DEVIANT BEHAVIOR

Readings in the Sociology of Norm Violations

CLIFTON D. BRYANT

ROUTLEDGE

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Readings in the Sociology of Norm Violations

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DEVIANT BEHAVIOR: Readings in the Sociology of Norm Violations

This volume is affectionately dedicated to the memory of Edward Sagarin.

The author thanks Xiang Chen and Li Li for their invaluable assistance with the indexing of this volume.

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Contents

PART 4 DEVIANCE AS BEHAVIOR

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Preface

The journal *Deviant Behavior* was founded more than a decade ago. It was to be unique in that it was to be the only extant journal that addressed the topic of social deviance specifically and exclusively. It succeeded in that purpose and remains today the sole professional journal totally devoted to that theme. Over the years various issues have contained articles on a wide variety of deviant behavioral patterns as well as theoretical, methodological, or conceptual issues. The articles have evidently been both insightful and utilitarian to many social scientists inasmuch as many have been cited in numerous books and journals and, according to reports from professional colleagues around the country, have been used for pedagogical purposes in courses such as deviant behavior and criminology, to mention two. It was this latter utility that was the progenesis of this volume.

Because various issues of the journal have contained so many articles that were revealing, intuitive, and imaginatively instructive in illuminating the deviant segment of the human social enterprise, it seemed a shame that they were not more readily available to students for classroom use. Thus, the decision was made to assemble a representative sample of articles into an integrated anthology that would address the major dimensions of social deviance. The resulting anthology was to be something of a showcase volume for the journal, presenting some of its best articles.

This volume contains a comprehensive set of readings that examine the full range of pedogogical concerns in the area of deviant behavior. Additionally,

each set of readings is introduced, examined, and connected by appropriate editorial commentary.

The volume begins with an editorial introduction to the concepts of social norms, sanctions, the process of social control, and the deviant violation of social norms. Chapter 2 addresses the form and content of deviance. Deviance research and understanding are the subject of Chapter 3. Chapter 4 examines the social interpretation and reaction to deviance. Chapter 5 explores the cultural patterns of deviance and Chapter 6 the social organization of the deviant world. Chapter 7 addresses the way in which deviants adapt to their particular situations. In Chapter 8, deviance is investigated as different types of social interaction and in Chapter 9 as a social process with an outcome. Chapter 10 focuses on deviance in the workplace to demonstrate how deviance is frequently imbedded in a larger social process—in this case the work setting. Chapter 11 looks at the process of discontinuing or withdrawing from deviance and returning to more conformist behavior. Chapter 12 concludes the book with an editorial assessment of what the future may hold for normative systems, social sanctions, deviant behavior patterns, and the social reaction to deviance.

Although this book is titled *Deviant Behavior,* the subtitle is *Readings in the Sociology of Norm Violation.* The words *norm violation* were specially chosen inasmuch as deviance at its simplest operational level can be defined as the violation of social rules or norms. By focusing on the process of norm violation—regardless of whether such behavioral vagarancies actually constitute crimes, social problems, socially dysfunctional behavior, or a manifestation of aberrant inclinations—any judgmental or idiosyncratic bias is, I hope, avoided. Deviant behavior is, indeed, relative, and in the land of the blind the sighted person is not only king but a deviant as well!

Although there are a number of anthologies on deviant behavior in print and frequently used in sociology courses, I believe this volume has several advantages. All of the readings from the issues of *Deviant Behavior* are relatively new (from the 1980s), are fresh, and, with few exceptions, have not appeared in other anthologies. Some edited volumes have articles that date back decades, and many of the readings in such anthologies have been recycled numerous times. All of the readings in the present volume were selected with an eye toward readability and student appeal. Rather than simply being a collated set of disparate articles, these readings are integrated into a well-structured conceptual framework—articulated and discussed, along with the articles, in the editorial commentaries. Many theoretical postures, methodological approaches, and substantive content are explored in the readings. Various deviance-related issues also are examined. Such a package will, I hope, provide a provocative, insightful, and thoughtful consideration of deviant behavior. I believe that you, too, will find this collection of readings to be both engaging and informative.

This anthology was originally to have been a coedited project. Edward Sagarin, a member of *Deviant Behavior's* Editorial Policy Board since its

founding, was to have been my coeditor. We worked together on the idea for, and the structure of, the volume and had formally proposed the notion to Hemisphere Publishing Corporation. Tragically, Dr. Sagarin died suddenly before we could finalize plans for the book. Ed was very enthusiastic about the enterprise, and its thus seems appropriate to dedicate the book to his memory. I have been severely handicapped in writing the editorial exposition in that whatever I have said he could have said better and in a more organized fashion. Dr. Sagarin made a significant contribution to the original conceptual planning of the book. The book's defects and shortcomings are entirely mine, however.

Dr. Dan Dotter of Grambling University carefully reviewed draft chapters of the editorial commentaries and made many helpful suggestions, for which he is sincerely thanked. Ms. Pat Baker worked long and hard, "above and beyond the call of duty," typing original drafts and revised versions of the chapters, preparing articles, and organizing the materials to be sent to the publisher. This process was made more difficult by the fact that I was in Taiwan on a Fulbright grant during the 1987–1988 academic year while she was in the United States, and communication was very much long distance. She is entitled to a large measure of gratitude for her efforts. I also thank Ms. Cindy Crawford and Ms. Machell Schmolitz for typing some of the editorial material. Ms. Sherri L. McGuyer, my summer secretary, handled correspondence concerning the book and also typed some of the editorial material. Finally, my wife, Patty Bryant, is due a special debt of gratitude for her tireless work in typing drafts in the muggy heat of Taipei for transmission back to the United States.

Clifton D. Bryant

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Part One

Introducing Deviance

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Chapter One

The Social Context

EDITORIAL COMMENTARY

All living creatures live according to "rules" and "laws." The simpler animals behave in accordance with "laws" created and enforced by nature. Their compliance is constituent to their biological nature. They are physiologically "programmed," as it were. Fish, for example, often move in tremendous groupings known as "schools." As they swim in these schools, they move and turn, seemingly in almost perfect unison with every dart and dive synchronized simultaneously among all who make up the school. Compliance with the "traffic rules" is accomplished by means of ultra sensitivity to water pressure and electrochemical signals among the fish, and their programmed biological response.

The animals higher on the phylogenic ladder, such as the mammals, are also genetically programmed to respond to the laws of nature but they have somewhat more behavioral latitude in how they carry out the biological mandates. The exercise of "territoriality," for instance, is characteristic of

many species of fish, birds, and animals. In effect, the creatures must compete for a certain amount of space and territory if they and their offspring are to survive. Among mammals (and other species as well) it's the male that defends the area and his mate. This competition for real estate is a survival mechanism, and the territorial instinct and sexual appetite are "profoundly intermeshed" as some writers (Audrey, 1966) have pointed out. In many species, the female is unresponsive to an "unpropertied" male (Audrey, 1966:3). Nature, thus, discourages the reproduction of offspring where there are not sufficient resources to sustain them. Within the framework of this natural instinct the individual animals may sometimes exercise this territorial imperative in a somewhat idiosyncratic fashion. They may be more or less aggressive than other similar animals of the same species in defending their territory and herein lies the mechanism of "selection of the fittest." There are also non-biological dimensions to such behavior in that one wire-haired terrier may be ferociously aggressive in defending his "turf"—his owner's yard and surroundings—while another may be almost passive. The ways in which the respective dogs are raised, their relationship with their owner, and other "social" factors, in addition to differential hormonal considerations, may impact on their behavior. The higher animals, then, may behave somewhat differently on an individual basis in complying with the rules of nature.

Humans, like other animals, also have some biological programming, but much more limited in extent. They experience physiological disequilibrium in the form of the hunger drive and the sex drive, to mention some biological imperatives. How they respond to these biological mandates is socially determined. Everyone becomes hungry, but how, what, and when this hunger is assuaged, is usually a function of the society in which one lives, the culture of that society, and the social beliefs and rules of eating and nutrition that are component to the culture.

HUMANS AND THE SOCIAL ORDER

Beyond the biological drives, and the responses to these drives that are socially shaped, humans have the need to coordinate their behavior if they are to successfully live together in a social group. To this end, they effect rules—or norms of behavior. This can be simply demonstrated by an attempt of two (or more) individuals to occupy a small, potentially unstable boat. They must immediately determine which part of the boat each is to occupy and agree on that placement. Beyond this, they must establish precautionary measures such as not leaning out too far beyond the boat, and certainly not both (or all) doing so at the same time (so as not to capsize), as well as procedures for propelling the boat, such as who will steer, who will

row, who will row on one side and who will row on the other, etc. Failure to perfect rules to accomplish these things may well cause the boat to sink, or at least sit still in the water with no purposive direction. In this instance, then, to be successful in sharing the boat and making it go somewhere, there must be rules and agreement to abide by the rules (and, of course, compliance).

Other more complicated social situations require a more complex set of rules. Two or more individuals attempting to live together in a room or an apartment have to quickly establish rules. Who lives in which bedroom? Who sleeps in which bed? At what time is it necessary to turn down the volume of the radio or television at night in order that the other(s) may go to sleep? How are the rent, utilities, food costs, and other expenses to be shared? Who cooks, who washes dishes, who cleans up, and when, how often, etc., etc., etc.? Rules concerning the bathroom may be especially important because of differential time schedules of the occupants. One person may have to leave for work earlier. Here again, to successfully share the apartment, the occupants will have to establish rules, and then agree to abide by the rules (and, of course, comply with the rules).

Where a group of individuals is shipwrecked, and then marooned on a desert island, there will obviously be a need for a prompt institution of a relatively complex set of rules if the group is, indeed, going to enjoy any prospect of survival. The complex rules will probably include a division of labor, some form of group decision making and a means of enforcing those decisions, and the development of a collective goal supported by all. There will also be a need for establishment of appropriate proscriptions and prescriptions for the more routine day-to-day activities as well as guidelines for interpersonal interaction. Only in this way could the group accomplish to provide for the needs of its members and either survive until rescued, or until a means of escape could be devised, constructed and implemented.

In all of these examples, the boat "crew," the roommates, or the castaway group, what would be needed is a preordained organization of behavior— "a social order." Societies, small or large, have the same need or problem. In order to exist and endure—to survive—a social order must be established and enforced.

THE ORIGIN OF A SOCIAL ORDER

A social order, in the form of a set or system of rules or social norms comes about in various ways. Laws and rules may be instituted or declared by fiat on the part of some hereditary rules, king, or chieftain (i.e., "the divine right of kings") or by a charismatic leader, on the basis of being omniscient as well as omnipotent. They may also be issued by persons occupying posi-

tions of high hierarchical status on the basis of the authority vested in the position, ("standing" orders or procedures, or "orders of the day" as issued by the Captain of a ship, or the Commanding General of a military base), or their assumed technical expertise (some regulation promulgated by the Director of some federal agency or bureau). Laws, rules, or instructions can even emanate from entities in other worlds—deities, the dead, spirits, or supernatural force, to mention but some. Enactments based on pronouncements, messages, or signs from such entities, of course, need an agent, intermediary, or emissary, such as a religious leader, who has "divine guidance," (a Pope, for example), a medium through whom the dead speak, a witch doctor, oracle, soothsayer, or diviner, who can interpret signs and unnatural events. Moses received the golden tablets directly from God and transported them back down the mountain to instruct the Israelites. Joseph Smith accomplished much the same when he dictated the Book of Mormon directly from the golden plates. Medicine men or witch doctors may have visions that serve as communications from the gods or the dead. Oracles may interpret storms, or earthquakes, or the eruptions of volcanoes as particular mandates of deities or supernatural forces for specific behavioral responses on the part of humans.

Laws and rules may also come from less divine or regal sources. Behavioral instructions in the forms of legislation, statutes, or ordinances, may be issued by a tribal council of elders, a board of aldermen, a school board, a group of city commissioners, a church synod, board of elders, or a regulatory agency. They may emanate from more of a "grassroots" level social entity such as a town meeting of citizens, the vote of a church congregation, a national plebiscite on some issue, a student body referendum, a union balloting, the showing of hands at a neighborhood association meeting, or simply, the consensus of the members of a 2-table bridge group, a small bird-watcher's club, or a slum street gang.

All such rules—be they by-laws, directives, ordinances, laws, codes, or regulations—serve to guide and direct some aspect of social behavior. In effect, they proscribe (prohibit) or prescribe (advocate) certain conduct, and also circumscribe and dictate the circumstances, conditions, contingencies, and contexts of such conduct. The rules are usually linked to some attendant sanctions— punishments and/or rewards to motivate compliance. In a society (or even on a smaller scale such as a community) there are many entities that issue or promulgate rules. Denominational bodies and local churches formulate rules regarding both religious behavior and religious thought in the form of theology (Catholics, for example, are expected to participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation at regular intervals, and must believe in the Immaculate Conception and the Holy Trinity, as items of faith). States legally require that children attend school until a particular age, school boards issue directives concerning educational policy, and local

school administrations create day-to-day rules for the conduct of classes, and the behavior of students. The U.S. government, through its Department of Labor, has developed a complex set of safety rules for the work place, which are administered and monitored by its subsidiary Occupational Health and Safety Administration. Most counties have a health board or health agency which institutes health rules for persons involved in food preparation (appropriate medical tests for cooks, for example), and standards of cleanliness and sanitation for establishments that serve food (periodic checks for insects, rodents, unsanitary conditions in the kitchen, etc.). States, counties, or cities may have fire codes which specify standards of safety in regard to fire hazards, and "Fire Marshalls" to enforce them. Contractors, carpenters, plumbers, and electricians, to name but some craftsmen, are subject to a wide variety of building codes in the construction of a house, or the installation of electrical wiring, appliances, plumbing fixtures, or additions or modifications to an existing structure. The use of certain types of wiring, pipes, electrical outlets, or building materials may be required for safety and aesthetic reasons. Individuals are subject to rules when they drive their automobile (traffic laws and ordinances), are usually required to carry liability insurance on their automobiles, and are subject to a number of rules and requirements in acquiring and using a driver's license. The Federal Aeronautics Administration lays down numerous rules and regulations in regard to qualifying for a pilot's license, the maintenance of airplanes, and the process of flying on an airplane itself. The Federal Communications Commission regulates the acquisition of a license to operate a shortwave radio, and the operation of a radio or television station as well. Farmers, ranchers, and dairymen are all subject to rules and controls imposed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in connection with raising crops, livestock, and producing milk. Food processors are similarly regulated and controlled. Persons who hunt and fish for sport, or fish and gather shellfish commercially are subject to a number of rules (game and fish laws). The conduct of recreation and sport is subject to many rules, ranging from boating (Coast Guard or various state safety and boating regulations) to playing board games (all played according to historical and traditional rules), to organized sports (which are played not only according to traditional rules, but also governed by league, and conference rules).

Marriage, the family, and the behavior of members of the family are all subject to social rules that include state control of requirements for obtaining a license to marry, the specification of conditions for the dissolution of marriage (divorce laws) to the control of the behavior of husband and wife in a marriage (domestic relations laws). The list of formal rules impinging on social behavior is almost endless and could go on for volumes. Beyond the formal rules are the vast array of informal rules that operate within all sorts of formal and informal groups and settings, and the variety of societal

values and attitudes that specify a preference for a particular kind of thought, action, or feeling. According to prevailing societal values, one *should* feel patriotic when the flag passes by, or sad when it is learned that a relative has died. It is *better* to be honest rather than be dishonest, truthful rather than tell a falsehood, and to be altruistic rather than to be selfish. It may be customary for a group of factory workers to stop at a particular bar close to the factory when they get off work and to have a few beers. The worker who might have another preference for place or activity would find himself under considerable pressure to "follow the crowd." The individual discovers that he or she is subject to informal rules that exist within the family, among neighbors, within the church congregation, between friends, among office workers, fellow students, or military servicemen in the same unit, or among fellow participants in a wide variety of leisure activities, to name but some.

In short, the individual lives in a world of rules—a veritable "jungle" of rules—as it were, all supported by sanctions of one kind or another to motivate compliance with the rules. Most rules are assumed to specify behavior that is correct, appropriate, timely, and desirable and, thus, that which is "normal." The rules of normality are, then, what people ought to or should be doing. From these assumptions is derived the term "norm" to generically encompass all of the rules, regulations, laws, statutes, ordinances, and preferences discussed above. The term "norm" would seem to suggest a modal frequency or form of behavior but such is not the case. The social "norms" are ideal statements of specified behavior but, in reality, in many instances only a minority of the members of a society may conform to many norms. Nevertheless, because it is felt that the norms proscribe or prescribe that which is socially desirable (even at an ideal level), the norms are theoretically enforced even if only a small percentage of the public is inclined to so behave. The multitude of norms in a society, plus the attendant motivational mechanisms for compliance, then make up "social order."

