DEVIANCE AND MORAL BOUNDARIES *

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The anomie and differential association approaches to deviance and their reformulations present deviance as the product of the movement of actors across the moral boundaries of a particular social system. However, the work presented here suggests that deviance can be thought of as a product of the movement of moral boundaries in a social system, independent of the movement of the actors within that system. Our focus is upon the unresolved problems in the functional theory of social control and the labeling approach to deviance. Also, as an attempt to extend these two approaches, this research includes work on the definition of deviance. The main thrust of the work is to explain how it is that the definition and volume of deviance can change in a particular social system independent of the actions of the deviants within that system. The evidence from this study supports the contention that deviants, independent of their actions, will be more severely rejected and stigmatized following an external threat to their corporate social system.

Despite the obvious importance of the labeling perspective in the analysis of deviance, there are a number of problems that have kept the approach from realizing its potential. Hirschi (1973:168), for example, notes that labeling arguments have become the “most widely quoted and influential insights into the area of deviance,” but objects that they are “in fact devious and illogical.” Summarizing the main objections to the labeling perspective, he argues that the approach has not developed a theory of the reaction process to deviance (Gibbs, 1966; Kitsuse, 1972), has not integrated the notion of deviance into a theory of social change (Lemert, 1967; Schur, 1973), has not developed conceptual precision or constructed detailed analyses of the conditions under which a given principle might hold (Manning, 1973) or articulated theoretically the process by which “insiders” assign and maintain the deviant’s low social and moral status (which could provide a theoretical and empirical link for studies of secondary deviation and organized social control activities). These unresolved theoretical problems appear to be the primary reason for the paucity of empirical evidence supporting the approach. Some of its most interesting and important assertions are not amenable to reasonable empirical tests. While there is considerable interest in confronting its problems and producing new data (cf. Rubington and Weinberg, 1973; Harris, 1975), there has been little progress (cf. Manning, 1973; Schurish, 1973; Davis, 1975).

The present paper takes a step toward resolving some of these problems by integrating the functional theory of social control with the labeling theory of deviance and testing some of the consequences that follow from their synthesis. Both theories share a common conception, unlike either the anomie or differential association theories, that moral boundaries of a social system move independently of the actual behavior of individuals defined as “deviant” by the system.1 For both, deviance is not inherent in actual behavior and, in both, attention is focused not on what motivates individuals to violate norms but on what causes others to define their behavior as “normal” under some conditions but “deviant” under others. Hence, there is a natural justification for integrating the two. The synthesis has the advantage of sug-

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1 For an excellent comprehensive review and critique of the anomie and differential association approaches, see Matza (1969) or Davis (1975).
gesting conditions under which labels are created, maintained and changed, and of linking these conditions to empirically testable consequences. It makes it possible to approach the kinds of questions with which the present paper is concerned: what kinds of social situations produce deviant labels, how and why they produce them (and, therefore, how and why the definition and volume of deviance change independently of the actual behavior of individuals defined as “deviant”), and what are the consequences for the structure and dynamics of social systems that are involved in the creation and maintenance of such labels.

The functional theory of social control conceptualizes social systems as having a social space in which action is defined and evaluated. Within this space there are moral boundaries that give the social system a sense of what its identity—that is, identity in terms of what types of entities inhabit it, what types of actions those entities engage in and what types of actions are permissible or moral. To maintain this boundary (and solidarity), the system or parts of the system negatively sanction those entities (e.g., actors or actions) that appear to threaten the boundary. Erikson (1966: 68) gives us some clues as to how the boundary of a social system might be threatened. It might be threatened by (1) realignment of power within a social system or (2) emergence of a threat (e.g., new adversaries) from outside the system. Therefore, the functional approach provides a framework for integrating the notion of deviation into a theory of social change and the development of a theory of the reaction processes to deviance. That is, the functional approach provides the labeling perspective with this framework if one substitutes the functional idea of negative sanction for the labeling notion of deviant label.

From a functional perspective, deviance can be viewed as a regular, integrative and “normal” aspect of any social system, rather than as an irregular, disintegrative and abnormal problem (cf. Durkheim, 1964). Furthermore, it is possible to interpret the “elimination” of deviance not as elimination but, instead, as an attempt to redefine or maintain the moral boundaries that have been symbolically transgressed. Deviance can be thought of as a product of the movement of moral boundaries rather than as a product of the movement of actors across those boundaries.

Unfortunately, the functional theory presents us with its own problems; that is, the functional theory is not very precise in its formulation of the processes whereby deviance produces solidarity (cf. Davis, 1975). In order to help resolve this problem, expand on Erikson’s boundary argument and extend our general concern with the definition of deviance, we will focus upon the effect of an external threat on a social system. Our decision to focus upon the effect of an external threat rather than on the realignment of power within a social system is based on the extensive work concerning external threats to a social system (Simmel, 1955; Coser, 1962; Sheriff, 1969).

There is a fairly well established argument that an outside threat will create greater in-group solidarity (cf. Simmel, 1955; Sheriff, 1969); however, it is not clear what effect that threat has on the volume and definition of deviance. Basically, there are two arguments that follow from this. Solidarity increases by redefinition of the system’s deviant(s); first, the social system becomes more tolerant of the deviant(s), since that system needs all its resources to repel the threat. In other words, the system increases its solidarity by reducing the level of internal deviance via definition (Coser, 1962). The second position is that, as a means of increasing solidarity of the system, the system will attempt to repel those members (deviants) who are already considered a threat to the solidarity of the system. That is, the social system ritually reaffirms its boundaries by less tolerance of the deviant(s). Negatively sanctioning deviance becomes public communication about the importance of the moral boundaries leading to an increase in solidarity among the non-deviants (Erikson, 1966). In other words, the system increases its solidarity by placing the deviant(s) further outside its moral boundaries. To illustrate these two positions, Simmel (1955: 87) states:
The group in a state of peace can permit antagonistic members within it to live with one another in an undecided situation because each of them can go his own way and can avoid collisions. A state of conflict, however, pulls the members so tightly together and subjects them to such uniform impulse that they either must get completely along with, or completely repel, one another.

