David Matza

With a new introduction by Thomas G. Blomberg

BECOMING DEVIANT

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Introduction to the Transaction Edition

It is my pleasure to introduce the second edition of *Becoming Deviant* and its author David Matza to a new generation of scholars and students. In the years since its original publication in 1969, *Becoming Deviant* has become a "criminological classic" and its author David Matza recognized as a major criminological theorist. *Becoming Deviant* was at once original while simultaneously grounded and informed by previous criminological research and theory. It was original in its efforts to give the subject a prominent role in the process of becoming deviant. It was grounded and informed by previous research and theory through its successful integration of functional, learning, and labeling perspectives to conceptualize and interpret the process of becoming deviant.

Throughout the twentieth century, a series of theories emerged in the ongoing effort to explain crime. These theories included the Chicago School's "culture conflict" theme (i.e., Park and Burgess, 1924; Shaw, 1931) followed by the widely recognized contributions of Merton (1938) with "anomie" theory and Sutherland (1939) with "differential association" theory. Anomie and differential association theories were subsequently employed, individually or in combination, (i.e., Cohen,

1955; Cloward and Ohlin, 1960) to explain delinquent subcultures. Additionally, labeling theory (i.e., Lemert, 1951; Becker, 1963), with it's shift in theoretical focus from the deviant to society's reaction to deviance and the consequences of this "societal reaction" for subsequent behavior, competed for theoretical prominence in the early 1960s. It was from this theoretical context that David Matza's first book, *Delinquency and Drift* (1964), followed by *Becoming Deviant* (1969) emerged and to which they were responsive.

Delinquency and Drift differed from established subcultural theories through its assertion that delinquents were, in fact, more integrated into American mainstream culture than previous subcultural theorists acknowledged. *Becoming Deviant* provided yet another theoretical account in which the process of becoming deviant was conceptualized not as deterministic but rather as sequential and open, thereby allowing for both offending and non-reoffending through its focus upon the thinking, meaning, and action of the subject. In sum, in *Becoming Deviant*, Matza gave the subject a voice and active role in the process of becoming deviant that while necessarily complex, was altogether understandable.

To introduce new readers to David Matza and *Becoming Deviant*, what follows are a biographical sketch of Matza, a description of his becoming a criminologist, a review of his criminological contributions culminating in *Becoming Deviant*, and reflections from a number of criminologists regarding *Becoming Deviant*'s original and continuing contributions to criminological theory. Much of the material on Matza's biography and career was drawn from a series of interviews I conducted with him during 2008-2009. The reflections from criminologists on *Becoming Deviant* were drawn from responses to a survey I administered in 2009.

A Biographical Sketch of David Matza

David Matza was born on May 1, 1930 in New York City. He grew up in Harlem and the East Bronx with his parents, and an older brother and sister. His father had emigrated to the U.S. from Turkey in 1906 and his mother from Greece in 1921. David recounts that while his father experienced long periods of unemployment during his childhood, he remembers his family life, particularly during the Great Depression, as being normal for the times, until his brother Abraham was killed in the Battle of the Bulge in early January 1945, a few months before the end of World War Two. His brother's death had a major and lasting effect that contiues today.

While living in Harlem, David attended a religious community center and a public school up to the 6th grade where he described himself as "a good boy." He was a high-performing and gifted student. David's family moved from Harlem to the East Bronx in 1941. In the East Bronx, he divided his time between public Junior High and High School and a Jewish community center and spent the remainder of his time with friends, playing ball and hanging out in the streets and playgrounds.

Following graduation from high school, David attended CCNY Business School but quickly dropped out to work. He re-enrolled in college at CCNY as a social science major after working for several years.

