Ryan O’Connor

behaviour. Therefore another reason for the importance of maintaining social order would be power and authority to combat this unwanted behaviour, as if everyone did as they please society would be in chaos. So legal systems are maintained by the government to threaten imprisonment to these deviants who otherwise would cause harm to others in society.

Social stratification refers to a system in which society ranks people within a hierarchy. This impacts all individuals as with this hierarchy comes a perceived social worth based on the amount of wealth and/or power you may have. Class, race and gender all play a part in this and as a result people at the top of this pyramid could be said to be privileged, while limiting certain peoples chances in life if you are at the bottom. For example, society’s way of thinking deems women inferior to men, resulting in unfair wages in the workplace. There are three types of stratification systems. Estate - the elite who owns property and has control over resources. Caste - rigid hierarchy of classes. Class - status is partially achieved and there is some potential for movement between classes. This idea of social mobility may be limited by the culture of poverty - the fact that poverty is a way of life inherited from generation to generation. When looking at consensus and conflict theories of stratification, consensus/functionalist theories convey that those who work hardest and succeed have greater chances in life, while conflict/marxism emphasises that the most vital jobs in society are usually the least rewarded. Action theory argues that individuals help create society as they act and interact in socially meaningful ways.

References/Bibliography: