SOCIAL VARIANCE AS IT EXISTS BETWEEN CONFORMITY AND DEVIANCE: FOLLOWING SOME ADVICE FROM OGBURN*

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Abstract

The purpose of this article is to introduce social variance as the "stuff" that exists between conformity and deviance in modern sociology. We often over-emphasize the either-or qualities of conformity and deviance, presuming that nothing lies between them. A foot-long ruler is not intended to look at 0 or 12 on a stick, so why do we do that very thing? By borrowing generously from novels, distance measurements and art, social variance represents aberrations from conformity and from deviance as a new subject in a discipline which has been dedicated to traditional definitions, dualisms, and labeling theory.

"No one Sampson or I spoke to that morning had seen anything out of the ordinary around Sojourner Truth School. We heard the usual com-plaints about drug pushers, the zombie-like crackheads, the prossies who work on Eighth Street, the growing number of gangbangers…But nothing out of the usual"
(James Patterson, *Jack & Jill* 1996).

"We were discussing duels and when they were, by general consent, permissible when they were universally condemned and when they were absolutely required"
(Patrick O'Brian, *The Truelove* 1992).

"[Joan had] read about religious fanatics who fondled snakes, but a turtle fixation was borderline deviant"
(Carl Hiaasen, *Lucky You* 1997).

"As a civilization, through consensus, we agree on what is normal, but this consensus is as wide as a river, not as narrow as the high wire above a big top"
(Dean Koontz, *Life Expectancy* 2004).

"…no venal or meretricious enterprise existed without a community's consent" (James Lee Burke, *Jolie Blon's Bounce* 2002).

"Something can be legal but not moral"
(Steve Perry, *Cybernation* 2001).

"It all simply comes down to good guys and bad guys"
(Jimmy Buffett, *A Salty Piece of Land* 2004).

INTRODUCING *SOCIAL VARIANCE*

Novelists often exist on the periphery of core social institutions (Steward 1955) as one type of p*eripheral activist*, writing stories containing ideas about key social and sociological issues, like conformity and deviance, in ways that audiences can access and understand, easily. Singer-songwriter-novelist-actor Jimmy Buffet writes that we often dichotomize social phenomena for reasons of convenience, comprehension, and clarity, and some of those visions can serve as bases for social labeling. James Lee Burke, author of the popular Dave Robicheaux detective/mystery series, reminds us that communities often permit an illegal activity, such as prostitution, to exist because it is deemed useful, just as poverty and unemployment have been called functional (Gans 1971). Dean Koontz states that in a pluralistic society consensus of opinion regarding social morality may be difficult to achieve. Some conduct codes are designed with broad parameters of application, resulting in multiple reactions and sanctions which are differentially enforced. Patrick O'Brian author of the Jack Aubrey "Master and Commander" naval series, confirms that norms are not universal, needing to be seen in cultural context which Konty (2007) calls defining deviance "sideways" because "...rules are not evenly distributed with and across societies..." Konty (2006:630). Detective Alex Cross, created by James Patterson, confirms that citizens and public officials have become inured to open and unattended activities which were once considered to be unaccepting, but are now commonplace. Steve Perry, a writer for the Tom Clancy-created *NetForce* series, informs us that legally-accepted behaviors do not always meet the ethical ideals of a community: A city in central Illinois, for example, is the location of a famous adult night club, a strip joint, which was once featured on a *Donahue* television episode. Finally, Carl Hiaasen, who usually writes comic tales about ecological and exile politics in southern Florida, reminds us that even mildly deviant behavior can have limited social tolerance.

These authors are, of course, novelists with much literary license who are not required to cite data and sources, so we should not treat them authoritatively. Still, they identify collectively a triptych of key themes in sociology. It is often difficult to have unequivocal definitions for conformity and deviance and their applications; we often think in oppositional frames of reference; and we do love our labels. Consequently, we can no longer subscribe to conformity and deviance as depicted in the following way:

Conformity–––––––Deviance

Instead, we could think about the range of tolerance for both conformity and deviance as being extremely fluid, existing on sliding scales, in the following visual manners.