The social science major at CCNY included requirements for courses in sociology, economics, philosophy, and history. David completed the honors program at CCNY, which included a great books reading course. The works of Plato, Machiavelli, Marx, Schumpeter, and others were required course readings. He recalls that the course had considerable influence on him because it exposed him to the works of a series of remarkable writers. The most important influences in shaping his interest in sociology were Marx and Veblen and, to a lesser degree, C. Wright Mills. Additionally, David explains that while he read numerous novels, he found Dostoyevsky to be one of his favorite novelists. Up until his last year of study in the honors program, he had planned to become a social worker. However, David did not truly aspire to be a social worker but rather, because of his experiences and work in a settlement house, it seemed like a logical career choice. To elaborate, David had been helped and influenced by many social workers who worked with him and his friends in Club Freeman at the East Bronx Y. Moreover, many of his closest friends had chosen social work careers. Nonetheless, by the time he graduated from CCNY, he had decided to become a writer. The fields of economics and sociology seemed closer to a writing career than social work, which seemed more like an applied career working with people for which he believed he was not ideally suited. During his last year of study at CCNY, David was advised by Professor Charles Page to seriously consider going into graduate school to study sociology. He followed that advice.

Becoming a Criminologist

David chose to attend Princeton University because it was the only program at the time with a joint department of economics and sociology. As David explains, he was very interested in the relationship between economics and sociology. However, he soon discovered that economics was not well-integrated with sociology at Princeton. David recounted that while he took Jacob Viner's course on the history of economic theory, the Princeton faculty that had the greatest influence on him were Wilbert Moore, an industrial sociologist, and Mel Tumin, an anti-functional theorist in sociology.

David's Master's thesis was an assessment of America's anarchist movement beginning with the Haymarket events to Emma Goldman. Much of his early graduate work had focused upon political and radical social movements and he planned to write his doctoral dissertation, under the direction of Wilbert Moore, on shifts in the American labor force in relation to the trade union movement.

During this period, David married and became a father. Moreover, just before he began his dissertation, Wilbert Moore went on leave from Princeton for a year. Moore's leave resulted in David being without a research assistantship

to help support his family as well as a major professor. At this time, David met Gresham Sykes, a newly-hired assistant professor at Princeton. Sykes had just received a grant to study delinquency and offered David a one-year research assistantship that he readily accepted. This marked the beginnings of the Sykes and Matza professional collaboration and the formative beginning of David becoming a criminologist. Like so many careers, David becoming a criminologist clearly involved elements of serendipity.

David's initial research in criminology involved fieldwork in which he interviewed incarcerated boys at a state custodial institution. He recalls that he went into his work with delinquents with a very tolerant and appreciative view of delinquency, in part, because of his experiences in junior high school where he and his friends were routinely subjected to confrontations from older boys demanding their money through threats of violence. He recalled that he never really came to dislike the older boys and would merely comply with their demands by allowing them to search him for money without resistance.

Between 1957 and 1959, before he completed his dissertation, David took his first teaching job at Temple University and worked there with Negley Teeters. After completing his dissertation in 1960, David moved to the University of Chicago Law School for post-doctoral studies. His studies at Chicago were focused upon observations of juvenile courts. During this period, he began the preliminary research for his first book *Delinquency and Drift*. Before the publication of *Delinquency and Drift* in 1964, David published four criminological articles. These included "Techniques of Neutralization" (with Gresham Sykes, *American Sociological Review*, Volume 22, 1957), "The Extent of Delinquency in the United States" (with Negley Teeters, *The Journal of Negro Education*, Summer, 1959), "Subterranean Traditions of Youth" (*The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Volume 338, 1961), and "Juvenile Delinquency and Subterranean Values" (with Gresham Sykes, *American Sociological Review*, Volume 26, 1961). Emerging from these early publications and confirmed with the 1964 publication of *Delinquency and Drift*, was David's growing recognition as a criminological theorist with an ability to uniquely fit his theoretical conceptualizations with the known empirical patterns of juvenile delinquency and with existing theoretical formulations.

During 1960-1961 when David was completing his post-doctoral studies at Chicago, he decided not to return to Temple University. Specifically, he decided that he would pursue more independent research and writing and do less collaborative work. He then interviewed for several University faculty openings at Smith and at the University of Wisconsin at Madison. At this time, Reinhard Bendix, Chair of the Sociology Department at the University of California at Berkeley, visited Chicago and interviewed David for a faculty position. Bendix subsequently offered David a faculty position beginning in the Fall of 1961. David indicates that he was pleased to accept Bendix's offer and to be joining one of the very best sociology departments in the country with a truly distinguished faculty. As he recalls, it was a position that gave him professional pride and motivation.

