

Moral Panic

Definition

A MORAL PANIC IS A FEELING OF FEAR SPREAD AMONG MANY PEOPLE THAT SOME EVIL THREATENS THE WELL-BEING OF SOCIETY. ... STANLEY COHEN STATES THAT MORAL PANIC HAPPENS WHEN "A CONDITION, EPISODE, PERSON OR GROUP OF PERSONS EMERGES TO BECOME DEFINED AS A THREAT TO SOCIETAL VALUES AND INTERESTS

Examples of Moral Panics

Example 1 - (The 'mods' and 'rockers')

ONE OF THE FIRST MORAL PANICS OCCURRED IN THE 1960s, WITH THE MEDIAS' PORTRAYAL OF THE CLASHES BETWEEN **MODS** AND **ROCKERS**. THE MEDIA PORTRAYED THE EVENT IN A SENSATIONAL WAY, WITH LAWLESS GANGS FIGHTING EACH OTHER IN DRAMATIC BATTLES



Example 2 – Knife Crime

Read the article about the media's moral panic over knife crime. Answer the following: Are the media representations distorted and how would this affect public perception?

bit.ly/the_sun_knife-crime

Knife Crime as a Moral Panic

Explain How Knife Crime could be regarded as an example of a moral panic

Stages of Moral Panic

Stage 1

Stage 2

Stage 3

Stage 6

Stage 5

Stage 4

Deviance Amplification and Moral Panic

DEVIANCY AMPLIFICATION IS A TERM USED BY CRIMINOLOGIST TO REFER TO THE WAY LEVELS OF DEVIANCE OR CRIME CAN BE INCREASED BY THE SOCIETAL REACTION TO DEVIANCE ITSELF. FOR EXAMPLE, IF THERE IS A MORAL PANIC ABOUT SOMETHING THIS EFFECTIVELY ADVERTISES IT. FOR EXAMPLE, THE 'LONDON' BEGAN IN ONE AREA OF LONDON BUT QUICKLY SPREAD THROUGH THE CITY AND THEN TO OTHER COUNTIES. LATER OFFENDERS WERE ONLY AWARE OF THE RIOTS THROUGH ITS REPORTING ON 24-HOUR NEWS BROADCASTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA – THEREFORE THE REPORTING OF THE ORIGINAL DEVIANCE **AMPLIFIED** IT.

Explain How the London Riots can be seen as an example of 'Deviance Amplification'
