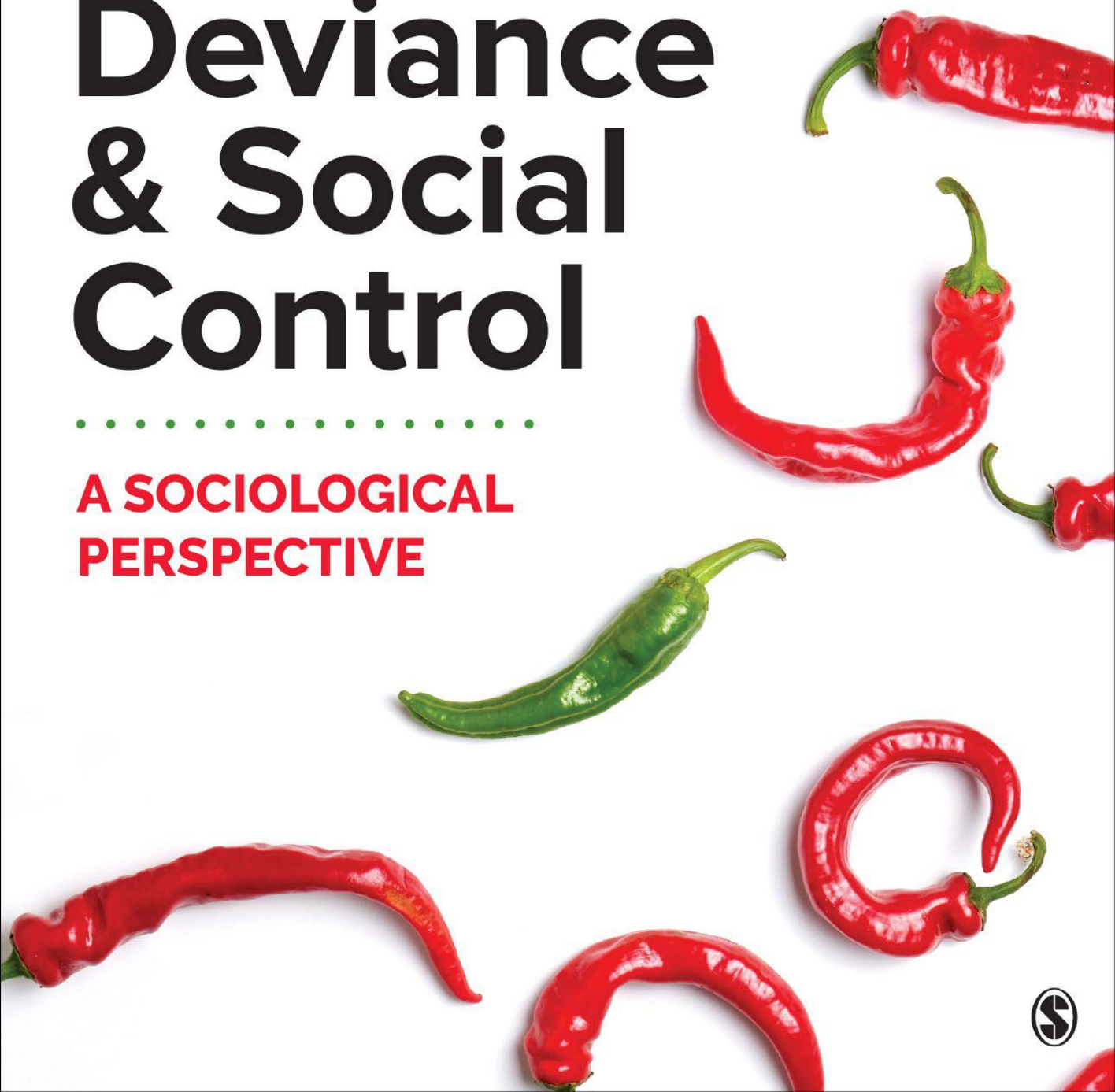
Michelle Inderbitzin | Kristin A. Bates | Randy R. Gainey

THIRD EDITION

Deviance & Social Control

A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE



Deviance and Social Control

Third Edition

Michelle dedicates this book to her students, past and present, inside and outside, who offer inspiration, creative challenges, and, most importantly, real hope for a better future.

Kristin dedicates this book to Jeff, William, and Christopher, who are welcome reminders that the world can be a really cool place.

Randy dedicates this book to Beth, our new lives, and the many adventures we have yet to come.

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Deviance and Social Control

A Sociological Perspective

Third Edition

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Foreword

By the time sociology came to universities at the beginning of the 20th century, all the "good" topics had been snatched up by earlier arrivals: Historians got to write about wars and kings and queens, economists acquired the market as their special turf, and political science took control of the state and government. Sociology was left with whatever topics were left over, especially (chief among these less desirable subjects) the "bad behavior" nice people didn't like in the increasingly urbanized society they lived in: slums, gangs, prostitution, alcoholism, and crime. No one had to worry, then, about defining this field or justifying all these disparate topics being treated under one heading. It seemed obvious to all right-thinking people that these things were problems that needed looking into. Sociologists took them over as their own, and the nature of these problems (and the solutions to them everyone hoped the new science would provide) defined the nature of the field.

Since university disciplines like to make sense of what they are doing, sociologists soon began to look for a unifying thread, for what all these things had in common that justified calling studying them a scientific field. Once you question the commonsense idea that they all simply exemplified "bad behavior" or "social problems," you commit yourself to finding a more logical and scientifically defensible description of what you're doing. Sociologists worked hard to come up with that definition. What they came up with, in the end, was not a definition but definitions, lots of them. To go beyond saying these were all simply differing versions of badness, to define what made bad people's behavior bad, created great difficulties because people don't agree on that kind of definition. The commonsense understanding of "badness" included a mixture of very different things: drunkenness, stealing, craziness—the definition really consisted of nothing more than a list of activities that the law banned. Because legislatures make laws not to define the subject matter of a science but rather to satisfy constituents, the science part comes hard.

For many years, taking commonsense ideas of bad behavior at face value and accepting conventional definitions of what "bad" was, sociologists tried to make science by accepting and trying to prove and improve upon equally commonsense explanations of why people behaved badly. They mostly relied on one of two ideas. On one hand, some theories said that people did bad things because they were inherently bad—there were plenty of genetic theories in the early history of criminology, identifying potential criminals by physical markers of bad heredity—similar to the markers of feeblemindedness, another topic that sociology and criminology had on their hands—or because they lived in bad circumstances, which turned otherwise normal children into delinquents, sane people into the mentally ill, and healthy people into alcoholics and drug addicts.

These general ideas, scarcely worth being dignified as general theories, for many years dominated the classes taught under such titles as "Social Disorganization" or

"Social Problems." Textbooks and lectures proceeded along a well-marked path of problems, dominated by well-known kinds of crimes—starting with juvenile delinquency and following criminal types through more adult crimes like robbery, theft, burglary, and murder—and equally familiar kinds of personal pathologies, revolving around pleasurable forms of behavior that right-thinking people thought were wrong—sex, drugs, and alcohol, all three leading to mental illness. Teachers and books rehearsed the numerous and varied things that had been found to be correlated with bad behaviors and presumably to cause them: living in a slum neighborhood, coming from a broken home (that is, a household not headed by a married heterosexual couple), low educational achievement, and a long list of other phenomena usually correlated with some measure of social class so that, in some fundamental sense, the cause of all this pathology seemed to be being poor.

Such an approach did not produce a lot of results. What one study found was often contradicted by another study and, eventually, some sociologists and criminologists began to take a more neutral approach to these subject matters, seeing them not as signs of bad character or heredity but rather as signs of a mixed-up society, whose operations and organization made it likely that some sizable number of people would find it attractive and/or profitable to engage in behavior that led them into conflict with the law (as the gang members in *West Side Story* sang, "We're not depraved, we're deprived!").

Since finding the causes of bad behavior in society did not produce reliable results any more than genetic and psychological theories had, some sociologists began to look further. They asked about a larger spectrum of things and focused on what we might call "the crime industry," the agencies and organizations that made laws that defined what things were crimes, that devoted themselves to finding people who had violated these laws, adjudicating their cases and administering the punishments and forms of supervision the resolution of those cases dictated: the legislatures that made the laws, the police who found the guilty parties, the courts where their cases were decided, the jails and prisons where they served their sentences, and the parole offices and officers that oversaw those who came out at the other end of this process.

All this research is best summarized, as the authors of this book have done, by considering the variety of theories that sociologists and criminologists have created to make sense of this confusing mass of ideas and of the research the variety of ideas has engendered. Reading their crisp, informative summaries of so many conflicting ideas and then the wisely chosen illustrative examples of what you get from each approach will give students the best possible introduction to a lively and still developing field of research.