Upon arriving at Berkeley, David taught a joint 500-student enrolled Introduction to Sociology course with Philip Selznick and William Kornhauser and a Social Problems course. As he remembers, there was confusion over his exact field of study. At one point, colleague Kingsley Davis asked David if he would be interested in a joint appointment with the School of Criminology but he was advised by other colleagues in sociology to decline the joint appointment, which he ultimately chose to do. During this time, David developed close bonds with colleagues Selznick, Kornhauser, and Bendix, as well as Erving Goffman with whom he co-taught several different courses.

While David remembers many positive experiences during his early years at Berkeley, there was considerable pressure to publish. As a result, *Delinquency and Drift* became the book that David "had to write," if he was to be promoted and tenured at Berkeley. During this period, there were several other rising scholars vying for a permanent position in the sociology department at Berkeley including Albert Cohen, Ernest Becker, and Jerry Skolnick. The Berkeley sociology faculty was comprised of a number of different academic orientations that included the extremes of humanism and positivism with a number of faculty falling somewhere in between. David did not easily fit within any of these faculty groupings given his criminological interests. Nonetheless, in 1964, with the publication of *Delinquency and Drift*, David was promoted to associate professor and awarded tenure. *Delinquency and Drift* received significant praise including a tremendously positive review by Edgar Friedenberg of the *New York Times Review of Books* making it's publication a positive and satisfying experience for David.

Following his promotion and award of tenure, David began teaching graduate courses and signed a contract for his next book, *Becoming Deviant*. David remembers thinking that he had another book in him because in *Delinquency and Drift* he had only covered a few authors and a more comprehensive and historically-informed review of delinquency was needed. His thinking about *Becoming Deviant* was also influenced by his experiences co-teaching the course Deviance and Social Control with Goffman. In the course, he lectured on the history of sociology and criminology. In discussions about his historical lectures on sociology and criminology with Neil Smelser, he was encouraged to write *Becoming Deviant*.

David recalls the period between 1964 and 1969, when his energies were focused upon writing *Becoming Deviant*, as a particularly chaotic and difficult period in his life both personally and professionally. Beginning in 1968, he was nearing the period where he needed to go up for promotion to professor and everything hinged upon the publication of and favorable reactions to *Becoming Deviant*. With these pressures and the book only half-written, David secured a Guggenheim grant to support him for a year at the London School of Economics (LSE) to finish writing *Becoming Deviant*.

At LSE, David met Stanley Cohen and David Downes who became friends and helpful colleagues. David was able to write despite the pressure the book was creating for him. His method of work was to write sections and then send them to

Sheldon (Shelly) Messinger at the Center for the Study of Law and Society at Berkeley for comments and suggestions. Shelly was a wonderfully-constructive critic and sophisticated sociological/criminological thinker who was well-recognized and respected by many prominent scholars and students for his uncanny ability to flesh out the intended argument(s) of writers and then point out what remained to be done in order to ultimately produce these intended argument(s). Shelly's often heard introduction following a review of a writer's work was "I think what you are trying to do is … and here is what I believe is missing." David, like so many before and after him, benefited greatly from Shelly's help, which he eloquently articulated in the acknowledgements of *Becoming Deviant* as follows:

> I am especially indebted to Sheldon Messinger. During a few of the two thousand-odd days, he was a final though tenuous link with reality; on many others he was a critic, colleague and friend.

Toward the end of the year at LSE, Shelly recommended that David send a reduced version of the manuscript to his publisher that excluded two sections he had written on Gypsies and homosexuality. David agreed with Shelly's recommendation and sent the reduced version of the manuscript to the publisher where it was accepted for publication. In 1969, following the publication of *Becoming Deviant*, David went up for promotion to professor without a second university faculty offer which defied Berkeley's custom, but was promoted to professor nonetheless.