THE FORMS OF NORMS AND THE MORAL ORDER

Social norms vary greatly in terms of the types of behavior that they are designed to govern or control. At the level of least social consequence are the norms pertaining to relatively mundane and regular, everyday, conduct. These norms are known as *folkways* (Sumner, 1906). Folkways are rules governing behavior of no great social import or consequences. Such behavior is often grouped into subsystems with distinctive names or labels. Included in such behavior might be the norms pertaining to eating (table manners), the norms governing language usage (correct grammar), or the norms governing appropriate interactional behavior (manners or the "social

graces"). We speak of being considerate of others in our interaction such as saying "thanks," or "excuse me," or "I'm pleased to meet you," etc. as politeness or civility. Chivalry refers to the norms of solicitous and helpful behavior toward women, children, and the elderly. Etiquette encompasses the norms such as sending "thank you" notes to acknowledge gifts, sending letters of condolence to acquaintances who have had family members die, or introducing a friend to a person who joins the group. Clothing and personal neatness norms may be subsumed under "good grooming." All of these and thousands of other commonplace behaviors, ranging from covering one's mouth when yawning to conversing softly and minimizing speech while in a library, to being punctual for an appointment, would all quality as folkways. Folkways seldom have severe sanctions, and violators of such norms are generally not severely sanctioned. The folkways are not considered to be of great social consequence because it is believed that even in the face of massive violations of such norms, the existence and continuation of society would not be imperiled. In short, violation of the folkways might make for a less efficient or a more disagreeable society, but does not pose a real threat to the social fabric of life.

Folkways are of two varieties, the interactive folkways, and the technical folkway (Bryant, 1984: 118–124). Interactive folkways refer to "the normative behavior patterns constituent to social interaction such as polite address, appropriate gestures, and conversational propriety." Technical folkways, on the other hand are rules or requirements regarding the selection of certain tools or implements to accomplish a particular task, and the utilization of these tools or implements in a specific fashion or manner. As with social behavior, we are constrained to use designated tools and implements and in a socially indicated manner, as well as specified techniques and procedures. There are sanctions attendant to the technical folkways as well as the interactive folkways. An example of a technical folkway might be the cultural specification for eating with a particular set of implements (chopsticks, perhaps). Beyond the selection of particular implements is the questions of how the implements are to be used. Americans cut meat by holding the fork in the left hand and the knife in the right hand, making the cut and then putting down the knife and transferring the fork from the left hand to the right hand before using it to spear the meat portion and move it to the mouth. The English and other Europeans begin the same way but do not transfer the fork from one have to another. Instead, they simply keep the fork in the left hand after cutting, and move the meat portion to the mouth with the fork in the left hand. Other technical folkways might be the use of a particular "traditional" recipe to cook certain foods, or writing from a specified side of the page to the other (such as here in the U.S. writing from the left to the right). One technical folkway may actually dictate another. Japanese saws are made in such a way that they cut on the pull stroke as

opposed to American saws that cut on the push stroke. The Japanese by virtue of being constrained to select that particular type of saw as being the appropriate tool are also mechanically constrained to cut wood with a pull stroke on the saw which in turn produces a fine cut better suited for meticulous joinery work. There are sanctions for violation of technical folkways as well as interactive folkways. A person who attempted to eat the vegetables on his plate with a spoon rather than a fork would likely be laughed at by his table companions. Likewise an individual who made a very traditional food dish using a totally inappropriate recipe would be subject to criticism and ridicule. In some instances, however, the violation of a technical folkway could invoke a formal sanction. Failure to wear the legally prescribed seat belt when driving or riding in the front seat of an automobile, in some states, could mean a fine of $75.00 or more. The violation of some OSHA regulations in the workplace could likewise bring a heavy fine on the owner of the business.

The term *mores* refers to norms that are considered essential to the existence of social life and the continuation of society. Violations of the mores are seen as serious offenses and usually sanctioned severely. Members of society tend to feel very strongly about mores and public compliance with them while, on the other hand, there is usually a low intensity of feeling about the folkways and their violation. Examples of mores would be the prohibition against murder and theft, and the obligation to be loyal to one's country rather than betray it to an enemy nation, and to nurture and protect one's children. If murder and theft were not prohibited and severely sanctioned, individuals would not feel safe leaving their home lest they fall prey to killers and robbers, and social life as we know it would be impossible. Similarly a nation that was betrayed by its citizens could not prevail. Where people routinely mistreated, neglected, brutalized, or abandoned their children, family life could not exist, and children could not grow into healthy, mature, responsible, and productive adults to carry on social life. Understandably, the mores are viewed as essential to society and its members. Aside from prohibitions against murder and theft, perhaps the most socially controlled area of human behavior is sexual behavior. Sexual norms of a wide and complex variety carefully define and circumscribe what is believed to be "proper" and "natural" sexual behavior. Uncontrolled sexual behavior is believed to be especially disruptive to social life. Accordingly, violations of the norms, such as sexual violence, homosexual or other "unnatural" sexual activity, the production or consumption of pornography, or sex with a child are all seen as serious threats (albeit to differing degrees) to social life. Furthermore society harbors strong beliefs that marriage and family stability, and the ability to successfully rear children in the family are all essential to the continuity of social life and that they are only possible where

sexual behavior is carefully regulated and controlled. Adultery or incest then would pose a hazard to the stability of marriage and the family.

Where social norms, folkways and mores become formalized to the extent of being enacted as legislation or ordinances and enforced with equally formalized sanctions, we speak of them as *laws*. The enactment of a norm into law is not directly related to the socially perceived seriousness of the violation. One may, for example, see signs in a post office or courthouse in some rural communities admonishing the citizenry not to spit on the walls and indicating that a legal fine may be levied if they do. It may be, however, that some social norms perceived as far more serious, will not be formulated as law, nor will there be a legal sanction.

Where behavior has simply evolved into a normative pattern over a period of time, we may label it as a *custom*. If the custom is widely recognized and if there is either some personal compulsion to continue it, or public encouragement to comply with the norm, it may come to be termed a *tradition*. Social norms and their compliance are not value free. We may view the compliance with some regulatory norm, perhaps such as a city ordinance to only water lawns after 6:00 p.m. for conservation purposes, as essentially a matter of practicality but attach little emotional meaning to the norm or its enforcement. There is, however, often very deep emotional content to many norms, and few norms without some intensity of feeling.

As a case in point, many people tend to drive particular "paths" as they travel about in their community. An individual may come to drive from home to town and back using a particular route. Over a period of time this become the routine route. The choice of the route can be said to have become *habituated*. The individual's wife may have used a different route to drive to town and back home and her route may have also become *habituated*. Both now have come to think of their route as the best, the proper, and the appropriate route to take and may even rationalize the habituated route as the shortest, the quickest, the safest, or whatever. One day the wife rides with the husband to town and he takes his habituated route. The wife becomes distressed because he is not taking the "proper or appropriate" route and criticizes his choice of a route as imprudent. Both husband and wife have developed and emotional involvement in their respective routes. Where many members of a society (or a community) come to attach emotional meaning to a particular habituated pattern of behavior, it is said to have become institutionalized. They feel that the behavior is correct and proper, and perhaps even "normal." That particular behavior becomes valued and those members of society defend it, believe in it, and sometimes try to persuade everyone to support or engage in it to the extent of making it a norm with strong sanctions. It may be that those who bring about the norm are not necessarily in the majority, but are in a position to force their perspectives on others. Antipornography ordinances have often been

enacted because of pressure from a limited segment of the population, and the ordinances may tend to reflect the views of those who were responsible for their enactment in terms of what is defined by them as pornographic. Western Missionaries in some folk societies have sought to change the sexual patterns of the native peoples in the belief that their traditional sexual behavior was not "natural" or "proper." Instead, they often attempted to encourage Western sexual patterns in such matters as coital position with particular preference for what the natives laughingly called the "missionary position."

Institutionalization does only come about through the development of ego involvement in a habituated pattern of behavior. In the process of rationalizing certain conduct as preferential or desired, members of a society may attribute ethnocentric, theological, or even magical importance to such behavior. Thus, we may come to view certain behavior as being the "American" way and alternate or contrary behavior as "unAmerican." Similarly, folk or primitive people may say that particular behavior is correct because it is ordained by the gods, or spirits, or other supernatural forces and to violate the norms proscribing such behavior is to invite bad luck or go against the wishes of the gods, etc. Very frequently, certain behavioral norms are rationalized as being consistent with or supported by religious ideology and posture. Thus, compliance with some norms comes to be viewed as the "Christian way" or the "moral way." The norm now takes on religious and moral significance, and assumes a position of right or wrong, with very strong emotional sentiments attached to compliance with the norms and to the sanctions to enforce them.

Sanctions may be formal (imprisonment) or informal (being ridiculed), may be severe (capital punishment) or of minor consequence (a $2.00 parking ticket), may be symbolic (wearing a dunce cap) or real (a jail term), positive (a reward) or negative (a punishment), and applied in this world (trial, conviction, and punishment) or in the next ("burn in hell"). The norms may be enforced in many ways, including educating people in such a way that they are indoctrinated with the norms to the point of internalizing them (socialization). Compliance with the norms is often brought about by the presence of sanctions. Sometimes, compliance with the norms can be "engineered" by such means as removing or minimizing the opportunity structure for violation (sometimes, for example, vehicle traffic is made to go only one way by the expedience of imbedding spikes in the pavement that can be safely rolled over while traveling in the indicated direction, but will puncture tires when travel in the opposite direction is attempted. Finally, continuing pressure for conformity is exerted through a variety of means ranging from public sentiment to moral values and attitudes to the informal influence of pressure groups such as peers, friends, neighbors and fellow workers.

Thus, the complexity of norms extant in a society emanating from many different groups and segments combine to create a *social order*—the existing system of social relations, and the attendant equilibrium of interaction and social behavior. The norms which make up the social order are supported and enforced by a variety of processes and mechanisms which encourage conformity to and identification with the social order, which is known as social control. Inasmuch as the social order is often imbued with ethical, ethnocentric, and even theological content, it becomes a heavily value laden system of rules with a high degree of emotional intensity involved in bringing about compliance with the norms. In this sense, the social order becomes a moral order.

NONCOMPLIANCE AND REJECTION OF THE MORAL ORDER

When and if an individual conforms to the norms, society provides a number of positive labels or identities. At an informal level we may speak of a husband as a good provider, a faithful, industrious wife, a dutiful son or daughter, a studious pupil, tax-paying citizen, hard-working employee, brave soldier, dedicated doctor, pious minister, honest merchant, passionate lover, safe driver, good sportsman, or meticulous craftsman, to name but some. At a formal level, society and the groups that make it up provide numerous positive sanctions for compliance with the norms. Students with the highest grade average are identified as Class Valedictorian and get to give the Commencement Address. Soldiers may receive a Good Conduct Medal. A successful real estate agent may be inducted into the "Million Dollar Club." Outstanding athletes may receive trophies, Olympic gold medals, or become champions. Wives who are good cooks may win a blue ribbon for their jelly at the State Fair. People who find a lost wallet and return it to the original owner may receive a reward. Some men may become "Father of the Year," and workers who demonstrate diligence may receive a bonus. Safe drivers who do not have accidents may get a reduction on their automobile insurance premiums. Professionals who set examples for their peers may be honored by their professional groups with awards or election to office in the professional group. In short, there are many ongoing inducements for compliance with the social norms above and beyond the intrinsic satisfactions of conforming in terms of being an honest citizen, hard-working employee, good husband, and a temperate consumer of food and drink.

For those who fail to comply there are negative labels and negative sanctions. Law breakers are criminals and often punished severely. Errant soldiers are given a Dishonorable Discharge. Elected officials who are guilty

of malfeasance may be impeached. Unethical attorneys may be disbarred. Students who misbehave in school could be expelled. Drivers who violate too many traffic laws may lose their license. Children who violate legal norms are labeled as delinquents. Men who patronize prostitutes may be called "whore mongers," and overly promiscuous females may be labeled as "loose women" if not "sluts." Poor academic performers in school may be called dumb or a "dunce," and persons who are less than fastidious in their dress, grooming, and eating behavior may be called "slobs." A person who does not conform to the norms of polite language may be termed vulgar or crude. Persons with sexual tastes that do not conform to the social norms may be viewed as perverts. Beyond all of these derisive terms and labels, there are innumerable negative sanctions, ranging from incarceration and fines to ostracism; from loss of privileges to expulsion from school; and from demerits to having one's pay docked. They extend in severity from execution to having to stay after school.

In spite of all the negative labels and negative sanctions, many persons still do not conform to the social norms. It is this fact that has occupied the intellectual energies of philosophers and theologians as well as psychiatrists and social scientists for centuries. Negative labeling has often failed to work, and many offenders have turned vice into virtue and have even come to revel in the title of bandit, or killer, or "dirty old man." Negative sanctions, no matter how severe, also have frequently failed to deter violations of laws or even noncompliance with relatively minor, inconsequential norms. At one point in English history pickpocketing was a capital offense and offenders were publicly hanged. Spectators at the public hanging of pickpockets often had their pockets picked while watching the spectacle! In spite of all the positive inducements to conform, and the many negative sanctions to discourage violations of the norms, social norms are frequently transgressed, and many members of society are involved in such violations. In fact, it is probably safe to assert that at one time or another and at one level or another almost everyone violates some social norm and theoretically can be labeled as a *deviant*!

THE GENESIS OF DEVIANT BEHAVIOR

At the very simplest level, deviance can be explained on the basis of someone violating a social norm simply because they wish to attain some goal. A child may purloin a cookie from the cookie jar after the mother has forbidden him to do so because he wants to eat the cookie. Willie "The Actor" Sutton, the infamous bank robber, once safely observed that he robbed banks because that's where the money was! Similarly, individuals may view forbidden pornographic photographs simply because they derive carnal

gratification from doing so. In short, an overriding hedonistic consideration would seem to be involved in deviant behavior (Riemer, 1981). But, of course, the question is usually much more complex, for how else can we explain the fact of two individuals in a situation of temptation but only one violates the social norm while the other does not.

Historically, there has been a tendency to locate the genesis of deviance internal to the individual. In the distant part, criminals and deviants were sometimes said to be possessed by demons and spirits, or that they harbored evil and sin within themselves. Some were believed to be witches and behaving in cahoots with the Devil (even today, Flip Wilson humorously asserts that "the Devil made me do it!"). A century ago, learned authorities were offering the opinion that physiognomy or the shape and other features of the face, and phrenology or the configuration of the skull might be an indicator of mental faculties and individual character, and especially a criminally prone character. In time, other aspects of anatomy and physiology were invoked as causative agents in deviance, as were heredity and mental deficiencies. Even in more recent periods, the search for biological factors in crime persists. Assorted theories in this regard were offered, including the notion of biological "inferiority," and somatology with the ideal-type models of body type and physique with attendant behavioral characteristics—endormorphs, mesomorphs, and ectomorphs, and brain malfunction. The field of psychiatry offered mental disorders such as insanity and psychopathology, and from the field of genetics came the anomaly of the XYY chromosome syndrome, or the fact of some males having an extra Y chromosome in every cell. Some writers reported an overrepresentation of XYY males in prison populations, and that some XYY males tended to have criminal histories (For a detailed discussion of these earlier theories of deviance, see McCaghy, 1985: 11-45). Empirical evidence, particularly of contemporary variety, has, however, provided little if any support for any of these diverse theories and notions.

Sociologists, on the other hand, have offered some highly productive, albeit diverse, insights into the etiology of deviant behavior. It almost goes without saying, of course, that some persons violate norms because of impaired cognition or reasoning. An individual who is retarded, sustains brain damage, or is senile, may not even be aware of the existence of the norm, much less the social import and consequences of violating it. Similarly, persons with mental illness are essentially in the same situation. Some persons do have genuine compulsive disorders, such as kleptomaniacs, and cannot resist engaging in the behavior that represents a violation of the norm. There are those who, because of temporary cognitive and/or mental impairment, may engage in deviant acts that they would not otherwise commit. Much deviant behavior can be and is blamed on alcohol and narcotics. Inasmuch as alcohol consumption and narcotic use is voluntary,

such an excuse for norm violation seldom has much legal or social legitimation. Under the influence of alcohol or narcotics, individuals may hallucinate or almost totally lose self control, and sometimes commit acts of great social repugnancy.

Sociologists are more prone to look to social factors external to the individual to account for deviant behavior, and the theories attendant to such an orientation are many and varied. Robert K. Merton's (1938) theory of anomie postulated that there are societal norms in terms of goals, and societal norms in terms of appropriate ways of attaining these goals. Individuals may subscribe to the societal goal norms (wealth, fame, success, etc.), but be unable to avail themselves of the normative means of attaining those goals (hard work, education, etc.), and in the face of such a normative gridlock, may have to resort to alternate, and illegitimate means of reaching the socially approved goals, or may otherwise react in a deviant fashion to their dilemma.

It has also been argued that deviant behavior may be functional to society, at least at a latent level (Erikson, 1966). The very presence of deviance better delineates the boundaries of acceptable and conforming behavior. The deviant stands as an example of what not to be. The student forced to sit on a high stool and wear a dunce cap in front of the class, because of his intellectual ineptitude, serves as a model or example of what happens to deviants. The "dunce" is needed for that purpose and, thus, functional. It may well be that the "dunce," the class "cut-up," and the town drunk are tacitly tolerated and, perhaps, even mildly encouraged because of the functional example they serve. Deviance is also functional because the reaction of outrage and indignation to it by members of the community serves to promote social cohesion and, thus, aids in integrating and uniting the community. Finally, deviance may be functional in an economic way. The thief provides cheap "hot" (stolen) merchandise for the less affluent that they could not otherwise afford. The presence of strippers, while perceived as deviant, may attract tourists and, thus, money into a resort area. In both instances, the offenders often rationalize their behavior as helpful to society. Prostitutes not infrequently assert that they help "save" marriages by providing sexual variety to husbands, and help society by affording sexual outlets to person who might otherwise commit sex crimes on innocent females. By rationalizing one's deviant behavior as helpful, one is encouraged to commit such acts.

