

Seventh Edition

MARSHALL B. CLINARD · ROBERT F. MEIER

Psychology of Deviant Behavior



SOCIOLOGY OF DEVIANT BEHAVIOR

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SOCIOLOGY OF DEVIANT BEHAVIOR

To my children, from whom I have learned a great deal:

**Marsha
Stephen
Lawrence**

Marshall B. Clinard

To my parents, who made my learning possible:

**Frank
Eileen**

Robert F. Meier

Preface

This textbook provides a theoretical overview of what deviance means in today's world and presents a comprehensive examination of a number of specific forms of deviant behavior. Throughout the book, sociological concepts and processes underlie the presentation. We have carefully explained and appraised the leading theories and perspectives of deviant behavior: anomie, control, labeling, conflict, and learning. The theoretical frame of reference that we have adopted to examine the forms of deviance is socialization, or learning theory, together with a normative perspective. We regard deviant behavior as learned behavior, behavior that is developed in a normal (or usual) learning process, as is all other behavior. Such a frame of reference furnishes theoretical continuity throughout the text; at the same time, we recognize other viewpoints and perspectives. Where applicable, the analyses stress the importance of looking at deviance from the deviant's own perspective.

It is not easy to define behavior. Nor is there any behavior that is universally regarded as deviant. Where unanimity about deviance has seemed to exist, it usually has been the result of political, social, and economic powers of certain interest groups that have succeeded in imposing on others the views they hold of what constitutes deviance. Here, we examine the relative merits of four definitions of deviance: the statistical, absolutist, reactivist, and normative. We have adopted the normative definition as best fitting the complex, largely urbanized societies that are characterized by a high degree of differentiation and deviance.

As with the previous editions, this seventh is a complete revision that incorporates the most recent theoretical developments in the field and the latest research findings. Reviewers of the previous edition have suggested changes. In this edition, we have placed more emphasis on deviance theory, and have also expanded the discussion of drug use and have included a new section on the growing problems of family abuse and violence. At the same time, we have eliminated or reduced some previous material. Because deviance is increasingly being recognized as essentially a sociological phenomenon, we have drastically reduced the discussion of individualistic theories of deviance.

Chapters 1 and 2 deal with the definition of deviance. They introduce the sociological concepts necessary to understand the processes as well as the theories of deviance. Chapter 3 represents a discussion of the sources of deviance, with particular focus on urbanization as an important context in which to view deviance. Chapter 4 examines and contrasts two major sociological theories of deviant be-

havior: anomie and learning or socialization theory. Chapter 5 examines three other theories: control, labeling, and conflict. We shift then to an in-depth analysis of various forms of deviant behavior. Chapters 6 and 7 identify the processes involved in crimes of interpersonal violence and crimes against the economic and political order. Chapters 8 and 9 deal with drug usage and alcohol abuse, Chapter 10 focuses on homosexual behavior, and Chapter 11 on forms of heterosexual deviance. Chapters 12 and 13 analyze mental disorder and suicide from a sociological point of view. We conclude with Chapter 14 in which we discuss certain physical disabilities that are often regarded sociologically as being deviant, with profound social and personal consequences for the self-concept of the disabled person.

This book was first published in 1957. Originally, it pioneered a major shift from the then characteristic approach to deviance, termed "social disorganization" or "social problems," toward a basically sociological orientation built around the concept of normative deviance and deviant behavior. Subsequently, the conceptual framework of deviant behavior has received wide acceptance and greater use in sociology. In this seventh edition, we continue the tradition begun in the first edition: Deviant behavior is human behavior and is best understood in its social context. This edition also emphasizes that deviance is a feature of modern, complex societies because such societies are characterized by a system of ranked social differentiation (or stratification) that is the basis for social deviance. We also note that this edition affirms the importance of the obvious relationship between deviance and social order and the necessity for a sociological understanding of all aspects of society in order to comprehend the nature and complexity of social deviance.

Over the years, countless sociologists have contributed the basic data for this book through their theoretical writings and research on deviance. The references in the book acknowledge many of them. At various times, other sociologists have criticized the various editions, including the present one, and they have thus contributed valuable ideas and suggestions. We are deeply grateful to all of them.

An Instructor's Manual is available. The manual may be obtained through a local Holt representative or by writing to the Sociology Editor, College Department, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 301 Commerce Street, Suite 3700, Fort Worth, TX 76102.

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M.B.C.
R.F.M.