Conformity–––––→Deviance
Conformity←–––––Deviance

There is, though, yet another way to visualize the issues of conformity

and deviance because they, and peoples' responses to them, are not always what they seem to be.

Mathematicians use rulers to measure the infinite number of discrete distances between 0 and 12 on a foot-long stick. The end points are used only as places of reference. Artists, in similar fashion, do not rely solely on the primary colors of red, blue, and yellow in their creations. They blend them, varying the originals, making an endless array of hues. Moralists and sociologists, however, may not yet have reached this same level of pragmatic sophistication because that which is "right" and "wrong," "normal" and "abnormal," "approved" and "disapproved," conformity" and "deviance," "good guys" and bad guys," "criminals" and "non-criminals," and "legal" and "illegal" are ideologically charged ideas sitting at opposite ends of scales of propriety as ideal types. Actual illustrations of them exist somewhere between the opposites, as can be shown visually

Conformity→Variance←Deviance

The term *social variance* is introduced here as that which exists somewhere between the polarized ideas of conformity and deviance. This new term was created to reflect a wide range of illustrative legal-but-not totally acceptable, illegal-but-not-totally-unacceptable, once stigmatized-but-now-defined down, as well as the quirky/ odd/idiosyncratic/unusual/strange behaviors which exist in a community. There are often lingering questions of doubt, for example, when others tell us that they are ex-convicts, *recovering* alcoholics/addicts, *former* mental patients, *seeing* a therapist, *between jobs* right now, or *work-release* convicts like many of my fellow workers; and Chamblis (1973) wonders how the community's people would really view the Saints if their actual delinquency was known, just as he wonders whether or not the Roughnecks could have actually been assigned grades higher than "Cs?"

Much of instructional sociology is dedicated to "buzz word" approaches, encumbered by ideal types and dualistic reasoning, and bound to shopworn illustrations for the phenomena we study. Instead, we need to provide students and ourselves with opportunities and accreditation to play with new approaches, thinking "outside the box," relying on non-traditional sources of inspiration and sponsorship of new research, and there is a sociological precedent for such an approach. It was Ogburn (1930) who said that we should sometimes leave the laboratory, refresh ourselves, and return to work renewed. It can be tempting to look at the word with myopic vision reality as seen through sociology rather than reality through the eyes of others. Those "others" such as novelists, have made their own observations which are often molded into their stories. Even though such thoughts are not framed in sociological paradigms, and even though they are presented to a reading public in recreational formats, they should not be denied by sociologists; instead, those ideas can be embraced by us as points of departure for research, and this type of foundation has already been used.

O'Sullivan (2002) discussed his

paradigm shift to an appreciation for the conflict approach as he reflected upon his occupational move into a private factory environment. In partial support of his epiphany he cited numerous bodies of recreational literature that depicted the presence of dualistic class structures in diverse places and times, even though the criteria for membership in the upper- and lower-classes varied considerably. O'Sullivan neither validated nor vilified the oppositional classes he encountered in his reading, nor did he attempt to deconstruct or subvert them by questioning their moral hierarchies. Instead, he used them to better understand the types of arguments that conflict theorists use in their dialogues about social disharmony. Similarly, this study makes no efforts to support or deny the foundations for social norms, the inherent tension between conformity and deviance, or the justification for the labels of conformist or deviant. They are beyond the scope of this piece as it is based on public sentiment expressed in literature, which can give us the opportunity to remove ourselves from Ogburn's "laboratories," to venture into new areas of exploration and explanation, making sociology a more comprehensive, interesting, accurate, up-to-date, and grounded activity.

If we never extended ourselves beyond ideal types, never used our experiences as the bases for research, and relied only on existing data, replications, and previous questions and explanations then our discipline would never have grown; and if we do not delve into new realms of curiosity it will grow no further. Our discipline re-quires dynamic and venturesome explorations, not static convenience. As Konty (2006) argues, we have arrived at a threshold in the history of conformity-deviance studies. We must stay true to such notable scholars as Becker (1963) and Goffman (1963), but we must also strike out in new directions of study. We can do all of this by looking critically at our terminologies, re-evaluating how we envision the subject matter, looking at our labeling process, and by creating new methods of study which would include alternative foundations for research.