Both of the arguments hold that the external threat increases solidarity; but one posits a decrease in the level of internal deviance, while the other posits an increase in the level of deviance. In the next section we hope to show why neither of these arguments is completely viable and we will attempt to formulate a more reasonable position.

THEORETICAL ARGUMENT

We restrict our discussion to “corporate” social systems—structures that possess an ongoing social organization through which members can act collectively and to which they feel responsible independent of their sentiments toward one another. (For a more stringent use of “corporate” social system, see Swanson, 1971.) We are concerned only with those social systems in which there is, at least, a minimal consensus among the constituents that the preservation of the system as an entity is worthwhile, and we deal only with those threats that challenge the corporateness of a social system. That is, in a non-corporate structure the constituents may regard an external threat as a threat to “them” (certain other actors in that social system) rather than to “us,” or the constituents may not regard the preservation of the system as worthwhile (cf. Simmel, 1955:93).

There are two basic ways in which the corporateness of a social system can be challenged via threat. One threat can be to the actual existence of the social organization, while the other is the threat to goals of the social organization. The level of threat must be at least severe enough to challenge one of these dimensions if it is to threaten the corporateness of the social system.

Solidarity refers to the extent to which actors want to remain in a particular social system and the extent to which they want other actors to remain in that social system. Therefore, our concern is with mechanical solidarity—solidarity based on consensus, congruent interests and unity of purposes—as well as with organic solidarity, which is based on cooperation, differentiation and interdependence.

Deviance is concerned with those actors whom the social system attempts to push outside the moral boundary of that system, and deviants are seen most clearly when those actors are ritually stigmatized and placed outside the moral boundaries. The deviant actors are not simply different from the other members but, clearly, morally deviant. Deviance is not necessarily synonymous with deviation (nonconformity) from the norms of a particular social system. For example, as has been widely demonstrated, actors of high status or high esteem have wider latitudes of nonconformity than actors of low status or low esteem (cf. Hollander and Willis, 1967).

The initial effect of an outside threat to a corporate social system is a decrease in the level of solidarity—which leads to an increase in the rejection of the internal deviant(s)—which leads to an increase in the level of solidarity. That is, there is not a direct effect from an outside threat to an increase in solidarity of the system; instead, the increase is indirect. In addition, we have noted that it is necessary to threaten the corporate structure of the social system. We have introduced the idea of corporate structure because an external threat to a non-corporate structure may more easily lead, for example, to disintegration of the system rather than to a final increase in solidarity.

Our argument is that in order to maintain its moral boundary, its corporate structure and its solidarity, the social system becomes less tolerant of the internal deviant(s), thereby increasing the level of rejection of the deviants. The redefinition of the deviants as “more deviant,” and, therefore, the redefinition of the moral boundaries, creates greater solidarity among the nondeviants of that social sys-
tem by reaffirming the common corporate membership. That is: (1) an external threat to a corporate social system produces an initial, momentary loss of solidarity since the constituents become unsure of the continued existence of the system; (2) in order to insure its existence as a corporate structure and reestablish its solidarity, the system increases its rejection of the deviants, thereby shifting the moral boundary; (3) the rejection of the deviant and movement of the moral boundary reduce the extent of the internal threat (the deviants) by placing the deviants further from the moral boundary; (4) the rejection of the deviants and movement of the boundary also prepare the system for repulsion of the external threat by bringing divergent (but not deviant and nondeviant) parts into a unified whole, thereby reestablishing solidarity and reaffirming the purity of the nondeviants and the moral boundary of the social system, as well as insuring the corporate existence of the system. Essentially, we conceive of the external threat as serving as a magnifier of the internal threat—the deviants. That is, the external threat points to the potential dangers of the internal deviants that were not apparent prior to the threat. Coser (1962:107) suggests how it is that a social system derives its solidarity from redefining the deviant:

Those group members who must bear the burden of being the scapegoats, through their sacrifice cleanse the group of its own failings, and in this way re-establish its solidarity: the loyal members are reassured that the group as a whole has not failed, but only some "traitors"; moreover, they can now reaffirm their righteousness by uniting in action against the "traitors."

While Coser's example of the process of solidarity is obviously much like our own, our analysis presents the deviants as something more than scapegoats. Our position includes the idea that the nondeviants will be less tolerant of the deviant's actions and positions, thereby redefining the deviant as "more deviant" (e.g., seeing the deviants as no longer just "bad," but as something more impure—"evil"). We believe that this redefinition allows the system to justify its new moral position.

The argument that an external threat immediately produces solidarity and that there is an ensuing increase in the level of rejection of the deviants does not appear tenable. Considering the boundary position we have discussed, there would be no reason for increasing the level of rejection of the deviants once that system had already increased its solidarity. The argument that an external threat immediately produces solidarity and that there is an ensuing decrease in the level of rejection of the deviants is unclear. It may be that what researchers (cf. Sherif and Sherif, 1966) have presented is the possibility that the outside threat creates less nonconformity from the nondeviants within the particular social system. That is, there may be less deviation but still more "stigma" attached to the deviants of the system. However, if the external threat can produce an immediate increase in solidarity within the system then, from our perspective, that would lead to a decrease in the level of rejection of the deviants.

