

## Sociology Study Guide

### Deviance

- definition- a violation of norms
- Howard Becker—it is not the act itself that is deviant, but rather how society reacts to it.
- Different groups have different norms—what is deviant to some is normal to others
  - ex. 4 year old drinking VS. 24 year old drinking
- Goffman—stigma(the good and bad) attributes that discredit one's claim to a "normal" identity—often a stigma defines a person's master status(how they are described)
- We understand the world because of a shared predictability
  - "Otherness" threatens our sense of predictability
- "When we define someone as deviant, we strengthen our own position and simplify our response to the "other": ignore, expunge, destroy, or rehabilitate them
- \*\*Deviance is a phenomenon situated in power\*\*
- We don't like deviance in society
  - others doing something other than the norm threatens our predictability
- Problem? —keeps people from working together
- Essential? —keeps society changing
- Norms make social life possible by making behavior predictable
  - Deviance undermines predictability

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- Social Control—formal and informal means enforcing norms- it is necessary for social life.
- Sociologists look within the individual:
  - Biological explanations-focus on genetics, like the extra Y chromosome, or body type
  - Psychological explanations- focus on personality disorders—overactive id, authoritarian personality.
- Found outside the individual:
  - Crime is a violation of norms written into law
  - Socialization, subculture groups, social class, etc, may influence some people to break norms.
- Is it possible for blindness to not be deviant?
  - yes if it is a norm
- **\*\*Social arrangement create deviance\*\***
- Robert Scott: "The Making of Blind Men"
  - the problem of blindness does not stem from preconceptions, but it is an effect of introducing the factor of blindness into interaction: Strained Interaction
- Symbolic Interaction (Edwin Sutherland)
  - those who associate with groups orientated toward deviance
  - Differential Association— those who associate with groups orientated toward deviance learn and excess of definitions of deviance and are more likely to engage in deviant behavior

- Control theory—is an interdisciplinary branch of engineering and mathematics that deals with the behavior of dynamical systems with inputs, and how their behavior is modified by feedback.
  - everyone is propelled towards deviance, but two control systems work against deviance
  - \*more control\* Inner control—capacity to withstand temptations: morality, conscious, fear of punishment, and desire to be good.
  - Outer control—police, parents, and peers that influence us
- Labeling theory—labels that are given affect their own and others perceptions of them thus channeling their behavior into deviance into conformity.
- Functionalists Perspective:
  - Individuals help produce their own orientation to life and their choice of association helps shape self.
  - Travis Hirshi: “strong bonds to society lead to more effective inner control, bonds based on attachments, commitments, involvements, and beliefs.
  - Gresham Sykes and David Matza use terms “techniques of neutralization”
    - strategies deviants employ to resist society’s label
      - we did it and here’s why
  - William Chambliss Study
    - Saints and Roughnecks
    - Saints: Upper Class, talked more educated, also more deviant but did not get the label
    - Roughnecks: Lower Class, good kids, but labeled deviant
  - Functionalist Perspective
    - Trying to understand why we do the things we do (what’s right and wrong)
    - Emile Durkheim-deviance is functional because it contributes to the social order
    - Clarifies moral boundaries, promotes social unity, and promotes social change—if boundary violations gain enough support, they become new, acceptable behaviors.