Now that the term and the bases for social variance have been introduced and visually signified, there is need to explain the expression's origin. There are three.

EXPLAINING THE ORIGINS OF SOCIAL VARIANCE

Several tasks need to be completed in order to successfully explain the origins and utility of the new term. First, there is a need to talk about the fact that the multiplicity of norms in our society makes it almost impossible to have moral constancy upon which any interpretations of conformity and deviance are based. Second, there is a need to review strengths and weaknesses about dualistic reasoning in order to show how its use can hamper thinking about anything between conformity and deviance. Third, and last, labeling theory, in the broadest sense, will be discussed to show how deviant behavior labels, or stigmas, have fostered traditional thinking; and to show how deviancy has been defined down, and up, at least in terms of

labeling while the original forces which created the labels remain with us.

Social Variance Founded in Social Norms

Introductory textbooks in sociology have a chapter dedicated to the subject of social deviance which usually defines it as behavior patterns which violate social norms. Those same textbooks also contain a chapter which is concerned with the subject matter of culture which identifies prevalent types of norms in a people's lifestyle, and that list of norms is usually comprised of folkways and mores, but may also include laws and social institutions. Socialization into a culture involves the internalization of those social norms in order to do that which is desired, necessary, and normal. Conformity is expected and deviance is not, but may be normal, so deviance receives the disproportional amount of social attention and ethical condemnation. Those norms need to be reviewed in order to see how both conformity and deviance may be more fleeting than rock-solid.

Folkways, mores, and laws exist for different reasons, have different constructions and are enforced differently. Folkways refer to behaviors which are asked to be followed for reasons of courtesy and respect, and if they are violated the person may be considered to be rude and impolite, but not likely to be formally and publicly sanctioned. Mores are more important expectations because they have societal survival built into them, as in social institutions; but they also exist to protect individual rights, dignity, and property. Laws are codified norms, put into statute forms with formal negative social sanctions applied which are intended to serve as specific punishments for offenders and as warnings to would-be offenders. However, our legal system is complicated and diversified consisting of civil and criminal statutes, state and federal jurisdictions, canonical laws and the military's Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), all having unique responses. For example, the violation of certain canonical laws and UCMJ codes are handled internally, without civilian responses, but when criminal codes are violated by church members or when military personnel violate community standards, civil proceedings may result.

Norms, especially laws, are complex things, requiring collective agreements based on shared ethics or morals, constructed consistency, applications, enforcement, interpretation, adjudication, and consequences. At the very least they require several occupational statuses and roles as Becker (1963), Weber (1967), Reid (1991), and O'Sullivan (1994, 2006) have shown, whose occupants are specifically authorized to create, enforce, and interpret rules of conduct as they encounter formal disputes. There are others, outside officialdom, who also have vested interests in the moral-legal well-being of a community and may lack legal franchise, but they can be more influential than powerful.

Symbolic crusaders (Becker 1963; Weitzer 2006) are mobilized against something broadly-defined as sinful or harmful, as shown in the temperance movement (Gusfield 1963) or in the movement against prostitution (Weitzer 2006). The crusaders often have a

religious foundation to their beliefs and activities, a moral righteousness, but lack the formal ability to impose their wills and beliefs upon others. To repair that deficiency they may align themselves with those who do, forming alliances against something which becomes morally and legally harmful, now enforceable.