American society does not have one culture but, rather, many subcultures under a larger, less than unified, cultural umbrella. It has many subcultures because society is made up of many diverse groupings—racial, ethnic, social class, regional, religious, and occupational—to name some. Each subculture may have its own unique normative system. A member of one of these groupings may be conforming to the norms of the respective

subculture but be in violation of the norms of other subcultures and of the larger societal cultural umbrella. In this connection the slum dweller who commits an illegal act may not so much be criminally inclined as simply not as prone to view the act as criminal. Abandoned cars in poor areas of New York are quickly stripped of parts. Anyone who lives in New York, however, would probably reveal that many persons, and especially those in low-income levels, do not view taking parts from abandoned cars as stealing. According to their subcultural system, such behavior is simply taking advantage of opportunities that come your way. Studies (Palmer & Bryant, 1985) have shown that in many rural areas, individuals who hunt may not always obey the game laws to the limit. It is traditional for persons in those areas not to do so, because they feel that the game is there for the taking. Deviant behavior, according to the so-called "Chicago School," may occur because of different normative systems in different subcultures and the attendant cultural conflict which results. In this same vein some authors (Sutherland and Cressey, 1970) have spoken of "differential association" or that deviant behavior is often learned from others who have different definitions of what is deviant, and different rationalizations for justifying their behavior. In a society as complex and diverse as the United States, it is not difficult to understand how cultural conflict and differential association might be factors in deviant behavior.

Social scientists who adhere to the so-called "social control/deterrence" school of thought put less emphasis on the structural conditions that may precipitate deviance and look more at why people conform to or violate norms in the "conventional order" (Liska, 1981:89). Simply put, offenders may find norm violations to be attractive and are motivated to do so unless certain controls operate to deter them. These controls may be inner controls which result from the internalization of rules with the attendant satisfactions that go with conformity and the guilt and anxiety that go with nonconformity. The deviant may not have properly internalized the norms. The outer controls are the sanctions—rewards or punishments that surround norms. If a person violates a norm, he or she may lose rewards and be punished. Deviance then is a function of the relative balance between the attractiveness of norm violation and the strength of inner and outer controls.

Some writers have suggested that crime and deviant behavior have a political dimension and argue that the more powerful and the more affluent are in a position to create norms and impose them on others. The less powerful and the less affluent may have other norms that are in conflict with those of the ruling class, but because of their relative powerlessness they are required to conform to the norms of the ruling class. In short, the normative system becomes an instrument of manipulation and oppression of the lower classes. According to such a perspective, lower class behavior

may become criminalized or labeled as deviant. The vagrancy laws were a device for getting rid of undesirables (Liska, 1981:184), and white-collar offenders are treated more leniently than are street crime offenders. The laws are selectively enforced. As Liska (1981:191) phrases it, "the general point is clear: what is crime and who is the criminal frequently depend on group interests and political power."

Finally, there are those social scientists who assert that deviance is to some degree socially constructed. Such a view assumes a pluralistic society with numerous sets of norms and values emerging from different interest groups. Certain interest groups prevail and establish their norms as society's norms. Persons who violate those norms then become deviants or criminals because they are so labeled by the prevailing interest group. This labeling is a social process which involves several steps. Because of a variety of factors, social and idiosyncratic, an individual violates a norm (primary deviance) but this fact alone has little impact on the individual and his self-image. The prevailing social order labels him as a deviant and reacts to the label accordingly. The individual then responds to the labeling reaction not infrequently with other kinds of deviant behavior (secondary deviance). This secondary deviance becomes a mode of adaptation to the reaction from others to the original labeling, and in time the individual may develop a new self-concept or identity. As an illustration, a child in a primary grade, because of restlessness, performs poorly on one or more tests. The teacher publicly labels the child as a "slow learner." The other children laugh at him and call him dumb. He responds to this by acting out, misbehavior, and with other antisocial behavior. Others now give him the status of deviant and delinquent and in time, the child assumes that identity as part of his self-concept. According to these writers, the deviance can be traced to the labeling process (see, for example, Dotter and Roebuck, 1988).

What are some of the facilitative or precipitative basic ingredients for norm violation? It would appear that there must be opportunity structure for deviance. The opportunity structure—a position of trust in a firm, for example—may make it easier to commit the offense of theft. Not infrequently, there may be some type of disequilibrium, disruption, or stress that would interfere with the traditional value system of the individual. The need for money to pay for the emergency operation on his daughter may motivate the bookkeeper to steal from his employer, even though he has always previously been scrupulously honest. Often an individual has to learn to be deviant and this sometimes occurs as part of a more conventional learning process. The soldier learns informally in his basic military training experience to "moonlight requisition" or steal that which his unit needs. His socialization is subverted, as it were. There also would have to be some appropriate means of rationalizing the deviant act so as to justify it and, thus, preserve the integrity of the self-image. The traveling salesman may

"pad" his expense account because "everyone else is doing *it*" and *the company* "expects it." These and other factors and circumstances that contribute to deviant behavior will be explored in the subsequent readings and commentary in this book.

There are a number of other sociological theories which have been advanced to account for deviant behavior, some of which will be mentioned and discussed later in this volume. It has been argued that there may be no single, clear-cut and completely satisfactory explanation for deviance. The violation of social norms may result from multiple factors and an appropriate theory for such behavior may have to employ an integrated or multicausal model. The existing sociological theories of deviance, in various combinations and permutations, may all prove useful. Certainly, the various theoretical schools of thought have provided provocative insights into the deviance process and offer a variety of different approaches and perspectives for further and hopefully more productive examinations and analyses of the phenomena of norm violation.

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Part Two

Deviance: Conceptions and Perceptions

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Chapter Two

Form and Content

EDITORIAL COMMENTARY

Deviant behavior, like all social behavior, is seldom haphazard, extemporaneous, random, serendipitous, or unrestrained. Rather, it is often planned or precipitated in a relatively predictable fashion. It is sometimes highly routinized and repetitious. Inasmuch as it usually involves interaction, it is scripted in the sense that others are brought into the routine in an anticipated and reactive manner. Most importantly, it is almost invariable structured in form and purpose.

Even the simplest social behavior has structure and meaning. Bowing, shaking hands, or waving at someone, for example, are usually done in a customary and prescribed manner. They occur or are precipitated in specific socially indicated situations or contexts. The activity itself is done in a highly routinized and predictable fashion (learning to salute properly may take many hours for a military recruit to learn). The behavior by being routinized is intended to convey a particular meaning. Similarly, because it

is customary in a given situation such behavior is also intended to elicit a particular kind of predictable response and involvement on the part of others. Such routinization, socially injected meaning, and expectations produce structure. Structured behavior may be planned or it may evolve through trial and error, but it tends to persist because it is effective. Because it is effective, it attains continuity and predictability. Deviant behavior, as social behavior, is no exception. It, too, has structure—social patterning and purpose.

Granted that there are true kleptomaniacs, most persons who steal do so to accomplish some purpose. They may steal for profit (such as bank-robbers), they may steal for patriotic reasons (such as politically committed espionage agents), they may steal for hedonistic reasons (such as the adolescents who "lift" a six pack of beer from a convenience store), or they may steal for thrills (such as the fraternity boys who "swipe" the statue from in front of the rival fraternity house), to name but a few. In most cases the theft is accomplished in a particular fashion. There are limited ways in which a bank can be successfully robbed. Occasionally an amateur attempts to do so in an innovative way and is caught. Similarly, shoplifting may also require a "strategy," as it were. Most deviance, in order to be successful or to accomplish its purpose, does require a strategy or a particular approach. Whether bank robbery, the use of narcotics, rape, armed robbery, plagiarism, fraud, or cheating on tests, there is usually an effective way of accomplishing the desired end. In short, there is a pattern to the activity. Law enforcement officials frequently speak of the "M.O." (modus operendi) or pattern of the crime. So patterned is the mode of many criminal offenses, that the law enforcement officials can often identify the type of offender, if not the actual offender, although they may not know his true identity. Thus, the labeling of the offender may derive from the patterning of this crime—"a second story man," or the "human fly" burglar, or the "oil man" confidence offender, or the "delivery man rapist." Such an "M.O." frequently refers to such characteristics of the offense as the similar time when the crime was committed, the type of business or person that was victimized, the kind of vehicle, or tools, or weapons that were used to facilitate the crime. Also taken into account might be the mannerisms of the offender, the way in which the victims were treated, the type of conversation between offender and victim, or the way in which the offender exited the crime scene to mention some possible components to the pattern.

Students of deviant behavior attempt to learn more about deviance by examining its pattern or structure. They may focus on the deviant, his career in deviance, the factors which precipitate his miscreance, or the self-identity that he develops as a result of this deviant actions. They may focus on the victims of deviance or the customers of deviance. What factors maneuvered them into the deviant situation, or what was their relationship

to the deviant actor, or what was their reaction to the event. Researchers may also concern themselves with the structure of deviant behavior systems—gangs, deviant work systems, deviance dispensing units—or deviant subcultures. They may examine the social-psychological dimensions of deviant patterns, focusing on the sociocultural background of the deviant, or the attitudes and values extant in his social network, looking at the deviant with the larger structural or organizational context. Researchers may even explore the patterning of the reaction of society or the group, looking at the process by which the nonconforming actor is adjudged to be a deviant and the consequences which follow.

The initial reading in this section, Joel Best and David F. Luckenbill's "The Social Organization of Deviance," affords an interactional perspective of the structure of deviance. In this instance, the authors view the deviant transaction itself. As they point out, much research on deviance is based on field research, employing observation or interviewing, and usually focuses analytically on deviant careers or deviant behavior systems. Research of a social psychological variety not infrequently explores the "movement through the deviant scene, being labeled and the adoption of the deviant identity." Yet other research efforts may examine the deviant within "a larger organizational and structural context." Such approaches, the authors assert, tend to neglect the character of the deviant act, and disregard the actual performance of deviance. They urge the examination of the social organization of deviant action, and toward this end posit an appropriate classification scheme, "along a dimension of organization complexity."

According to Best and Luckenbill, the deviant transaction—i.e., the pattern of relations between its roles—is characterized by several properties, including the participants orienting themselves toward a specific end that results in gratifications for them, a division of labor, and flexible coordination. Deviant transactions vary along a dimension of organizational complexity. In this regard they identify three major forms of deviant transaction along this continuum; individual deviance, deviant exchange, and deviant exploitation. Such a scheme, they claim, is useful because where several kinds of deviant transactions with different properties occur in behavior systems, they can be distinguished, and because it identifies the underlying similarities in seemingly dissimilar forms of deviance.

In their classification arrangement, the category of Individual Deviance includes both providing illicit services, such as narcotics, abortion, or suicide, to oneself and subscribing to a prohibited version of reality as in religious heresy or schizophrenia. Such disparate forms of deviance only require a single actor (although there may be ties to others, even if part of a social network), they can be isolated for analytic purposes, and they often occur in isolation or a protected setting where the actors can avoid discovery, and/or are not vulnerable to social control efforts.

Deviant Exchange, the second category of deviant transactions, involves two or more persons and includes trades such as homosexual activity or swinging, and sales such as prostitution or drug sales. In the former, the actors provide similar services to the other, and in the latter, one actor sells and the others purchase. In this type of transaction, the principals enter into the arrangement voluntarily out of self-interest seeking goods and services that they cannot provide for themselves. Thus, it is a cooperative activity. Unlike ordinary exchanges, however, its participants are eligible for official sanctions. This necessitates that those involved act with discretion to avoid social control agents, and that they trust one another, since if exploited by the other, there is no recourse to social control agents. Accordingly, the negotiation of trust becomes a seminal concern in the transaction. Trust may be fostered by limiting interaction to acquaintances, friends or relatives, or by offering up their track record for examination. Those involved may seek a sponsor of known integrity, or they may provide something to symbolize their commitment to the transaction, paying in advance, for example.

The final category of transaction, Deviant Exploitation, includes coercion such as murder or robbery, extortion such as kidnapping or racketeering, surreptitious exploitation, such as burglary or pickpocketing, and fraud, such as confidence games or investment fraud. Deviant Exploitation also involves two or more actors, but one participant is the deviant actor and the other is the target or victim. There is, accordingly, a conflict of interest between the two, and such a transaction is not mutually profitable. As a result, this category of transaction is more complex than the other two categories for the deviant actor must control the victim, onlookers or bystanders, and also cope with a possible victim control agent alliance. To do this, the deviant must take additional precautions to those in Exchange Transactions, such as shielding his identity from the victim and relying on special resources, such as speed, stealth, disguises, or weapons. The various categories of Deviant Exploitation are based on the understanding of the victim in terms of two dimensions, awareness of exploitation, and definition of the situation in terms of whether or not the transaction is viewed as exploitation or exchange. In the case of coercion, the victim is aware of it and defines it as exploitation. In extortion, the victim is aware of the transaction, but may view it as exchange—paying a ransom for the safety of a hostage, for example. The victim is usually not aware of Surreptitious Exploitation, such as burglary of an empty building when it occurs and clearly views it as exploitation. In fraud, trickery is often employed, thus deceiving the victim, causing him not to be aware of the exploitation, but instead, leading him to define the transaction as exchange. Indeed, the mark of quality fraud is a victim who really thinks he received full value in the transaction, or even took advantage of the deviant actor.

The authors, having articulated their typology of deviant transactions, then go on to offer several propositions describing the consequences of organizational complexity. They do, however, initially claim that these propositions should be qualified. Such qualifications include indicating that the propositions reflect social control agents' definitions of deviance. Also they are based on field research carried out in the United States over the last 20 years. Finally, their qualifications include the fact that while they focus on the effects of organization, there is no claim that this is the only, or most important, influence on the behavior of deviants and social control agents.

Best and Luckenbill then proceed to suggest that there are effects or consequences of the complexity of the deviant transaction. They assert, for example, that persons involved in the more complex forms of deviant transactions, such as Deviant Exchange and Deviant Exploitation, are more likely to be considered responsible for their deviance than those whose deviance is individual. The more complex the deviant transaction, according to their typology, the more likely the deviance will be defined as serious, the more likely the deviant will be subject to punitive sanctions, and the greater likelihood the deviant will be identified and apprehended by social control agents. Also the more elaborate will be the tactics used by deviants to protect themselves from social control efforts. Finally, it is the contention of the authors that the social control agents are more likely to use "proactive tactics" in dealing with individual deviance and deviant exchange, but they are more likely to use "reactive tactics" against deviant exploitation. Thus, as they view deviant transactions, there are significant social consequences as the level of complexity of the transaction increases.

Deviance, then, is structured along various dimensions, one of which is the organizational complexity of deviant transactions. The authors have offered a typology of such transactions which includes three major categories of transactions, and various specific types of deviance within each of those. In the most complex category, Deviant Exploitation, the elements of victim awareness and definition of the situation are also introduced. Although providing some qualifications for their conclusions, they do suggest that the level or organizational complexity does have important consequences both for deviants and for social control agents. The authors do, however, call for more research to determine if the consequences may be "overridden by other factors," and to "learn whether these relationships hold in other times and places." Such an approach to the structure of behavior, similar to that used in this consideration of deviance, may even have implications for conventional transactions.

Deviance is not without purpose, function, or goal and such function may operate at either manifest or latent level. At a manifest level, deviance may appear to exist primarily to gratify or fulfill the actor engaging in the deviance, i.e., people engage in deviant behavior because they derive some-

thing out of it. At a latent level, however, it may serve to accomplish societal purposes by acting as an escape valve for individual frustrations, thus, preventing the possibility of total rejection of the normative system or social rebellion. It may, in effect, channel discontents in a direction that is more easily absorbed or managed by society. The deviant also serves as an example or model of what constitutes nonconformity to those who are more circumscribed in their behavior, thereby effectively establishing borders or boundaries between acceptable and nonacceptable behavior.

Deviance of various kinds has been shown to be functional or beneficial to the individual. Narcotic use or alcohol abuse, for example, has sometimes been used as a means of accomplishing a difficult job or work specialty. The use of such substances has been a psychological of physiological crutch for some individuals with stressful occupational roles. Physicians may use narcotic substances to cope with their demanding regimen. Soldiers may use alcohol or narcotics to allay fear and anxiety in combat, and business executives may rely heavily on alcohol to deal with their career stresses. In some instance, at a community or society level, certain types of deviance have become a kind of economic mainstay, providing employment and generating income, or other economic advantages for the population. Deviance may help people cope with disaffective relationships with others. In some instances, various social benefits may be ascribed to some forms of deviance as a justification for their existence. Prostitutes, for example, may claim that they help marriages by providing sexual variety to frustrated husbands, or keep persons from committing sexual crimes by offering an alternate outlet. Law enforcement officials may tolerate brothels for similar reasons. Much social deviance is seen as having residual benefits in addition to social dysfunction. Thus, deviance of many kinds may be viewed with ambiguity.

Few things in life, including experiences and behavior, are all good or all bad. There are few truly black or white situations. Similarly, even deviant behavior and deviants are not always totally bad or good. Deviance is often gratifying, if not fulfilling, to the offender, and sometimes may even be viewed in a positive light, or perhaps, not in a completely negative light, at least some of the time. Robin Hood and Jesse James were seen as heroes by some. Demonstrators, protestors, and political dissidents may have multitudes of supporters. People may applaud or cheer when they hear of some offenders "beating the rap," as it were, if they were sympathetic to the position and circumstances of the offender. Colonel Oliver North became something of a national hero, in addition to being labeled as a governmental miscreant. Even among children, the "show-off," or class "clown" has a considerable following, even though being, by definition, a deviant. Actors, who portray characters who often "break the rules," and who themselves are frequently "rebels" in real life, are not infrequently enormously popular

with the public, who can live vicariously through the character (both on the screen and in real life), and can also vicariously "break the rules" themselves.

