

The Dark and The Deviant

Ilona Mikkonen, DSc.

1

Today's agenda

- Conceptualization of 'deviance'
- Deviance in sociology → *why* is there deviance in a society?
 - Three main theoretical perspectives
- Dark and deviant in consumer behaviors

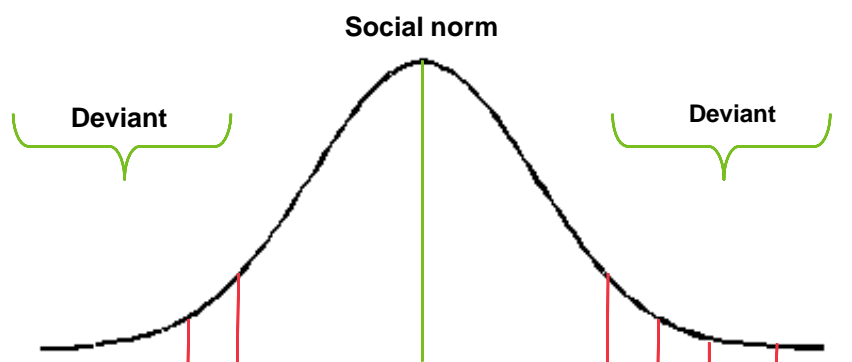
2

How would you define deviance?

- In mathematics and statistics, **deviation** is a measure of difference between the observed value of a variable and some other value (typically the mean/average)

→ In social sciences, deviance refers to **behaviors that somehow break social norms**; either formally defined and enforced norms (i.e. laws) and/or more informal mores and customs

3



4

Amine & Gicquel (2011, 1812):

*– the description of a deviant act **requires formulating a judgement** which is based on a certain idea of normality. Norm and deviance are **two complementary notions** (Durkheim 2007b, p. 40; Goffman 1975, p.150) that are **probably inseparable**.*

Deviance and norm

“On this basis, we suppose that the norm is characterised by:

- a set of rules forming a reference framework
- an authority originating the standard; and;
- a sanction, from which results an opposition between what is marginal and what is mainstream”

(Amine & Gicquel 2011, 1812)

In sociology theorized as

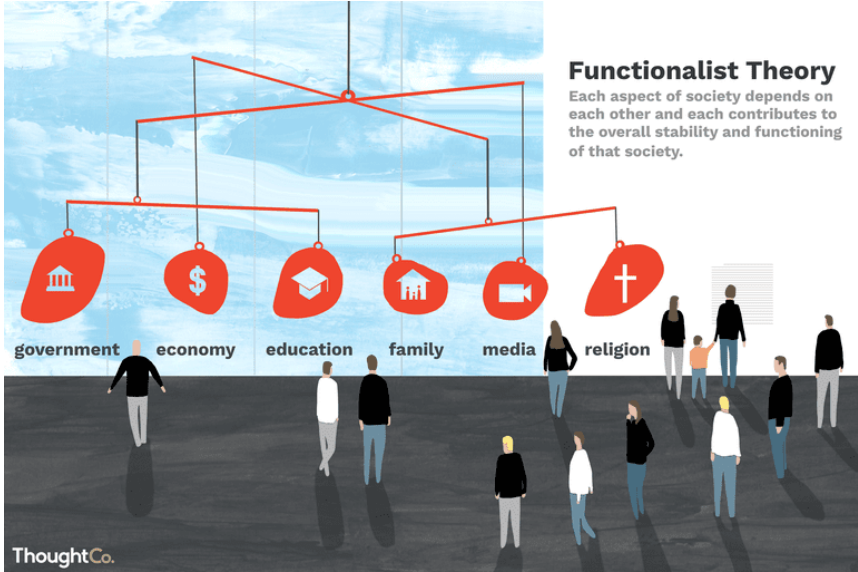
Crime, criminality (in the context of prison system)

Mental illness



Three main theoretical perspectives to deviance

- **Structural functionalism** is interested in the **functions** of deviance in a society → argues that it makes the society "work"
- **Symbolic interactionism** – deviance **is learned in social interactions**
- **Conflict theory** – **dominant classes decide** and control what is considered **deviant**, results in inequality in a society
Not inherent in an individual



Functionalism Theory
Each aspect of society depends on each other and each contributes to the overall stability and functioning of that society.