So when textbooks state that deviance is defined as rule-breaking behavior, there is a gross over-simplification of complex issues which should spawn many questions that are related to the concerns of Chambliss and Mankoff (1976) when they asked "Whose Law, What Order?" An additional list of questions includes: What types of norms? What are the moralities behind those norms? Who made the norms? Who is evaluating the behavior? Who is enforcing the norms? Are conformists obliged or merely invited to follow the rules? Does the person who is evaluating, or attempting to enforce conduct norms have the authority to do so? When we talk about deviance, are we talking about all wrongful behavior or that which seems to violate those mores and laws which reinforce each other? What are the rewards for conformity, or are they just the absence of punishments? Are these questions meaningful to rule-breakers, or only to us as we ponder them?

Conformity and deviance are not defined simply, and the problem of assignment becomes even more complex when we discuss the presence of groups, subcultures, and/or counter-cultures. Conformity to one set of norms may actually violate another, and two sets of examples illustrate this

point. Heyl (1979), Reiss (1987) and Calhoun (1992) all studied the subcultural world of prostitution which exists as a criminal offense in most locales. These three writers, however, have shown that there are strict guidelines to be followed by participants. In none of their works was it shown that the sale of sex was a matter of personal promiscuity, but rather it represented a job or a matter of economic need. Similarly, F.D. O'Sullivan (1928:271-274) and Stark (1987) agreed that certain elements of disorganized urban zones tended to be breeding grounds for juvenile delinquency. For example, in subterranean subcultures the incarceration of youths for their offenses is more common than not, and tends to enhance further deviant behavior due to labeling and learning effects (Tannenbaum 1939; F.D. O'Sullivan 1928). In such ecologies as these, deviant behavior may be more a matter of predictable normalcy than an abnormality, as such sociologists as Durkheim (1938), Moynihan (1993), and Hendershott (2002) as well as novelists Burke, Patterson, and Hiaasen would likely agree. The questions "What is normal?" and "What is abnormal?" can no longer be answered easily.

In an important discussion about rural-urban studies, Dewey (1960) stated that the referent points on a continuum need to be clearly articulated to make analyses viable; if those points are phrased in ambiguity then there may be need for abandonment of study or re-clarification of terminology. That which was true then applies to discussions about a conformity-deviance scale as well. If the definitions for conformity and deviance do

not clearly identify which types of norms elicit conformity or deviance, then we need to rework our explanations. Currently, their definitional bases are squishy, or tenuous, at best so we need to revise them and consider the utility of an in-between concept such as social variance, and continue to explore its second explanation of origin.

Social Variance Founded in Dualistic Reasoning

The history of sociology is full of oppositional categorizations including types of groups, relationships between people, social organization, societal systems, and other social forms which are too numerous to discuss and unnecessary here. There are also several substantive discussions in sociology which pertain directly to dualistic reasoning about conformity and deviance. We have, for example, dialogues about the normal and the pathological from Durkeim (1938). Lemert (1951) taught us about primary deviance and secondary deviance; Chambliss (1973) introduced us to the Saints and the Roughnecks; and from Becker (1963), we have a two-dimensional look at conduct and social reaction to it. He talks to us about rule-abiding and rule-breaking behaviors, and then about acts that are not perceived as being deviant and those which are. Furthering previous discussions about types of norms there are two which deserve special attention, and they are *prescriptive* norms and *proscriptive* norms.

Prescriptive norms remind us of the need to engage in certain forms of behavior as *thou shalt* types of statements. Proscriptive norms are prohibitive *thou shalt not* dictates. If we follow these commands by doing what we are supposed to do, or by avoiding actions which are forbidden, we are, at least at face value, conforming. If, however, we fail to do as we are told, or if we engage in taboo acts, we are engaging in some form of social deviance if the norms and the acts are strictly defined as being opposites.

With only a few notable exceptions such as the terms suburban, urban, and exurban discussed in relation to a rural-urban division, there are no interstitial *typologies* between oppositional categories as gray is a blend of black and white. To suggest that only extremes exist is to commit a dualistic fallacy of reasoning under the presumption that extreme ends are perfectly constructed, always applicable, and lacking ambiguity. Such issues as *hot* or *cold* or *fast* and *slow* can have quantified variances, but such concerns as prescriptive and proscriptive norms, conformity and deviance, and conformists and deviants are so loaded with moral and political positioning that absolutist interpretations are problematic, further contributing to a fallacy of reasoning.