In fact, as a nation, Americans have always had an admiration for "mavericks," "rebels," "eccentrics,"—persons who could make their own decisions, break the rules and follow their own dictates or conscience, or march to "the beat of a different drummer," as it were. We like people who are daring, audacious, and such persons have been military leaders, such as General George Custer, General Billy Mitchell, or General George Patton, political leaders, such as Andrew Jackson, or Harry Truman, industrialists and merchants, such as Henry Ford or Clarence Saunders (the originator of the grocery supermarket), actors such as James Dean and Errol Flynn, and musical composers such as John Cage and Spike Jones. Americans have tended to value novelty and innovation, and stubbornness and conviction, and flair and eccentricity, even if deviant in terms of some set of standards. It has been said that the line between genius and insanity is thin, and also that the line between ingenuity and nonconformity (if not rebellion) is also slender.

In the next reading in this chapter, Lesley D. Harman looks at behavior that may sometimes lie in between conformity and deviance in the article, "Acceptable Deviance as Social Control: The Cases of Fashion and Slang." In this article, the author points out that there is nothing absolute about the categories of deviation and conformity, but rather both are "negotiated conditions." According to the author "social behavior rarely exemplifies either ideal type." Rather, much behavior lies somewhere in between in the form of acceptable deviance. This the author defines as "that behavior which deviates enough from the norm such that it is not entirely predictable, yet which conforms enough to the norm to be acceptable as signifying membership."

Acceptable deviance as a category of vagrant behavior becomes necessary, according to Harman, when the individual is confronted with conflicting cultural demands. On the one hand in Western industrialized societies, individuals are encouraged (and, indeed, are told that they have the right) to "express their unique identities," and to manifest individuality and creativity. On the other hand, as the author phrases it, society is "a rule-governed set of individuals interested in a common goal of social order." Thus, the members of society must adopt mutually expectant roles, which include expected behaviors, or rules. In short, individuals must conform to the norms "in order to maintain social order, [and] to maintain the integrity of the group."

The demands of conformity and deviation would then seem to be in conflict. If the individual attempts to be overly "unique" in order to make choices, then he may be labeled as a deviant and a threat to the group for

not sharing the basic norms and values. If, on the other hand, the individual is too much of a conformist, then he may be viewed as "overinvolved."

The author asserts that this dilemma is resolved through "a negotiation between the two extreme demands," resulting in a secondary set of norms, which constitutes "acceptable deviance." Such a resolution does not really allow the coexistence of conformity and deviation, but only appears to the a solution to the problem. In reality, so the author contends, acceptable deviance is essentially "a method of social control—a mechanism of ensuring social conformity in the guise of individual freedom."

Acceptable deviance involves some "rule-bending," in that the individual attempts to bend the rules to show "self-expression" and, that he has control over the rules, but not to the point of posing a threat to the social order. The author cites Goffman's distinction between "main" and "side" involvement, and "dominant" and "subordinate" involvement in a social situation. A main involvement "absorbs the major part of an individual's attention and interests," and a side involvement may be engaged in "an abstracted fashion without threatening or confusing simultaneous maintenance of a main involvement." A dominant involvement has priority in the sense of being "the role in which one is expected to be engaged," but the subordinate involvement only serves as a "filler" between one's engagement in dominant involvements.

In regard to acceptable deviance, there does seem to be a legitimized rule-bending procedure. One can bend the rules by engaging in subordinate involvement, as long as one is prepared to engage in dominant involvement when necessary, and as long as main involvement does not become subordinate involvement. Also, if you can show that you know and accept the rules, you will be able to bend the rules by expressing yourself through side and subordinate involvements.

Having laid the theoretical groundwork, Harman moves on to posit the notion of fashion as acceptable deviance. Certain manifestations of behavior "affected by the impulses of conformity and deviation" including "clothing, social conduct, amusements," which are termed "externals" are "meaning-endowed" in that they make a statement about the person affecting them. Such externals "serve the dual functions of self-expression and conformity," and also provide the basis for membership in "*epistemic communities*" or groupings of persons who share a sense of what externals or symbols are "good."

The epistic communities possess a subculture that includes "a set of rules and patterns dictating the symbolic function of externals [that] is known as fashion." Fashion as a norm affects many aspects of social life in that it may prescribe clothing, music, art, language, and even automobiles, to mention some externals. But in prescribing externals, fashion also departs from conventional custom. The author identifies two levels of fash-

ion: the societal level where it is a process, and the individual level where it occurs as a form of interaction.

At the societal level, the concept of fashion assumes a cyclical configuration. If something (a style of clothing, for example) is "in," then something else must be "out." Thus, there is a cyclical and changing perception of what is "in fashion." The cycle of fashion includes three stages: introduction, assimilation, and obsolescence. In the introductory stage, the innovative style is new and, thus, vagrant from the prevailing style. Those who adopt the new style are daring, or pioneers or style setters, as they are sometimes know. The new style serves a differentiating function by setting apart those who have adopted the new style and those who are hesitant to do so or resist it. In time, the new fashion is adopted by more and more members of society to the point that is common and, thus, assimilated into the normative system. At this point, a deviation from the normative fashion may become unacceptable. The fashion now ceases to differentiate between members and nonmembers. The fashion now becomes "old fashioned" and obsolete because of its failure to serve as a symbol of membership, and the cycle may begin again. Fashion then, begins in "novelty" and ends in "obsolescence," both of which represent deviation from the norm.

At the individual level, fashion becomes very significant as a means of "exemplifying self in the face of the conformist force it has at the societal level." The actor is faced with the choice of allegiance to a fashion which is symbolic of membership in an epistemic community, and "a sense of self which seeks to be expressed." The choice may be resolved in different ways by three ideal types of actors. The *outrageous* "live on the fringe of convention, and are the main actors in the societal stage of 'introduction' of a fashion." The *old-fashioned* are persons who did not become involved with the new fashion, and are more identified with the societal stage of obsolescence. The *fashionable*, however, do participate in the new fashion, but within the "safety of the norm," once the fashion has been accepted. Fashion, then, becomes a mechanism through which the individual can acceptably deviate between the two forms of unacceptable deviation—the "outrageous" and the "old-fashioned."

Slang is another such mechanism of acceptable deviation. Slang, as "the privatization and personalization" of meaning in language, has a differentiation function in that a "private language is an effective means of making clear the in-group/out-group distinction." As with fashion, slang provides a means of establishing membership, as well as distinguishing between fashionable and old-fashioned.

A new slang term must be introduced by an individual who, by definition, is daring, innovative, and outrageous. There may be initial awe, discomfort with, and resistance to the new slang term by the group. If the epistemic community finds the slang term to "correspond with the continu-

ous culture of the group," they may determine to adopt it, and the slang then becomes fashionable with the result that the new term differentiates the members of the epistemic community from others. Other persons now become inventive with the term, perhaps combining it with other new slang terms, and using it in individualistic ways as a medium of self-expression. This is acceptable deviance in that it both demonstrates membership, but also attests "to one's ability to innovate within the prescribed rules of convention of the community." The use of such slang terms provides high visibility to the epistemic community. Members of other groups may try to adopt the slang, but lacking the subtle meanings of such terms, may "flounder" in its use, thus exposing themselves as outsiders. Sometimes as these groups become comfortable with the slang, it becomes obsolete and, accordingly, strengthens the boundary between ingroup and outgroup by showing the outgroup to be old-fashioned. When the slang is adopted by a wider and wider population, it ceases to differentiate between members and nonmembers and no longer serves as a criterion for membership.

Fashion and slang represent mechanisms of acceptable deviance that serve to make "the individual feel in control of expression," and also at the societal level, absorb and negate "rebelliousness in that it controls the course of 'change.'" Individuals can access freedom through fashion, and achieve "self expression and self esteem" through the use of slang as privatized language, which also distinguishes group membership. Acceptable deviance *appears* to allow individual deviation, but in reality, it "becomes the *rule* and therefore assures conformity," Acceptable deviance is illusionary. It is "adventurous safety," because it is "institutionalized and therefore a conservative force which acts to ensure continuity." Individuals may seek to be fashionable, but rather than releasing one from the bonds of convention, it simply becomes another form of convention. Acceptable deviance, in the form of fashion and slang, controls uniqueness, by giving "a false sense of freedom while insuring that the 'rules' are followed." It provides a feeling of self-worth and acts as a safety valve by channeling "the self expression impulse," and "sustaining a high degree of uniformity within groups." Through acceptable deviance, according to Harman, there is room for plurality, negotiation between members and nonmembers, and "allows a multiplicity of factors to come into play, based on an underlying assumption that actors seek membership." Deviance then is not without utility, or function, and is sometimes productively employed by society as a means of effecting conformity.

Many assumptions, assessments, or conclusions in life are the product of perspective. As in the venerable example, the bottle with one-half its contents may be viewed as half-empty by the pessimist, but half-full by the optimist. The prevailing conception or perceptions of deviance may be very much a product of perspective. In the next reading in this section, David L.

Dodge explores the existence of what he feels is a biased perspective in his "The Over-Negativized Conceptualization of Deviance: A Programmatic Exploration." Dodge contends that the sociology of deviance tends to overly emphasize the negative in that it tends to focus essentially on "the objectionable, the forbidden, [and] the disvalued and these social phenomena are so designated because they are viewed as offensive, disgusting contemptible, annoying or threatening." Because such social phenomena are so viewed, the reaction is usually negative.

The preponderant concern with negative deviance has been such that positive deviance—the surpassing of conventional expectations—has not been "adequately acknowledged" or "systematically explored," In recent years, the study of deviance has been theoretically broadened to include a variety of influential variables, including sex, power, and the ordinariness of deviance, to name but some. The author suggests that if the "full scope" of deviance is to be examined, then the phenomena of positive deviance must be considered, and that such a consideration may be more important that the exploration of the influence of the previously mentioned variable. Dodge then proceeds to encourage such a perspective, provides reasons for adopting this additional perspective, provides some advantages of doing so, and attempts to stimulate further theoretical and empirical work along this conceptual line. The author does admit that various writers and researchers in the area of deviant behavior have, in fact, noted the existence of positive deviance, and have suggested that it would be equally as profitable to study such vagrancy from the norms as the study of negative deviance.

In way of justification of the reconceptualization of deviant behavior to more emphasize positive deviance, Dodge argues that there is a logical inconsistency in essentially looking only at negative deviance. Deviant behavior, by definition, refers to exceptional behavior—behavior that does not conform to or comply with the social norm. The direction of the nonconformity or exceptionality should be of no consequence. Exceptionality and directionality of behavior should be of equal importance. Positive deviance, therefore should not be ignored. The author further argues that deviance should be a "generic, sensitizing concept" encompassing both positive and negative deviance. Negative deviance can be seen as behavior violating the normative expectations and positive deviance as surpassing the normative expectations.

By introducing the concept of positive deviance into a general consideration of deviant behavior, it must be assumed that, in most instances, a particular form of behavior will fall along a continuum, with three ranges of normative variation. There will be exceptional behavior that falls above the expected (positive deviance), the "normal" range of behavior, and exceptional behavior that falls below the expected (negative deviance). There may well be exceptions to such a behavioral spectrum, but it would obtain in

most cases. The author also raises the issue of social response to deviance with special reference to positive deviance. A consideration of this concern raises a variety of questions, such as is deviance of either direction "perceived uniformally by significant others?", or where plural constituencies perceive positive deviance in different ways, how does the actor negotiate an identity, avoid role engulfment, or handle possible problems of secondary deviance?

Dodge suggests that it would be profitable to examine positive deviance rates as they relate to demographic, ecological, or social structural variables. Also he indicates that positive deviance should be examined in terms of existing theories of deviance. In Merton's anomie theory, for example, it is posited that deviance results from the "disjunctures between culturally prescribed goals and socially structured means to attain the goals." Why, the author reasons, could not positive deviance be as much a "normal" adaptive response as negative deviance in such a situation? Finally, he suggests that the numerous "core" definitional statements concerning deviance would hold their relevance if applied to positive deviance. If so, this would be even more compelling evidence for including positive deviance as a legitimate topic in the study of deviant behavior. To make his point, he offers several typical definitional statements for testing.

It has been said, he argues, that the label of deviant "carries with it an ascertainment of morality." Also that it "carries with it a strong essentializing tendency," and "a strong socially isolating tendency." Further, he proffers the assertion that deviancy is both functional and dysfunctional for society, and that the deviant label is always problematic in its assignment. After discussing the application of these statements to positive deviance, he concludes that some, if not all of the definitional statements are, indeed, applicable "with certain modifications."

In summary, Dodge asserts that while theorists of deviance have, in some instances, noted the existence of positive deviance, it has largely been neglected as a seminal topic in the area, with the result that it has not had the systematic examination that it deserves. He concludes that this overnegativized notion of deviance is somewhat analogous to what would have happened in the field of medicine if only illness had been studied to the neglect of wellness or health. The result, he asserts, would have been "preventative medicine would never have developed."

Dodge makes a persuasive argument, but not all agree with his conviction. In the final selection in this chapter, "Positive Deviance: An Oxymoron," Edward Sagarin argues the opposite position.

Sagarin rejects the notion of broadening the concept of deviance to include positive as well as negative deviance. He feels that to do so would "dilute a well defined and widely accepted concept." He applauds the fact that the essay arguing for such a conceptual change was published in the

journal from which all of the selections in this volume were obtained, because it would provide an opportunity for scholars of deviance to reject such a suggestion. He begins his counter argument by pointing out that it is important in science to develop classification systems that establish boundary lines. Such classification schemes, he indicates, bring together facts which appear separate but are actually connected in ways that are not always immediately obvious. In fact, the aim and method of modern science is the classification of science in such a fashion that "absolute judgements" can be formed.

The categories, concepts, and cells of such classification schemes do not exist in the world itself, but rather in our minds. In this sense, the classification systems are mental constructs or means of organizing our thoughts. These mental constructs are necessary in "normal everyday thought and communication." Inasmuch as mental constructs and classification systems do not exist in nature, they cannot be inherently wrong, simply superior or inferior to other schemes or systems. Classification schemes are, therefore, arbitrary in that they do not exist in objective reality, and stipulative in that their definition is not given, but rather stipulated "within a language community what these definitions are." In short, we create a reality with our mental constructs.

According to Sagarin, there are certain criteria that are necessary in order to create a concept, place some instances within its boundaries and exclude others, and then formulate a definition based on that construct. The concept or category should possess internal logic, have a usefulness for those who created it, and there should be agreement within a language community.

Having presented the preamble to his exposition, Sagarin moves on to point out that in his experience, an overwhelming majority of social scientists in the field of deviance who had defined it, tended to do so in a negative way. Such individuals, he asserts, represent a wide range of theoretical positions, and were also "persons of the highest reputation in sociology." The writers he reviewed spoke of deviance as "negative, deplorable, devalued, disvalued, disreputable, undesirable, disgusting, frightening, or in some other similar manner." To further make his point, he offers selected quotes from the writings of some of these deviance scholars. He speaks of the desirability of agreement within a scientific community, and contends that because of the general agreement on the definition of deviance, it would likely mean the loss of the concept to sociology if it were effaced by trying to broaden it to include positive deviance. He also demonstrates that the dictionary definition would seem to unquestionably indicate negative characteristics to the term, deviance. Sagarin grants that some writers have spoken of some behavior that is "good" or "functional" to society, and have specifically mentioned, "the genius, the reformer, the religious leaders,"

with the implication of nondisvalued deviation. Even such writers, however, he asserts, have "second doubts as to the implied definition," and have even put quotes on the words "good" and "deviant." Thus, there is little consensus of persuasion that there is a genuine "positive" deviance.

Sagarin feels that some of the arguments for a positive deviance are, perhaps, based on a confusion of the terms deviation and deviance. To document this alleged confusion, Sagarin resurrects quotes of several writers from the previous argument in behalf of positive deviance and demonstrates that these writers did make a distinction between the two terms. Deviation, reasserts Sagarin, refers to difference in any direction, but the term deviance denotes difference in the negative direction. Deviation, he says, refers "to measure of dispersion from a central tendency," but deviance is the violation "of social norms in ways which prompt punitive and disapproving reactions."

Sagarin contends that to move from deviance to deviation would be to move to a higher level of abstraction and this "would be a great setback in the study of deviant behavior." He also feels that if human behavior exists on a continuum, little would be served by compressing the two skewed ends of the bell curve of frequency into a single entity. In time, he predicts a need for a sociology specializing in one such end and, thus, a new sociology of deviant behavior would occur. He feels that the area of study traditionally called deviance by sociologists is a valuable field of study and has addressed many meaningful questions concerning the genesis of deviance, the individuals who deviate, the reactions of society to deviance, and the implications of deviance for society. He does not see the same value in the study of positive deviance or the meaningful questions to be answered. He particularly extols the value of the study of the social good or social value of deviance, but perceives no problem in the study of the social value of extraordinary individuals, be they musicians, actors, or scientists.

Finally, Sagarin argues that the study of deviance is "an integral part of a larger grouping of sociological concepts." The study of deviance, as now conceptualized is related to many other areas of sociological inquiry, including social control, societal structure, and the differential reaction of society to deviance in various contexts. Through this traditional approach, he says, much has been learned and there is much to be done. To now reconceptualize the field to include positive deviance, would be to, in effect, start over and would result in unlearning what has been learned and undoing what has been done. As he puts it, "Let us concentrate on exciting and important problems."