Criminological Contributions

In the preceding section, David's becoming a criminologist was described. In this section David's specific criminological contributions are identified and discussed. David's becoming a criminologist was largely a result of his meeting Gresham Sykes and agreeing to work with him on a delinquency research project. As a result of his research experiences with Sykes, David decided to write his dissertation on delinquency. The dissertation was titled "The Moral Code of Delinquents: A Study of Patterns of Neutralization." David explained in his dissertation that he found the existing theories of delinquency incomplete. Specifically, he concluded that the theories did not explain a number of the fundamental empirical features and nuances known to be associated with delinquency. This included the frequent cessation of delinquency at the onset of adulthood, the often conformist nature of delinquent behavior and the large numbers of non-delinquents in so-called "high-delinquency areas." David reasoned that most, though not all, delinquent behavior constituted relatively homogeneous phenomena that were developmental in character proceeding from trivial to more serious infractions. David believed that delinquent behavior represented youth's search for adventure that was accompanied by a withdrawal from conventional values and associated behavior. Very importantly, and what came to underlie David's subsequent criminological

contributions was his emerging belief that many delinquents were not fully committed to a delinquent lifestyle.

To place his thoughts about delinquency into a theoretical framework, David turned to the notion of neutralization. As he explained in his dissertation the "ideology of neutralization is useful in the maintenance of a delinquent pattern because it renders ineffectual definitions favorable to conformity to the law." Neutralizing beliefs deflect rather than repudiate respectable values. These beliefs do not directly conflict with the dominant norms of behavior. They merely neutralize them.

To test his theoretical argument, he interviewed a number of incarcerated youth offenders at two institutions located in Jamesburg, New Jersey. David employed both structured questions and informal conversations in the interviews. David found that patterns of neutralization are, in fact, subculturally transmitted although in some cases they may originate in response to particular kinds of personality disorders. He also determined that a number of the delinquent youth exhibited and held neutralizing attitudes. He then categorized the modes of neutralization as a denial of responsibility, denial of injury, denial of the victim, an appeal to higher values (loyalty and honor), and cynicism.

Upon completion of the dissertation, David received a Post-Doctoral Fellowship for Behavioral Science and Law from the University of Chicago School of Law. During the course of the Fellowship, he began reading about juvenile law and conducting a series of observations of the Cook County Juvenile Court. Gresham Sykes had left Princeton and was at Northwestern University throughout the course of David's Fellowship at the University of Chicago. During this period, they worked together and wrote "Juvenile Delinquency and Subterranean Values," which, as noted above was published in the *American Sociological Review*.

Following his Fellowship, David accepted the faculty offer from the Department of Sociology at the University of California at Berkeley where he remained throughout his career. Upon his arrival at Berkeley, David joined Shelly Messinger and Philip Selznick who were in the process of organizing the Center for the Study of Law and Society and continued working on what was to become *Delinquency and Drift* as part of a curriculum development program funded by the President's Commission on Youth Crime and Juvenile Delinquency. In explaining the differences between *Delinquency and Drift* and his dissertation and the two ASR articles written with Sykes, David indicated that he intended to "institutionally contextualize the attitudes or techniques of neutralization." He explains that in the first ASR article "Techniques of Neutralization," they referred to the legal anchoring of the various rationalizations with little explanation. Moreover, his dissertation was primarily a study of incarcerated delinquent youth's attitudes. David elaborates that in *Delinquency and Drift*, he wanted to be able to place the "techniques" into a broader institutional or organizational context of the juvenile code and Juvenile Court. He further explains that in writing *Delinquency and Drift*, he was trying to develop a textbook on juvenile delinquency. Therefore, in the book, he attempted to integrate his readings and interpretations of various delinquency textbooks and articles.

David believed that *Delinquency and Drift* differed from mainstream delinquency texts, articles, and theories, which he felt were largely positivist while his book was more classical or neoclassical. He points out that he did not think that his theory was unique but rather old-fashioned in that he elaborated upon and refined the previous work of others. David does, however, acknowledge that his theory is neoclassical in its claim that delinquents do believe in mainstream values but often drift from mainstream behaviors. He elaborates that the average or modal juvenile delinquent (especially the "subcultural" or slum delinquent) was more integrated into the usual or semi-usual culture of American society than most writers of the time seemed to believe or infer from their data or observations. He concluded that delinquency was part of the functional mix of American society's "subterranean" youth culture.