Howard S. Becker

Preface

While there are many textbooks and readers on deviant behavior currently on the market, this book is unique because it is framed within and written entirely from a sociological perspective. We explain the development of major sociological theoretical perspectives and detail how those theories have been used to think about and study the causes of deviant behavior and the reactions to it. We find the theories fascinating, and we think you will, too. We have provided many specific examples of deviant behavior and social control within the text so that students will have numerous opportunities to apply the concepts and theories and make connections to their everyday lives. The second unique aspect of this book is that as a text-reader, it is a true hybrid, offering both original text and primary readings. It includes both substantial original chapters that give an overview of the field and the theories as well as carefully selected articles on deviance and social control that have previously appeared in leading academic journals. For the third edition, we have chosen two readings for each chapter; one is a short piece written in an accessible tone from the sociology journal/magazine, ***Contexts***, chosen to give the students an idea of what public criminology looks like and can teach us. The other piece in each chapter is an article from an academic journal that presents research and contributes to scholarship in the content area of that chapter. In the following, we describe how the third edition of *Deviance and Social Control: A Sociological Perspective* differs from existing texts on the market.

While the widely used textbooks on deviant behavior have strong points, our book provides a very different experience for students by combining original text with existing studies. Professors will be able to assign one book (rather than a textbook and an accompanying reader) and will be assured that their students are presented with both clear explanations of sociological perspectives on deviance and some of the best examples of research from the field. We chose readings for their clarity in presenting ideas and findings and because they are generally cutting-edge contemporary examples of the use of theory to explain deviance. They offer the opportunity to explore a topic in deviance more thoroughly while still with an eye toward the importance of theory in that exploration.

In contrast to most of the popular readers and textbooks on deviant behavior, this book is primarily organized around theories and perspectives of deviance, rather than types of deviant behavior or a singular approach to understanding deviance. We have aimed for a combination of both depth and breadth in this book; in taking a broad sociological perspective, we focus on theory but also include full chapters on researching deviance, the societal responses to deviance, and deviant careers.

We hope this book will serve as a guide to students delving into the fascinating world of deviance and social control for the first time, offering clear overviews of issues and perspectives in the field as well as introductions to classic and current research. The third edition of *Deviance and Social Control: A Sociological Perspective*

is intended to replace standard deviance textbooks or readers; it can be used in both undergraduate and graduate deviance courses.

Overview of Features

The third edition of *Deviance and Social Control: A Sociological Perspective* includes topics generally found in textbooks on deviant behavior, with significant focus on the major sociological theories of deviance and discussion of rulemaking and societal reaction to deviance. This book offers clear explanations and discussion of concepts and theories and carefully selected examples to illustrate relevant topics. This book features the following:

1. An introductory section explaining the sociological perspective on deviance and social control. This section provides an overview on the organization and content of the book and also introduces relevant themes, issues, and concepts to assist students in understanding the different perspectives. Along with the introduction, we have full chapters on the diversity of deviance and methods of researching deviance to introduce students to the broader issues in the field.
2. Each chapter includes five different features or sections that prompt students to engage with the material, apply the concepts, and learn more about current research. These features include the following:
    - *Deviance in Popular Culture*—offers several examples of films and/or television shows and encourages students to apply the concepts and theories to the behavior depicted in these examples
    - *Deviance and Disparity*—explores the impact of status and inequality on different types of deviance and the reactions to such behavior
    - *Ideas in Action*—highlights examples of current policies or programs designed to address deviant behaviors from the perspective(s) covered in each chapter
    - *Now* You—asks students to apply the material they learned in the chapter to specific questions or examples
    - *Global Perspectives on Deviance*—illustrates the wide range of deviance by covering examples of research, policies, and practices from around the world
3. Each chapter includes discussion questions and exercises or assignments that will give students a chance to test and extend their knowledge of the material.
4. The book contains a glossary of key terms.

Structure of the Book

We chose very deliberately to organize our book around sociological theories rather than around types of deviance. This is in direct opposition to most of the competing texts on the market, and it is one of the reasons you might consider using our book. We believe the theoretically based approach offers students fertile ground for learning and exploring the realm of deviant behavior and social control. Once they learn the different theoretical perspectives, students will be able to apply the different theories to virtually any type of deviant behavior and, furthermore, be able to compare and contrast the theoretical models and decide for themselves which offers the most compelling explanation for the behavior. This is the kind of understanding and flexibility we hope our students achieve; while studying types of deviance is certainly interesting, being able to consider both individual and macro-level causes and explanations seems to us the larger and more important goal.

The book is divided into 12 chapters that cover an overview of the field of deviance and social control, methods and examples of researching deviance, the major theoretical traditions used in studying deviance, and a glimpse into the social control of deviance and deviant careers. The theory chapters each provide an overview of a theoretical perspective and its development, critiques of the perspective, and examples of current developments and research in that theoretical tradition. The chapters are as follows:

Chapter 1. Introduction to Deviance: We first provide the basic building blocks for studying deviant behavior from a sociological perspective. Different conceptions of deviance are described, and students are encouraged to develop and use their sociological imagination in studying deviant behavior. We explain the organization of the book and why we believe theory is so critical to understanding and researching deviance.

Chapter 2. The Diversity of Deviance: In this chapter, we offer an overview of some of the many types of deviance and show how our conceptions of deviance vary widely and change over time. We encourage students to think broadly about deviance and to always consider the culture, context, and historical period in which the "deviant" act takes place.

Chapter 3. Researching Deviance: This chapter addresses the many ways one might go about researching deviant behavior and social control. We highlight different research methods and the strengths and weaknesses of each approach. Examples are used throughout to make abstract concepts concrete for students.

Chapter 4. Anomie/Strain Theory: This chapter looks at one of the first sociological theories of deviance and traces the development of anomie and strain theories from Durkheim's, Merton's, and Cloward and Ohlin's macro-level ideas on how the very structure of society contributes to deviant

behavior to Agnew's general strain theory and Messner and Rosenfeld's institutional strain theory, which offer contemporary views on individual and institutional strain and the resulting deviance.

Chapter 5. Social Disorganization Theory: We discuss another early sociological perspective on deviance in this chapter: social disorganization theory, developed from early research on Chicago to explain patterns of deviance and crime across social locations, such as neighborhoods. We offer an overview of the perspective and show how it is being used today to explain high levels of deviance and violence in particular neighborhoods.

Chapter 6. Differential Association and Social Learning Theories: How do individuals learn to become deviant? This chapter covers ideas and research that try to answer that exact question. We explain the key ideas of Sutherland's differential association and Akers's social learning theories and offer an overview of the development of a sociological perspective that argues that deviance is learned through communication with intimate others.

Chapter 7. Social Control Theories of Deviance: Social control theories begin by flipping the question; rather than asking why individuals deviate, social control theories ask, If we are born prone to deviance, what keeps us from committing deviant acts? In this chapter, we trace the development of social control and life course theories and look at the importance of the individual's social bonds to conforming society.

Chapter 8. Labeling Theory: In this chapter, we look at the importance of being labeled deviant. We begin with a brief overview of symbolic interactionism, which then leads to a discussion of the labeling process and how it can affect individuals' self-concepts and life chances.

Chapter 9. Marxist and Conflict Theories of Deviance: Within the conflict perspective, power and inequality are key considerations in defining who and what is deviant in any given society. In this chapter, we begin with the ideas of Karl Marx and go on to show how Marxist perspectives have been used to study lawmaking and how the process of defining and creating deviant behavior is used to maintain positions of power in society.

Chapter 10. Critical Theories of Deviance: In this chapter, we focus on theories that examine deviance from a perspective that questions the normative status quo. We offer brief overviews of peacemaking criminology, feminist criminology, and critical race theory as alternative perspectives for studying deviance and social control.

Chapter 11. Societal Responses to Deviance: In this chapter, we offer a brief look into informal and formal social control of deviance. We discuss the medicalization (and medication) of deviance, mental hospitals, prisons and juvenile correctional facilities, felon disenfranchisement, and general effects of stigma on those labeled deviant.

Chapter 12. Deviant Careers and Career Deviance: While much attention is focused on getting into deviance, in this chapter, we consider the full deviant career, including desistance, or the process of exiting deviance.

Each chapter offers original material that introduces students to the issues, concepts, and theories covered in that chapter and contextualizes the examples used to show the wide variation in deviance and social control.

New to This Edition

In this third edition of *Deviance and Social Control: A Sociological Perspective*, we have updated the text, where appropriate, based on new examples and studies that illustrate the major sociological theories of deviance. While we included a chapter on global perspectives on deviance in the second edition, we have reorganized this in the new edition to include a section in every chapter that examines global issues in deviance and societal responses to deviant behavior or characteristics. We feel incorporating global examples into each chapter offers a better chance for students to be exposed to international perspectives while they are learning the substantive material, rather than our previous model of including global issues and examples in a separate chapter at the end of the book.

