movement or depth, resembling stylized waves or a decorative graphic element.

# Traditional approaches

- Little written by Marx
- Bonger (1916)
- Chambliss (1975) – study of British vagrancy laws
  - Wage restriction
  - Highway robbery
- Key idea of exploitation

## Basis of Criminal Law

- Criminal law reflects interests of ruling class

## Law creation & dominant hegemony

- Imposition of values
- Laws based upon dominant values

## Law enforcement

- Interpretation & enforcement in favour of ruling class

## Individual motivation

- Crime as outcome of individualistic values
- Poor driven to crime

# Crime & control

Box (1983)

- Release from social control leads to crime
- 5 elements can weaken capitalist bonds:
  - Secrecy
    - White collar crime
  - Skills
  - Supply
  - Symbolic support
    - Neutralisation – Matza (1961)
  - Social support

Cohen (1985)

Key themes in changing social control

- Penetration
- Size & density
- Identity & visibility

- Crime useful –
  - diverts attention
  - Justifies heavy policing of w/class areas

# Punishment

- Rusche & Kirchheimer
  - Punishment reflects interests of ruling classes
  - Changes according to interests

# Criticisms

- Victims of crime ignored
- Harm done ignored
- No allowance for complex influences on law-breaking
- Jones (1998) – capitalism does not always lead to high crime rates
- Feminists – ignores influence of patriarchy