The diagram illustrates Functionalism Theory using a balance scale metaphor. Six red circular weights, each containing a different icon, are suspended from a horizontal beam. From left to right, the icons represent: a government building (labeled 'government'), a dollar sign (labeled 'economy'), a graduation cap (labeled 'education'), a family house (labeled 'family'), a video camera (labeled 'media'), and a cross (labeled 'religion'). Below the scale, a group of stylized human figures stands on a dark surface, looking up at the scale. The background is a light blue sky with clouds. The logo 'ThoughtCo.' is visible in the bottom left corner of the diagram.

A! Aalto University School of Business

9

Functions of deviance

- Systems of recognizing and punishing deviance **create norms and tell members of a given society how to behave → internal cohesion**
- **Deviances create boundaries between populations** and enable an “us-versus-them” mentality within different groups
 - majorities unite around their normativity
 - being marked as deviant can actually bolster solidarity within the marked community (e.g. gay pride)
- **Extreme cases of (criminal) deviance** function to **create solidarity and cohesion** in those who adhere to norms
- Deviance also explains **positive changes (including innovations)** in society, as norms will not change without norm-breaking behaviors and attitudes
 - **even “criminal” deviance isn’t necessarily bad for a society**

10

Deviance explains change

Deviance can actually be good for a society, even "criminal" deviance!

EXPLAIN, WITH EXAMPLES, PLEASE ☺

Things that used to be legal that aren't anymore:

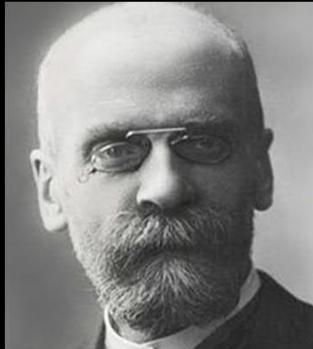
1. Drinking and driving
2. Lobotomy
3. Domestic violence and marital rape
4. Child labor
5. Slavery

Things that used to be illegal but aren't anymore:

1. Homosexuality
2. Alcohol
3. Divorce

Conceptualization of crime and mental illness in functionalism

- **Crime** results from **structural strains in society**, as not everyone is equally committed to **collective sentiments** (i.e. not everyone holds exactly the same values → people will always break the law)
- By recognizing mental illness, society upholds values about conforming behavior



We do not condemn it because it is
a crime, but it is a crime because we
condemn it.

— *Emile Durkheim* —



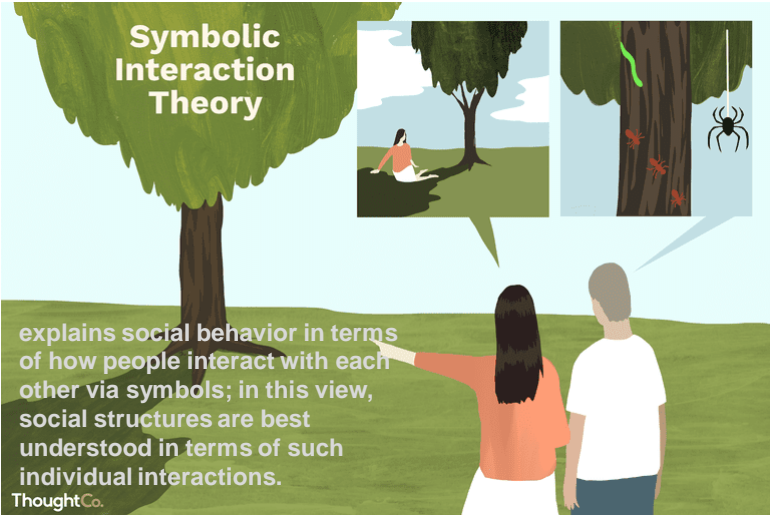
13

CRITICISM??

- Does not take into account social institutions, structures, inequalities, dominating discourses, or personal circumstances related to or contributing to deviant behaviors
- Does not take into account **negative** societal and individual **consequences** of (criminal) deviance



14



Symbolic Interaction Theory

explains social behavior in terms of how people interact with each other via symbols; in this view, social structures are best understood in terms of such individual interactions.
ThoughtCo.

A! Aalto University
School of Business

15

Symbolic Interactionism

- Society constructs deviance (discursively), and people learn them
- Deviance, especially crime, is learned behavior, enforced or discouraged by our others

16

Becker

“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 the label has successfully been applied; deviant behavior is behavior that people so label.”