Deviance then must be viewed as a behavioral configuration with structure and content. It is often routinized, if not institutionalized and, thus predictable in terms of context and outcome. It is patterned in the sense that the actors usually play particular parts in particular ways, to accomplish

particular ends, and the process may include specific social mechanisms, devices, and behaviors to accomplish this. It is frequently complex in its construction. Best and Luckenbill, in an innovative perspective of part of the deviance process, propose a research approach that focuses on the actual performance of deviance—the transaction. Toward this end, they provide a typology of deviant transactions and provide appropriate analysis and discussion of their proposal. The level of organizational complexity of the deviant transaction does have social consequences. Their exposition adds additional analytical insight into the nature and implications of social deviance. Deviance also has function and purpose, as has been pointed out in the past. Sometimes, however, it can provide a function in an unanticipated fashion. Harman offers a provocative analysis of two forms of "acceptable deviance"—fashion and slang—and suggests that through these behavioral devices, society is able to effect a particular type of social control without appearing to do so. The individual can seemingly appear to deviate but in actuality is conforming. In this way, the opposing needs of expressing uniqueness but abiding by the rules can be accommodated. Such a mechanism allows a reconciliation of individual freedom and uniformity within groups. Deviance can, indeed, in some instances, be an unusual kind of conformity. In any area of inquiry there is always a basic question, and the basic question in this field is what is deviance? Dodge contends that it is nonconformity to the norm, and the direction of the deviation is of no consequence. Accordingly he suggests that positive deviance has a legitimate place in the field and that it would be profitable to explore this possibility. Sagarin, on the other hand, asserts that deviation from the norm in either direction is not deviance. Instead there is a traditional and correct emphasis on deviance as disvalued nonconformity. Little would be accomplished by changing the conceptualization, he says, and much research accomplishment would be lost if it were necessary to theoretically start over, as it were. Thus, even the basic understandings and constituent conceptualizations of deviance, in terms of structure, function and content, are still contentious and under development. Insight and understanding are always a product of prevailing conceptions and perceptions.

Reading 1

The Social Organization of Deviance

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The social organization of deviance refers to the structure of the deviant transaction, the pattern of relations among its roles. Deviant transactions can be arrayed along a dimension of complexity. Three forms are distinguished: individual deviance can be carried out by a single actor; deviant exchange requires two deviant actors in reciprocal roles; and deviant exploitation needs an offender and a target. Organizational complexity has consequences for deviants and social control agents. As complexity increases, deviants are more likely to be seen as responsible for their actions, those actions are more likely to be defined as serious, the response to deviance is more likely to be punitive, the risks of the deviant's identification and capture become greater, the range of tactics used by deviants expands, and the tactics of social control agents become reactive. The complexity of transactions' organization has implications for the study of deviant and respectable action.

DEVIANT TRANSACTIONS

Field research, employing techniques of observation or interviewing, provides the methodology for dozens of studies of deviants. Regardless of the researcher's theoretical orientation, their data, drawing on the lives of individual deviants, encourage the adoption of concepts that can illustrate features of those lives. Consequently, most treatments of deviance founded on field research use either deviant careers or deviant behavior systems for their analytic foundation. Social psychological examinations focus on deviant careers, movement through the deviant scene, including key events in the deviant's life, such as being labeled and adopting a deviant identity, and the deviant's interpretations of these moments (Goffman, 1963; Lofland, 1969; Matza 1969). Attempting to move beyond the limitations of a social psychological perspective by locating the deviant in a larger organizational and structural context, other researchers describe behavior systems. A deviant behavior system is "an integrated unit, which includes, in addition to the individual [deviant] acts, the codes, the traditions, *esprit de corps,* social relationships among the direct participants, and indirect participation of

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many other persons. It is thus essentially a group way of life" (Sutherland and Cressey, 1974:280; cf. Clinard and Quinney, 1973). These analysts might view safecracking or, more generally, professional theft as behavior systems.

Viewing deviance in terms of careers or behavior systems neglects the character of the deviant act. These concepts can be used to analyze the deviant's background, prospects, perspective, social network, and so forth, in short to locate deviance in its broader context, but at the cost of disregarding the actual performance of deviance. Although dozens of field studies describe deviant acts, there has been relatively little effort to systematically analyze the social organization of deviant action. Generalizing from reports of field studies,[1] we attempt to develop such an analysis in this paper. We classify forms of deviant action along a dimension of organizational complexity and then examine some of the consequences of organizational variation for deviants and social control agency.

The social organization of deviance refers to the structure of the deviant transaction, the pattern of relations between its roles.[2] The unit of analysis is the deviant transaction. A transaction is an activity system in which one or more persons orient themselves toward a specific end.[3] In deviant transactions, at least one participant's action is liable to being defined as deviant; it is subject to the sanctions of social control agents. Like conventional transactions, the deviant transaction is characterized by several properties (cf. Shibutani, 1961: 32–35). First, the participants orient themselves toward a specific end, the achievement of which brings gratifications of some sort to all or some of the participants. To be sure, there may

[1]The logical foundation for generalized theories of this sort can be found in Glaser and Strauss (1967).

[2]Two distinctions should be made. First, the social organization of deviance must be separated from the social organization of deviants, the patterns of relations between deviant actors. Deviants organize in different ways: they may operate alone, in the context of a group, or in coordination with other members of a formal organization. In any case, their organization has relatively little bearing on action in deviant transactions. We discuss the social organization of deviants in a separate paper (Best and Luckenbill, 1980).

Second, in focusing on the deviant transaction, we deliberately ignore other aspects of the deviant's life, such as sociable contacts with other deviants and interaction with social control agents. For the purpose of this discussion, the focus is on the commission of deviant acts, not the experience of being deviant. Committing deviant acts, particularly when the action is known to others, has important, well-documented consequences for the deviant, but these consequences are not addressed in this paper.

[3]The term transaction is used instead of encounter or situation in order to highlight the coordination of behavior between participants. Many, but not all, deviant transactions take the form of face-to-face interaction. The fact of copresence, however, is less important than the relations between the actors' roles; a mugging has some organizational similarities to a computer theft, even though the principals in the latter transaction may never meet. The actors in a transaction may be loners, or they may belong to groups or formal organizations. In some cases, the interests of these larger collectivities are represented by one or more of their members.

be marked variation in the degree to which participants agree on the propriety of the objective and in the types and magnitude of gratifications. Second, transactions have a division of labor, an allocation of tasks among those involved. Achieving a specific end requires that participants coordinate their roles. In some cases, a transaction may involve nothing more than one person performing alone, but other transactions call for two or more persons, each providing a different contribution. Third, transactions involve flexible coordination, "that high degree of adaptability which makes it possible to meet the peculiarities and changes that occur in each situation" (Shibutani, 1961:35).

Deviant transactions vary along a dimension of organizational complexity. Complexity refers to the minimum number of actors required for the transaction and the relationship between the roles they must perform. Some deviant transactions can be accomplished by a single person, but others require two actors. These are minimum requirements; there is no upper limit on the number of people who might be present during a transaction. In transactions featuring several persons, participants may share a common role; but transactions requiring at least two actors involve two distinct roles. The relationship between these roles can range from cooperation to conflict. The more people required for a transaction and the more their roles conflict, the more complex the transaction's organization.

Three major forms of deviant transactions can be arrayed along the dimension of complexity: individual deviance, deviant exchange, and deviant exploitation. Individual deviance requires only one person to accomplish the deviant operation. Deviant exchange demands two actors performing cooperative deviant roles. Deviant exploitation requires two actors in conflict, with one performing a deviant role and the other performing a respectable or quasirespectable role. These basic organizational forms have identifiable subtypes:

1 Individual Deviance
   - **A** Self-services (drug addition, suicide)
   - **B** Deviant Belief Systems (mental illness, heresy)

2 Deviant Exchange
   - **A** Trades (homosexuality, swinging)
   - **B** Sales (prostitution, drug sales)

3 Deviant Exploitation
   - **A** Coercion (murder, robbery)
   - **B** Extortion (kidnapping, racketeering)
   - **C** Surreptitious Exploitation (burglary, pickpocketing)
   - **D** Fraud (confidence games, investment fraud)

Classifying deviant transactions according to the complexity of organization offers two analytic advantages. First, where behavior systems involve several kinds of deviant transactions, those transactions—which may have different properties—can be distinguished. Thus when addicts use drugs, they engage in individual deviance, but their drug purchases and the thefts to support their habits constitute instances of deviant exchange and deviant exploitation, respectively. Second, the scheme identifies the underlying similarities in seemingly dissimilar forms of deviance, as the examples in the above list suggest. An examination of the different forms of deviant transactions show that each constrains the activities of deviants and social control agents.

VARIETIES OF DEVIANT TRANSACTIONS

Individual Deviance

Individual deviance is an activity defined as deviant that can be accomplished by a single person. The deviant may act in isolation or in the presence of others. The issue is not whether other persons, respectable or deviant, are present but rather whether the individual's action taken alone would merit a deviant label. Two principal forms of individual deviance can be identified. First, there is the provision of illicit services to oneself, as in suicide (Douglas, 1967; Jacobs 1971), self-induced abortion (Less, 1969), the use of illicit drugs (Blumer, 1967; Feldman, 1968; Stoddart, 1974; Winick, 1961), and the excessive use of alcohol (Cahalan and Room, 1974; Spradley, 1970). Second, some actors are considered deviant because they subscribe to a prohibited version of reality, as in cases of schizophrenia (Scheff, 1966; Szasz,1974), forbidden political philosophies (Handler, 1967; Loney, 1973), and religious heresy (Erikson, 1966).[4] These apparently disparate forms of deviance share an important organizational feature: they require only a single deviant actor.

Individual deviants are not without ties to others. They frequently have deviant associates who share their deviance; together, these deviants may form a peer group, such as a skid row bottle gang, or even a formal organization, such as a forbidden political party. Other people may supply the individual deviant with necessary resources; for instance, someone must manufacture and distribute illicit drugs before they can be consumed. Although the individual deviant may be a part of a social network, the act of individual deviance can be isolated for analytic purposes. A single actor, properly prepared and equipped, can commit individual deviance.

[4]Some studies treat certain conditions as deviant. We prefer to view deviance in terms of behavior. The possession of a flawed social identity, however, could be seen as a third form of individual deviance (Goffman, 1963). Examples could include the mentally retarded (Edgerton, 1967), the visibly handicapped (Davis, 1969), and dwarves (Truzzi, 1968).

The fact that the actor's behavior makes the individual eligible for official intervention affects the character of the transaction. So long as the deviant has the capacity for self-control, he or she usually takes precautions to avoid identification and processing by social control agents. Precautions generally center on self-discretion, the control of discrediting information about one's involvement in deviance, often by restricting one's deviance to isolated or protected settings that outsiders do not routinely enter (Goffman, 1963). Thus individual deviance often occurs in isolation, or among other individual deviants, as in some recreational drug use. The control of discrediting information also may be accomplished by cloaking symbols of involvement in deviance as when a drug addict covers needle tracks. Where individual deviants ignore the need for discretion, for instance by carrying out their deviant transactions in public, they are vulnerable to social control efforts (Bittner, 1967; Wiseman, 1970).

Deviant Exchange

Deviant exchange refers to transactions in which two or more persons voluntarily cooperate in the exchange of illicit goods or services. Deviant exchange can take two basic forms. In a trade, the simplest form of exchange, the actors perform comparable roles; each provides a similar service to the other.[5] Examples of deviant trades include homosexual intercourse (Humphreys, 1970; Mileski and Black, 1972; Warren, 1974) and swinging (Bartell, 1971). In a sale, the more complex form of exchange, the actors perform different roles; one or more actors sell a good or service, while one or more others purchase it. Examples of deviant sales include prostitution (Bryan, 1965, 1966; Gray 1973; Hirschi, 1962; Lloyd, 1976), illicit drug dealing (Carey, 1968; Redlinger, 1975), fencing (Klockars, 1974; Walsh, 1977), bookmaking (Hindelang, 1971; Lesieur, 1977), and some forms of bribery (Stoddard, 1968). All of the participants in a deviant exchange are considered deviant.

Exchange, whether deviant or respectable, has certain properties (cf. Blau, 1964; Homans, 1974). The participants voluntarily enter an exchange out of self-interest; they seek goods or services that they cannot provide for themselves. Exchange is a cooperative event. The participants share compatible interest; they operate on the shared assumption that if each party provides the other with rewarding goods or services, the other will reciprocate. Furthermore, exchange is profitable. The participants obtain rewards that are greater than the costs incurred from participation. When the transaction does not yield expected profits, the participants may negotiate for a

[5]Although the actors in a trade perform comparable roles, their parts need not be exactly alike; there may be a division of labor in the transaction. Thus in Humphrey's (1970) language, one tearoom participant acts as the insertor, the other the insertee, but each provides and receives sexual satisfaction, making their roles comparable.

change in the rate at which goods or services are exchanged or withdraw from the operation altogether.

A deviant exchange differs from conventional exchanges in that its participants are eligible for official sanctions. As a consequence, the participants share an additional common interest: they wish to avoid the attention of social control agents. This common interest requires not only that they act with discretion but that they trust one another. Although the shared concern for maintaining discretion offers a potential basis for their alliance, each participant also must be concerned with the other's intentions. This is because a deviant exchange offers opportunities for exploiting one's partner without the exploited member being able to call upon social control agents for assistance. In deviant trades, an actor may worry about being vulnerable to blackmail or to having his or her deviant involvement made public by the other. In deviant sales, customers may worry about receiving less than they are paying for, while sellers may fear robbery or betrayal by their customers. Further, because most deviant sales involve customers who have less experience with deviance than the seller and because social control agents commonly view selling as a more serious offense than buying, the seller has a special responsibility for staging the interaction and managing the customer's responses.[6]

Because the actors must trust each other in the face of potential exploitation, the negotiation of trust becomes a central issue in deviant exchange. Trust may be fostered in several ways. First, participants may limit their operations to acquaintances, friends, or relatives, on the assumption that a partner linked through friendship or kinship can be trusted. Second, they may offer up their track records, informing each other that they have engaged in similar dealings before without ill consequences for their associates. This may involve reference to specific credentials, or it may be achieved through the display of a comfortable, confident demeanor, suggesting familiarity with the exchange situation. Third, participants may use a sponsor of known integrity; they meet through the agency of a sponsor who provides introductions and vouches for the actors. Fourth, participants may provide something symbolizing their commitment to the transaction, establishing a stake in carrying out their part in the exchange. Thus a prostitute may require the customer to commit himself to the purchase of sexual services by paying in advance. The decision to enter into the exchange will depend upon the actor's assessment of the potential advantages and risks from the exchange, as well as his or her assessment of the other's trustworthiness.

[6]Compare the concerns of abortion clients (Lee, 1969) and illegal abortionists (Ball, 1967). Where a deviant good is distributed through several trading levels, a person at an intermediate level may act as a customer in some transactions and as a seller in others, acquiring both sets of concerns (Anonymous, 1969; Redlinger, 1975).

Deviant Exploitation

Like exchange, deviant exploitation involves a minimum of two actors. Exploitation, however, requires only one deviant actor; the other serves as a target or victim.[7] In exploitation, the deviant compels the target to surrender goods or services through stealth, trickery, or physical force. Whereas deviant exchange is characterized by the voluntary cooperation of deviants in pursuit of compatible interests, deviant exploitation involves a conflict of compatible interests, deviant exploitation involves a conflict of interests between the offender and target. Exploitation is not mutually profitable. The payoffs are determined by the deviant, and the payoff structure favors the deviant. The target always loses more by participating in deviant exploitation than by never encountering the deviant.

Because the participants' interest conflict, deviant exploitation is more complex than deviant exchange. Although some exchange transactions are complicated (e.g., distributing a shipment of illicit drugs or operating a numbers game) and some exploitative transactions are straightforward (e.g., a mugging or burglary), exploitation poses special problems for deviants that do not arise in exchange. These problems include managing the target and bystanders and coping with a probable target-social control agent alliance. The resolution of such problems makes the deviant operation more complex. To accomplish the transaction, the deviant must take precautions in addition to those found in exchange, such as shielding his or her identity from the target and bystanders and isolating the operation from the target's potential allies. These precautions typically require special resources, including particular skills, such as speed, stealth, or the skillful manipulation of targets and bystanders, information about the activities of authorities, and special equipment, such as disguises and weapons.

Four distinct forms of deviant exploitation can be identified: coercion, extortion, surreptitious exploitation, and fraud. These are distinguished by the target's understanding of what is taking place. Target understanding varies along two dimensions. First, the target may or may not be aware that exploitation is occurring at the time of the transaction (cf. Glaser and Strauss, 1965). Second, understanding varies in terms of whether the target defines the transaction as an instance of deviant exploitation or some sort of exchange (see Table 1).

Both coercion and extortion occur in a context of open awareness. The target recognizes exploitation for what it is, even while it is occurring, and

[7]In some cases, the person who is forced to surrender goods or services to the deviant may not be the one who bears the loss; for example, it is the bank's money that is stolen, not the teller's. It is therefore possible to distinguish between a victim and a target who acts as the victim's agent. To simplify the discussion, the term "target" will be used to include both of these roles. A target is not necessarily guiltless. For example, con games depend upon the mark's willingness to cheat another person.