Some of the introductory vignettes that begin each chapter have been entirely changed or modified and help to provide a clear starting point for each theory and topic. In addition, the majority of inserts in each chapter, including our newly reframed sections on "Deviance and Disparity" as well as returning features "Deviance in Popular Culture," "Ideas in Action," and "Now *You*," have been updated or changed in order to better orient students to the relevance of theory and research in understanding deviance and social control in modern society.

Key theoretical concepts have been expanded, and the new edition includes discussions of social constructionist conception, the looking-glass self, multicultural feminism, social control of mental illness, and restorative justice. Reflecting the impact of the digital world on our society, the new edition includes a closer look at the influence of the internet on deviance and subcultures and explores emerging topics such as the use of smartphones and social media, stigma management in the internet age, the #MeToo movement, and the effect of platforms like YouTube. Demonstrating recent trends and events today, the data have been updated throughout, and recent events like the Trump administration's stance on transgender individuals serving in the military, The UnSlut Project, and the Black Lives Matter movement are considered. Additionally, pressing topics impacting society and students, such as human trafficking, school shootings, and world energy consumption rates, have been added.

Finally, in this third edition of *Deviance and Social Control: A Sociological Perspective*, we have taken a new strategy in selecting the readings that we chose to include. Each chapter now includes one article from *Contexts*, a sociological

magazine written for a broad audience, and one research article or chapter from an academic journal or book that was written largely for other sociologists and criminologists. With these contrasting but complementary examples, students will be able to see and compare examples of public sociology or public criminology, where scholars are writing to convey key ideas to the general public, and academic sociology or criminology, where the authors are publishing their work in hopes of advancing science and strengthening our understanding of deviant behavior and social control.

A great deal of thinking and work was involved in the creation of this new edition, but the work was a labor of love as we grew as scholars rethinking and investigating the subject of deviance and reactions to deviance to date. We hope instructors assigning the text appreciate the changes; we welcome your feedback for subsequent editions. Feel free to contact any or all of the authors if you have suggestions.

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How to Read a Research Article

As you travel through your studies of deviance and social control, you will soon learn that some of the best known and/or emerging explanations of deviance come from research articles in academic journals. This book has research articles included as part of the readings with most chapters, but you may be asking yourself, "How do I read a research article?" It is our hope to answer this question with a quick summary of the key elements of any research article, followed by the questions you should be answering as you read through the assigned sections.

Research articles published in social science journals will generally include the following elements: (1) introduction, (2) literature review, (3) methodology, (4) results, and (5) discussion/conclusion.

In the introduction, you will find an overview of the purpose of the research, and you will often find the hypothesis or hypotheses. A hypothesis is most easily defined as an educated statement or guess. In most hypotheses, you will find the following format: If X, Y will occur. For example, a simple hypothesis may be: "If the price of gas increases, more people will ride bikes." This is a testable statement that the researcher wants to address in his or her study. Usually, authors will state the hypothesis directly, but not always. Therefore, you must be aware of what the author is actually testing in the research project. If you are unable to find the hypothesis, ask yourself what is being tested, observed, and/or manipulated, and what are the expected results?

The next section of the research article is the literature review. At times the literature review will be separated from the text in its own section, and at other times it will be found within the introduction. In any case, the literature review is an examination of what other researchers have already produced in terms of the research question or hypothesis. For example, returning to my hypothesis on the relationship between gas prices and bike riding, we may find that five researchers have previously conducted studies on the effects of increases in gas prices. In the literature review, I will discuss their findings and then discuss what my study will add to the existing research. The literature review may also be used as a platform of support for my hypothesis. For example, one researcher may have already determined that an increase in gas prices causes more people to Rollerblade to work. I can use this study as evidence to support my hypothesis that increased gas prices will lead to more bike riding.

The methods used in the research design are found in the next section of the research article. In the methodology section you will find the following: who/what was studied, how many subjects were studied, and how the data were collected and processed. The methods section is usually very concise, with every step of the research project recorded. This is important because a major goal of the researcher is "reliability," or, if the research is done over again the same way, discovering if the results are the same.

The results section is an analysis of the researcher's findings. If the researcher conducted a quantitative study (using numbers or statistics to explain the research),

you will find statistical tables and analyses that explain whether or not the researcher's hypothesis is supported. If the researcher conducted a qualitative study (non-numerical research for the purpose of theory construction), the results will usually be displayed as a theoretical analysis or interpretation of the research question.

Finally, the research article will conclude with a discussion and summary of the study, examining the implications of the research and what future research is still needed.

Now that you know the key elements of a research article, let us examine a sample article from your text.

From Chapter 3: "Misogyny in Rap Music: A Content Analysis of Prevalence and Meanings" by Ronald Weitzer and Charis E. Kubrin

1. What is the thesis or main idea from this article?

   The thesis or main idea is found in the introduction of this article, specifically the last paragraph of the introduction. This is pretty common and it makes an easy transition from bringing the reader in to letting them know what they will learn if they read further. Weitzer and Kubrin do two things in this paragraph. First, they state the problem when they write, "Much of the criticism of rap music is impressionistic and based on a handful of anecdotes, rather than a systematic analysis. Exactly how prevalent are misogynistic themes in this music and what specific messages are conveyed to the listeners?" This tells the reader the problem, what we don't know and what we ought to know. The authors then explicitly state what their study is all about: "This study addresses this question through a content analysis of more than 400 rap songs. We document five themes related to the portrayal of women in rap music and link them to larger cultural and music industry norms and the local, neighborhood conditions that inspired this music." This well-structured paragraph sets up the problem and tells the reader how the authors will address the problem.

2. What is the research question(s) or hypothesis?

   The specific research question can also be found in the last paragraph of the introduction: "Exactly how prevalent are misogynistic themes in this music and what specific messages are conveyed to the listeners?" Although this is a research question, there is also a hint that there is something more going on. A possible hypothesis might be that there are less misogynistic themes than might be expected given conventional wisdom and/or at the least there may be more going on here, something sociological having to do with culture, norms and neighborhood conditions.

3. Is there any prior literature related to the hypothesis?

   Although they are not labeled as a "literature review" or "review of the literature" as is often done in research articles, the next several sections do exactly that—provide an overview about what we know about the issue.

The next section, "Images of Women in Popular Music," documents what is known about how women are portrayed in popular music, not only in rap but also country music and heavy metal rock music. The following section, "The Social Sources of Rap Music," basically provides a theory of rap music bringing in gender and gender relationships, issues of power and subordination, and culture as a backdrop that contextualizes the art of rap music. The authors conclude with the following claim: "We do not argue that neighborhood, industry, or larger cultural forces, as just described, are necessarily direct causes of the lyrical content or images, but instead that these forces are an essential part of the context within which the messages contained in rap are best understood." They educate the reader with an intellectual, empathetic understanding of rap music in reaction to the simplistic generalization that "rap music is 'bad' because it portrays women negatively." It is more than that!

4. What methods are used to support this hypothesis?

   In the "Research Method" section, Weitzer and Kubrin describe and justify the sample they analyze: "All rap albums from 1992 through 2000 that attained platinum status (selling at least 1 million copies) were identified ($N = 130$)." This is important because it not only provides a sampling frame but it allows the reader to think critically about that decision. Other than collecting more recent music (something newer than 20 years ago), would you have sampled music differently? Might you have included a comparison group? Do you have any other thoughts about their methodological approach? The authors also describe what they are going to do with the data, the music: "Each song was listened to twice in its entirety by the authors, while simultaneously reading the lyrics… Each line was coded to identify major misogynistic themes. Misogyny refers to lyrics that encourage, condone, or glorify the objectification, exploitation, or victimization of women." Thus, the authors are looking to see if what is expected (hypothesized) is actually there.

5. Is this a qualitative study or a quantitative study?

   To determine whether a study is qualitative or quantitative, you can look at either the methods section, which may often tell you whether quantitative or qualitative methods are being used, or the results section. If the results are presented numerically, it is a quantitative study; if they are presented non-numerically (an analysis of quotes from interviews, for example), it is a qualitative study. In this case, the answer is found in the results section and the answer is both. The authors are going to quantify (count) the occurrence of misogynistic lines and they are also going to provide qualitative examples to help us understand the numbers.

6. What are the results and how does the author present the results?

   Weitzer and Kubrin very clearly lay out their results, beginning quantitatively with overall counts and the frequencies of the five themes

they uncovered: naming and shaming (49%), sexual objectification (67%), distrust of women (47%), legitimating violence (18%), and prostitution and pimping (20%). The researchers then go into each theme, providing qualitative examples.