With regard to the claim made by some control theorists that *Delinquency and Drift* supports their arguments, David responds that in the book's last chapter he made some control theory concessions to the view of delinquency as "action." He elaborates that he wrote that infants and little children can be observed cutting up things or hitting and acting out at others, so that humans can act badly, and thus live up to their image as portrayed in then existent versions of control theory. However, he points out that in the remaining part of the book's last chapter he goes back to stressing delinquency as an infraction. By the end of the book, he states that he was only in the "Control" camp in the sense that he was suggesting that to repeat the offense or go on to some greater offense, the practicing delinquent has to overcome the actual and anticipated incursions of the Controllers. David concludes that, "I guess that makes me perhaps an anti-control theorist. In both *Delinquency and Drift* and later in *Becoming Deviant*, I try theoretically and in Blumer's sense methodologically, to adapt the view of the subject. It is the subject's viewpoint and behavior I am trying to understand and explain. This can lead to some confusion since the subject is also the object of control theory."

As summarized by David in the preface of *Delinquency and Drift* (1964):

> In developing a conception of the classical delinquent—a delinquent seen in legal context—I have been led quite naturally, or so I would like to believe, to a portrayal that incorporates the associated assumptions of classical criminology. Thus, I have tried to convey the sense in which the precepts featured in a subculture of delinquency are only marginally different from those apparent in common sentiments of American life; and I have attempted to utilize the classic conception of a will to crime in order to maintain the eradicable element of choice and freedom inherent in the condition of delinquent drift.

Edgar Friedenberg's review in *The New York Review of Books* (1965) indicated that David achieved his purpose:

> *Delinquency and Drift* is elegant and light, precise and penetrating, wholly original, and so unsentimental that it can treat of misery to some coherent purpose, avoiding both disguise and despair. It is subtle, too intricate to summarize, yet very clear.

Following the 1964 publication of *Delinquency and Drift*, David began writing *Becoming Deviant*, which he intended to be different from *Delinquency and Drift*. David indicates that what he wanted to accomplish in his second book was to provide a sociological notion of how individuals become deviant without implying determinism. The idea of "becoming" was then popular in psychology and existentialism as a sufficiently general concept to allow the subject to be a part of the becoming deviant process.

Becoming Deviant provided a conceptualization of a sequential and open process that employed the concepts of affinity, affiliation, and signification. The sequential process allows for both non-re-offending and recidivism. David explains that the theoretical argument underlying the book came mainly from his undergraduate and graduate teaching between 1964 and 1969. In several courses that he co-taught with Goffman, he recalls trying to summarize the main themes in the sociology of deviance along with psychology. Ultimately, three "schools" of thought were integrated into the *Becoming Deviant* process, namely:

1. Affinity (i.e., Chicago School and functionalists: predispositions, subcultural, urban, class; Parks, Burgess, Shaw, McKay, and Thrasher.),
2. Affiliation (i.e., differential association and behavior system; Sutherland), and
3. Signification (i.e., labeling, selecting, framing; Goffman, Becker and Lemert).

David summarizes his *Becoming Deviant* argument as a process in which the subject sometimes moves from (1) an affinity to certain prohibited behaviors to (2) affiliation with circles and settings which include or sponsor the offenses to (3) the apprehension and signification of the offenses.

Following the 1969 publication of *Becoming Deviant*, David turned his scholarly attention back to his early graduate school interests in labor and social movements. This scholarly shift from criminology was shaped by the then changing social context of the times with the Vietnam War, strained race relations, and the prevailing crisis in the legitimacy of American institutions. This changing social context influenced a number of academics throughout the country to critically question and refocus their scholarly pursuits toward broader social, political, and economic concerns, particularly on the Berkeley campus.