This analytic error has special relevance when used in discussions about criminal or delinquent acts, those labeled as criminal or delinquent, and three case studies centering on the reactions of various moral entrepreneurs are used in illustration. Psychologist Mike Roberts, who worked with the San Jose, CA Police Department, reported that police officers divided the world into two distinct categories of people, "assholes and cops" (Meredith

1984:22). Chambliss (1972) reported the police and the Roughnecks were always in a state of conflict, but the police often viewed the Saints' acts of delinquency as just "sowing wild oats."

There is yet a third case study illustrating the necessity for a middle-ground social variance, and that involved high-profile "celebrity justice" trials which took place in two of California's court systems. The athlete-actor O.J. Simpson was accused of murdering his ex-wife and an acquaintance of hers. The American public, a labeling body, was split in its opinions about Simpson's criminal status, but the public was not his criminal court jury which officially determined that Simpson needed to be acquitted on both charges, and he was. Thinking dualistically, he was not a criminal and wrongfully accused. Later, in civil proceedings against him that used different criteria for jury decisions, Simpson was found to be responsible for the two deaths and was held accountable to the victims' surviving families.

Two separate and legitimate court systems placed Simpson at opposite ends of a spectrum simultaneously. Unless a person is straddling a state line border, with one foot on each state, it is fairly impossible to be in two places at once. Once again, Dewey is used to assess the possibility of overlapping traits.

Dewey (1960:65) stated: "[t]here is no such thing as urban culture or rural culture but only various culture contents somewhere on the rural-urban continuum." When we look at the multitude of conduct norms and their applications we can paraphrase Dewey

and conclude that there are no such things as absolute versions of conformity and deviance, but only conducts which exist somewhere on various conformity-deviance continuua that elicit diverse reactions from observers.

Social variance is not an attempt to undermine or trivialize our understandings of norms and the social opposites of conformity and deviance. Instead, it enhances them by adding another element and reaction to them. Unfortunately, the actual expression social variance and the subsequent term social *variant* contain some ambiguity, also due to fluidity of any existing definitions from which they can be derived. Nonetheless, the new term gives us another opportunity to think critically about the over-simplified way we have traditionally treated the subjects of conformity and deviance. Novelists recognize this deficiency so it is time for us to do the same.

The first section of explanation for the use of the term *social variance* stated that the presence of so many types of norms makes it difficult to have universal visions of conformity and deviance. The second section, illustrated with the O.J. Simpson case, affirmed that dualistic thinking may be out-of-place in our understandings of conformity and deviance. It is now time to take a look at the labeling approach in sociology to see why the expression was created.

Social Variance Founded in Social Labeling

So, where are all the old "bad guys," (Buffett 2004), "…drug pushers… crackheads… prossies, [and] gangbangers" (Patterson 1996), the

"genetically deficient numskull" (Hiaasen 2006), and "Nuts, Sluts, and Perverts" (Lazlos 1985)? They are still here, but they are now identified and perceived differently.

Social labels, such as stigmas for deviant behavior and halos for conforming behavior are convenient devices for us. They are founded in personal or collective moralities, help us to define who we are and what we believe, and they help us to distinguish between insiders and outsiders so we can separate ourselves from those who do not act or believe as we do. People with authority use labels, people with influence use them, and people who have no recognized authority or influence use them so frequently and casually that it is difficult to determine whether or not the labels are justified; and that is a significant problem when discussing the subjects of conformity and deviance.

Whether or not we accept Moynihan's 1973 thesis that we are defining deviancy *down*, Karmen's 1994 criticism of Moynihan's premise, including the idea that we are defining deviance *up* (Adler and Adler 2008; Karmen 1994), is a personal choice. The fact remains though that many old orientations toward deviance and stigmatization, as well as toward conformity and the halo effect, are changing. We are no longer limited to old visions as we have been, and there are several possible causes for these paradigm shifts in the American public.