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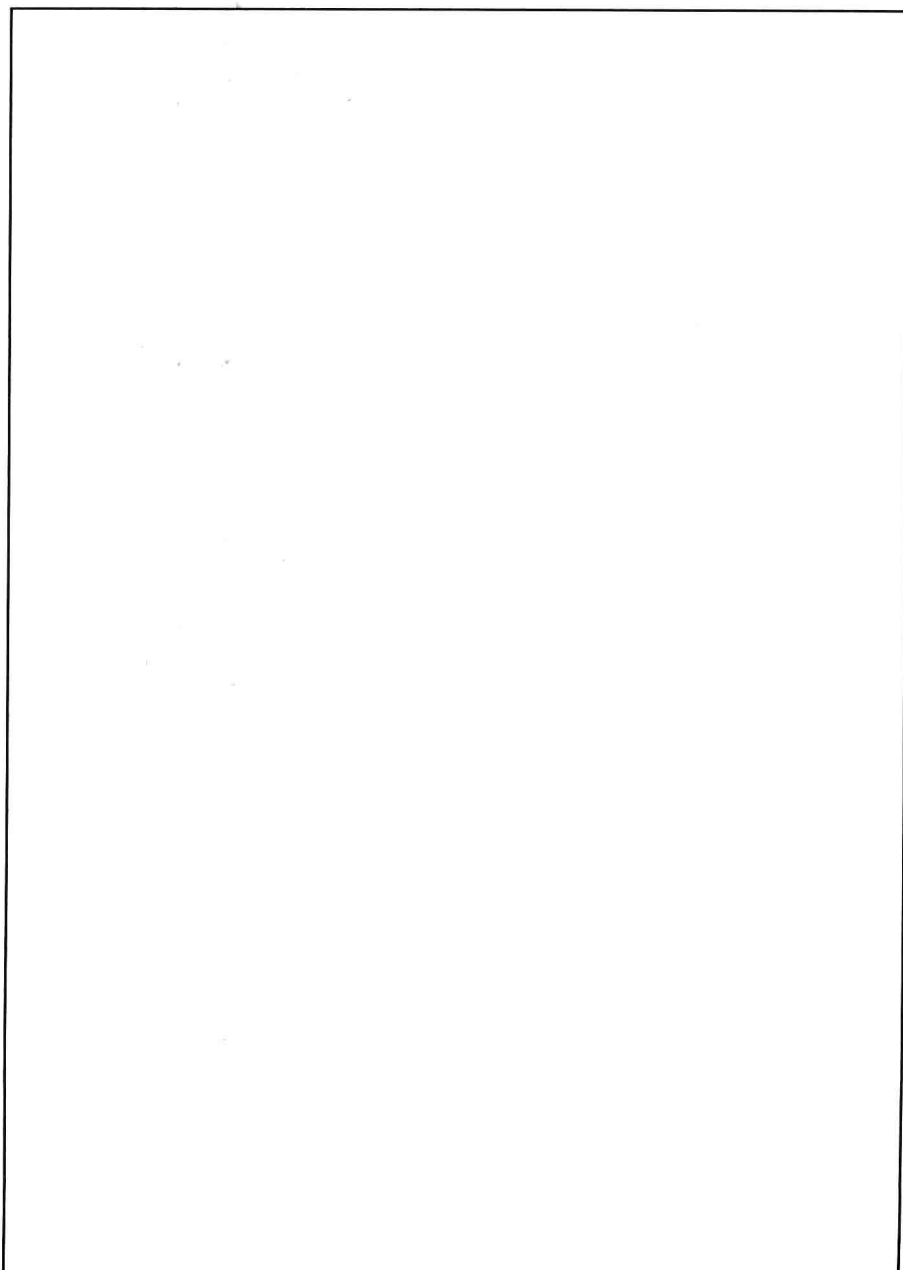
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PART ONE

The Nature of Deviance



The Nature and Meaning of Deviance

The study of deviance faces a difficult problem: there is no universal agreement on what behavior, people, or conditions are deviant. Yet most persons would say that they know deviance when they see it. Mental disorder, suicide, crime, homosexuality, and alcoholism would be on many persons' lists. Yet, even with this list of generally accepted forms of deviance, there is disagreement. To some, for example, homosexuality is not at all deviant. What one person considers problem drinking may pose no such problem to another. The wrongfulness of certain crimes, such as prostitution and the use of marijuana or cocaine, is currently disputed among different segments of the population. As such, deviance may be similar to what St. Augustine said about time: we know pretty much what it is—until someone asks us to define it.

Even scholars who study deviance are not in agreement on which people, acts, or conditions are deviant. Davis (1961) includes blacks and both Davis (1961) and Schur (1984) discuss women as deviant. Cohen (1966: 1) says his deviance book is about "knavery, skulduggery, cheating, unfairness, crime, sneakiness, betrayal, graft, corruption, wickedness, and sin." Gouldner (1968) complained that the empirical literature on deviance has been limited largely to "the world of the hip, night people, drifters, grifters, and skidders: the 'cool world.'" Howard Becker (1973), a writer we will encounter again, limited his influential study on deviance to jazz musicians and marijuana users. A British collection of papers on deviance dealt with drug users, thieves, hooligans, suicides, homosexuals and their blackmailers, and industrial saboteurs (Cohen, 1971). Lemert (1951) illustrated his theoretical position on deviance with reference to, among others, the blind and stutterers. Dinitz, Dynes, and Clarke (1975) find the following types of persons deviant: midgets, dwarfs, giants, sinners, heretics, bums, tramps, hippies, and Bohemians. Becker (1977) finds the genius deviant. Liazos (1972) attempts to capture the essence of deviance by claiming that the study of deviance has traditionally been concerned with "nuts, sluts, and perverts." Henslin (1972) discussed four types of deviants to illustrate research problems in the field: cabbies, suicides, drug users, and abortionees. Stafford and Scott (1986: 77), in a contemporary list, offer the following list of disapproved conditions: "old age, paralysis, cancer, drug addiction, mental illness, shortness, being black, alcoholism, smoking, crime, homosexuality, unemployment, being Jewish, obesity, blindness, epi-