Reflections on *Becoming Deviant*

With the publication of *Becoming Deviant* in 1969, David Matza provided a much anticipated sequel to his 1964 classic *Delinquency and Drift*. In *Becoming Deviant*, Matza has indicated that he intended to provide a conception of delinquency different from *Delinquency and Drift*. Specifically, he wanted to offer a sociological conception of how individuals become deviant without reliance upon notions of determinism. The intent was to acknowledge and elaborate upon the role of the subject in the process of becoming deviant.

Becoming Deviant was uniquely successful in changing the ways criminologists thought about crime and deviance. But exactly how did *Becoming Deviant* change criminological conceptions of crime and deviance and how does it continue to inform contemporary criminological theory? To address these questions, I surveyed a number of criminologists, many with careers that have spanned the period of *Becoming Deviant*'s original publication and subsequent rise to prominence. I asked the criminologists to share their view on *Becoming Deviant*'s major contributions to criminology in 1969 and its continuing contributions today. Among the early and continuing contributions of *Becoming Deviant* that were articulated are:

- "I'm sure you know quite well that I haven't been involved in the fields of deviance or criminology for a very long time.... Nevertheless, the part of the book that sticks with me most is the three vignettes illustrating the three processes of becoming deviant: affinity, affiliation, and signification," (Becker, 2009).
- "I think Matza is infused in the contemporary work of all of us, certainly in mine. I was particularly influenced by labeling as a social process, as a stigmatizing process, that could lead to denial and indeed a great variety of techniques that neutralize the social control projects of those who impose the label. I think there are clues in Matza to the contexts where labeling stigmatizes counterproductively that also become clues to where it can confront educatively. Understanding when acknowledging deviance increases it and when acknowledgment reduces it is the project put on the agenda by Matza and his community of scholars that I was interested in following up," (Braithwaite, 2009).
- "*Becoming Deviant* made a big impact at the time, as a tour de force which gave shape to the emergent sociology of deviance and control as a clear alternative to conventional criminology. Part 1 was, and remains, an utterly original analysis of the growth of 'naturalism' in sociological work on crime and deviance. The shift from correction to appreciation, simplicity to complexity, and pathology to diversity transcended the tendency—partly encouraged by Matza himself in *Delinquency and Drift*—for oversimplified histories of the field to view the subject as a battle between positivism (bad) and interactionism (good). For example, Matza gave functionalism, usually dismissed as irrelevant or stultifying, a key role, for its stress on irony—'good' things can flow from 'bad' causes—and complexity—the social is not simple. Perspectives on the Chicago School, functionalism and the neo-Chicagoans gained fresh life from this mode of conceptualizing their achievements. Part 2's examination of the three master paradigms in the explanation of the process of becoming deviant—affinity, affiliation, and signification—was a bold way of mastering the field. It was in the final chapters, on signification, that he made his most important contribution to understanding what is entailed in becoming deviant—for instance—the notions of gross and reasonable exclusion as extending and intensifying deviant identity," (Downes, 2009).
- "I was very influenced by *Becoming Deviant* when I read it. (1) The power of it, I thought was that by shifting the frame of reference or perspective,

one could reconstitute the object; (2) Made sociological thought relative; (3) Rejected conventional theories based upon values, norms and beliefs and tried to focus on meaning and action; (4) It moved away from a blame the deviant toward seeing such activity as orderly, meaningful, logical and collective. (5) It brought theoretical acuity to an area seen as a bit too "practical" for sociologists. (6) It bridged deviance and crime and moved away from mere textbook treatments. At the time, I thought it was one of the most subtle and complex books I had read in the field. I still do," (Manning, 2009).