7. Do you believe that the authors provided a persuasive argument? Why or why not?

   The answer to this question is ultimately up to the reader, but a reader should think about the questions (research question and hypotheses) being asked, the theoretical framework being applied, and the methods used while answering this question.

8. What does the article add to your knowledge of the subject?

   Again, this question is specific to each reader, and we suspect that within any given course there will be variation in what readers "get out of" a piece of research. In other words, an article that really excites one of you and gets you thinking about deviance may not be the article that excites someone else. But in general, when thinking about this question, you may want to ask yourself whether it effectively answers the question, ***So what?***

   We think that this article does add value. It is a fascinating examination of a controversial form of art that is often interpreted and responded to as deviant. We think this article provides a useful context for thinking about other forms of art as normal or deviant and why other forms of art with derogatory depictions of women are not considered deviant.

9. What are the implications for public policy (or social change) concerning deviance that can be derived from this article?

   Not all articles will be equally good at addressing public policy. Some articles may be more about our cultural and theoretical understanding of difference (as is the case with this article), and a formal public policy response would be inappropriate given how deviance is being framed.

   This study, however, importantly concludes that for those interested in changing the content of a particular form of popular music away from stereotypical and degrading depictions of women, perhaps one should look outside of the music itself and look to the larger culture in which the music is created, bought, and sold.

Now that we have gone through the elements of a research article, you should continue to answer these questions as you read the other articles in this textbook. The questions may be easier to answer for some of the articles than for others, but do not give up! You will benefit the most from answering these questions with the hardest articles.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction to Deviance

Public Nudity

Founded in 1972, the Fremont Fair is one of Seattle's most beloved neighborhood street festivals, featuring a weekend of eclectic activities that celebrate the quirky community of Fremont, the self-proclaimed "center of the universe." Held annually in mid-June to coincide with the Summer Solstice, the event draws more than 100,000 people to shop, eat, drink, mingle, groove, and enjoy all manners of creative expression. Artistic highlights include craft and art booths, street performers, local bands, wacky decorated art cars, the free-spirited Solstice Parade produced by the Fremont Arts Council, and many other oddities that personify Fremont's official motto "Delibertus Quirkus"—Freedom to be Peculiar.

—Fremont Fair (2010; see also Fremont Fair, 2018b)

The Fremont Arts Council (FAC) is a community-based celebration arts organization. We value volunteerism; community participation; artistic expression; and the sharing of arts skills. We welcome the participation of everyone regardless of who they are, or what they think or believe.

The rules of the Fremont Solstice Parade, which make this event distinct from other types of parades, are:

- No written or printed words or logos
- No animals (except service animals)
- No motorized vehicles (except wheelchairs)
- No real weapons or fire

—Fremont Arts Council (2018)

It is true that a parade with no logos, animals, or motorized vehicles is different from most parades that we experience in the United States. But one more thing sets the

Fremont Solstice Parade apart from other parades: the public displays of nudity. Every year at the parade, a contingent of nude, body-painted bicyclists (both men and women) ride through the streets of Fremont as part of the parade. Rain or shine (and let's face it, there can be a lot of rain in Seattle in June), a large group of naked adults cycle down the street as the crowds cheer and wave. The Fremont City Council estimates that more than 100,000 people visit the weekend fair, and pictures show that the streets are crowded with parade watchers, from the very young to the elderly.

The traditions of the "free-spirited event" are explained on the Fremont Fair webpage:

> **What is the etiquette with body paint?** We won't deny it, the Fremont Fair and Fremont Solstice Parade are partially famous for body-painted bicyclists and revelers. If you are one of the body painted participants please note: The Fremont restaurants and bars greatly appreciate if you can carry a towel with you to place on the chair/booth you dine and drink in. If you don't, they are left scrubbing for weeks to come, which is a mess and can permanently damage decor. They love to have you in their establishments, but please be respectful of their furnishings. Also, remember that many families with small children attend the fair. Please be considerate of children's eye level. Plus, if you are not on a bike you should cover it up.
>
> **Is the Fremont Fair appropriate for children?** The Fremont Fair welcomes family members of all ages! In fact, there are special activities just for kids and families. However, Solstice-goers should be aware this is a very eclectic and free-spirited event. Some Solstice guests appear in full or partial body paint, and a variety of other colorful costumes (this is typically limited to Saturday's festivities.) (Fremont Fair, 2018a)

Contrast this event with the recent announcement that a serial flasher was sentenced in San Diego in the summer of 2019. The flasher who pleaded guilty to four misdemeanor charges of indecent exposure was sentenced to 180 days in jail and three years of probation and was required to waive his Fourth Amendment search and seizure rights. In addition, he is required to register as a sex offender and go to counseling (Horn, 2019).

While both of these events center on public displays of nudity, one is celebrated while the other is vilified. Why?

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Photos 1.1 and 1.2 When is a public display of nudity considered deviant? When is it celebrated?

Introduction

You might expect that a book about deviance would start with a definition of deviance. But like all things worth studying, a simple definition does not exist. For example, in the stories above, one public display of nudity was not only welcomed but celebrated by 6-year-olds and grandmothers alike, but another display led to arrest and jail time. Why? This chapter and this book explore how it can be that the Fremont Solstice Parade was celebrated in the same summer that a flasher was arrested and sentenced to 180 days in jail.

Conceptions of Deviance

All deviance textbooks offer their "conceptions of deviance." Rubington and Weinberg (2008) argue that there are generally two conceptions of deviance: "objectively given" and "subjectively problematic." Clinard and Meier (2015) also suggest two general conceptions of deviance, the **normative conception** and the

reactionist or **relativist conception**. Whereas Thio, Taylor, and Schwartz (2012) argue that we can view deviance from a **positivist perspective** or a social constructionist perspective.

While none of these authors are using the same language, they are defining similar conceptions of deviance. The first conception—that of an "objectively given," normative, or positivist conception of deviance—assumes that there is a general set of norms of behavior, conduct, and conditions on which we can agree. **Norms** are rules of behavior that guide people's actions. Sumner (1906) broke norms down into three categories: folkways, mores, and laws. **Folkways** are everyday norms that do not generate much uproar if they are violated. Think of them as behaviors that might be considered rude if engaged in, like standing too close to someone while speaking or picking one's nose. **Mores** are "moral" norms that may generate more outrage if broken. In a capitalist society, homelessness and unemployment can elicit outrage if the person is considered unworthy of sympathy. Similarly, drinking too much or alcoholism may be seen as a lapse in moral judgment. Finally, the third type of norm is the **law**, considered the strongest norm because it is backed by official sanctions (or a formal response). In this conception, then, deviance becomes a violation of a rule understood by the majority of the group. This rule may be minor, in which case the deviant is seen as "weird but harmless," or the rule may be major, in which case the deviant is seen as "criminal." The obvious problem with this conceptualization goes back to the earlier examples of reactions to public nudity, where we see that violation of a most "serious" norm (law) can receive quite different reactions. This leads to the second conception.

The second conception of deviance—the "subjectively problematic," reactionist or relativist, **social constructionist conception**—assumes that the definition of deviance is constructed based on the interactions of those in society. According to this conception, behaviors or conditions are not inherently deviant; they become so when the definition of deviance is applied to them. The study of deviance is not about why certain individuals violate norms but, instead, about how those norms are constructed. Social constructionists believe that our understanding of the world is in constant negotiation between actors. Those who have a relativist conception of deviance define deviance as those behaviors that elicit a definition or label of deviance:

> Social groups create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders. For this point of view, deviance is not a quality of the act the person commits but rather a consequence of the application by others of rules and sanctions to an "offender." The deviant is one to whom that label has successfully been applied; deviant behavior is behavior that people so label. (Becker, 1973, p. 9)

This is a fruitful conceptualization, but it is also problematic. What about very serious violations of norms that are never known or reacted to? Some strict

Be Careful Who *You* Are Calling Deviant: Body Rituals Among the Nacirema

In 1956, Horace Miner published an article on the Nacirema, a poorly understood culture that he claimed engaged in body rituals and ceremonies that were unique, obsessive, and almost magical. He highlighted several of these beliefs and actions:

- The fundamental belief of the Nacirema people is that the human body is ugly and prone to "debility and disease."
- The people engage in rituals and ceremonies in a "ritual center" considered to be a shrine. Affluent members of society may have more than one shrine devoted to these rituals and ceremonies.
- Each shrine has, near its center point, a box or chest filled with magical potions. Many believe they cannot live without these magical potions and so collect to the point of hoarding them, afraid to let them go even when it is determined they may no longer hold their magic.
- The people have an "almost pathological horror and fascination with the mouth, the condition of which is believed to have a supernatural influence on all social relationships. Were it not for the rituals of the mouth, they believe that their teeth would fall out, their gums bleed, their jaws shrink, their friends desert them, and their lovers reject them" (p. 504).