The essential hypotheses from our theoretical argument are:

(1) If a threat from the outside challenges the corporateness of a social system, then there will be an increase in the level of rejection of the deviant(s) within that social system.

(2) If a threat from the outside challenges the corporateness of a social system, then the definition of the deviant(s) within that system will become more negative.

(3) If a threat from the outside challenges the corporateness of a social system, then there will be a shift in the moral boundaries of that system.

(4) If there is an increase in the rejection of the deviant(s) within a corporate social system, then there will be an increase in the solidarity of that system.
RESEARCH DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

For an adequate test of the hypotheses it is essential that the research situation be highly controlled. Considering the difficulties encountered by previous researchers who have worked with similar problems (cf. Sherif and Sherif, 1966), we decided to create an experimental test situation. Our decision was based also on our fieldwork with various social systems in which we encountered the following problems: (1) in many instances it is hard to determine if an outside threat actually threatens the corporateness of the social system; (2) the deviants within the social system often have left the system immediately following the threat; (3) we have not been able to locate a social system amenable to measurement concerning the status of the deviants. In addition, much of our work will probably need refinement. Since there is little evidence concerning the problems we have presented, an experimental design is especially suited for approaching the problems systematically with the aim of producing a cumulative body of knowledge. This experimental situation provides enough flexibility to allow for specific variations relevant to subsequent studies regarding deviance.

The design of the research requires a situation that clearly possesses: (1) at least one actor of deviant status,2 (2) a corporate ongoing social system, (3) a social system amenable to threat and (4) a framework that provides operational meaning for our concepts. To insure these basic aspects, our experimental procedures are grounded in an experiment that repeatedly has produced these necessary conditions. In addition, the previous experiment, "Deviation, Rejection, and Communication" (Schachter, 1951) and its replications (cf. Emerson, 1954) can be made flexible, allowing us the opportunity to incorporate those procedures necessary for a complete test of our thesis.

The Experimental Test

Subjects were solicited to join a social-work group whose ostensible purpose was to review the case histories of juvenile delinquents and to recommend correctional treatment to various authorities.

We chose social-work groups because they can fulfill the requirement of an ongoing, corporate social system. Also, subjects were assigned to groups on the basis of their preliminary interest ratings to insure that the system will have a minimal level of solidarity.

A brief case history of a juvenile delinquent, distributed at the initial meeting, provided the basis for group discussion. The members were to recommend the best treatment for the delinquent, believing that their recommendations would go to various criminal authorities. An observer, nominally acting as a criminal justice authority and as an expert on the manner in which these groups perform, was present at the meetings to take notes on how the group was progressing. In a typical meeting, after preliminary introductions, each group member read a revised version (i.e., Johnny Martin) of the "Johnny Rocoo" case (Evans, 1948), the life history of a juvenile delinquent, which ends as Johnny is waiting sentence for a minor crime. The case was presented as that of a real person. The experimenter (leader) asked the members to discuss and decide on recommendations for the delinquent. A scaled list of alternative recommendations was provided, ranging from extreme love and affection at point #1 to extreme punishment at point #7. Between these two extremes were graded variations of the two points of view. This scale, used to point to the differences of opinion within the group, was introduced to the group members as a convenient device for realizing everyone's position and providing a focal point for the initial part of the discussion.

After reading the case history, each member announced the position on the
scale that he had chosen. One confederate, the deviant, chose an extreme position and maintained it throughout the discussion. The case was written sympathetically to insure that the confederate is seen as a deviant by the other members. As Schachter's (1951) experiment and the replications show, almost all members in all groups chose positions on the scale which emphasize love and kindness (positions 2, 3, 4) and, since we expected the same results, the confederate chose a position of relatively extreme discipline (position 6). In the Schachter experiment and the replications, this position of extreme punishment and subsequent role playing moved the confederate into a deviant status, and we expected the same effect.3

The discussion was limited to 55 minutes and was largely concerned with thrashing out differences of opinion among members. After the first 25 minutes, the experimenter took a census to make sure that each member was fully aware of everyone else's position. The last 30 minutes involved further discussion of the problem and, of course, the introduction of our experimental manipulations.

There were 40 groups with a total N of 160. Each group had five members, and in each condition one of these members was the paid confederate (the deviant). The minimal test of our ideas required two conditions: condition 1 consisted of an outside threat (T) and a deviant (D); condition 2 consisted of no outside threat (NT) but a deviant (D).

In the threat condition, an outside threat was introduced to the group after the first 30 minutes of interaction. The criminal justice authority (observer), who was not involved in the interaction of the group, made a statement to the experimenter (leader) to the effect that "this group should probably not continue." Although this comment was directed to the experimenter, it was made quite audible for the

3 Relevant data and a discussion of the constancy of the confederate's conduct across conditions and related experimental controls in this study are available in a more extensive treatment of the work on which this paper is based (Lauderdale, 1975).
them. The specific question was: "To what extent do you prefer each other member of your discussion group today to be a member of another similar committee? (Please circle the number that most clearly reflects your preference.)"