TABLE 1 Target's Awareness and Definition of the Situation in Different Forms of Exploitation

Target's awareness	Target's definition of the situation	
	Exploitation	Exchange
Open	Coercion	Extortion
Closed	Surreptitious exploitation	Fraud

the deviant knows that this is the target's understanding. In coercion, the target surrenders goods or services because the offender uses actual or threatened physical force against the target. Murder (Luckenbill, 1977), forcible rape (Amir, 1971), and armed robbery (Einstadter, 1969; LeJeune, 1977; Luckenbill, 1980) are examples of coercion. In extortion, exploitation occurs under the guise of an exchange (Best, 1982). The deviant threatens to injure a hostage unless the target pays a ransom. The target parts with the ransom of goods or services in return for the hostage's safety. Thus in blackmail the offender agrees not to damage the target's reputation in return for payment (Hepworth, 1975), while in kidnapping the deviant returns a human hostage in exchange fro a ransom (Alix, 1978). Of course, coercion also involves an exchange of sorts; the target of a robbery gives in to avoid death or injury (LeJeune and Alex, 1973). The distinction between coercion and extortion lies in the degree to which the participants define the event as one in which a bargain is being struck. Extortion is more likely to involve overt negotiation between the deviant and the target. Whereas coercive transactions typically take a matter of minutes, the negotiation in extortion can extend over weeks or months. Extortion is less likely it involve a threat to the target's person; the target usually barters to save a reputation, a possession, or another person. Finally, extortion is more likely to become an established relationship, as in cases where a blackmailer or racketeer is paid at regular intervals.

Surreptitious exploitation and fraud occur in a context of closed awareness. Although the target may come to recognize that he or she was exploited, the transaction is over before this realization is made.[8] In surreptitious exploitation, the offender employs stealth to acquire or destroy the target's goods without the target's knowledge. Surreptitious exploitation is clearly exploitative; the target would recognize it as such if he or she knew about the transaction. In some cases, surreptitious exploitation occurs outside the target's presence,. as when an empty building is burglarized (Letkemann, 1973; Shover, 1973), a car is stolen (Savitz, 1959; McCaghy and

[8]In some transactions, awareness may shift from closed to open. Here the target becomes suspicious that the transaction is a deviant one. One form of target management involves reassuring the target that these suspicions are unfounded so that the transaction can proceed.

Giordano, 1977), or a vacant classroom is vandalized (Wade, 1967).[9] In other cases, surreptitious exploitation is accomplished in the target's presence, as in shoplifting (Cameron, 1964) and picking pockets (Maurer, 1964). In fraud, the offender uses trickery leading the target to define the transaction as one in which they will exchange goods or services. Fraud can take different forms. The target may intend to make a legitimate purchase, such as having his or her roof repaired, or the exchange may take the form of a deviant sale, such as buying illicit drugs. In either case, the deviant secretly intends to exploit the relationship by giving the target less that full value in the deal; for example, the roof receives an application of worthless substance, or the drugs are adulterated. In its most artful version, fraud occurs without the target ever realizing that his or her loss was due to exploitation. The forms of fraud range from career crime, such as confidence games (Maurer, 1962), pool hustling (Polsky, 1967), or forgery (Lemert, 1967; Klein and Montague, 1977), through some types of white-collar crime, such as land fraud (Snow, 1978) or investment fraud (Miller, 1965; Soble and Dallos, 1975).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF DEVIANCE

Individual deviance, deviant exchange, and deviant exploitation are arrayed along the dimension of organizational complexity. Differences in complexity have identifiable consequences for deviants and social control agents. This section advances several propositions describing the effects of organizational complexity. The status of these propositions must be qualified in three ways. First, they reflect social control agents' definitions of deviance. Deviance is behavior that is liable to sanctions by social control agents; the risk of being sanctioned is a central concern for most deviants. Adopting officials' designation of deviance, with its attendant conceptions of responsibility, seriousness, and so on, ignores alternative interpretations. Definitions of deviance are socially constructed; officials and deviants view deviance differently. By adopting the officials' perspective, this analysis reflects some of the underlying assumptions of that point of view. Second, the propositions are derived from reports of field research conducted largely in the United States during the last 20 years. As a consequence, the following discussion refers to a specific time and setting, and its applicability to deviance in other periods or in other societies is an empirical question. Societies differ in their social control ideologies, including their justifica-

[9]Although only the deviant is present during the deviant act, these instances should be considered exploitative, for there is a target who is likely to call on the authorities for aid once the deviance is discovered.

tions for the rules deviants violate and their explanations for deviance, their social control apparatus, the degree to which their reaction to deviance depends on the deviants' position in the community, and so forth. All of these factors have important consequences for deviance and social control. Third, the focus of this discussion is on the effects of organizational complexity, but there is no claim that complexity is the only, or the most important, influence on the behavior of deviants and social control agents. Still, complexity has an effect, and this section attempts to outline some of these consequence.

1. *Persons involved in deviant exchange and deviant exploitation are more likely to be considered responsible for their deviance than those involved in individual deviance.*

In the modern United States, persons involved in individual deviance usually are seen as less than fully responsible for their deviance. The problem drinker, the drug addict, the mentally ill individual, and so forth are believed to engage in deviance because of conditions outside their control Explanations for individual deviance point to various causes, with biological and psychological accounts carrying particular weight. Even when individual deviance appears to involve deliberate action (e.g., suicides or conversion to deviant belief systems), the deviant's action is often attributed to a biological state (such as being under the influence of drugs), an abnormal mental state (such as a compulsion), or beliefs acquired through innocence or foolishness (such as the transmission of deviant belief systems through "brainwashing"). In contrast, persons involved in exchange and exploitation typically are thought to be responsible for their deviance. This is particularly true if they announce or can be presumed to have motives consistent with cultural standards signifying volition, for instance, making money (Cressey, 1962; Biggons and Jones, 1975; Hartung, 1965).

Of course, the relationship between the complexity of the transaction and the imputation of responsibility is not perfect. Deviants involved in exchange and exploitation may be considered, or may plead to have themselves considered, less than fully responsible. Often this is due to their simultaneous involvement in individual deviance. For example, exploitative acts committed by those defined as mentally ill, drug addicts, or compulsive gamblers are viewed as stemming from the conditions causing the individual deviance. Where this condition can be viewed as the direct cause of the exploitative act, for example, an assault committed by a schizophrenic, the deviant is unlikely to be held responsible. However, where the exploitation is only indirectly related, such as thefts by drug addicts, the deviant is viewed as making a calculated choice in response to whatever pressure the individual deviance poses and continues to be held responsible for the exploitation. On occasion, deviants or their spokespersons lobby to redefine some deviants as not responsible for their behavior. Thus early

homophile representatives argued that homosexuality is a condition that people occupy rather than a choice that they make, so that one should not be held responsible for one's sexual preference. Such a redefinition places homosexuality, as opposed to homosexual intercourse, into the category of individual deviance.[10]

Just as deviants engaged in complex transactions are sometimes viewed as not responsible for their deviance, individual deviants are sometimes held responsible for their actions. This seems especially common when the individual deviance takes the form of disaffection from a central institution that has the power to control the terms in which deviance is viewed. For example, in Puritan New England, where religion was the community's focal institution and clerics served as moral arbiters, heresy was defined as deliberate, responsible action (Erikson, 1966). Similarly, totalitarian governments, which serve as both central institutions and defining agencies, treat subscription to alternate political ideologies as intentional conduct (Connor, 1972). Imputing responsibility to individual deviants tends to coincide with outside threats to the institution, for example, from rival churches or governments. Although exceptions appear under specifiable circumstances, the relationship between complexity of the transaction and the attribution of the responsibility generally holds.

2. *The more complex the deviant transaction, the more likely the deviance will be defined as serious.*

Social control agents patrol the moral boundaries of communities and protect their members from the offenses of deviants. Individual deviance, deviant exchange, and deviant exploitation violate these boundaries in different ways. Exploitation is viewed as most serious because it inflicts an injury on an unwilling target and because exploitative attacks are unexpected and unpredictable (Conklin, 1975). Further, these transactions directly challenge the ability of social control agents to protect the community's members from predators (cf. Rossi et al., 1974). Inasmuch as participation is voluntary, deviant exchange poses a lesser threat: respectable members of the community may be enticed into participating in these transactions, often as customers in deviant sales. Individual deviance is threatening insofar as it is public, because visible rule breaking challenges the community's assumptions about its moral order. Therefore, the dangers to the community posed by deviance diminish as the transactions become less complex.

The exceptions to this pattern generally reflect stratification within the community. Some areas of the community, such as downtown business

[10]This is the case in which the assignment of responsibility has become a political issue. Although some homophile spokespersons argue that homosexuals do not choose their sexual preference (and, because they are not responsible, should not therefore be blamed for it), others claim that it is a matter of choice and insist that that choice be respected.

districts or upper-middle-class neighborhoods, may be defined as very important, meriting more protection by control agents. Deviant transactions in these sectors may be seen as more threatening than comparable acts in other areas. Control agencies allocate their resources, in part, according to their perceptions of the special need to preserve order in these areas, and deviants in these sectors are more likely to receive the agent's attention than those who engage in deviance elsewhere. Just as agents differentiate between community sectors, they may distinguish between deviants, so that deviant acts committed by some people are considered less serious than similar acts committed by others. Hence, middle-class delinquents may be defined as pranksters rather than vandals, and white-collar crimes are categorized as normal business operations (Chambliss, 1973; Conklin, 1977). In part, this reflects the greater resources of the advantaged. They command private places, so their deviance is less likely to be noticed. If their deviance is discovered, they can call on others, for example, private attorneys, to help cast their activities in favorable terms. Finally, deviance may be viewed as less serious if social control agents or those who set social control policy have a vested interest in the deviant operations. This can involve corruption—bribes paid by deviants to agents—or the authorities' recognition that deviance performs valuable functions. For example, officials may be willing to overlook street-walkers in one part of a city because they fear driving prostitution underground where it cannot be supervised.

3. *The more complex the deviant transaction, the more likely the deviant will be subject to punitive sanctions.*

The methods used by societies to respond to deviance depend upon their resources, culture, and social structure. Before the Industrial Revolution, deviants were typically executed, given corporal punishment, publicly humiliated, or banished, although institutionalization was also employed. In Europe and the United States, the 19th century saw the development of widespread custodial institutions, grounded in various ideologies that explained the causes of deviance and recommended regimens for reform (Foucault, 1965; Hay, 1975; Rothman, 1971; Scull, 1977). In contemporary U.S. society, the legal and medical models are dominant: deviants can be seen either as responsible for their actions—as criminal—or as not responsible—as sick (Aubert and Messinger, 1958; Rothman, 1980; Stoll, 1968). The choice of model is consequential, because crimes are ordinarily punished, while illnesses are treated.[11]

Individual deviance is usually seen as a kind of illness that should be treated. Because there is no second party being intentionally exploited,

[11]Obviously, the use of medical rhetoric should not be taken as proof of a distinctive pattern of practice. Many control programs that provide treatment strongly resemble punitive programs in their concern with custody.

individual deviants are defined as threatening their own personal well-being. The medical model justifies treatment as a method of protecting individual deviants from themselves. Social control is cast in terms of a medical vocabulary; institutions are labeled hospitals, clinics, or centers for detoxification, drug rehabilitation, or methadone treatment; and personnel bear the titles of physician, psychiatrist, nurse, counselor, or aide. The appropriateness of treatment is recognized by the professionals, the legislative and judicial agencies that create and maintain their authority, and the public at large. Surveys show that a large proportion of the U.S. public not only considers mental illness, alcoholism, and drug addiction to be medical-psychiatric problems, but also favors a response of treatment rather than punishment (Dohrenwend and Chin-Shong, 1967; Patterson et al., 1968; Linsky, 1970).

Societal reaction to participants in deviant exchange is mixed and shifting. On the one hand, individuals involved in most forms of exchange are held responsible for their actions and therefore eligible for punishment. This is especially true for sellers in deviant sales, who tend to be held more culpable than their customers. On the other hand, forms of deviant exchange are increasingly viewed as private arrangements that have few, if any, detrimental consequences for others or for the social order. Those who argue that exchanges are "crimes without victims" urge that social control resources be redirected toward dealing with the more serious, exploitative violations (Schur, 1965).[12]

Exploitative transactions are most likely to be viewed as meriting punitive sanctions. Because exploitation attacks the community's members, these are defined as "real crimes," which should be punished (President's Commission, 1968: 159–168; Conklin, 1975). Survey respondents, when asked to indicate the appropriate degrees of punishment for different offenses, generally assign heavier penalties to exploitative deviants than to those involved in individual deviance or exchange (Gibbons, 1969). Public condemnation extends to white-collar or business crimes, particularly when these offenses have a clear exploitative element (Conklin, 1977). In spite of this public sentiment, social control efforts directed at organizational crime are relatively limited, and the sanctions levied against offenders are relatively lenient (Green et al., 1972). This restrained social control activity reflects a reluctance by authorities to interfere with legitimate organizations, as well as the substantial stocks of resources that these organizations can employ to shield illicit practices from targets, create favorable public impressions, and neutralize enforcement efforts.

[12]While the term "crimes without victims" has some analytic uses, it transcends the boundaries of our categories. A drug purchase has the structure of an exchange, but drug use fits the category of individual deviance.

Exceptions to the relationship between the complexity of the deviant transaction and the use of punitive sanctions reflect definitions of the deviant's responsibility or the act's seriousness. Thus medicalization of child abuse means that offenders are treated rather than punished, and as marijuana becomes redefined as relatively harmless, legislatures reduce penalties.

4. *The more complex the deviant transaction, the greater the likelihood the deviant will be identified and apprehended by social control agents.*

The more complex the deviant transaction, the more visible it is to others, and, assuming the authorities will intervene in visible incidents, the more visible the transaction, the greater the likelihood of the deviant's apprehension. Given the capacity for self-discretion, individual deviants can take precautions to make themselves relatively safe from social control efforts. Individual deviants run the greatest risks when they fail to attend to the need for discretion or when their limited resources force them into public view, as when skid row tramps drink in public. So long as their deviance is performed in private, individual deviants are unlikely to be discovered.

Deviant exchange, because it requires at least two actors, is more vulnerable to social control efforts. First, the other parties to the exchange know about one's involvement in deviance, and they may be capable of supplying control agents with enough information to bring about one's identification and capture.[13] However, associates are unlikely to provide the authorities with such information, because they are implicated in the exchange. They are most likely to inform when they are forced to supply such information or when they feel they were exploited in the exchange. Thus pressure from the police may lead an addict to inform about a drug dealer, and a theft by a prostitute may lead a customer to provide vice officers with an anonymous tip. Second, when the participants in exchange meet in public, for example, when the participants in an illicit marketplace are not well known to one another, their risks are greater. Deals conducted in public are more likely to be noticed, and if the existence of the marketplace becomes known to the authorities participants are vulnerable to ambushes and infiltration by control agents.

The existence of the target makes exploitation more visible than individual deviance or exchange. Because targets object to being exploited, the offender must anticipate that after the transaction's completion the target will complain to the authorities and assist them in identifying and apprehending the deviant. Although individual deviance and exchange frequently occur without coming to the attention of control agents, a much higher

[13]If individual deviants perform their transactions in the company of deviant associates, they run similar risks of betrayal.

proportion of exploitative transactions are reported. Because exploitative transactions are viewed as more serious, the authorities are likely to devote more attention to these complaints. The probability of arrest is greater for deviant exploitation, such as rape, robbery, burglary, and forgery, than for deviant exchange, such as drug sales (Peterson and Braiker, 1979:41).

The degree to which deviants involved in exploitation are subject to identification and apprehension varies with the form of exploitation. In coercion, the target typically reports the violation and tries to assist in apprehending the offender. Once they realize that exploitation has occurred, targets of surreptitious exploitation also are likely to report the offense to the authorities. Extortion and fraud, however, have comparatively lower rates of reporting. In extortion, the target may fear that reporting the incident will jeopardize the hostage. In some cases, targets call in officials as soon as they are threatened—particularly when they are confident that the authorities share their concern for the hostage. But in others they delay complaining until the hostage's return, and in still other cases, they never complain because reporting would make their problems worse—blackmail targets cannot complain without explaining to control agents why they are being blackmailed. Targets may not complain of fraud because they do not realize that their loss was due to exploitation (e.g., a target of land fraud never learns that the land is worthless) or because reporting would be personally embarrassing (e.g., the mark in the confidence game must reveal his or her illicit intentions when reporting the loss).

The relationship between the complexity of the transaction and the likelihood of identification and apprehension is also affected by the social organization of deviants—the patterns of relations between deviant actors (Best and Luckenbill, 1980). Although some deviants operate as loners, never associating with other deviants, most deviants belong to a deviant social network and often cooperate with associates in carrying out deviant operations. Deviant associates pose both risks and benefits. Because they know about one's involvement in deviance, associates are capable of betraying the deviant to control agents. This danger accounts for the establishment, in many deviant groups, of codes of conduct that emphasize secrecy and mutual loyalty. One the other hand, deviant groups usually control greater resources than loners, resources than can be used to conceal involvement in deviance and defend members who are apprehended or threatened with sanctioning. Because these resources tend to increase as the organization of deviants become more sophisticated, risks diminish in the more organized groups. Thus loners and gang members are more vulnerable to control efforts than members of teams of professional criminals or organized crime families.

Social control agents' priorities also affect the relationship between risk and complexity. When reformers, the press, or other segments of society

mount moral crusades and pressure agents to eradicate particular types of deviance, the deviants' risks increase. Heightened awareness of the part of citizens makes them more likely to report offense, and in response to the pressure agents may give the offense a higher priority and invest more of their resources in the effort.