Miner never lets on that this fascinating culture that believes magic will transform its members' ugly, diseased bodies is actually American (Nacirema spelled backward) culture. But his point is made: Our understanding and interpretation of events and behaviors is often relative. If we step back from the everyday events in which we engage with little thought, our most accepted practices can be made to seem deviant.

Take a moment to examine an everyday activity that you engage in from the perspective of an outsider. What might watching television, going to a sporting event, babysitting, or surfing look like to those who have never experienced it? Can you write a description of this everyday event from an outsider's point of view?

Source: Miner (1956).

reactionists or relativists would argue that these acts (beliefs or attitudes) are not deviant. Most of us would agree that killing someone and making it look like he or she simply skipped the country is deviant. However, there may be no reaction.

A third conception of deviance that has not been advanced in many textbooks (for an exception, see DeKeseredy, Ellis, & Alvi, 2005) is a critical definition of deviance (DeKeseredy & Dragiewicz, 2012; Jensen, 2007). Those working from a **critical conception** of deviance argue that the normative understanding of deviance is established by those in power to maintain and enhance their power. It suggests that explorations of deviance have focused on a White, male, middle- to upper-class understanding of society that implies that people of color, women, and

the working poor are by definition deviant. Instead of focusing on individual types of deviance, this conception critiques the social system that exists and creates such norms in the first place. This, too, is a useful and powerful approach, but there are still some things that the vast majority of society agrees are so immoral, unethical, and deviant that they should be illegal and that the system can serve to protect our interests against.

Given that each of these conceptualizations is useful but problematic, we do not adhere to a single conception of deviance in this book because the theories of deviance do not adhere to a single conception. You will see that several of our theories assume a normative conception, whereas several assume a social constructionist or critical conception. As you explore each theory, think about what the conception of deviance and theoretical perspective mean for the questions we ask and answer about deviance (Table 1.1).

The Sociological Imagination

Those of us who are sociologists can probably remember the first time we were introduced to the concept of the **sociological imagination**. C. Wright Mills argues that the only way to truly understand the experiences of the individual is to first understand the societal, institutional, and historical conditions that

Table 1.1 Conceptions of Deviance

Conceptions of Deviance	Assumptions	Definition of Deviance	Example Research Question
Normative or positivist	There is a general set of norms of behavior, conduct, and conditions on which we can agree.	Deviance is a violation of a rule understood by the majority of the group.	"What leads an individual to engage in deviant behavior?"
Relativist or social constructionist	Nothing is inherently deviant; our understanding of the world is in constant negotiation between actors.	Deviance is any behavior that elicits a definition or label of deviance.	"What characteristics increase the likelihood that an individual or a behavior will be defined as deviant?"
Critical	The normative understanding of deviance is established by those in power to maintain and enhance their power.	Instead of focusing on individual types of deviance, this conception critiques the social system that exists and creates such norms in the first place.	"What is the experience of the homeless, and who is served by their treatment as deviant?"

How Do *You* Define Deviance?

As Justice Potter Stewart of the Supreme Court once famously wrote about trying to define obscene materials, "I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description; and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it" (*Jacobellis v. Ohio*, 1964). Those who do not study deviance for a living probably find themselves in the same boat; it may be hard to write a definition, but how hard could it be to "know it when we see it"?

Choose a busy place to sit and observe human behavior for one hour. Write down all the behaviors that you observe during that hour. Do you consider any of these behaviors to be deviant? Which conception of deviance are you using when you define each as deviant? Might there be some instances (e.g., places or times) when that behavior you consider to be nondeviant right now might become deviant? Finally, bring your list of behaviors to class. In pairs, share your list of behaviors and your definitions of deviant behaviors with your partner. Do you agree on your categorization? Why or why not?

individual is living under. In other words, Mills believes that no man, woman, or child is an island. Below is an excerpt from Mills's (1959/2000) profound book, *The Sociological Imagination*.

> Men do not usually define the troubles they endure in terms of historical change and institutional contradiction. The well-being they enjoy, they do not usually impute to the big ups and downs of the societies in which they live. Seldom aware of the intricate connection between the patterns of their own lives and the course of world history, ordinary men do not usually know what this connection means for the kinds of men they are becoming and for the kinds of history-making in which they might take part. They do not possess the quality of mind essential to grasp the interplay of man and society, of biography and history, of self and world. They cannot cope with their personal troubles in such ways as to control the structural transformations that usually lie behind them. . . .
>
> The sociological imagination enables its possessor to understand the larger historical scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals. It enables him to take into account how individuals, in the welter of their daily experience, often become falsely conscious of their social positions. With that welter, the framework of modern society is sought, and within that framework the psychologies of a variety of men and women are formulated. By such means the personal uneasiness of individuals is focused upon explicit troubles and the indifference of publics is transformed into involvement with public issues.

> The first fruit of this imagination—and the first lesson of the social science that embodies it—is the idea that the individual can understand his own experience and gauge his own fate only by locating himself within his period, that he can know his own chances in life only by becoming aware of those of all individuals in his circumstances. In many ways it is a terrible lesson; in many ways a magnificent one. . . .
>
> In these terms, consider unemployment. When, in a city of 100,000, only one man is unemployed, that is his personal trouble, and for its relief we properly look to the character of the man, his skills, and his immediate opportunities. But when in a nation of 50 million employees, 15 million men are unemployed, that is an issue, and we may not hope to find its solution within the range of opportunities open to any one individual. The very structure of opportunities has collapsed. Both the correct statement of the problem and the range of possible solutions require us to consider the economic and political institutions of the society, and not merely the personal situation and character of a scatter of individuals. . . .
>
> What we experience in various and specific milieux, I have noted, is often caused by structural changes. Accordingly, to understand the changes of many personal milieux we are required to look beyond them. And the number and variety of such structural changes increase as the institutions within which we live become more embracing and more intricately connected with one another. To be aware of the idea of social structure and to use it with sensibility is to be capable of tracing such linkages among a great variety of milieux. To be able to do that is to possess the sociological imagination. (*The Sociological Imagination* by C. Wright Mills [2000] pp. 3–11. By permission of Oxford University Press, USA.)

One of our favorite examples of the sociological imagination in action is the "salad bar" example. In the United States, one of the persistent philosophies is that of individualism and personal responsibility. Under this philosophy, individuals are assumed to be solely responsible for their successes and failures. This philosophy relies heavily on the notion that individuals are rational actors who weigh the costs and benefits of their actions, can see the consequences of their behavior, and have perfect information. The salad bar example helps those who rely heavily on this conception of the individual to see the importance of social structure to individual behavior.

No one doubts that when you order a salad bar at a restaurant, you are responsible for building your own salad. Every person makes his or her own salad, and no two salads look exactly alike. Some make salads with lots of lettuce and vegetables, very little cheese, and fat-free dressing. Others create a salad that is piled high with cheese, croutons, and lots and lots of dressing. Those who are unhappy with their choices while making their salad have only themselves to blame, right? Not necessarily.

A salad is only as good as the salad bar it is created from. In other words, individuals making a salad can only make a salad from the ingredients supplied from the salad bar. If the restaurant is out of croutons that day or decided to put watermelon out instead of cantaloupe, the individual must build his or her salad within these constraints. Some individuals with a great sense of personal power or privilege may request additional items from the back of the restaurant, but most individuals will choose to build a salad based on the items available to them on the salad bar. In other words, the individual choice is constrained by the larger social forces of delivery schedules, food inventory, and worker decision-making. The sociological imagination is especially important to understand because it is the building block for our understanding of deviance and sociological theory.

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Photo 1.3 The salad bar can represent the restriction on choices that individuals have. We can only make our salad with the ingredients offered to us on the salad bar.

The sociological imagination helps us understand the impact of social forces on both engaging in and reacting to deviance. One of the easiest reactions to or assumptions about people who engage in deviance is that they are "sick" or "mentally ill." This assumption is what we refer to as **pathologizing** individuals. It puts all the responsibility for their actions onto them without asking what impact the social forces and social structures around them might have. The sociological imagination reminds us that individuals exist in a larger social system, and they impact that larger social system just as it impacts them. One of the ways to systematically understand these impacts is to understand sociological theory.