In order to assess the level of solidarity, we asked the members at the beginning of the group (i.e., after the initial solidarity manipulation and some five minutes into the meeting) to what extent they were interested in participating in the present judicial study. Also, since we were interested in a measure of solidarity immediately following the threatening or non-threatening message, we recorded the group interaction on tape and coded that interaction in terms of a solidarity measure. At the conclusion of the meeting, we asked the group members to indicate to what extent they wished to remain in their group and how often they thought the group should meet. At this point, we asked the individual members to stay for a few extra minutes, noting that we were interested in receiving feedback on what type of individual is "best" for this kind of social-work group. This comment was made to each individual privately. We asked each member to indicate on an adjective list (cf. Alexander and Knight, 1971) his impression of that individual to whom he gave the highest preference rating and his impression of that individual to whom he gave the lowest preference rating. The latter impression gave us a measure of the level of negative definition attached to the deviant. As the other measure of the level of stigma attached to the deviant, we asked each member privately, at the conclusion of the post-experimental interview, if there were any people in the group with whom he did not want to work.

**Post-Experimental Observations**

After the group meeting and the administration of the measuring devices, each subject was interviewed at length. The purpose of the interview was: (1) to determine if a subject had violated any of the conditions of the theory or the experiment; (2) to ascertain if any important information was missed in the formal operations of the experiment; (3) to give the subject a complete explanation of the experiment and the rationale behind it. Each subject was asked for his consent for use of the information gathered in the study in the analysis and presentation of results in this thesis.

**Subjects and Facilities**

Subjects in the experiment were all males, aged 17 to 25, recruited from various colleges and universities in the Bay Area of Northern California. Each subject was paid for his participation, but not all subjects were aware in advance that they were going to be paid.

**RESULTS**

The first data are concerned with initial solidarity. After introductions and allow-
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ance for “small talk,” the group members were asked: “How interested are you in participating in the present judicial study?”  The alternatives ranged from “not interested at all” (scored 1) to “extremely interested” (scored 4). The results produced a mean of 2.938 (standard deviation of 0.559, N = 80) for the threat condition and a mean of 3.025 (standard deviation of 0.503, N = 80) for the non-threat. The means correspond to moderately interested (scored 3); and as is evident from a t score of −1.04, the levels of group interest for conditions of threat and non-threat are not significantly different.

Table 1 presents the mean desirability scores for the deviant and other group members. For “Deviant,” the desirability score is computed as the mean of the means received from the other group members in each group. “Others” refers to the mean of the means of the four group members excluding the deviant. At the end of each meeting the question posed to the group members was: “To what extent do you prefer each other member of your discussion group today to be a member of a similar committee?” The scale ranged from “not at all” (position 1) to “very much” (position 7). The data in Table 1 show that the mean ratings of Others are not significantly different (Z = 0.01) in either threat or non-threat conditions. The data also show that mean ratings of Deviant are considerably lower (p < .01) than Others in both threat and non-threat conditions, and that Deviant in the threat conditions is much more strongly rejected (p < .01) than Deviant in the non-threat condition. Therefore, Table 1 supports the first hypothesis: if a threat from the outside challenges the corporateness of a social system, then there will be an increase in the level of rejection of the deviant(s) within that social system.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>DEVIANT</th>
<th>OTHERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THREAT</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>2.800</td>
<td>7.088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NON-THREAT</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5.275</td>
<td>7.162</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sum of ranks of deviant and others in THREAT condition (Z = −12.337) are significantly different (p < .01) by Mann-Whitney U-Test. Sum of ranks of deviants and others in NON-THREAT condition (Z = −7.503) are significantly different (p < .01) by Mann-Whitney U-Test. Sum of ranks of deviant in THREAT and NON-THREAT conditions (Z = −8.268) are significantly different (p < .01) by Mann-Whitney U-Test. Sum of ranks of others in THREAT and NON-THREAT conditions (Z = 0.0001) are not significantly different by Mann-Whitney U-Test. For comparison with Schachter’s study, it should be noted that the same significance levels held when a t-test was employed. However, since the rejection instrument does not produce an interval scale, the Mann-Whitney U-Test is a more appropriate test. Additionally, since a fairly large proportion of the scores were tied, the correction for ties suggested by Siegel (1964) was employed.

At the end of the interview, group members were also asked if there were any people in their group with whom they did not want to work. This separate measure of the rejection of the deviant also supported the hypothesis, since three times (30% in the threat condition versus 10% in the non-threat condition) as many people mentioned the deviant in the threat condition as did those in the non-threat.

Table 2 supports the second hypothesis: the definition of Deviant becoming more negative when the system is threatened. After the sociometric choices were made, subjects were informed that, in order to be able to organize the advisory groups more efficiently, we were interested in the impressions they had formed of the individuals they preferred the most and the least in their group. The subjects were presented the series of adjective-pairs and asked to: “Please rate this person as best you can in terms of the overall impression you had of him.” They were then asked to select the “most relevant” adjectives for describing the person. There were separate forms for most- and least-preferred indi-