5. *The more complex the deviant transaction, the more elaborate the tactics used by deviants to protect themselves from social control efforts.*

In any deviant transaction, deviant actors can be expected to try to minimize their chances of being detected, identified, apprehended, and sanctioned. Because the deviant's risks increase with the complexity of the transaction, deviants must employ more elaborate tactics for protection as organizational complexity increases. In individual deviance, the principal defense is self-discretion. The actor's precautions center on controlling information about his or her involvement in deviance by operating in isolated or protected places, concealing evidence of deviant activities, and offering evidence of one's commitment to respectability (Goffman, 1963).

In deviant exchange, discretion is supplemented by additional means of self-protection. Exchange requires associates, who know of and can betray the actor's involvement in deviance. Deviants can usually count on their associates to be discreet, but, as suggested earlier, their discretion can dissolve under certain circumstances, such as pressure from control agents. Therefore, deviants devise supplemental tactics to protect themselves from betrayal and the risks posed by their public dealings. Four tactics can be identified. First, deviants may withhold information regarding their identities from their deviant associates. For example, swingers may operate on a first-name basis and refuse to provide information about their identities, occupations, or places of residence (Bartell, 1971). Second, as noted above, deviants may limit their dealings to associates who are trustworthy. Third, deviants may threaten associates with sanctions, such as physical harm or ostracism, if the associates betray them. Finally, in sales networks, where profits from dealing may be substantial, deviants may insure the safety of their operations by corrupting the authorities to overlook their deviance.

In exploitation, deviants may use all of the protective tactics adopted by those engaged in individual deviance and exchange, including self-discretion, methods of avoiding betrayal by deviant associates, and attempts to corrupt control agents. In addition, deviants engaging in exploitation must manage actual or anticipated resistance from the target. During the transaction, the target must be manipulated so as not to disrupt the operation and jeopardize the offender's safety. In surreptitious exploitation, manipulation involves special techniques, for example, the pickpocket's deft touch, that allow the offender to carry out the transaction without arousing the target's notice. In coercion, the deviant uses other methods to manipulate the target, such as the calculated threat or use of physical force

and the management of a capable and credible appearance (Letkemann, 1973; Luckenbill, 1980). In extortion, the deviant typically couples the control over the hostage—which should induce cooperation if the target is concerned for the hostage's well-being—with tactical maneuvers designed to keep the extortionist's identity secret, such as communicating only via notes or phone calls. In fraud, target manipulation is central to the operation, because the deviant deceives the target as to the nature of their transaction. Second, the deviant must cope with the possibility that the target will call on social control agents for assistance. Because exploitative transactions presumably will be reported to the authorities, the offender tries to avoid giving up enough information about his or her identity to be linked to the offense. The concealment of personal identity varies with the form of exploitation. In coercion, the actor may cover up outward appearance, for instance, by wearing a mask; in surreptitious exploitation, the deviant tries to avoid leaving clues behind, for instance, wearing gloves to avoid leaving fingerprints. Extortionists can usually avoid face-to-face contacts with their targets, but they remain concerned with giving off evidence of personal identity; for example, the handwriting on a ransom note can link the deviant to the crime. Because deviants engaged in fraud typically meet and talk to their targets, they must either construct false identities for these encounters or try to keep the target from complaining, for example, by "cooling out the mark" or, ideally, keeping the target from recognizing the fraud for what it is.

The social organization of deviants also affects the deviant's ability to use effective tactics (Best and Luckenbill, 1980). Protective tactics may require resources, such as information about social control activities, enforcers to maintain discipline among deviant associates, or money for corrupting officials. Members of more sophisticated organizational forms are more likely to command these resources. Moreover, experienced deviants can teach newcomers how to recognize and evaluate risks and how to devise tactics to manage them. In short, contact with other deviants helps reduce risks.

6. *Social control agents are more likely to use proactive tactics against individual deviance and deviant exchange, while they are more likely to use reactive tactics against deviant exploitation.*

In order to apprehend and sanction deviants, social control agents must have information about the deviant transaction and the people involved in it (Reiss, 1971; Sanders, 1977). Inasmuch as the source and amount of information available to social control agents vary with the organization of the deviant transaction, agents must adopt tactics suited to the organizational features of the transaction.

Actors engaged in individual deviance and deviant exchange generally carry out their transactions discreetly. This means that social control agents

cannot rely on others to report these offenses; agents must uncover them through proactive methods (Reiss, 1971). To be sure, agents do receive some complaints from citizens, particularly about cases involving deviants whose limited resources force them to operate in public places or who lack the capacity to maintain discretion. But these complaints concern only a fraction of all deviant transactions. Social control agencies seeking to eradicate a particular form of individual deviance or deviant exchange must adopt proactive tactics and use their own initiative to cultivate information about the deviants' identities and activities. By employing undercover agents, informants, covert observation, and similar tactics, control agents can penetrate the protected setting that house individual deviance and exchange (Rubinstein, 1973; Schur, 1965; Skolnick, 1966).

In deviant exploitation, control agents usually can expect cooperation from the target, who is likely to report the transaction in hopes of getting revenge, restitution, or other satisfaction. The quality of these reports varies with the form of exploitation. In surreptitious, exploitation and coercion, targets frequently report their loss, usually after the transaction is over and the damage done. Targets of surreptitious exploitation, who generally never see the offender, are less likely to have useful information than targets of coercion, who are attacked face to face (Stinchcombe, 1963). Targets of extortion and fraud are less likely to inform the authorities of their loss. In extortion, targets may fear for the hostage's safety while the transaction is in progress, and once it is completed they may be reluctant to call in the authorities out of embarrassment, either at having cooperated with deviants or at having their personal secrets revealed.[14] Although extortion usually involves no face-to-face contact, targets who report the offense while it is in progress give agents opportunities to disrupt the offenders' plans, for example, by ambushing the ransom delivery. In fraud, targets typically meet the deviants. The failure to complain may be due to ignorance of the exploitative nature of their loss or to embarrassment at being fooled, particularly if the fraud involved an illicit exchange. Whatever the form of exploitation, the fact that targets do report offenses provides agents with valuable assistance. In exploitation, agents rely heavily on reactive tactics (Reiss, 1971). Once they have been called in, agents can interview witnesses, analyze physical evidence, use informants to link offenders to offenses, and so forth, trying to identify, locate, and capture offenders.

[14]In blackmail, social control agents sometimes take special care to protect the target's reputation, for instance, by avoiding public mention of the target's name or the reason for blackmail during prosecution. This tactic is intended to encourage targets to report their exploitation (Hepworth, 1975).

CONCLUSION

Deviant transactions can be arrayed along a dimension of organizational complexity. This paper described three forms of deviant transactions: individual deviance, deviant exchange, and deviant exploitation. The level of complexity has important consequences for deviants and social control agents. As complexity increases, deviants are more likely to be seen as responsible for their actions, those actions are more likely to be defined as serious, the response to deviance is more likely to be punitive, the risks of the deviant's identification and capture become greater, the range of tactics used by deviants to avoid apprehension expands, and social control agents are more likely to employ reactive tactics. These claims must be qualified in two important ways. First, focusing on the consequences of organizational complexity neglects other factors—factors that may have different, even opposing effects. Second, these relationships are derived from a reading of field studies in the contemporary United States. The social organization of deviant transactions has not received the systematic attention awarded the social psychology of deviance. More research is needed, both to determine the circumstances under which the influence of organizational complexity is overridden by other factors and to learn whether these relationships hold in other times and places.

This perspective has implications beyond the study of deviance. The dimension of organizational complexity can be applied to conventional transactions. In the course of respectable life, people frequently engage in individual operations, such as feeding and dressing themselves. In cooperative interactions, people engage in various forms of exchange, from formal purchases to the development and maintenance of friendships. And whenever one party to a transaction acts in his or her own interests at the expense of another—a situation that may occur in the exercise of coercive power or in mundane incidents such as lying—an analogy can be drawn to deviant exploitation. A systematic study of the social organization of conventional transactions may reveal other forms that have no deviant equivalent.

Although there are analogous forms of deviant and respectable transactions, the two should be distinguished because they occupy different positions in the larger institutional order. Deviant transactions, unlike respectable transactions, make one or more participants subject to social control efforts. As a consequence, secrecy about operations and identities forms a central theme in deviant transactions. In addition, deviant transactions are more tenuous than their respectable counterparts. Respectable transactions receive strong institutional support, backed by custom, written codes, and social control agencies. People enter into conventional operations with confidence that the other participants will operate within the confines of respectability. In contrast, deviant transactions do not receive

comparable institutional support. Deviants must rely on whatever norms govern conduct between deviant associates as well as their own abilities to carry out operations in the face of opposition by targets or social control agents. Therefore, planning and precautions assume special importance to deviants. Even though its organization may resemble that found in respectable transactions, the fact that an activity is deviant turns the transaction into an occasion for secrecy and precaution.

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Reading 2

Acceptable Deviance as Social Control: The Cases of Fashion and Slang

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The concept of "acceptable deviance" is introduced as a bridge between the ideal types of conformity and deviance. It is argued that as a form of social control it ensures conformity in the guise of individual freedom. The principle has its roots in the work of Goffman ("role distance") and is developed in this paper as a basis for explaining the social control effects of two forms of social action: fashion and slang. In both cases, acceptable deviance exemplifies Sapir's principle of "adventurous safety" by melding the "imitative" and "differentiating" functions discussed by Simmel. Rule-bending is allowed by only within predefined limits of propriety; beyond these boundaries behavior becomes "unacceptably deviant." It is suggested that normality is an achieved status for actors whose expressive capacity is limited by the ability of their audience and others to read their statements. Acceptable deviance regulates such reading and consequently assures conformity.

As theoretical constructs, conformity and deviation have become pivotal, indeed paramount, in the study of social order. It is quite clear that any version of order requires a partner in disorder; the very idea of conformity demands that we have an idea of what deviation could be. Both ideal types exist only by virtue of their opposition: if deviation did not pose a threat to social order, then neither would conformity be problematic (Coser, 1956).

The advent of the labeling perspective to deviance (Becker, 1963; Lemert, 1951; Goffman, 1968; etc.) has led to a realization that there is nothing absolute about these categories, but rather that deviation and conformity are negotiated conditions. This paper is an attempt to contribute to this tradition by further obscuring the line between conformity and deviation. To this end, it will be maintained that social behavior rarely exemplifies either ideal type. Rather, most social actors balance on the tightrope of

acceptable deviance, which delicately mediates between the two extremes. Acceptable deviance is defined as that behavior which deviates enough from the norm such that it is not entirely predictable, yet which conforms enough to the norm to be acceptable as signifying membership.

The need for such a category becomes evident when the competing demands of conformity and deviation which are placed upon the individual by the liberal democratic ethic of urbanized Western society are recognized. On the one hand, this ideology maintains that individuals have the right and the freedom to express their unique identities. Individuality and creativity are encouraged. On the other hand, however, the existence of society as a rule-governed set of individuals interested in a common goal of social order demands that members share basic conceptions about what it is which makes them a group. This entails a set of roles which members must adopt in relation to each other, and the accompanying set of expected behaviors, or rules. Where there is rule-guided behavior there is social pressure to comply with the rules in order to maintain social order, to maintain the integrity of the group.

So we are faced with a paradox—two social demands which appear to contradict each other: conformity and deviation. Individuals who heed either demand to the exclusion of the other are labeled deviant. If one conforms entirely with the norm, the one is viewed as "over-involved" (Goffman, 1961). That is, one is not able to establish the distance from the norm which is required in order to be recognized as a unique individual capable of making choices. On the other hand, if one deviates entirely from the norm, then one is viewed as posing a threat to the group—as not sharing the basic set of norms and values which would designate one as a member.

How is it possible to satisfy both demands? That is, how is it possible to conform and deviate at the same time? The solution to being perceived as an acceptable member must be arrived at through a negotiation between the two extreme demands, as reached through a secondary set of norms which constitute acceptable deviance. Acceptable deviance will be presented as an apparent solution to the paradox—apparent, because it solves through appearing to solve rather than through allowing the coexistence of conformity and deviation in any concrete sense. Through the example of fashion, it will be suggested that acceptable deviance can and should be seen as a method of social control—a mechanism of ensuring social conformity in the guise of individual freedom.

RULE-BENDING

The concept of acceptable deviance has its roots in the notion of "rule-bending." One may bend rules to the extent that the individual appears to

have control over them, but not to the point that s/he poses a threat to the social order. Erving Goffman dealt extensively with social interaction from the implicit premise that rule-bending is a central mechanism. His social actor both needs to be rule-guided (i.e., seeks membership) and needs to bend those rules in order to present self as different (i.e., seeks self-expression). One achieves this, according to Goffman, by controlling one's degree of involvement in the social situation. He distinguishes between "main" and "side" involvements, where a main involvement "absorbs the major part of an individual's attention and interest" and a side involvement may be engaged in "in an abstracted fashion without threatening or confusing simultaneous maintenance of a main involvement" (1963:43). He also differentiates between "dominant" and "subordinate" involvements. A dominant involvement has priority: it is the role in which one is expected to be engaged. A subordinate involvement, on the other hand, acts as a "filler" between one's engagement in dominant involvements, which "ought to catch only the individual's lesser and unimportant self" (45).

These two dichotomies not only differentiate between degrees of involvement, but assign priority to certain involvements above others, implying two things. First, there seems to exist a legitimatized rule-bending procedure. That is, it is acceptable for an individual to bend the rules of social interaction (by engaging in subordinate involvements) as long as it is clear that one can account for the deviant action (by being prepared to engage in the dominant involvement when it arises), and as long as one's main involvement does not become one's subordinate involvement. The second implication is that social actors know and accept the rules—rules whose making is beyond their control—and that if they demonstrate their commitment to membership then they will be given the leeway to express themselves through side and subordinate involvements.

The principle of acceptable deviance can also be found in Goffman's work on role distance (1961), in which he suggests that actors fear appearing overinvolved in their roles. Overadhering to the rules in as dangerous as breaking them: one risks being seen as antisocial—as identifying one's self entirely with one's role and forgetting one's position as a multifaceted individual. So, in addition to feeling drawn to both following the rules and expressing one's self in one's deviation from those rules, one carefully avoids giving the impression of being overinvolved in whatever one happens to be doing. This avoidance Goffman calls "role distance". As he puts it, "the individual acts to say: 'I do not dispute the direction in which things are going and I will go along with them, but at the same time I want you to know that you haven't fully contained me in the state of affairs.' "(133).

In *Frame Analysis* (1974), Goffman admits that "some deviation from the norm is tolerated. And if effective cover is maintained, a great deal of deviation can be got away with. Indeed, that deviation is an element in

almost all fabrications" (346-347). Implicit here is that "breaking frame" creates a new frame, which the previous break structures.

> It follows that if a particular structure of attention is to be maintained, it cannot be maintained intendedly (at least wholly so), since such an intention would introduce a different focus of attention, that of maintaining a particular one. (346)

This reformulation of overinvolvement introduces a subtle dimension of *change* in the norms governing what one may be involved in, bringing us closer to acceptable deviance than Goffman's previous work. The notion that frame can be broken and a reframing, or a change in primary framework, can take place, lends more credence to the collective negotiation of primary framework (that which "provides the first answer to the question 'What is it that's going on here?' " (25).

Posner (1975) suggests yet another indication of acceptable deviance with her notion of the "stigma of excellence." She maintains that individuals who are superior, i.e., who approximate the ideal which is held up by the normative structure, are excluded by normals because they are *too* good. "The identity of being an exceptional individual is truly a 'mixed blessing'. Being superior to others is as problematic and pathological as being inferior. Both sorts of people are marginal to the social system" (141). For Posner, it is the "just right principle" which governs who is stigmatized and who is not.

Merton's (1938) "ritual" mode of adaptation also leads to such an extreme of overinvolvement; his "innovator" may approximate our acceptable deviant as long as s/he does not employ unacceptable (as opposed to merely unconventional) means to reach cultural goals.

Matza's (1964) work on delinquent commitment has revealed a tension in subcultures between public expressions of commitment to the group, and private misgivings about one's role. The ease with which his model may be applied to other subcultures suggests an underlying reality of conflict between group demands and individual desires. When one individual desire is that of acceptability, it would seem that the principle of acceptable deviance is useful in suggesting how that tension is expressed.

FASHION AS ACCEPTABLE DEVIANCE

Conformity and deviation have little overt social function unless they are first and foremost visible: identifiable to others as exemplifying a relation to the rules. Thus, the types of behaviors which are affected by the impulses of conformity and deviation are those which suggest one's membership, and

can be read as such. Simmel (1971) isolated just such a realm, which he called "externals." Externals are such things as "clothing, social conduct, amusements" (298) which are meaning-endowed, in that they carry social significance, and therefore make a statement about the one who owns or utilizes them. Material culture and social behavior—even extending to the basic element of language—are used to symbolize self and the relation of self to group. Externals, then, are those symbols which serve the dual functions of self-expression and conformity.

One of the assumptions which is being made regarding acceptable deviance is that individuals desire to be accepted as members. It is important to remember that this involves an element of choice, and therefore that it is to groups which are freely organized on the basis of shared symbols that the idea of acceptable deviance would seem to apply. An appropriate term for these groups was generated by Holzner (1968) when he introduced the notion of *epistemic communities.* Epistemic communities are groups whose membership is contingent upon a common sense of what "good" symbols or externals are. This is exemplified by the group's manifestation of a particular lifestyle, often termed by sociologists as subculture. Because "subculture" often has the unintended connotation of "counterculture," the more neutral term of "epistemic community" will be used. Gans' (1974) concept of "taste community" is also relevant here.