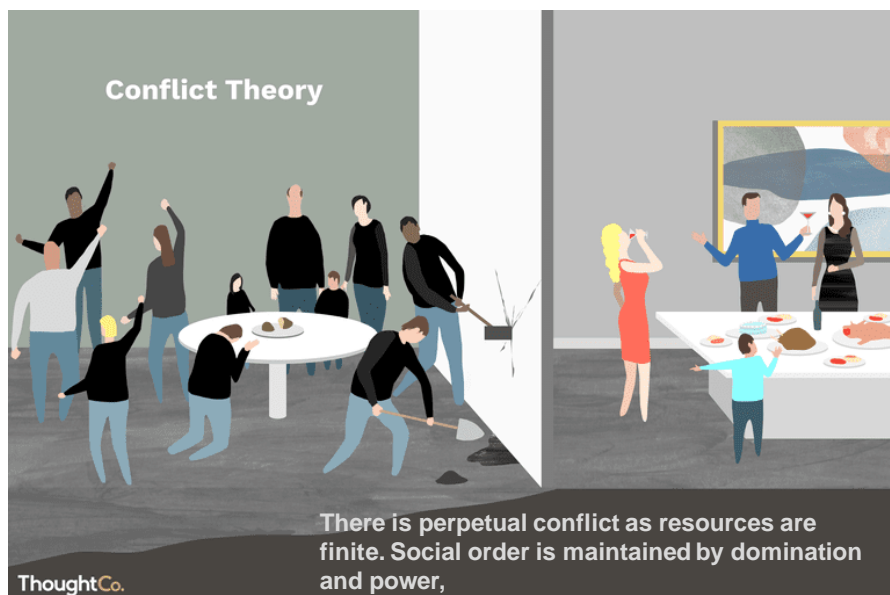


Conceptualization of crime and mental illness

- Mentally ill are victims of societal reactions to their behaviors
- **Labelling people as criminals reinforce crime** rather than deter it → internalizing the label and acting accordingly

CRITICISM??

- Does not address processes through which deviance is constructed → who constructs the labels?
- Does not really explain "white-collar crime" (business elites, politicians) of people **not labeled**
- There is little empirical evidence that support the claim of the labeling theory (i.e. that people internalize label)

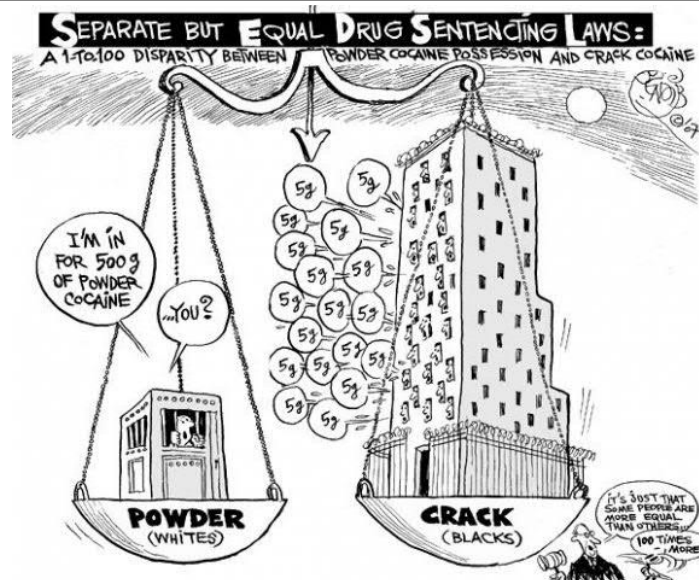


Conflict theory

- Deviant behaviors are actions that do not go along with the **social institutions**
- The powerful define crime, and elite crime typically goes unpunished

→ **laws are instruments of oppression:** tough on the powerless and less tough on the powerful.

21



22



23

Conceptualization of crime and mental illness

- Crime stems from a system of inequality that keeps those with power at the top and those without power at the bottom
- People with the least resources are likelier to become defined deviant, criminal or mentally ill

24

CRITICISM

- Deterministic – does not account for **individual agency (some versions!)**
- Some forms **assume an utopia**, where deviant behaviors would not exist

Dark and deviant consumer behaviors

Deviant consumer behavior
Consumption practices
(acquisition, use, disposal)
that deviate from what is
considered within the norm
and *may*
result in harm



27

Breakout rooms

- In breakout rooms
 - Come up with 2 to 3 topics or contexts you could study that would fall under dark and deviant
 - Also think about how you'd go about studying them (what kind of data would be needed and how it could be obtained)