4 The manipulation of initial solidarity began with our first telephone conversation with the group members. Prior to arriving at the first meeting, the subjects were screened to insure that they would be interested in and somewhat committed to the topic, the other group members and the structure of the “judicial study.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADJECTIVE</th>
<th>THREAT</th>
<th>NON-THREAT</th>
<th>MOST-PREFERRED</th>
<th>THREAT</th>
<th>NON-THREAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rational (1)</td>
<td>7.649</td>
<td>5.925*</td>
<td>2.267 (N = 45)</td>
<td>2.267</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irrational (9)</td>
<td>(N = 37)</td>
<td>(N = 40)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(N = 45)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly (1)</td>
<td>6.656</td>
<td>6.415</td>
<td>1.969 (N = 32)</td>
<td>2.465* (N = 43)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unfriendly (9)</td>
<td>(N = 32)</td>
<td>(N = 41)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flexible (1)</td>
<td>8.250</td>
<td>7.594*</td>
<td>1.771 (N = 35)</td>
<td>4.083* (N = 24)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigid (9)</td>
<td>(N = 44)</td>
<td>(N = 32)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warm (1)</td>
<td>7.867</td>
<td>7.242*</td>
<td>2.909 (N = 11)</td>
<td>3.421 (N = 19)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cold (9)</td>
<td>(N = 30)</td>
<td>(N = 33)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive (1)</td>
<td>7.686</td>
<td>4.640*</td>
<td>2.643 (N = 28)</td>
<td>4.391* (N = 23)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insensitive (9)</td>
<td>(N = 35)</td>
<td>(N = 25)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social (1)</td>
<td>7.469</td>
<td>7.219</td>
<td>2.000 (N = 11)</td>
<td>3.429* (N = 14)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antisocial (9)</td>
<td>(N = 32)</td>
<td>(N = 32)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honest (1)</td>
<td>4.576</td>
<td>3.069*</td>
<td>2.429 (N = 35)</td>
<td>2.581 (N = 43)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dishonest (9)</td>
<td>(N = 33)</td>
<td>(N = 29)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The mean scores range from 1 as the most positive characterization to 9 as the most negative.

In every case, the group member least preferred by the other group members was the deviant; therefore, in this table, deviant is synonymous with least-preferred.

These seven adjective-pairs particularly dominated the relevance selections for the deviant in terms of overall choices (i.e., the other sixteen pairs were not chosen as most relevant a sufficient number of times to warrant their analysis, cf. Alexander and Knight, 1971). Three additional adjectives were selected among the most relevant for the most-preferred group member; however, they are not included above since they are not comparable to the least categories. Those adjectives were Sincere, Moral, and Cooperative.

* T-test yields a significant difference (p < .01) between conditions.

Individuals, and the seven adjective-pairs in Table 2 particularly dominated the relevance selections for the least-preferred individual (in Table 2 the least-preferred individual is synonymous with the deviant). The adjectives were on a scale of 1 to 9, with 1 being the most positive dimension and 9 the most negative. From Table 2, it is evident that the deviant in the threat condition was seen as significantly more Irrational, Rigid, Cold, Insensitive, and somewhat less Honest than the deviant in the non-threat condition. The deviant was also characterized as slightly Unfriendly and Antisocial in both conditions, but those dimensions were not significantly different between conditions.

It is interesting to note that the most-preferred individual in the threat condition systematically received more positive definitions than the most-preferred individual in the non-threat. Additionally, the data in Table 2 show that four of the seven dimensions were significantly different: the most-preferred individual in the threat condition was seen as clearly more Friendly, Flexible, Sensitive and Social than the most-preferred individual in the non-threat condition. A comparison of the data in Table 2 points to the idea of an evaluative continuum between the threat-non-threat conditions and the deviant-most-preferred individual. In the following section, we will elaborate on possible substantive reasons for this systematic relationship.

The first series of data related to the boundary hypothesis showed the similarity of the most acceptable and most objectionable positions in the initial and final measurements of the recommendations concerning the disposition of “Johnny Martin.” For the most acceptable and most objectionable positions, there is little difference from the initial to the final phase and
no significant difference in the boundaries for conditions of threat and non-threat.  

The next data relevant to the boundary hypothesis concerns the latitudes of acceptance, rejection and noncommitment. These latitudes were computed by counting the number of other positions accepted (excluding the most acceptable), others rejected (excluding the most objectionable) or those not evaluated by each subject, and by computing means for the three categories for phases and conditions (cf. Sherif and Sherif, 1965). The latitudes of acceptance data indicated that there is little difference from the initial to the final phase and that there is not a significant difference in the boundaries for conditions of threat and non-threat. However, a comparison of the latitudes of rejection in Table 3 notes the strong increase in the size of the latitude of rejection for the threat condition versus the non-threat. That is, the groups in the threat condition rejected significantly more positions in the final phase than did those in the non-threat. The latitudes of noncommitment presented in Table 4 follow the pattern established by the latitudes of rejection, but inversely. The groups in the threat condition are impressively less noncommittal than those in the non-threat. The data from Table 4 indicate that groups in the non-threat condition frequently are more noncommittal, thereby having larger latitudes of noncommitment than these groups in the threat condition.

Table 3. Mean Sizes of Latitudes of Rejection *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THREAT</td>
<td>1.650</td>
<td>1.225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NON-THREAT</td>
<td>1.712</td>
<td>1.562</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* For a comparison with Sherif's studies, a two-way analysis of variance of the effects of phases and conditions on latitudes of noncommitment yields nonsignificant F-ratios for main effects and a significant F-ratio for interaction effect (df = 1,316, p < .01). A more appropriate test of overall changes in the chi-square test is suggested by Mc Nemar (1957:229). Utilization of this test demands that the raw data be organized somewhat differently from the above presentation. When the test was employed, it produced the same results (significant ratios) as did the analysis of variance.

Table 4. Mean Sizes of Latitudes of Noncommitment *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>Final</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THREAT</td>
<td>1.988</td>
<td>1.325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NON-THREAT</td>
<td>2.040</td>
<td>2.025</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* For a comparison with Sherif and Sherif's studies, a two-way analysis of variance of the effects of phases and conditions on latitudes of noncommitment yields nonsignificant F-ratios for main effects and a significant F-ratio for interaction effect (df = 1,316, p < .01). The chi-square test suggested by Mc Nemar yields a significant overall change.

