

Anthropology 21A.218  
Identity and Difference  
Class #10

Becoming Deviant (conditions for doing the deed)

a) Crossing the boundary

Responding to threat  
Seeking pleasure and thrills

b) Deviant careers

Increasing social organization leads to longevity,  
stability of deviance (career)

Social organization varies by:

Degree of association with others/interaction  
Subculture, codes of conduct (norms, language)  
Degree of hierarchy of authority  
Degree of specialization and division of labor

Variation in social organization of deviance;

loners, colleagues, peers, teams, formal organizations

Managing Deviant Identities

Responses to deviant label

by subject/individual; by others (informally, formally)

A. Individual can

Reject the label: denial  
Accept the label  
Exchange/manage the label

B. Strategies for denial of a deviant label

1. Deny commission of act/behavior which is thought to be deviant

2. Provide Accounts

a. Admit behavior but deny responsibility (excuses)

Appeal to accidents  
Appeal to defeasibility/ intent  
Appeal to biological drives  
Scapegoating

b. Admit behavior, admit responsibility, deny that it is bad or deviant (justifications and techniques of neutralization)

Deny injury/harm  
Deny victim status  
Condemn the condemners  
Appeal to higher loyalty

3. Conditions for successful accounting, honoring accounts, which accounts honored and not honored?

hyp 1: When person giving and person receiving share background expectancies;

hyp 2: Accounts are culturally and historically specific; culturally appropriate

4. Commentary:

Rationalizations are important because they preserve identities as "normal"

Difference between successful and unsuccessful accounting, between normal and deviant identity often comes down to using the appropriate vocabulary;

Emphasizes importance of reflective process

Implications differential success - multiculturalism

C. Accept the label of Deviant

Acceptance has variable behavioral consequences  
Termination of behavior defined as deviant  
Acceleration of behavior  
Coping strategies

D. Stigma - (Erving Goffman) deeply discrediting, devalued, undesirable differentness

stigmatized usually accept label, perceive condition and self as less (valuable) human, experience shame

manage "spoiled" identities; manage information about selves

Passing: discreditable rather than discredited; tension filled role

- Change names

- Alter to less stigmatizing trait

- Divide world into allies (knowers) and others

- Maintain physical and social distance

Covering: no longer manage information, manage situations

- concern over standards incidentally associated with stigma

- restrict displays as much as possible

Produces dual consciousness (cf. W.E.B. Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folk*)

- hyper-awareness, sensitivity to situations

- ambivalence

Double deviance:

- Deviant once because of stigmatizing condition

- Deviant twice because do not conform to expectations for  
deviant role

- e.g. minority populations; women