The Importance of Theory and Its Relationship to Research

The three of us (the authors of this book) spent many hours discussing the importance of **theory** as we wrote this book. Why did we choose to write a textbook about deviance with theory as the central theme? Many of you may also be asking this question and worrying that a book about theory may suck the life right out of a discussion about deviance. Really, who wants to be thinking about theory when we could be talking about "nuts, sluts, and preverts" (Liazos, 1972)? But this is precisely why we must make theory central to any discussion of deviance—because theory helps us *systematically* think about deviance. If it weren't for theory, classes about deviance would be akin to watching MTV's *Jersey Shore* (*Family Vacation* edition) or Bravo's *The Real Housewives of New Jersey* (why is New Jersey so

Deviance in Popular Culture

Many types of deviance are portrayed and investigated in popular culture. Films and shows on television, the internet, and social media, for example, illustrate a wide range of deviant behavior and social control. There are often several interpretations of what acts are deviant. How do you know when an act or person is deviant? One way to develop your sociological imagination is to watch films or shows, listen to music, and engage with social media from a critical perspective and to think about how different theories would explain the deviant behavior and the reactions portrayed. Films, music, and social media offer examples of cultural norms, different types of deviant behavior, and coping with stigma.

Television—reality shows and the TLC network in particular—features a number of programs offering an inside view of people perceived as deviant or different in some way and how they deal with stigma from various sources.

The internet may be one of the best places to go to for examples of deviance and social control. It is all right at our fingertips all the time.

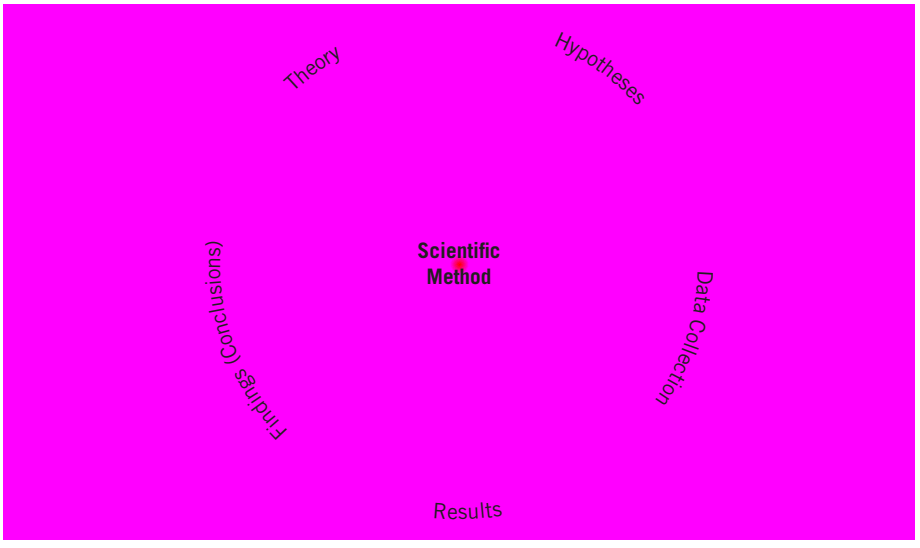
In each of the chapters that follow, we will suggest one or more features of pop culture for you to watch from the theoretical perspective outlined in the chapter. We think you'll soon agree: Deviance is all around us.

popular for these shows?)—it may be entertaining, but we have no clearer understanding of the "real" people of New Jersey when we are done watching.

Theory is what turns anecdotes about human behavior into a systematic understanding of societal behavior. It does this by playing an intricate part in research and the scientific method.

The **scientific method** is a systematic procedure that helps *safeguard against researcher bias* and the power of anecdotes by following several simple steps (Figure 1.1). First, a researcher starts with a research question. If the researcher is engaging in deductive research, this question comes from a theoretical perspective. This theory and the research question help the researcher create hypotheses (testable statements) about a phenomenon being studied. Once the researcher has created hypotheses, he or she collects data to test these hypotheses. We discuss data and data collection methods for deviance research in detail in Chapter 3. The researcher then analyzes these data, interprets the findings, and concludes whether or not his or her hypotheses have been supported. These findings then inform whether the theory the researcher used helps with our understanding of the world or should be revised to take into consideration information that does not support its current model. If a researcher is engaging in inductive research, he or she also starts with a research question, but in the beginning, the researcher's theory may be what we call "grounded theory." Using qualitative methods, such as participant observation or in-depth interviews, the researcher would collect data and analyze these data, looking for common themes throughout. These findings would be used to create a theory "from the ground up." In other words, while a deductive researcher would start with a theory that guides every step of the

Figure 1.1 The Scientific Method Allows Us to Systematically Examine Social Phenomena Such as Deviance



research, an inductive researcher might start with a broad theoretical perspective and a research question and, through the systematic collection of data and rigorous analyses, would hone that broad theoretical perspective into a more specific theory. This theory would then be tested again as the researcher continued on with his or her work, or others, finding this new theory to be useful and interesting, might opt to use it to inform both their deductive and inductive work.

If we go back to our example of reality shows about people from New Jersey, we may see the difference between an anecdote and a more theoretically grounded understanding of human behavior. After watching both *Jersey Shore* and *The Real Housewives of New Jersey*, we may conclude that people from New Jersey are loud, self-absorbed, and overly tan (all three of which might be considered deviant behaviors or characteristics). However, we have not systematically studied the people of New Jersey to arrive at our conclusion. Using inductive reasoning, based on our initial observation, we may start with a research question that states that because the people of New Jersey are loud, self-absorbed, and overly tan, we are interested in knowing about the emotional connections they have with friends and family. (We may suspect that self-absorbed people are more likely to have relationships with conflict.) However, as we continue along the scientific method, we systematically gather data from more than just the reality stars of these two shows. We interview teachers, police officers, retired lawyers, and college students. What we soon learn as we analyze these interviews is that the general public in New Jersey is really not all that tan, loud, or self-absorbed, and they speak openly and

warmly about strong connections to family and friends. This research leads us to reexamine our initial theory about the characteristics of people from New Jersey and offer a new theory based on systematic analysis. This new theory then informs subsequent research on the people of New Jersey. If we did not have theory and the scientific method, our understanding of deviance would be based on wild observations and anecdotes, which may be significantly misleading and unrepresentative of the social reality.

In addition to being systematic and testable (through the scientific method), theory offers *solutions to the problems* we study. One of the hardest knocks against

The Poverty of the Sociology of Deviance: Nuts, Sluts, and Preverts

Liazos (1972) argues that the study of deviance used to be the study of "nuts, sluts, and preverts," a sensationalistic ritual in finger-pointing and moralizing. The focus was on individuals and their "aberrant" behavior. This meant that the most harmful behaviors in society—the ones that affected us most thoroughly—were ignored and, in being ignored, normalized. Liazos referred to these forms of deviance as *covert institutional violence*.

According to Liazos, the poverty of the study of deviance was threefold: First, even when trying to point out how normal the "deviance" or "deviant" is, by pointing out the person or behavior, we are acknowledging the difference. If that difference really were invisible, how and why would we be studying it? This meant by even studying deviance, a moral choice had already been made—some differences were studied; some were not. Second, by extension, deviance research rarely studied elite deviance and structural deviance, instead focusing on "dramatic" forms of deviance, such as prostitution, juvenile delinquency, and homosexuality. Liazos argues that it is important to, instead, study covert institutional violence, which leads to such things as poverty and exploitation. Instead of studying tax cheats, we should study unjust tax laws; instead of studying prostitution, we should study racism and sexism as deviance. Finally, Liazos argues that even those who profess to study the relationship between power and deviance do not really acknowledge the importance of power. These researchers still give those in positions of power a pass to engage in harmful behavior by not defining much elite deviance as deviance at all.

The implication of this is that those who study deviance have allowed the definition of deviance to be settled for them. And this definition benefits not only individuals in power but also a system that has routinely engaged in harmful acts. While Liazos wrote this important critique of the sociology of deviance in 1972, much of his analysis holds up to this day. In this book, we examine theories expressly capable of addressing this critique.

As you explore each of the theories offered to you in this book, remember Liazos's critique. Which theories are more likely to focus on "nuts, sluts, and preverts"? Which are more likely to focus on elite deviance and new conceptions of deviance?

Source: Compiled from Alexander Liazos, 1972, in *Social Problems*, *20*(1), 103–120.

the study of deviance and crime has been the historically carnival sideshow nature (Liazos, 1972) of much of the study of deviance. By focusing on individuals and a certain caste of deviants (those without power) and using less-than-systematic methods, deviance researchers were just pointing at "nuts, sluts, and preverts" and not advancing their broader understanding of the interplay of power, social structure, and behavior. Theory can focus our attention on this interplay and offer solutions beyond the individual and the deficit model, which focuses on the individual (or group) in question and blames the deviance on something broken, lacking, or deficient in him or her. Bendle (1999) also argued that the study of deviance was in a state of crisis because researchers were no longer studying relevant problems or offering useful solutions. One of Bendle's solutions is to push for new theories of deviant behavior.

Theoretical solutions to the issue of deviance are especially important because many of our current responses to deviant behavior are erroneously based on an individualistic notion of human nature that does not take into account humans as social beings or the importance of social structure, social institutions, power, and broad societal changes for deviance and deviants.