28

Rethinking resistance and anti-consumption behaviours in the light of the concept of deviance

The concept of deviance

1809

Abdelmajid Amine and Yohan Gicquel
IRG Research Center, University of Paris-Est, Paris, France

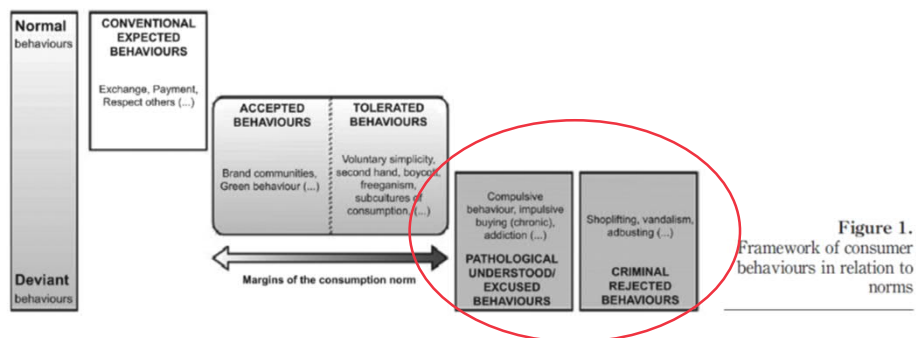
Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to address an under-researched issue in marketing, atypical consumption behaviours. More particularly it focuses on the deviant behaviours of consumers in a commercial or consumption situation and on their reactions in regard to the market system.

Deviant consumer behaviors “**include, but are not limited to, shoplifting, credit misuse and abuse, compulsive buying, purchase of illegal products, illegal market transactions, misuse of products, fraudulent return of merchandise, fraudulent requests for warranty service, purchase of counterfeit products, violation of license agreements, gambling, and other addictive behaviours**” (Budden and Griffon, 1996)

A! Aalto University
School of Business

29



A! Aalto University
School of Business

30

Dark/deviant consumer behavior includes



Extremely unconventional behaviors
(e.g. body modification, football hooliganism, BDSM dungeons, dumpster diving, extreme fandom)

("may not be considered normal")



Pathological behaviors
(e.g. addictive behaviors such as compulsive buying, hoarding, substance abuse, etc.)



Criminal behaviors
(e.g. shoplifting, illegal trade, vandalism, illicit substances)

31

- Amine and Gicquel (2011, 1813)

*To these conceptions of norm, there must also be added the notion of **elasticity of the norm over time** - - there is a **historical and social relativity** of norms*



32

Breakout rooms

THINK ABOUT PRODUCTS/MARKETS EXAMPLES –
PRODUCTS/INDUSTRIES THAT HAVE BEEN
LEGITIMISED/DE-LEGITIMIZED ☺

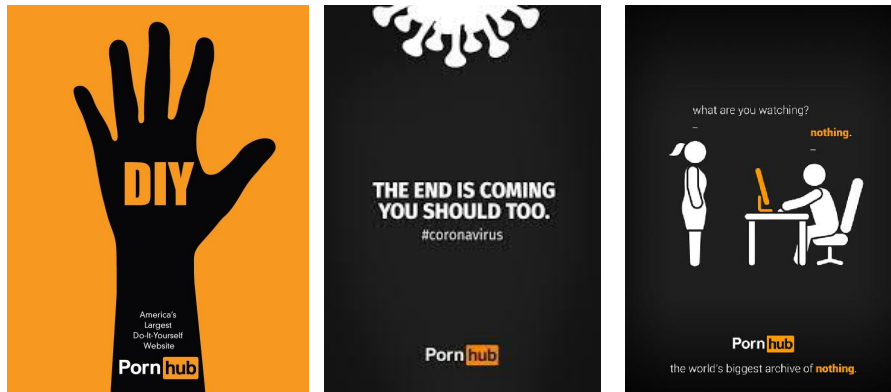
Products/industries that used to
be deviant that aren't anymore