In summary, the average number of other acceptable positions does not differ significantly. The systematic variation to be found in the patterns lies in the latitudes of rejection and noncommitment. The latitude of rejection for the threat condition is larger than that for the non-threat, and the latitude of noncommitment is smaller for the threat condition than that for the non-threat. We interpret the shift in these latitudes as a constriction of the boundary around the position of the deviant (position 6) in the threat condition. Therefore, the data in Tables 3 and 4 lend support to the third hypothesis: if a threat from the outside challenges the corporate-ness of a social system, then there will be a shift in the moral boundaries of that system. The other data are consistent with previous findings (e.g., Sherif and Sherif, 1965, found that the number of positions acceptable for respondents upholding different stands did not differ significantly) and do not alter the conclusion.

The first series of data concerning the solidarity hypothesis showed that there is a slightly larger mean interest in remaining in the group in the threat condition; however, that difference is not significant. The question asked of the members to obtain
these means was: "To what extent do you wish to remain in the group?" The scale ranged from "not at all interested" (scored 1) to "extremely interested" (scored 4).

The data concerning the solidarity hypothesis were obtained by dividing the meeting into ten-minute intervals and measuring group solidarity communications (as indicated by Bales' [1950] social-emotional interaction process categories) for each interval. The figures presented below represent the total number of process category communications in each time interval made by all the people in each category, divided by the number of people in that category, and the Total solidarity communications is the sum of the three social-emotional category means for each time interval by each condition.

Since our hypothesis is concerned with an increase in solidarity in the threat condition, we examined the Total solidarity communications for the threat condition at the last time interval (45-55) versus the Total for the non-threat condition at the same interval (45-55). We found 1.30 more communications in the threat condition. That difference is significant (p < .05); however, the inspection of the individual socio-emotional process categories revealed that the second category (tension release, etc.) accounts for that significant difference. There is a mean of 2.45 for the threat condition in the second

![Mean Number of Group Solidarity Communications](image)

**Figure 1.** Distribution of the Mean Number of Group Solidarity Communications by Conditions of Threat and Non-Threat
category of the last time interval versus 0.65 for the non-threat. Therefore, it does not appear reasonable to conclude from this data that the increase in the rejection of the deviant leads to an increase in the solidarity of the system.

Looking at the Total solidarity communications in the threat condition by ten-minute intervals, we saw that the increase in communications was somewhat curvilinear as a function of the slight decrease in communication in the 25–35 minute interval. (It is important to note that the threat was administered after 30 minutes of group interaction.) The Total solidarity communications in the non-threat condition increase in a clear linear fashion (plotting by ten-minute intervals). Breaking both categories and conditions of the 25–35 minute interval into 25–30 and 30–35 minute intervals, we had a better indication of what was happening. For each of the three separate social-emotional categories, it is evident that the threat condition had a dramatic decrease in solidarity communications immediately following the threat (i.e., a mean of 3.00 for the 25–30 interval versus 0.85 for the 30–35 interval) while the solidarity communications in the non-threat condition continued to rise (i.e., a mean of 3.15 for the 25–30 interval versus 4.20 for the 30–35 interval).

Figure 1 shows the movement of solidarity communications throughout the group meetings in both threat and non-threat conditions by presenting the distribution of the mean number of group solidarity communications in five-minute intervals. The distribution of the communications in the threat condition not only points to the severe loss of solidarity following the threat, but also to the remarkable recovery of solidarity starting with the 35–40 minute interval. This series of solidarity data coupled with the data regarding the rejection of the deviant lends support to the last hypothesis which states that if there is an increase in the rejection of the deviant(s) within a corporate social system, then there will be an increase in the solidarity of that system.

Table 5 also supports the solidarity hypothesis. In this table, the indicator of solidarity is the amount of interest in future group meetings. Subjects were asked to answer: "How often do you think this group should meet?" We arbitrarily divided the responses into three categories (twice a week or more, once a week, and once every 2, 3 or 4 weeks) presented in Table 5 as the percentage of people responding in each category. The threat condition produced significantly (p < .01) more interest in future group meetings than did the non-threat. The results shown in Table 5 are striking considering that there was such a large loss of solidarity (as indicated by the interaction process categories) in the threat condition some 30 minutes prior to asking this frequency-of-meeting question.

**DISCUSSION**

The experiment appears to have met the scope conditions presented in the theoretical section. The judicial groups had a corporate structure possessing an ongoing social organization through which members could act collectively and to which they felt responsible, independent of their sentiments toward one another. The groups had a minimal level of solidarity prior to the threat or non-threat, and the threat was external. In fact, in the interviews a majority of the participants mentioned that they felt the message from the criminal justice authority (the threat) was especially disturbing because the authority “was really
never a part of the group" and that the authority "did not help explain what was wrong." One subject's comment was representative of the reaction to the criminal justice authority and helps illustrate the externality of the threat: "He was really never there, not even before he left; when he was there he sat back from us and took notes." Also, the threat was severe enough to challenge one of the basic dimensions of the corporate system—the actual existence of the social organization.

Solidarity is something more than a unidimensional concept and the experimental situation allowed measurement of it as a more complex construct and not simply in terms of liking of, or preference for, other group members. Deviants were defined as those actors whom the social system attempts to push outside the moral boundary of that system. Furthermore, deviants were said to be seen most clearly when those actors were ritually stigmatized and placed outside the moral boundary. The experimental situation allowed us to handle the above operational definition of deviants. Additionally, the measurement of deviance allowed us to present deviance as something different than deviation (nonconformity). That is, the deviant in both conditions deviated from the norms of the system to the same degree; however, he was more stigmatized in the threat condition.