Global Perspectives on Deviance

A recent issue of *USA Today* featured a short article on weird laws from around the world. Although all are truly "weird," some appear to actually have a rational reason for their existence while others do not. For example, in Rome, it is illegal to eat or drink near landmarks, and in Greece, it is illegal to wear stiletto heels. While both these laws appear to be rather random, when explored, they make perfect sense. The laws are designed to preserve the ancient landmarks found in both places. It is fairly obvious that eating and drinking in historic places could lead to sticky walls or ruined artifacts, but stiletto heels may be just as dangerous. It turns out that the pressure from a thin stiletto heel is roughly equal to the pressure of an elephant walking in the same spot. Thailand and Canada both have laws that dictate how people treat or use their currency. In Thailand, it is illegal to step on the nation's currency. All currency in Thailand carries a picture of the king, and because the king is so revered, it is a great offense to treat the currency and thus the king disrespectfully. In Canada, it is illegal to use more than 25 pennies in a single transaction. Why? We're not quite sure, except there appears to be a strong feeling that the penny is worthless—the government has phased out the coin. Not to be outdone, the United States has its fair share of weird laws, too. In Washington State, it is illegal to harass Bigfoot, Sasquatch, or any other undiscovered subspecies. In North Dakota, it is illegal to serve beer and pretzels at the same time at a bar or restaurant. And in Missouri, you can't ride in a car with an uncaged bear.

One of the most interesting ways to examine deviance is to look at it in a cross-cultural or global context. It is easy to see how our understanding of deviance transcends or is impacted by differing beliefs and experiences when we compare across borders.

First, there is no greater example of the relativist nature of deviance than examining the laws of a country or region. While it is unlikely anyone is getting into a car with an uncaged bear anytime soon, it is much more likely that beer and pretzels will be served at the same time, that stiletto heels will be worn, and that someone might mistreat the currency of a country. While some might engage in these acts knowing their behavior will be defined as deviant, it is our bet that a good number will have no clue that their actions are defined as deviant, at least by the laws in that country. Second, the responses to these forms of deviance are also relative. While it is true that the law says you cannot eat or drink near historic landmarks in Rome, it is rarely enforced, and while the authors have not had the pleasure of drinking a beer in North Dakota, we bet we could find at least one restaurant that would serve us a pretzel, too. None of us are willing to test the uncaged-bear law.

In a book devoted to theory and social control, it is important to see how those theories can explain not only deviance in the United States but also how we experience deviance around the world.

Deviance and Disparity

We have included a section in each chapter that discusses deviance and disparity. This might be a look at how in some situations behaviors are seen as deviant while in other situations they are not, or that some individuals may be considered deviant while other individuals are not. In other words, we pause to offer an example of how the impact of race, class, gender, sexuality, or geography may impact our understanding of deviance. Depending on the chapter, we have chosen to do this in one of two ways. Some chapters focus on a single deviance that, while engaged in by a variety of individuals, is interpreted differently depending on the characteristics of who is engaging in it; other chapters focus on how disparity might impact a perception of deviance or likelihood to engage in deviance. For example, in Chapter 4, we describe the Occupy Wall Street Movement and the impact that a changing economy has on individuals' experiences and expectations. In Chapter 6, we focus on how differential association theory and social learning theories may explain gender disparities in deviance. And in Chapter 9, we examine felon disenfranchisement and voter suppression, much of which is linked to issues of race and class. In all of our chapters, we want to highlight how disparity may impact deviance or deviance may impact disparity and how behaviors are often on very different sides of the power spectrum. In all of the chapters, we first offer a substantive discussion of the deviance before we analyze it from the perspective of the chapter.

Ideas in Action

For the purposes of this book, we are expanding the discussion of public policy to include public and private programs, which is why we have titled this section

in each chapter "Ideas in Action." While a single, concrete definition of public policy is elusive, there is general agreement that public policy is the sometimes unwritten actions taken by the city, state, or federal government. These actions may be as formal as a law or regulation or may be more informal in nature, such as an institutional custom. While public policy is often associated with government guidelines or actions, we also find it important to highlight the work of public and private programs, nonprofits, and nongovernmental organizations. For this reason, our "Ideas in Action" section may highlight a private program or entity or a public (state or federal) guideline, rule, or law that affects our understanding or control of deviance.

Some argue that tension exists between public policies and private programs created to address deviance, crime, and public well-being. These tensions are twofold. The first argument involves what some say is a movement of public well-being out of the public realm (the government) to a private and more likely profit-motivated industry (private programs). This shift is often referred to as neoliberalism.

> The term neoliberalism refers to a political, economic, and social ideology that argues that low government intervention, a privatization of services that in the past have predominately been the domain of government, an adherence to a free-market philosophy, and an emphasis on deregulation (Frericks, Maier, & de Graaf, 2009) is "the source and arbiter of human freedoms" (Mudge, 2008, p. 704). What may be one of the most important aspects of neoliberalism from the standpoint of those focused on social justice, then, is this link between the free markets and morality. While free markets have proven time and again to place the utmost emphasis on the profit motive (because this is what the free market is: an adherence to the notion of supply and demand)—this connection between free markets and "freedom" seems to intrinsically suggest that free markets, and, therefore, neoliberalism, have individual well-being as their focus.
>
> However, individual well-being in the form of a guarantee that individuals will have access to the basic human needs of shelter, food, clothing, good health care, and safety from harm is not always produced by two of the most central components of neoliberalism—privatization and deregulation. In some ways, privatization and deregulation are opposite sides of the same coin. Privatization means the "opening up of the market" and the loosening of the rules (regulations) that are often the purview of the government. But privatization, at its core, is also the introduction of the profit motive into services that, at *their* core, are about protecting the human condition. A reliance on a neoliberal philosophy and free market economy means that we begin to evaluate everything through the lens of profit and cost-benefit analyses. We abdicate the responsibility of the state to private companies and then feign surprise when those companies defer to the profit motive. . . . In addition to

> the increased preference for free markets and profits, privatization both reduces state responsibility for the care of its citizens and masks the lack of preparation of the government to care for its citizens that quickly develops (Mitchell, 2001). (Bates & Swan, 2010, p. 442)

As you read and evaluate the policies and programs we have chosen, keep this argument in mind. Does it play out with the programs we discuss?

The second argument is that public programs may more likely focus on **suppression** (the social control of deviance), whereas private programs may more likely focus on rehabilitation and prevention. In general, suppression policies are those that focus on the punishment and social control of behavior deemed deviant. **Rehabilitation programs** focus on groups or individuals who are deemed likely deviant and involve attempts to change this assumed deviant behavior. **Prevention programs** may be focused on groups or individuals who are assumed to be more "at risk" for deviant behavior, or they may be focused on decreasing the likelihood of deviance in all groups equally. Many argue that there has been a buildup of suppression policies in the state and federal governments at the expense of rehabilitation and prevention programs. Meranze (2009) argues,

> From the recently repealed Rockefeller drug laws through the expansion of the prison systems in Texas and Florida, onto the increasingly punitive response to poverty in the Clinton years, and the continuing disparity in sentencing laws, states and the federal government have chosen the Iron State over the Golden State. And whatever arguments there may be about the relative effectiveness of imprisonment in affecting crime rates (a topic of great controversy amongst scholars and analysts), one thing seems certain: a policy that exacerbates the brutalization of society is not one that will make us safer. Investing in prisons means investing in institutions that produce neither goods nor new opportunities (aside from the limited jobs available for prison employees and the one-time opportunities in construction); money spent on imprisonment is money taken from rebuilding our worn out infrastructure, our schools, our communities, and our economic future. Insofar as corrections remains at the heart of our social policy—rather than as a supplemental or marginal support as it was throughout most of United States history—it is the Iron State stealing from the future of the Golden State. (para. 6)

Finally, according to Barlow and Decker (2010), "Policy ought to be guided by science rather than by ideology" (p. xi). As we have already briefly discussed, a central part of the scientific method is theory. Therefore, a book whose primary focus is a theoretical examination of deviance and social control should have as one of its central themes an examination of public policy from the viewpoint of each of these theories.

The reaction to deviance has often been spurred by interests well beyond science. Barlow and Decker (2010) point out,

> The pen remains firmly in the hands of politicians and legislators, whose allegiance is less to the products of science—for example, how to deal with the AIDS pandemic, warnings about global warming, and the ineffectiveness of the Strategic Defense Initiative, or SDI (otherwise known as "Star Wars")—than to the whims of voters and the personal agendas of their counselors and financial supporters. (pp. xi–xii)

This means the reactions to deviance have often focused on the stigmatization and criminalization of a variety of behaviors and, in many instances, on the harsh punishment of those behaviors.

