**Chapter 8: Constructing Difference: Social Deviance**

Discussion Questions:

1. Do these articles seem to be written from absolutist or relativist perspectives on deviance? Explain why?
2. Can you find support for either deterrence or labeling theory in these articles? Explain?
3. Is the medicalization of deviance evident in any of these articles?
4. How are different roles surrounding deviance socially constructed?

Heath C. Hoffmann

Criticism as Deviance and Social Control in Alcoholics Anonymous

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 35, No. 6, 669-695 (2006)

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/35/6/669?ijkey=psiejoljhC/7s&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>

**Abstract:**

Emile Durkheim recognized many years ago that all groups—even a "society of saints"—produce deviants. Group members must then come to terms with how to respond to and control those who violate the group's moral order. The Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) meeting offers an interesting context to explore this process. AA members, by their own admission, are far from being "saints," some admitting to adultery, theft, and assault during their active alcoholism. In this article, the author describes the moral order of AA that functions to prevent and create deviant behavior, focusing on AA members’ use of criticism as both a method of social control and a violation of AA's normative system. This seeming contradiction is explained by showing that criticism is a social control strategy available primarily to high-status members, used primarily against lower-status members.

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Brian A. Monahan, Joseph A. Marolla, & David G. Bromley

Constructing Coercion: The Organization of Sexual Assault

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 34, No. 3, 284-316 (2005)

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/34/3/284?ijkey=7XuPzYVqtnNLY&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>

**Abstract:**

There is an abundance of research on how perpetrators organize and orchestrate their activity during the commission of burglary, robbery, and homicide. By contrast, there is very little research on how perpetrators organize sexual assaults. Based on interviews with 33 incarcerated rapists who acted alone and had little or no prior social connection to their victims, we describe rape events in terms of a sequential series of phases that are analogous to those employed to analyze homicides and robbery. The five phases of the kind of rape events we describe include (1) preexisting life tensions, (2) transformation of motivation into action, (3) perpetrator-victim confrontation, (4) situation management, and (5) disengagement. We also argue that within these five phases, perpetrators exhibit differential awareness of their own actions, apply divergent meanings to apparently similar actions, and engage in different degrees and types of organization

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Jill A. McCorkel

Embodied Surveillance and The Gendering Of Punishment

Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, Vol. 32, No. 1, 41-76 (2003)

<http://jce.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/32/1/41?ijkey=qyOhNfPZKnNRo&keytype=ref&siteid=spjce>

**Abstract:**

This ethnography explores the enactment of "get tough" politics in a state prison for women and considers whether the implementation of seemingly gender-neutral programs and policies implies that women’s prisons are no longer operating as "gendered organizations." The author will demonstrate that even when women’s prisons attempt to mimic the disciplinary policies associated with men’s facilities, they modify disciplinary practices in response to perceived differences in offending between men and women. A crucial modification is the use of an "embodied surveillance" that sharply differs from Foucault’s analysis of penal surveillance mechanisms. The article concludes with an analysis of how the practice of an embodied surveillance is embedded within a larger structure of gendered punishment.

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Karen J Terry & Alissa Ackerman

Child Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church

Criminal Justice and Behavior, Vol. 35, 643 – 657 (2008).

<http://cjb.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/35/5/643?ijkey=GuEG8fYQ6Ze5g&keytype=ref&siteid=spcjb>

**Abstract:**

Research on child sexual abuse often focuses on offenders, particularlyon explanations of the etiology and maintenance of their abusivebehavior. A recent study by Smallbone and Wortley suggests,however, that research should also focus on the situation inwhich the sexual abuse occurs. This article employs the situationalcrime prevention (SCP) framework that they used to study childsexual abusers in Queensland to study patterns of abuse by Catholicpriests. Results from the study on the nature and scope of childsexual abuse by Catholic priests support the assertions by Smallboneand Wortley that there is a situational component to sexuallyabusive behavior. The discussion outlines the steps taken bythe Catholic Church as well as other SCP techniques that couldbe employed to create safe environments.