Once-stigmatized groups have become more publicly open in displays of their lifestyles, perhaps lobbying for new laws protecting them against discrimination. Some provide assistance for participants, such as the old COYOTE organization of prostitutes has done for people in the sex-for-sale industries. Those same groups also rally to the support of other stigmatized groups to increase public awareness with facts rather than impresssions.

Popular culture media fare show that people who were once stigmatized are now normalized and humanized– shown to be just like the rest of us. In some cases, the deviant behaviors are so commonplace that public officials and police do not have resources, time or energy to curb them, consigning them a tacit legitimacy. While Hendershott (2002) would argue making the abnormal normal is due to moral decay, the effect of such changes is that the behaviors and the people who engage in them are no longer considered so deviant, better understood, and thereby needing a new place on the old conformity-deviance scale. The behaviors are not gone, but our reactions to them have been modified, perhaps to a variant status.

Over the past several decades, there has been a specifically identifiable social movement which aided in the de-stigmatization process, removing responsibility from the actor, and that explanation is the medicalization of deviance (Davis 2006; Hafferty 2006). This controversial approach is based on the idea that medical professionals and medical scientists are strategically and advantageously placed to use their expertise in diagnosis and treatment of some forms of deviance, treating them as medical rather than social issues. For example, Davis (2006:59) cites findings indicating that such concerns as lunacy, de-

generacy, sin, and poverty have been defined as illnesses in need of appropriate social policies, programs, and monies, to "treat" them, as we take doses of medicine for certain types of illnesses. In the same manner, homosexuality and alcoholism are now identified as having biological bases so individuals may no longer be accused of choice/habit based behavior or differential socialization. Novelist Sarah Strohmeyer addresses our obsession with "treatment" drugs in one of her romantic comedy books about Bubbles Yablonsky –hairdresser and reporter.

> I considered all the possibilities that could be damning: drugs to treat depression, drugs to reduce the severity of mental illnesses like schizophrenia and frightening diseases such as cancer. There were drugs to treat impotence, embarrassing foot odor, uncontrollable flatulence, kleptomania, rampant swearing, homicidal and suicidal tendencies, menopausal hot flashes and ravenous food cravings (Strohmeyer 2006:280).

Extending this thought, can we treat such norm violations as failure to get an education, failure to vote, failure to shake hands with glove removed, failure to help senior citizens cross streets safely, failure to say "pardon me" when we sneeze in crowds, or, as happened to me in the Army, failure to remove a cigarette from my mouth as I saluted an officer, as maladies which can be treated with "wonder drugs?"

There are serious issues with medicalization which reflect upon discussions presented earlier in this article. The first concerns the problem of whether or not medical practitioners or medical scientists have the right, expertise, or authority to serve as social engineers who can define what society needs, which actions are "good" or "bad" and how "bad" acts or "bad" people can be treated or cured? Since studies in social deviance are also studies in social power, we must recall the two questions of Chambliss and Mankoff (1976), and their subsequent derivatives. The answers may be elusive and not held by all.

The next concern revolves around the perception that something was missing from the works of Davis and of Hafferty, and that *something* is a specific and a general theoretical deficiency. If deviance can be defined in medicalized and directional terms, then conformity should be explained similarly, but is not. Medicalization cannot explain conformity, nor can this approach explain how a person's "backstage" behavior is deviant while public demeanor seems in accord with a group's wishes. Can "bad genes" or the absence of a "scruples gene" explain corporate executives' uses of slick accounting methods to steal megabucks from unsuspecting stockholders and company employees?