Let us turn to the specific relationships between the support of the hypotheses and our theoretical argument. Our first statement was: (1) an external threat to a corporate social system produces an initial, momentary loss of solidarity since the constituents become unsure of the continued existence of the system. The data (especially the distribution of the mean number of group solidarity communications) indicated that the external threat did produce an initial, momentary loss of solidarity, and we assume that the loss was due to the constituents' uncertainty concerning the continued existence of the system. It is important to mention that "group solidarity communications" may not be the best indicator of solidarity immediately following the threat, and it would be preferable to have other indicators. However, our pre-tests showed that the reactivity of other measurements precluded their inclusion.

The next statement was: (2) in order to insure its existence as a corporate structure and reestablish its solidarity, the system increases its rejection of the deviant(s), thereby shifting the moral boundary. In fact, we interpret the mean score of 2.8 for the deviant in the threat condition (versus 5.275 in the non-threat) as a very strong indication of rejection. Hypothetically, the lowest possible sociometric score is 1.000; however, only two individuals in the entire study gave the deviant a score of 1.000. Subjects made it very clear in the interviews that they felt enormous constraint in using the end-points of the sociometric scale (i.e., either the 1 or 9 positions). Subjects also exhibited constraint during the interview in which they were asked to mention the names of any people in their group with whom they did not want to work. Nonetheless, three times as many people stated that they did not want to work with the deviant in the threat condition versus the non-threat. This strong rejection of the deviant in the threat condition appears to be directly related to the reestablishment of solidarity following the threat.

We also maintain that the strong rejection of the deviant following the threat is related to the shift in the moral boundaries evident in the threat condition. The groups in the threat condition rejected significantly more positions than did those in the non-threat. Also, groups in the threat condition were more certain of those positions to which they were committed. We suggest that, since these positions were related to the disposition of a supposedly real juvenile delinquent, they are reasonable indicators of the moral boundary of the group.

We then stated: (3) the rejection of the deviant and movement of the moral boundary reduces the extent of the internal threat (the deviant(s)) by placing the deviant(s) further from its moral boundary. The groups in the threat condition did reject more positions around the deviant's position than did those in the non-threat. That is, in the threat condition the moral bound-
ary was "tightened." The groups in the threat condition were less tolerant of the deviant's moral position; and we suggest that, as a function of this increased intolerance of the deviant's position, they pushed the deviant farther from their moral boundary. We also suggest that this tightening of the boundary and placement of the deviant farther from that boundary was a process that developed throughout the last phase of the threat group.

The next statement in the theoretical argument was: (4) the rejection of the deviants and the movement of the boundary also prepares the system for repulsion of the external threat bringing divergent (but not deviant and nondeviant) parts into a unified whole, thereby reestablishing solidarity and reaffirming the purity of the nondeviants and the moral boundary of the social system, as well as insuring the corporate existence of the system. All the indicators of solidarity confirm that solidarity was reestablished in the threat groups. In fact, all of the indicators support the notion that solidarity was increasing at a faster rate in the threat condition. We have only indirect indications that the nondeviants in the threat condition were reaffirming their "purity." That is, the groups that followed the threat defined their most preferred member as more Friendly, Flexible, Sensitive, and Social than did those in the non-threat condition. Another type of response that points to this reaffirmation of purity is the amount and type of interaction produced in the threat group following the threat. In the

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6 At this point, it is obvious that a separate study is necessary to substantiate this idea and to examine the possibility that the movement of the boundary reduces the extent of the internal threat (the deviant(s)). It is important to note that the concept of boundary or boundaries needs further explication. An interesting observation made independently by different experimenters and confederates (deviants and criminal justice authorities) was that following the threat the group members in that condition consistently moved their chairs, and if possible their bodies, further and further from the deviant as the meeting progressed. The groups in the non-threat condition did not do so. Unfortunately, we did not anticipate action of that sort and can only report it ex post facto, since we were unable to incorporate it into our theoretical framework. last ten-minute time interval in the second category (tension release, jokes, laughs, shows satisfaction), the threat condition produced a mean communication of 2.45 for that category. Much of the content of that second category was interaction that confirmed the righteous nature of the group's existence. The mean communication for the groups in the non-threat condition for the same interval and category was 0.65. However, this is not an unusual finding since the groups in that condition were able to confirm their purity throughout the meeting while the groups in the threat condition had their purity questioned via the threat. The selection of the latitudes of rejection and noncommitment by the groups in the threat condition point to the reaffirmation of the moral boundary. We maintain that the reestablishment of solidarity, the reaffirmation of the purity of the nondeviants and the reaffirmation of the moral boundary by the nondeviants help insure the corporate existence of the system (cf. Stinchcombe, 1975, for a different analysis of the essential defining characteristics of a social system).

In summary, it may be conceptually useful to think of the external threat as serving as a magnifier of the internal threat, the deviant. However, it appears that further work is needed to ascertain whether, in fact, the deviant is an internal threat; and, if the deviant is an internal threat, we need to know how that threat works (cf. Marx, 1974). What parts of the system does the deviant challenge and exactly what is his relationship to the external threat? It would also be helpful if further work were done on the intensity of both the external and internal threats. At this point, we do not know if an increase or decrease in the external threat leads to a direct increase or decrease in the stigma attached to the deviant.