Products/industries that used to
be normalized but aren't
anymore

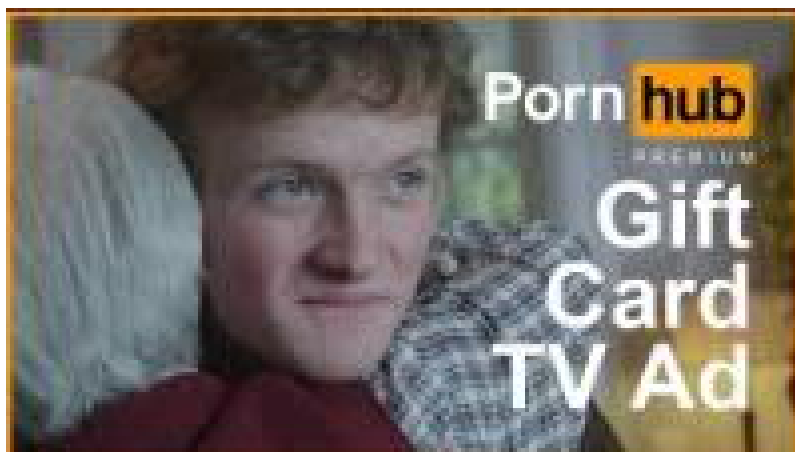
Porn industry



Porn industry

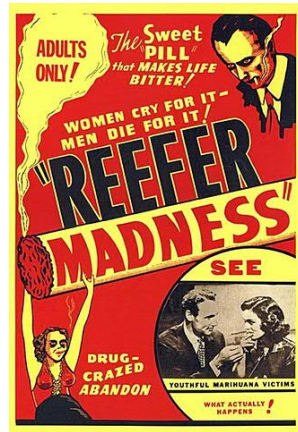


35



36

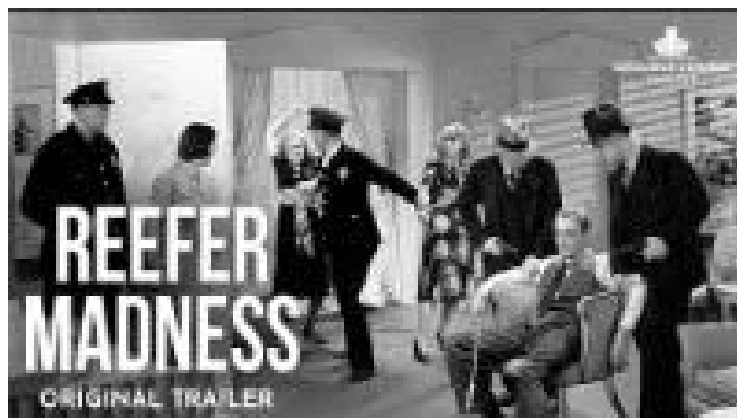
Cannabis - From reefer madness of 1930's...



Reefer Madness (originally made as **Tell Your Children** and sometimes titled as **The Burning Question, Dope Addict, Doped Youth, and Love Madness**) is a 1936 American propaganda film revolving around the melodramatic events that ensue when high school students are lured by pushers to try marijuana—from a **hit and run accident, to manslaughter, suicide, attempted rape, hallucinations, and descent into madness due to marijuana addiction.**

21.11.2021
37

37



38

to hippie counterculture of 1960's...



to stoner stereotypes of 1980's and 1990's...



..to legal medicine, recreation, and **self-improvement tool**

The New York Times

SELF-CARE Why Is CBD Everywhere?

By Alex Williams
Oct. 27, 2018

Why Is CBD Everywhere?

Cannabidiol is being touted as a magical elixir, a cure-all now available in bath bombs, dog treats and even pharmaceuticals. But maybe it's just a fix for our anxious times.

WEED MOM
The Canna-Curious Woman's Guide to Healthier Relaxation, Happier Parenting, and Chilling TF Out
Danielle Simone Brand