Fortunately we have a long explanatory history which has tackled such critical issues as the origins and amplification of conduct norms (Buckley 1967; Quinney 1970); the possible results of labeling (Becker 1963; Goffman 1963; Lemert 1951; Tannenbaum 1938); as well as the role of differential opportunity and its directional influ-

ence (Cloward and Ohlin 1960). Different types of personal epiphanies are documented by Denzin (1989) and by O'Sullivan (1999), and by combining them with symbolic renunciations (Lambert and Lambert 1964), we can envision how volitional changes in peoples' life can occur such as transitions from lifestyles of alcohol abuse or sinfulness to ones of sobriety or salvation (Denzin 1986, 1987; O'Sullivan 1999). We can also rely on discussions of a thrill-seeking element in personality theory (Farley 1986); the impact of such values as attachment, commitment, involvement, and beliefs in a conformity-deviance configuration (Hirschi 1969) and the possibility of lifestyle drift (Matza 1964). The paradigm of adaptation to social goals and their means of achievement (Merton 1967) is a sociological staple, just as analyses of differential association and role learning (Sutherland and Cressey 1978) are required reading for us. Finally we have the presence of subterranean values (Matza and Sykes 1961) which might explain corporate leaders' fiduciary greed and criminal activity. Collectively, these other explanations attend to many of the issues about conformity and deviance which biomedical accounts cannot accomplish alone.

There is no specific theory that can explain how socially-variant acts occur nor is there any specific type of norm which allows us to say which acts are indicative of social variance. Instead, social variance represents a reaction to, and a refinement upon, traditional ways of looking at social norms, oppositional ways of thinking, and social labeling as novelists have already shown is possible.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In a perfect world, all of our norms are clearly defined, applied, and have equal consequences, but such is not the case as novelists clearly show to readerships wider than sociology's audiences. Novelists are not required to collect data as they begin their stories, but they may use them, and public perceptions, as they depict discrepancies between the ideal and the real.

Conformity and deviance are created in the very process of norm construction which dictate what we should and should not do. If we adhere to norms of conformity, we are called conformists, and if we violate them, we are called deviants or worse. There are so many formal and casual norms covering so many areas of jurisdiction that is impossible to identify them all, and more are constructed every day in various legislatures. Further, not all of them are of equal consequence, so there will be differential responses to them, as is the case of sanctions applied to misdemeanor criminal offenses compared to those for felony criminal offenses. All of this suggests that our traditional orientations to conformity and deviance are more flexible than customary, so there is need to reassess how we view the traditional conformity-deviance continuum because old ideas may no longer be applicable. Social variance is not intended to replace our understandings about conformity and deviance. Instead, it adds to them.

Sociologists Adler and Adler, Karmen, Konty, Moynihan, and Lazlos tell us that the discipline and the subject matter of sociology are continually changing new paradigms are created, new areas of interest are emerging, and the roles of sociologist-as-academician, sociologist-as participant, sociologist-as-practitioner, and sociologist-as-reporter are changing regularly. When we write that former "deviants" are being redefined and studied anew, and when we create new ways to assess social conformity and deviance, we should consider ourselves as being a part of the change process and talk to our audiences about information which peripheral activists already know and share with their followers.

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Chuck Hagel: Moving Forward
By Charlyne Berens
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In late August 2004 the Republicans were celebrating the nomination of incumbent George W. Bush for another term as president of the United States. In the midst of the festivities, Chuck Hagel, a senator from Nebraska, was telling reporters that the Republican Party had come loose of its moorings. This was a bold position for someone identified by the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, and Boston Globe as a prospective 2008 presidential candidate, but it was not surprising coming from a Republican senator who had also recently remarked that the occupation of Iraq was poorly planned and that it had encouraged the spread of terror cells throughout the world. Who is Chuck Hagel, what is his story, and is he a genuine player on the national political stage? Charlyne Berens sets out to answer these questions in her close and careful look at one of the most interesting and independent figures on the current American political scene.

Having survived a tour of duty in Vietnam and having made a fortune as a pioneer in the cellular phone industry, Chuck Hagel seemingly came out of nowhere to beat a popular sitting governor in a race for the U.S. Senate in 1996. Berens charts Hagel s quick rise to national recognition and influence and examines the background that has led Hagel to an outspoken internationalism that often puts him at odds with his own party and president. This complex, plain-spoken Nebraskan may be on his way to the White House. Charlyne Berens explains why and how.

CHUCK HAGEL
Moving Forward
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