



INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY

Soc 1101: Summer 2023

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Deviance

Lecture 15

TODAY'S LECTURE OUTLINE

- **What is deviance?**
 - **Deviance as a social process**
 - **Deviance and crime**
- **Theories of deviance**
- **Stigma and Social Control**
- **Monday's lectures: Marriage, family and schooling**

WHAT IS DEVIANCE?

- **Any transgression of socially established norms**
 - **Violations can range from minor to major**
- **Social groups make decisions about what behaviors are seen as deviant or normal**
 - **These decisions change over time and place**
 - **Vary across social groups and societies**

Deviance is socially constructed

RECALL ETHNOMETHODOLOGY & BREACHING EXPERIMENTS



DEVIANCE, CRIME, NORMS AND LAWS

- **Deviance is a violation of social norms**
 - **Enforcement is informal; consequences usually less severe**
- **Crime is an act punishable by law**
 - **Enforcement is formal; consequences usually more severe**
- **Not all crimes are seen as deviant; not all deviance is a crime**

DEVIANCE

Informal Deviance

bizarre
clothing, nose
picking, facial
tattoos

CRIME

Formal Deviance

murder,
sexual
assault

Parking ticket,
speeding violation,
underage drinking

Source: Giddens, Duneier, Applebaum, and Carr. 2016. *Introduction to Sociology*

DEVIANCE AS A SOCIAL PROCESS

- **Social norms are fluid and subject to change**
 - **The definition of what counts as deviant is also subject to change and likely varies across contexts**
- **Durkheim: No act is inherently deviant in and of itself**
 - **Deviance is defined socially and will vary from one group or context to another**

Which of these acts would you rate as the most deviant?

- A) Shoplifting**
- B) Speeding**
- C) Fraud**
- D) Jaywalking**
- E) Flag burning**

Which of these acts would you rate as the most deviant?

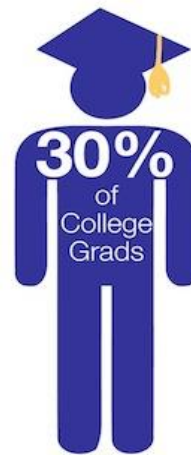
- A) Shoplifting to provide food for one's family**
- B) Speeding on the way to the hospital**
- C) Welfare fraud**
- D) Jaywalking to escape a stranger**
- E) Flag burning as protest**

Which of these acts would you rate as the most deviant?

- A) Shoplifting because you are bored**
- B) Speeding, 50 miles over the speed limit**
- C) Credit card fraud**
- D) Jaywalking in the midst of a large crowd**
- E) Flag burning ceremony to retire a flag**

VARIATIONS IN WHAT COUNTS AS SOCIAL DEVIANCE

- **The case of the tattoo**
 - Normative in many cultures
 - Deviant in the United States



Who Has Tattoos?



18-25 year olds



26-40 year olds

Tattoos, by Generation

% who have a tattoo



PewResearchCenter

Tattoo Household

	June 1999	April 2014	Change
Ages 35-49	21%	49%	+28%
Parents	25%	52%	+27%
\$30K-\$50K	23%	49%	+26%
Blue Collar	34%	60%	+26%
Rural	20%	45%	+25%
Ages 18-34	35%	58%	+23%
White Collar	24%	47%	+23%
High School or Less	27%	50%	+23%
African Americans	24%	46%	+22%
Under \$30K	24%	46%	+22%
Some College	24%	46%	+22%
South	21%	43%	+22%

SOLIDARITY AND DEVIANCE

- **DURKHEIM: deviance exists to ensure social cohesion**
- **Social sanctions on the deviant help us bond; reinforce our collective values and norms**
- **Deviance exists because it plays an important social function**

Functionalist theory of deviance

WHY AND HOW DO PEOPLE BECOME DEVIANT/OUTSIDERS?