- Identifying "the powerful hold of the conventional order on those who would violate even its most important rules. It is a much more sophisticated account than the idea of 'subculture' or 'street codes' of the complex process of normative detachment—always partial and contingent—that precedes or co-occurs with deviant action," (Rosenfeld, 2009).
- "The first section of *Becoming Deviant* is still required reading in my introductory graduate course on criminological theory. What I find most compelling about this book are the carefully crafted discussions of correction v. appreciation, pathology v. diversity, and simplicity v. complexity. What this amounts to is a subtle critique of the domain assumptions of positivism in criminology. Specifically it clarifies the assumptions that provide the warrant for inquiry that is mobilized to uncover the pathological differences that determine or at least cause criminal behavior. In the process, Matza illustrates the limitations and contradictions of those assumptions, and provides what I consider to be a most valuable critique of the dominant paradigm in the field," (Chiricos, 2009).
- "*Becoming Deviant* remains a brilliant critical analysis of how we think about and try to explain crime and deviance. It remains quite relevant as scholars circle back around to the issue of human agency and cognitive transformation in life-course offending. Today's scholars focus more on the role of human agency in desisting from crime, whereas Matza was concerned, in a sophisticated way, in how individuals used agency to become criminals. Regardless, his insights on human agency (which avoid a crude free-will perspective) would benefit anyone delving into this topic today," (Cullen, 2009).
- "David Matza's *Becoming Deviant,* which I first encountered during my first semester as a graduate student, was one of the two or three most important books published in criminology from, at least, the early 1960's to early 80's—the other two were Howard Becker's *The Outsiders* and Jack Douglas' *The Social Meanings of Suicide*. I think that *Becoming Deviant's* lasting importance derives from two main things. First, it represents the high point in the development of what was called the "Neo-Chicagoan" or labeling approach to the study and explanation of crime and deviance. Second, and, more importantly, it still provides a bugle call for criminologists to conduct studies on crime and deviance from an *appreciative naturalistic* approach. Although I have never considered myself an exponent of labeling theory, *Becoming Deviant* helped ignite the fire under me that first inspired my taking of an appreciative naturalistic approach in studying the problem of violent crime," (Athens, 2009).

- "When it first appeared in 1969, *Becoming Deviant* was a witty and intelligent commentary on the major theoretical tendencies in criminology and the sociology of deviance. It synthesized a mass of material and rendered comprehensible the history of the field in a lucid and compelling fashion," (Scull, 2009).
- "Among the key ideas in Matza's *Becoming Deviant* were the notion of provisional identity (identity is always more supposition than conclusion) and his rejection of the commonplace and unfortunate idea that categories like 'deviant,' 'delinquent,' or 'criminal' are ontological boxes into which humans can be neatly fit. Both of these are of course linked to his earlier work on *Drift*. These ideas have resonated in criminology for decades in everything from labeling theory to modern life-course criminology," (Warr, 2009).
- "By the end of the 1960s when *Becoming Deviant* was published, criminology was just beginning to see the rise of 'social control' theory and its emphasis on correctionalism, both of which were strong competitors to *Becoming Deviant* in the marketplace of ideas as well as the shifting social and political tastes of the public.... A perusal of criminology and criminal justice journals indicates—at least to me—that correctionalism holds sway once more—or still does—and it would be timely and important to the health and vigor of criminological theory and our failed attempts to incarcerate our way out of crime to re-issue *Becoming Deviant*," (Lilly, 2009).
- "The life-course of the field of criminology is one marked by growth generally, and both continuity and change in particular. Our young discipline has grown tremendously and quickly in its short life, and several instant-classic readings have emerged during this period. One of these is Matza's *Becoming Deviant*. As he states in his introduction, the theme of the first part of *Becoming Deviant* is growth, and he shows how major sociological viewpoints build off one another. Today, this framework is exemplified across many criminological theories, most notably developmental/life-course criminology, which seeks to incorporate ideas from various disciplines and continually build a more complete theory about the longitudinal patterning of criminal activity," (Piquero, 2009).

As these commentaries affirm, *Becoming Deviant* was and remains a criminological classic. What distinguished *Becoming Deviant* in 1969 and what continues to distinguish it from other theories of crime today is that it places the reader in the subjective realm and mind of the deviant subject. Rather than being on the outside looking in, *Becoming Deviant* places us on the inside looking out through the subjective lens, thoughts and actions of the deviant subject. Truly an important and illuminating perspective that begs for further theoretical refinement and empirical validation. I am pleased that Transaction is publishing the Second Edition of this unique work. Scholars and students from criminology, sociology, and related disciplines will find it to be invaluable in the ongoing effort to comprehend the complexities of criminal behavior and thereby to better inform what are far too often misguided efforts to reduce the pain and suffering of crime.

Thomas G. Blomberg

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