It will be maintained that the "expressive function of externals is limited by the ability of others to read the externals as expressive of certain collectively agreed-upon meanings. The most important of these is group membership. Externals as expressive of group membership both suggest the language in which membership may be expressed (societal rule level) and the individual articulation of self in relation to group, *through* meaning-endowed externals (individual level).

The set of rules and patterns dictating the symbolic function of externals is known as fashion. Fashion is a central mechanism in social organization. It affects most externals—some, such as clothing, automobiles, language, music, and art, more than others. Because it is so pervasive—fashion touches us all, even in a negative sense (e.g., the one who claims to dress totally independently of fashion is her/himself responding to a very powerful force—a force strong enough to elicit a negative response)—and because it is an excellent example of acceptable deviance as it affects the very basis of social behavior, it will be used to illustrate in a general sense the concepts with which we have been dealing.

> Fashion is custom in the guise of departure from custom. Most normal individuals consciously or unconsciously have the itch to break away in some measure from a too literal loyalty to acceptable custom. They are not fundamentally in

> revolt from custom but they wish somehow to legitimize their personal deviation without laying themselves open to the charge of insensitiveness to good taste or good manners. Fashion is the discreet solution of the subtle conflict. The slight changes from the established in dress or other forms of behavior seem for the moment to give the victory to the individual, while the fact that one's fellows revolt in the same direction gives one a feeling of adventurous safety. (Sapir, 1939:140)

There are two levels at which we can speak about fashion: at the societal level, as a process, and at the individual level, as a form of interaction. The societal and individual levels meet in the context of the epistemic community where behavior must incorporate both group and individual demands.

Societal Level of Fashion

The idea of a cycle is implicit in the societal definition of fashion. The very notion that a thing could be "in" makes it necessary that an other be "out"; the very notion that it could be "new" entails an expectation that it will at some point become "old." Fashion, then, is a process which involves changing perceptions of what is "in fashion." There are three stages to the cycle: introduction, assimilation, and obsolescence. Konig (1973) describes the cycle

> At the beginning of a new fashion development we regularly note a distinct hesitation; this period can vary in length: one wants to keep in step with the fashion without being ahead of it. The pioneers are thus always left on their own, if only for a few weeks. After this period of hesitation the wave of fashion spread invariably rises, reaching its crest at increasing speed, only to subside rapidly afterwards. This is the normal picture of development. (180)

At the introductory stage, the fashionable item is new—different from that which has been fashionable before and therefore accepted quite tentatively. It serves a differentiating function in that it is quite clear which members have adopted the new fashion, and which ones meet it with some hesitation. As the new external becomes more common, adopted by more members, it becomes a customary activity, assimilated into the behavior patterns of the group. At this point, fashion becomes the rule, any serious deviations from which may be deemed unacceptable.

When the fashion has become assimilated into the lifestyle of the group, it ceases to be successful at differentiating *between* members, for it is a criterion of membership, and therefore differentiates between members and nonmembers. Due to a push for more innovation, the fashion begins to decline into obsolescense, being gradually replaced as a new fashion is

introduced. At this point, the old fashion is indeed "old-fashioned," and is no longer a symbol of membership within the group. The old-fashioned is either rejected and possibly adopted as evidence of membership in another group, or it becomes a permanent part of the originating group's lifestyle, as noted by Blumer (1969). In any case, it ceases to serve a differentiating function within the group.

Erikson (1966) has demonstrated the importance of groups maintaining visible boundaries. Fashion performs this function at the societal level at all of its stages. Introduction of fashion signifies a change in previous group indicators; assimilation speaks to the adoption of the external as a symbol of group membership; and obsolescence disassociates the group from the symbol.

Fashion is truly a cycle in that it has a definite beginning and end. In may ways its beginning and end are similar, for at both stages the fashion may lay no claim to approval by the group. That is, both represent a condition of deviation from the norm (the norm being whatever happens to be "in" fashion at that time). So, as for a circle whose beginning is its end, fashion's origins in novelty predestine its end in obsolescense.

Individual Levels of Fashion

In his definitive work on fashion, Simmel (1971) has isolated two drives which are central in producing fashion: imitation and differentiation.

> Fashion is the imitation of a given example and satisfies the demand for social adaptation; it leads the individual upon the road which all travel, it furnishes a general condition, which resolves the conduct of every individual into a mere example. At the same time it satisfies in no less degree the need of differentiation, the tendency towards dissimilarity, the desire for change and contrast. (298)

At the individual level, fashion becomes important as a way of exemplifying self in the face of the conformist force it has at the societal level. The individual actor is faced on the one hand with a fashion, which is central in proclaiming membership within an epistemic community, and on the other hand with a sense of self which seeks to be expressed. Corresponding to Goffman's categories of overinvolved, noninvolved, and role-distancing, we may generate three ideal types of social actors within the situation of fashion: the outrageous, the old-fashioned and the fashionable.

The *outrageous* live on the fringe of convention, and are the main actors in the societal stage of "introduction" of a fashion. Their lifestyle is one dominated almost exclusively by difference. Innovation is a way of life. Although they sustain revered positions as innovators, the necessity of

acceptance by the community limits their innovation to the reorganizing of trends which are already existent. Any acceptable innovation has its seeds in what has been, and is usually merely a reformulation of these in the guise of the new. This fact does not diminish the inherent risk involved in being outrageous. In the fine interplay between self and symbol there is always the possibility that one might misread the social cues and "innovate" in an unacceptable way, i.e., truly deviate. This is what happens when high fashion designers make the mistake of introducing clothing which the public absolutely refuses to accept. A frequently cited case of such a misreading occurred when, in 1970, designers failed at introducing the "midi" skirt after the buying public had been wearing "minis" for several years. Women rejected this attempt to change so radically their clothes, and it was clearly a misjudgment on the part of the designers. A few years later, when the times were more conducive to change, longer skirts were reintroduced and consumers purchased them quite willingly. Thus, in Bell's (1976) words, "the leader must therefore be a follower; he may alter details, but he cannot either arrest or reverse the process" (91).

The outrageous are viewed with a combination of awe and ridicule. They are viewed with awe because they manifest what Sapir identified as a deep desire among us all to break away from the flock and indulge almost exclusively in "self-expression." At the same time, however, there is a sense of ridicule, for they are quite obviously and deliberately different. In Goffman's terms, the outrageous are overinvolved in the new, grounding their membership on the basis of generating the new. The outrageous are unable to distance themselves from their role as creators, because essentially they *are* the externals they create. Their medium of self-expression is the same medium which validates their membership.

The *old-fashioned* are those for whom the relationship with the new is one of total noninvolvement, and they correspond to the societal stage of the "obsolescense" of fashion. The old-fashioned are needed by the community in order to validate the goodness of the new and the necessity of adhering to the fashionable. In this sense, being old-fashioned resembles being unacceptably deviant. The old-fashioned are by necessity denied membership into the group which defines itself according to the fashionable external, for they do not share the same symbol system. It is only in the context of the old-fashioned that the fashionable achieve the desired difference which maintains them as a distinct community.

From the perspective of the "normal" members of the group, the outrageous, who constitute the leaders, and the old-fashioned, who constitute the outsiders, in some sense merge. Neither is satisfied with being fashionable, i.e., "merely" normal, yet both are necessary in order to make fashion possible. The outrageous are necessary in order to introduce the new and validate its acceptability for conformity by members, and the old-fashioned

are necessary in order to strengthen community boundaries and provide the community with a sense of difference.

Finally, the *fashionable* are those who, from the safety of the norm, participate in the new once it has become quite acceptable and desirable. The fashionable correspond to the societal stage of the "assimilation" of fashion. It is here that Sapir's notion of "adventurous safety" comes into play. For the fashionable individual, it *is* adventurous to adopt the new fashion. But it is safe adventure, because the new has already become a fashion—it has been introduced by the outrageous and sanctioned by the general membership. To indulge in the new fashion by the time it becomes reasonable for the fashionable to do so is to affirm their membership in the group, as the fashion has become the new criterion for that membership.

To be fashionable is to exemplify acceptable deviance. If so, then it is not enough to simply adopt the fashion. Indeed, one cannot do so without the element of choice which goes in to establishing how the external will become *your* external. As long as one follows the basic guidelines of "style"—which in clothing, for example, are such things as color, cut, hem length—one is conforming to the rule of fashion. Beyond style, it is up to one's individual *taste* to determine how the fashion will work individually. The actor who shows "good taste" is acceptably deviant. Roach and Eicher (1973) comment on this compromise:

> An individual's taste is a measure of his ability to live up to a group standard. We may say that taste operates at a social-psychological level because judgments are applied to an *individual's* pattern of selection from the alternatives open to him, but he is judged on the basis of how well his choices measure up to *group* levels. In other words he is assessed in regard to his ability to differentiate "good" from "bad" as measured against arbitrary standards possessed by the group. (135-136)

Each of the actors that has been developed exemplifies taste to a different degree. The outrageous tends to display the most taste and the least style; however if style is completely absent then there will be no continuity in change, thus dooming the prospects of general acceptance of the new.

The fashionable actor tends to temper his/her taste such that it follows the precedent set by the outrageous—exercising self-expression within the limits set by the outrageous rather than experimenting with totally unsanctioned modes of expression. It follows that the fashionable individual is "safe" in this exercise of taste, because neither then arbiters of convention nor the arbiters of change may threaten one's position as a self-expressive member when the means for that self-expression have been predetermined.

Finally, the old-fashioned actor is forever consigned to having bad

taste. In that taste varies with the style, what may be in good taste for one fashion will most likely be defined as in bad taste for the next.

From this brief sketch of fashion at the societal and the individual levels, it appears that "being fashionable" as acceptably deviating mediates between the two forms of unacceptable deviation—being outrageous and being old-fashioned—to become the rule, the socially-prescribed behavior. What appears to be a situation of individual choice in the face of group demands is in fact that condition for membership in the epistemic community for whom the particular external in question is fashionable. That is, there is really very little choice. One is only acceptable if one conforms to the limits of propriety—the acceptable deviations which are bounded quite narrowly at each end by unacceptable deviations.

THE CASE OF SLANG

Language is the most extensively used symbol system in social behavior, and the most subject to interpretation through various factors such as context, intonation, gestures, metaphor, and colloquiality. Language as it acts within the network of these variables is the communicative mode *par excellence.* Slang, as the privatization and personalization of meaning, which mediates between conformity and deviation at the level of language, is of interest as an example of how acceptable deviance affects even the most basic levels of sociability.

Slang works at the level of the epistemic community to achieve a differentiating function: a private language is an effective means of making clear the in-group/out-group distinction. As such, it differentiates between old-fashioned and fashionable. Within the group, slang provides a mechanism for establishing membership and at the same time the role distance required in order that one not appear overinvolved. With this is mind, let us take a look at slang as acceptable deviance.

Within the group, there must be a process of introduction of a new slang term. The actor responsible for this is innovative, risk-taking, outrageous. Individuals aspiring to reconfirm their membership will express mixed delight in encountering the new term. They will be both awed at the outrageous member for using the word, and reluctant to use it themselves until it has become more conventional in the vernacular. In addition, there may also be some question as to what the word means. Thus, the introduction of the term is followed by a period of discomfort in the group, during which members try to adapt their symbol systems to the new usage; to assign a significance to the term, and begin to become comfortable with its use. This is also the period during which the epistemic community chooses whether to adopt or to dismiss the new term. Its meaning and overtones

must correspond with the continuous culture of the group in order for it to be accepted, and this is determined early in the initiation period of the new word.

Once a few outrageous members have incorporated the new term into their vocabulary, it becomes increasingly a membership requirement that others do so as well. This is the point at which the slang becomes fashionable, and members outdo themselves to employ the term in their speech, thus demonstrating that they share a symbol system which is different. The existence of their epistemic community becomes grounded in the particular use of the word that has become fashionable, and others are placed as either in-group or out-group members on the basis of their use of the slang. It thus functions to differentiate the community from others.

But it is not enough merely to use the word, which would be sheer conformity. In order to be fashionable, the objective is to be inventive with the word, to make its use interesting, to exhibit taste. It is not merely *that* one uses the word, but *how* one uses it. Slang thus achieves the pinnacle of acceptable deviation when it becomes seen as the medium of self-expression; when its use exemplifies one's taste (individuality) as well as one's style (membership). This inventiveness often takes the form of stringing together a set of slang terms in a way which is different from that in which they have been used before. This is acceptable deviance in that it proclaims membership while attesting to one's ability to innovate within the prescribed rules of convention of the community.

In that language is a key device of between-group interaction, slang is highly visible to other epistemic communities. The mass media often serve to enhance this visibility, especially in advertising, films, and television programmes geared towards the adolescent community, where slang is probably taken the most seriously in its differentiating function. Two peripheral groups which interact to a large extent with adolescents and are therefore exposed to and related to in terms of their language are the family and the mass media (who have to hear and identify the slang before they can feed it back to its users). Parents and mass media members, in their efforts to achieve a stronger communication link with adolescents, may attempt to adopt the latest slang term. This is accompanied by a period of trial-and-error during which the nonmember tries to establish which words are in fact "new" slang and what their contextual meaning is. Schutz (1944) has written about the trial-and-error process of a stranger learning the subtle meanings of group-specific keywords. The floundering entailed itself betrays one's status as an outsider. It is often the case that these outsiders start to feel comfortable with the terms just as they are achieving obsolescence with the group on question. This results in the strengthening of the boundary between in-group and out-group, in that out-group members are old-fashioned in terms of the in-group because they cannot display adequate

command of the symbol system which provides the group with its basis for difference.

Slang ceases to serve its differentiating function, and by extension to be a criterion for membership, once it has been adopted by other communities. When a term becomes a component of the larger society's language—a tool of self-expression for Everyperson—then it no longer serves to distinguish members from nonmembers. At this point it will either become an established part of the conventional language, as "ain't" has recently been included in the dictionary of the English language, or it will fade away, perhaps becoming fashionable in other communities (e.g., parents and the mass media) briefly as it makes its way out.

ACCEPTABLE DEVIANCE AS SOCIAL CONTROL

In taking the perspective that norms are negotiated, it is implied that deviating in an acceptable manner preserves autonomy within the limits of cultural propriety. In the case of fashion, externals serve to decorate or extend the self in a way which both attests to the uniqueness of the self and conforms with the criteria of membership.

The function of acceptable deviance at the individual level is that it makes the individual feel in control of expression, and at the societal level, acceptable deviance absorbs and negates rebelliousness in that it controls the course of "change." In the case of fashion, from the point of view of the individual, freedom is accessible through fashion, and from the point of view of the society, change is possible through fashion. In the example of slang, we have found that individuals assert and confirm their membership in the group by using the "privatized language" which sets the group off from others, while at the same time achieving self-expression and self-esteem for their individual, "tasteful" use of the language.

It has been implied by the discussion of acceptable deviance that, rather than allowing for individual deviation as it appears to, acceptable deviance in fact becomes the *rule* and therefore assures conformity. It is clear that there are limits to how far a rule may be bent before it breaks. In a social situation where expected behaviors are clearly defined and shared by those actors involved, then these limits of propriety are also clearly defined. On either end—the overinvolved (conformist) and the noninvolved (deviant)—of the scope of appropriate behavior there is a socially understood degree to which one may stretch definitions of the situation without transgressing the bounds of propriety. But it is also possible to stretch them too far. As we have seen with fashion, the principle of "adventurous safety" predetermines that most individuals will act within the limits, for the limits to acceptable deviation, rather than the institutionalized rule, serve to guide

social behavior. Acceptable deviation provides the illusion of solving the dilemma between conformity and deviation—the individual feels free. But what is the nature of that freedom? That freedom is only within the very narrow limits of propriety—limits which still pay allegiance in principle to the rule from which they deviate acceptably.

In that acceptable deviance itself becomes the norm, it does not provide "freedom" at all. From the societal point of view, acceptable deviance is institutionalized and therefore a conservative force which acts to ensure continuity. Acceptable techniques for rule-bending, as Goffman makes clear, change with respect to historical conditions, age, sex, social class, time, and location in any given culture. Thus, how one may go about bending the rules, and what rules one may bend, are just as much culturally defined as the original rules themselves. When the preservation of one's membership requires that one be fashionable, acceptable deviance ceases to release one from the bonds of convention for it merely becomes another form of convention. Similarly, when change at the societal level can only occur when it is responsible to the goals of the culture, it can only ever be conventional change as opposed to real change.

Goffman (1974) alludes to the element of social control in acceptable deviance:

> And at the heart of it? The individual comes to doings as someone of particular biographical identity even while he appears in the trappings of a particular social role. The manner in which the role is performed will allow for some 'expression' of personal identity, of matters that can be attributed to something that is more embracing and enduring than the current role performance and even the role itself . . . There is a relation between persons and role. But the relationship answers to the interactive system—to the frame—in which the role is performed and the self of the performer is glimpsed. Self, then, is not an entity half-concealed behind events, but a changeable formula for managing oneself during them. Just as the current situation prescribes the official guise behind which we will conceal ourselves, so it provides for where and how we will show through, the culture itself prescribing what sort of entity we must believe ourselves to be in order to have something to show through in this manner. (573–574)

We began with the assumption that there can be no deviance without conformity. That is to say, all attempts at unique expression are only unique insofar as they exist in relation to that which is not unique (i.e., that to which people conform). Similarly, conformity depends on the possibility of deviance: if difference did not pose a threat, then there would not be such a concerted effort to stamp it out.

We can now see that individuality is a relative term, one which changes