- **Anomie is a sense of aimlessness or despair that is common in a society where social norms lose their hold over individual behavior**
- **Anomie results when a society develops social norms that a significant part of the population is unable to realize**

Merton's Structural strain theory of deviance

MERTON ON "ANOMIE" AND DEVIANCE STRUCTURE

unequal
access to the
means

CULTURE

agreement on
the ends
(cultural norm)

ANOMIE

Merton's Structural strain theory of
deviance

BECKER ON OUTSIDERS

- **Social groups create deviance**
 - **By setting the rules of what is right and what is wrong**
 - These rules are the creation of specific social groups (rules vary by group)
 - **By labeling wrongdoers as outsiders**
 - But not all individuals whose actions break the rules are labelled outsiders/deviant
 - Responses of other people to the behavior are key to the labeling process

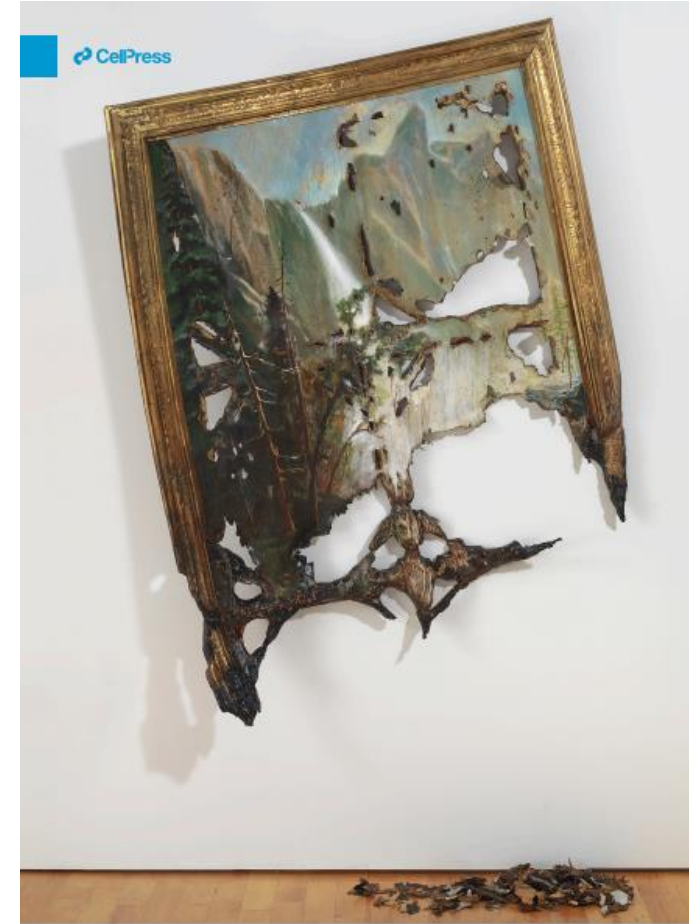
Example: Incestuous marriage, gossip, and suicide

Becker's labeling theory

DEVIANCE AS A SOCIAL PROCESS



Merton and Becker on
graffiti vs museum exhibits?



SOCIAL STIGMA

- **GOFFMAN: A negative social label that not only changes others' behavior toward a person but also alters that person's own self-concept and social identity**



SOCIAL STIGMA

- **What is the function of stigma?**
 - **Shame**
 - **Social control is maintained through social sanctions imposed on deviants**
- **What are the consequences of stigma?**
 - **Prevents people from breaking norms**
 - **Social isolation**
 - **Possible subordination of the marginalized**

STIGMA AND MARGINALIZATION

Mistreatment at School



Physically Attacked / Verbally Harassed / Denied Equal Treatment



Mistreatment at Work



**STIGMA AND
DISCRIMINATION**



**THE MAJORITY OF
TRANSGENDER PEOPLE
EXPERIENCE VARIOUS
FORMS OF HARASSMENT,
VICTIMIZATION, AND
DISCRIMINATION IN
THEIR DAILY LIVES**

STIGMA AND MARGINALIZATION

Survey respondents were asked about their comfort level in eight different scenarios interacting with people living with HIV:

54% of Americans were uncomfortable with a doctor, dentist, or medical professional

49% were uncomfortable with a spouse

45% were uncomfortable with a barber or hairstylist living with HIV

MONDAY'S LECTURES

New module: Social institutions and organizations

- **Lecture 16: Marriage and Family**
 - **Readings: Cherlin 2004: Deinstitutionalization of American marriage**
 - **Raymo et al. 2015: Marriage and Family in East Asia**
- **Lecture 17: Schooling**
 - **Davies & Guppy 2014: The schooling society**