We offer a wide variety of public policies, or "ideas in action," that were designed to address deviant behaviors. It will be your job to evaluate these programs and policies for their intents and subsequent success.

Conclusion: Organization of the Book

We start your introduction to deviance by examining the diversity of deviance, how our definitions of deviance change over time, and how we research deviance. Then, we focus on theories of deviance, starting with the traditional, positivist theories of deviance and moving to social constructionist and critical theories of deviance. We also try to present the theories in a fairly chronological manner. While all these theories are still in use in the study of deviance, some have been around longer than others. Positivist theories have been around longer than social constructionist theories and, within positivist theories, anomie has been around longer than social disorganization. We think this offers you a general road map of how thinking and theories have developed about deviance. In each of these chapters, we present the classical versions of each theory and then the contemporary version and, along the way, we explore several types of deviance, including global deviance, that may be explained by each given theory. Then, in our final chapters, we examine our individual and societal responses to deviance.

This book has been written with a heavy emphasis on theory. In seven chapters, we explore nine theories. Anomie and strain theory, among the first of the truly sociological explanations of the causes of deviant behavior, seek to understand deviance by focusing on social structures and patterns that emerge as individuals and groups react to conditions they have little control over. Social disorganization theory was developed to explain patterns of deviance and crime across social locations, such as neighborhoods, schools, cities, states, and even countries. In Chapter 6, we focus on differential association and social

Now *You* . . . Use Your Sociological Imagination

In his 1972 article, "The Poverty of the Sociology of Deviance: Nuts, Sluts, and Preverts," Alexander Liazos argues that the sociology of deviance focuses too much attention on individual idiosyncrasies and not enough attention on structural dynamics and the deviance of the powerful. One of the areas that we might examine for examples of individual, organizational, and global deviance is the consumption of energy and the impact on climate change. There is a scientific consensus that climate-warming trends over the past century are extremely likely due to human activities. The following are several examples of individual and national behavior in response to this growing concern:

> In 1997, 192 out of 195 countries signed the Kyoto Protocol, pledging to lower greenhouse gas emissions. The agreement required that developed countries commit to lowering their emissions while developing countries were asked to *try* to lower emissions. The United States was one of the three countries that did not sign.
>
> In the summer of 2015, Shell Oil pulled its drilling rig into Puget Sound on the way up to the remote waters of the Chukchi Sea, off the coast of Alaska. Environmental activists known as kayaktivists protested the deep-sea drilling and the use of the Port of Seattle as a way station for drilling materials by surrounding the drilling rig with kayaks, thus blocking the movement of the rig, and later by blocking a Shell icebreaker headed to Alaskan waters by dangling from the St. Johns Bridge over the Willamette River while more kayaktivists surrounded the large vessel below (Brait, 2015).
>
> On December 12, 2015, in Paris, 195 countries adopted the Paris Agreement. In contrast to the Kyoto Protocol, this pact required that all countries address greenhouse gas emissions in some way. Some of the elements, like target reductions in carbon emissions, are voluntary, whereas other elements, such as verifying emissions, are legally binding (Davenport, 2015).
>
> During 2016 and the first part of 2017, there were concerted protests over a proposed pipeline to ship Canadian oil through the United States (via North Dakota). The Dakota Access Pipeline protests (#NODAPL) were led by the Standing Rock Sioux, who were worried the pipeline would threaten ancestral burial grounds and access to clean water. The protests sparked international support and, in late 2016, the Obama administration denied the pipeline construction rights under the Missouri River. However, in early 2017, four days after being sworn in as president, Donald Trump reversed that decision, allowing the construction and expediting the environmental review.

On June 1, 2017, the United States announced its withdrawal from the Paris Agreement, making it the only country to not participate. Given the rules of the agreement, the United States cannot officially pull out of the agreement until November 2020.

In 2018, 15-year-old Greta Thunberg started her public activism to bring awareness and change to the climate crisis. By sitting outside the Swedish parliament with a sign that read *Skolstrejk för klimatet* ("school strike for climate"), Greta quickly became a leader of a student movement to save the planet from irreversible damage from climate change. Greta has been diagnosed with Asperger's syndrome, obsessive-compulsive disorder, and selective mutism. While some try to use these diagnoses to characterize Greta as different, she refers to her Asperger's syndrome as her superpower. Greta has sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to bring attention to reducing emissions. She has spoken in front of the United Nations, and *Time* magazine declared her Person of the Year for 2019. Greta has endured a lot of backlash from climate deniers and politicians who do not support climate action and activism. Greta addressed this criticism, saying, "It's quite hilarious when the only thing people can do is mock you, or talk about your appearance or personality, as it means they have no argument or nothing else to say" (Haynes, 2019). One of the factors of the newest climate movements and Greta Thunberg's activism and experiences with critics is the central role that social media plays. For example, President Trump focused his attention on Greta after she was named *Time* magazine's Person of the Year in December 2019, tweeting, "So ridiculous. Greta must work on her anger management problem, then go to a good old fashioned movie with a friend! Chill Greta, Chill!" In response, Thunberg changed her Twitter profile to "A teenager working on her anger management problem. Currently chilling and watching a good old fashioned movie with a friend."

Figure 1.2 depicts the projected world energy consumption rates to 2040.

Over the past 200 years, the burning of fossil fuels, such as coal and oil, and deforestation have caused the concentrations of heat-trapping "greenhouse gases" to increase significantly in our atmosphere. These gases prevent heat from escaping to space, somewhat like the glass panels of a greenhouse.

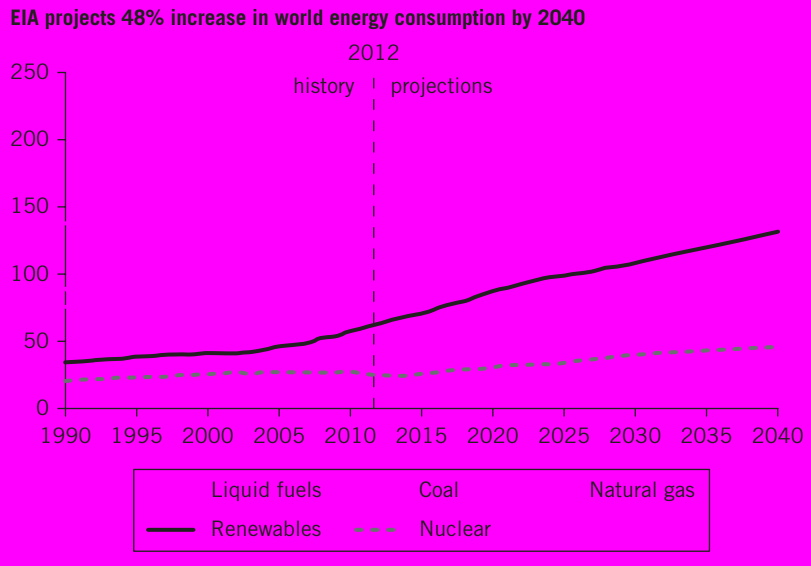
Greenhouse gases are necessary to life as we know it, because they keep the planet's surface warmer than it otherwise would be. But as the concentrations of these gases continue to increase in the atmosphere, the earth's temperature is climbing above past levels.

Figure 1.2 shows that renewable sources of energy will increase at a greater rate than any other source in the next several decades, but fossil fuels will still be the leading energy source even in 2040 if the projection is correct.

(Continued)

(Continued)

Figure 1.2 World Energy Consumption by Source, 1990–2040 (Quadrillion BTU)



The U.S. Energy Information Administration's recently released *International Energy Outlook 20M* (1E02016) projects that world energy consumption will grow 48% between 2012 and 2040. Most of this growth will come from countries that are not in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), including countries where demand is driven by strong economic growth, particularly in Asia. Non-OECD Asia, including China and India, accounts for more than half of the world's total increase in energy consumption over the projection period.

Concerns about energy security, effects of fossil fuel emissions on the environment, and sustained, long-term high world oil prices support expanded use of nonfossil renewable energy sources and nuclear power.

Renewables and nuclear power are the world's fastest-growing energy sources over the projection period. Renewable energy increases by an average 2.6% per year through 2040; nuclear power increases by 2.3% per year.

Even though nonfossil fuels are expected to grow faster than fossil fuels (petroleum and other liquid fuels, natural gas, and coal), fossil fuels still account for more than three-quarters of world energy consumption through 2040. Natural gas, which has a lower carbon intensity than coal and petroleum, is the fastest-growing fossil fuel in the outlook, with global natural gas consumption increasing by 1.9% per year. Rising supplies of tight gas, shale gas, and coalbed methane contribute to the increasing consumption of natural gas.

U.S. Energy Information Administration. *International Energy Outlook 2016.* Retrieved April 21, 2018 from https://www.eia.gov/todayinenergy/detail.php?id=.26212.