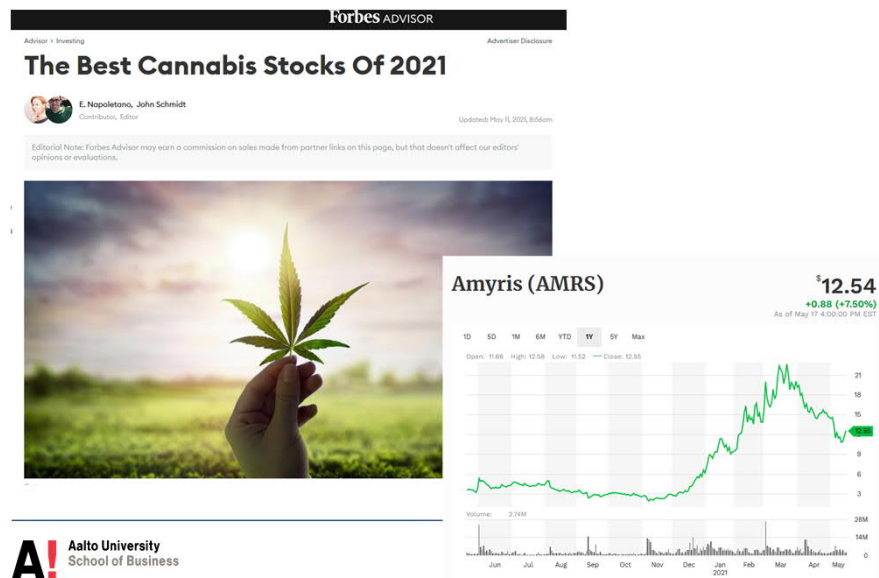
41

→ “end of pot – welcome cannabis!”

ALCHEMY
CANNABIS REVEALED
GOLD
PRO CBD
CBD
VET CBD
CANNABIS

42

You can even invest in cannabis stocks!



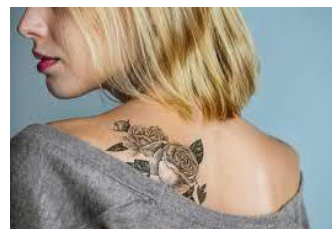
43

Tattoos

- Formerly associated with criminality (gang membership, prison system etc.)



→ Now completely mainstream



44

Cigarettes



45

Breakout rooms

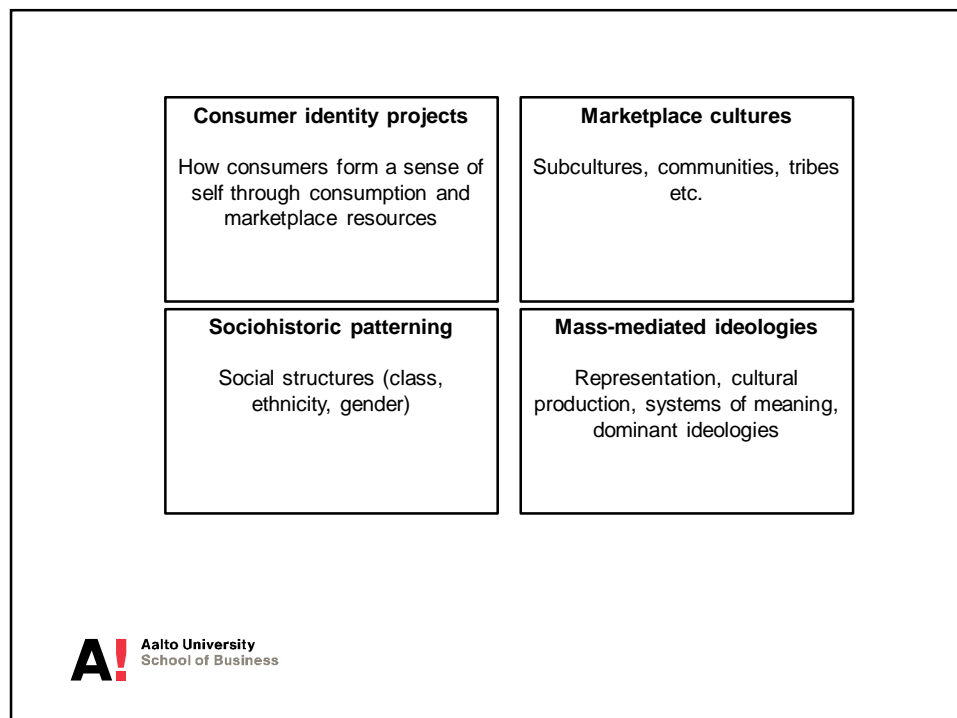
- What kind of (consumer) behaviors do you think would be 'deviant' in your own social circles?