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Glenn D Walters & Matthew D Geyer

Criminal Thinking and Identity in Male White-Collar Offenders

Criminal Justice and Behavior, Vol. 31, 263 – 281 (2004).

<http://cjb.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/31/3/263?ijkey=N0JIeFymXCGW2&keytype=ref&siteid=spcjb>

**Abstract:**

Thirty-four male white-collar offenders without a prior historyof non-white-collar crime, 23 male white-collar offenders withat least one prior arrest for a non-white-collar crime, and66 male non-white-collar offenders housed in a minimum securityfederal prison camp completed the Psychological Inventory ofCriminal Thinking Styles and Social Identity as a Criminal scaleand were rated on the Lifestyle Criminality Screening Form-Revised.Significant group differences were noted on the PsychologicalInventory of Criminal Thinking Styles Self-Assertion/Deceptionscale, Social Identity as a Criminal Centrality subscale, SocialIdentity as a Criminal In-Group Ties subscale, and LifestyleCriminality Screening Form-Revised, which showed that white-collaroffenders with no prior history of non-white-collar crime registeredlower levels of criminal thinking, criminal identification,and deviance than white-collar offenders previously arrestedfor non-white-collar crimes.

**Kids and Assault Weapons: Social Problem or Social Construction?**

Rick Ruddell and Scott H. Decker

*Criminal Justice Review, Spring 2005; vol. 30, 1: pp. 45-63.*

<http://cjr.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/30/1/45?ijkey=qleaga.bEIFT6&keytype=ref&siteid=spcjr>

**Abstract:**

The sunset of the federal assault weapons ban in September 2004 increased the political and scholarly debate about the criminal use of such firearms. Some of the debate is alarmist, suggesting that juveniles have easy access to these firearms and are likely to use them in violent offenses. These perspectives are reinforced on television and in films and contribute to perceptions about the sophistication of weapons that juveniles possess, as well as to the punishments that juveniles should face. This study examines firearms recovered from juvenile offenders in both national and city samples from 1992 to 2000 and finds that assault weapons are seldom used or possessed by juveniles. Our findings suggest that the disjuncture between popular perceptions and the reality of juvenile gun use has been socially constructed by four different groups: the police, news and entertainment organizations, interest groups, and juveniles themselves.

Brownstein, Henry H., Mulcahy, Timothy M., Taylor, Bruce G., Fernandes-Huessy, Johannes, Hafford, Carol

Home Cooking: Marketing Meth

Contexts, Feb 2012; vol. 11: pp. 30-35

<http://ctx.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/11/1/30?ijkey=GIE7hgLJVhpL.&keytype=ref&siteid=spctx>

**Abstract**:

Making and selling methamphetamine is a business of personal ties. Henry H. Brownstein, Timothy M. Mulcahy, Bruce G. Taylor, Johannes Fernandes-Huessy, and Carol Hafford provide a nuanced understanding of meth markets, from mom-and-pop to import markets.

Hawdon, James, Ryan, John

**Hiding in Plain Sight: Community Organization, Naive Trust and Terrorism**

Current Sociology, May 2009; vol. 57: pp. 323-343

<http://csi.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/57/3/323?ijkey=uuodL1OnFjCE.&keytype=ref&siteid=spcsi>

**Abstract**:

Terrorism is behavior that is both initiated and sustained by actors within a social environment. That social environment may vary along a continuum from supporting and enabling the behavior, to ignoring or being unaware of the behavior, to actively opposing the behavior. This article applies social disorganization theory, social capital theory and Black's work on terrorism to predict community characteristics likely to provide the anonymity required for the development of terrorist activity in developed nations. Using the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey and case studies, the article demonstrates how the theory predicts and helps explain why the 9/11 terrorists went undetected even as they lived in the US.