What is deviance?

- **Definition:** any behavior, belief, or condition that violates significant social norms in society, OR within the group in which it occurs.

- **Key Issues:**
  - Who defines what deviance is?
  - How much is there?
  - Why does it occur?
Deviance in Sport: Challenges

Why is it difficult to study deviance in sport?

• Too much variation in what can be considered deviance
• Deviant behavior in broader society may be normative within sports
• “Over-conformity” deviance
• Medicalization of sport training and performance
Substance Abuse

- What substances are abused in sports?
  - Anabolic-steroids
  - Nutritional supplements
  - Recreational drug use

- How widespread is use?
  - General pattern is increase with time in sport

- History of abuse
  - Evidence from Greeks to modern era
Why does abuse happen?

- Drug-using Culture
- Social Status accorded successful athletes
- Perceptions of what is necessary to compete
- Coaching pressure
- Ambiguity in relationship between big-time sports and drug companies
  - sport sponsors, owners, etc.
Drug Testing

- Does it work?
- Concerns:
  - Athletes’ rights (4th Amendment)
  - Validity of tests
  - Who is responsible?
- Alternatives
  - drug education
Eating Disorders

- Two majors
  - anorexia nervosa
  - bulimia nervosa

- Gender
  - 93% of victims are women
  - 20 to 60% experience at some point in career
Gambling

Problems of gambling?

• Fixing outcomes
• Most likely targets?
  • Collegiate sports--particularly men’s football and basketball
• Why Collegians?
  • Popularity of sports
  • low incomes for players
Violence

- Most serious form of deviance
- Definitions:
  - Aggression: behavior that has the potential to, or does, injure another person, either psychologically or physically
  - Violence: specifically physically assaultive behavior that has potential to or does injure another person or persons
Theories of Violence in Sports

- Instinctive aggression theories
  - sports represent important safety valve

- Frustration-Aggression theories
  - frustration is triggering mechanism, with sports as outlet

- Social Learning theories
  - learning through observed and experienced reinforcement for aggressive behavior
Levels of Violence in Sports

- Brutal Body Contact
- Borderline violence
  - illegal violence but routinely utilized
- Quasi-criminal violence
  - violations of rules and player norms
- Criminal violence
  - actual violations of criminal statutes
Sources of player violence

- Television and media
  - rough play glamorized
  - pseudo-sport culture
- Fans
  - fan interest associated with violence
- Player pressure to succeed
- Team pressures to be aggressive
  - coaches, owners, organizations
Off-field Violence

- Violence against women
  - gender norms in sports
  - generalization from sports to civilian activity
- Hazing
- Sport Fan Violence
  - decreasing civility on wider society
  - watching violent sports is catalyst
  - “perceived injustice”
- Situational factors