46

Deviance in CCT-literature

Disordered
Criminal
Mlicit
Dirty Dark
Dangerous
Mlegal
Compulsive

47



48

For example, in which would you locate research on “dark topics”

- How do the people engaging in dark consumption construct their identities? How do they engage with the “dark market” (for example illicit drugs)
- What kinds of social structures, communities, subcultures etc. are formed around “dark” consumption? How do they work, how are they structured etc.?
- How understanding of “dark”, marginalized, deviant consumption has evolved?
- What is the public discourse(s) around “dark” consumption and/or markets? How are the individuals/groups/actors around represented in mainstream media

49

The Marketplace Management of Illicit Pleasure

CHRISTINA GOULDING
AVI SHANKAR
RICHARD ELLIOTT
ROBIN CANNIFORD*

Criminal/Excused
behavior

Calculated
deviance

Through pleasure, a foundational concept in consumer behavior, we offer an analysis of the history, development, **and experience of clubbing**, the precursor of rave and the contextual focus of this article. On the basis of a 5-year study **primarily involving participant observation and interviewing**, we present an analysis of how the clubbing experience is cocreated by promoters, DJs, and clubbers themselves. We develop and demonstrate a biosocial conceptualization of pleasure and show how the shared experience of music and dance, the organization of space, **and the effects of the drug ecstasy** combine to produce a highly sought-after, **calculated suspension of the rules** and norms of everyday life. Further, **we suggest that the club, as well as the pleasurable practices and experiences that it supports, has become a site of contained illegality**

50

Dirty customers: Stigma and identity among sex tourists

Mark Neal

SOAS, University of London, UK

Journal of Consumer Culture
2018, Vol. 18(1) 131–148
© The Author(s) 2016
Reprints and permissions:
sagepub.co.uk/journalsPermissions.nav
DOI: 10.1177/1469540516648373
journals.sagepub.com/home/joc



51

This article asks the question, “How do Western men who travel to Thailand to pay for sex with Thai women **morally justify their actions?**” In order to answer this, the study frames the question in terms of debates about “dirty work” and introduces the concept of “dirty customers” to analyze sex tourists and to highlight the potential stigma and moral taint involved in their engagement with sex workers. The research methodology involved **content analysis of website discourse among Western men who visit Thailand for paid sex**; examining their discussions and debates, and thereby identifying key themes and patterns in their exchanges. The study found that although sex work can arguably be categorized as “dirty work,” sex tourists resist such characterizations of sex work and of their role in it. The article thereby **analyses how sex tourist discourse neutralizes external moralities of stigma and shame**. It shows why neutralization is significant for understanding how sex tourism is sustained as an industry and how it is significant at the theoretical level for our understanding of “dirty work” and “dirty customers” as analytical concepts.



Criminal/Excused
behavior

Justification of
deviance

52

Shopaholic stories: Tales of therapeutic addiction, governance, and political economy

Journal of Consumer Culture
2016, Vol. 18(4) 497–519
© The Author(s) 2016
Article reuse guidelines:
sagepub.com/journals-permissions
DOI: 10.1177/1469540516684186
journals.sagepub.com/home/joc
SAGE

Contemporary culture encourages shopping to abate negative emotions or alter one's disposition. This phenomenon has become known as **retail therapy**. Using two types of narratives – those told by mass media and those told by individual shoppers collected through interviews – this article compiles them together to **illuminate the tension between the experience of agency (the therapeutic effects of shopping) and constraint (the addictive qualities of shopping) people experience**. The article argues that this tension situates shoppers, especially those who participate in retail therapy, as ideal subjects for governance in a neoliberal society that values self-regulation and relies on immaterial labour. As shoppers participate in the **narratives of retail therapy**, they qualify themselves as citizen



Excused
behavior

Therapeutic
deviance

53

Despite the prominence of such individuals in the society, extant literature has nevertheless paid relatively little attention to positive deviance. - - Positive deviance can then be defined as **“acts, roles/careers, attributes and appearances [which are] singled out for special treatment and recognition...[and are] evaluated as superior because they surpass conventional expectations”**(Dodge1985). In other words, positive stigma or positive deviance is non-conforming behaviour which, contrary to negative stigma, is positively evaluated (Shoenberger, Heckert, and Heckert 2015). in this study **I conceptualise celebrities as positive deviants as, through their wealth and fame, they can be seen as deviants and as their status is generally positively evaluated.**

The context of veganism seems ideal for this analysis as, according to mainstream media reports recent years have seen a considerable change in the image of veganism. Indeed, Cole and Morgan(2011) found that **as late as 2007, 74.3% of all articles in the UK press related to veganism were negative** in tone. In contrast, **by late 2013 the mainstream media was calling veganism “fashionable”**(Fury2013), and declaring 2014“the year of the vegan”(Rami2014). Moreover, in the media, **this change in the image of veganism was mainly attributed to the new celebrity vegans** (e.g. Fury2013; Rami2014; Walker2014).

54

**Questions,
comments,
grievances?**

A! Aalto University
School of Business