Our contention that the deviant is something more than a scapegoat is supported by the results in the threat condition. The groups in the threat condition did not claim that only some "traitors" (Coser, 1962) had failed as a means of reassuring each other that the group as a whole had not failed. In fact, those groups attempted to disregard the deviant (Coser's "traitor")
and the deviant's actions as much as possible. It appears that the deviant in the non-threat condition more closely fits the idea of scapegoat. In the non-threat condition, the groups consistently attempted to address communications to the deviant and the results of the mean sociometric score (5.275) for the deviant in those groups appear to indicate that the group was prepared to keep the deviant in the group (although in our terms, "on the fringe"—the edge of the boundary) as a means of reaffirming their righteousness by continually uniting in action against the traitor (the deviant).^{7}

CONCLUSION

Our work provides considerable support for certain essential ideas in the functional theory of social control and the labeling approach to deviance. We have presented a system of theoretical relationships and corresponding empirical support to explain how the definition and volume of deviance can change in a particular social system independent of the actions of the deviants associated with that system. The evidence from our study supports the contention that deviants, independent of their actions, will be more severely rejected and stigmatized following an external threat to their corporate social system; that rejection and stigmatization has been related to the loss-then-reestablishment of solidarity of that system and the constriction of the moral boundary and, therefore, the further movement of the boundary away from the deviants. In presenting the evaluative categories used by members of different systems to characterize the deviants associated with those systems, we have provided an account of "how deviance is defined" under different conditions.

The question of the generality of the findings from this study should be raised. Do other natural ("real") groups operate in the same manner as this experimental corporate system which was concerned with the disposition of a juvenile delinquent? Can the reaction to racial and ethnic minority groups by any society be considered analytically analogous to the scapegoating (keeping those groups on the fringe of the moral boundary) in the non-threat condition, or can people segregated from their larger social system in mental and penal institutions be considered analogous to the deviant (clearly being pushed outside or already outside the boundary) in the threat condition? Can the redefinition to more severe stigmatization and separation of some Japanese-Americans into concentration camps (also, referred to as relocation centers) following the invasion of Pearl Harbor indicate processes similar to those identified in this study?

This study has not attempted to answer those questions; i.e., we are aware that a treatment of the problems incurred in moving from one type and/or level of analysis to another requires much more analytical work than is presented here.^{8} Instead, it is intended to raise questions of this sort. In fact, there are a number of other questions that probably should receive higher priority using the level and type of analysis of the present work. For example, we still do not know if all segments of corporate social systems have the same amount of power and/or concern in regard to the process by which deviants' low social and moral statuses are raised, lowered or maintained. If one particular

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^{7} A slightly different interpretation of the reaction of the groups in the non-threat condition is that they considered the deviant's actions in that group simply to be nonconforming, but in a disturbing manner, and, therefore, used those nonconforming actions as a basis for scapegoating the individual. From this viewpoint, the "nonconforming" actions of the deviant in the threat condition appear to be interpreted much differently by the groups in that condition. That is, the results of the rejection and redefinition of the deviant in both conditions reasonably can be interpreted by employing a different type of analysis as follows: actions X which become deviant under threat were nonconforming, perhaps idiosyncratically disturbing, without threat. In line with this interpretation focusing on actions, Etzioni-Halevy (1975) presents a class of action termed semi-deviance. For a discussion of action located at the borderline of what norms condone and what they condemn, see that article, especially pages 356-9.

^{8} For examples of studies employing different levels of analysis that are directly relevant to the present research, see Currie (1968) and Cohen (1969).
segment (e.g., the system's elite) can exert more power in the movement of the moral boundary, we do not know under what conditions that power will be exerted, which mechanisms might be used, or how the process of exerting that power will proceed. Hopefully, these and related questions can be analyzed profitably by employing the scheme provided by the system of theoretical relationships presented in this work.

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PROFIT AND NONPROFIT ORIENTATIONS AND THE DIFFERENTIATIONS-COORDINATION HYPOTHESIS FOR ORGANIZATIONS: A STUDY OF SMALL GENERAL HOSPITALS *

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Vanderbilt University


The theoretical relevance of distinguishing profit and nonprofit organizations is presented and is traced to Weber's distinction between formal and substantive rationality. It is argued that the relationship between differentiation and coordination is stronger in profit than in nonprofit organizations. Results for samples of small short-stay general hospitals support the hypothesis, even when a number of other variables are controlled. It is concluded that the profit-nonprofit orientation of organizations may be an important contingency in the relationship between organizational variables and that more theoretical and empirical attention should be given to it.

One of the oldest ideas in sociology is that as social systems become increasingly differentiated they tend to develop structures and mechanisms that coordinate the actions of the various parts (cf. Durkheim, 1933). The hypothesis has received particular attention both in theoretical work and empirical studies on organization (e.g., Anderson and Warkov, 1961; Blau, 1970; Hawley et al., 1965; Thompson, 1967; Rushing, 1967). The implication of most studies is that the relationship between differentiation and coordination is universal, that is, true for all types of organization. It is possible, however, that the relationship varies between types of organization. The hypothesis of this paper is that the relationship varies depending on the profit orientation of organizations. The type of organization on which findings are based is the small general short-stay hospital. I reported on differences between profit and nonprofit hospitals in effectiveness and efficiency for the same sample of hospitals in an earlier paper (Rushing, 1974).

THEORETICAL RELEVANCE OF PROFIT-NONPROFIT ORIENTATIONS

The profit versus nonprofit orientation of organizations has an uncertain relevance in theoretical formulations of complex organizations. Classification schemes of organizations sometimes imply a distinction between organizations in which economic return on the owner's investment is the primary goal and those in which other goals are primary. These distinctions

Senge, Sidney

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Swanson, Guy E.

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