**SOC 3290 Deviance**

 **Overheads Lecture 8: The Chicago School:**

\* The “Chicago school” produced 2 major perspectives on deviance:

 (1) Social disorganization (1920's & 30's);

 (2) Differential association (1930's & 40's)

 **(1) The Social Disorganization Perspective:**

\* General idea: deviance = result of rapid social change/disorganization

 **The Dynamics of Disorganization: Thomas and Znaniecki:**

\* Thomas and Znaniecki: social disorganization = “a decrease in influence of existing rules on individual members of group”

\* The Polish Peasant: research on immigrants found high rates of deviance due to rapid social change/ increase in normlessness

  **The Ecology of Disorganization: Park and Burgess:**

\* Introduced ecological model:

 - interdependence of organisms

 - symbiosis

 - life of one affects all

 - microcosm/macrocosm organic metaphor for society

\* Fourfold process of disorganization/reorganization:

 - invasion of symbiotic order by competing group

 - conflict for dominance (deviance increases)

 - accommodation of weaker to stronger

 - assimilation of new order of symbiosis

\* Geographic analysis: concentric zones in urban areas:

 - central business district (dynamic force/engine of change)

 - transition zone (most disorganized/deviant)

 - working class neighborhoods

 - old city neighborhoods

 - commuter zone (least disorganized/deviant)

\* Research: Shaw & MacKay: delinquency highest in transition zone

 **Identifying Disorganizational Deviance**:

\* The Chicago School combined two research traditions:

 (1) A focus on objective measurement of external factors and

 conditions (e.g. statistical maps)

 (2) An emphasis on the subjective side of social life (e.g. meaning)

\* This combination:

 -is a strength of their approach (broad and deep)

 -dissolved division over appropriate methodology

 -produced productive research

 **Social Control of Disorganizational Deviance:**

\* Despite distancing themselves from advocating specific strategies of social control, one emerged nonetheless

\* New focus on treating society not individuals (causes, not symptoms)

\* Chicago Area Project: an attempt to restore normative stability to disorganized communities by:

 (1) coordinating community resources of fragmented/competing

 groups

 (2) sponsoring youth/activity programs

\* Assessment:

 - CAP itself never systematically evaluated

 - Similar projects succeeded in organizing close community ties

 and activities, but failed to reduce delinquency

 - Impact of socially structured inequality?

 - Still a welcome first step away from earlier individualistic crime

 control models

 **Assessment of the Social Disorganization Perspective:**

\* Positive points:

 -avoids individualistic biases/limitations of earlier views

 -enables us to see deviants as people like ourselves

\* Weaknesses:

 (1) Problems in operationalization

 - failure to justify indicators (e.g. high % of working women) - indicators often confuse cause/effect in same thing

(2) Race, class and gender biases confusing different types of

 organization as disorganization (e.g. black, female headed

 families)

(3) Failure to address crimes by well-organized, “respectable” individuals (e.g. white collar crime).

(4) Failure to consider causal influences of structured differences

 in power and social class (alternative explanations).

 **(2) The Differential Association Perspective:**

\* The learning perspective argues that deviance a form of learned behavior in interaction with others

 **Edwin Sutherland and Differential Association:**

\* Two core assumptions:

(1) Deviance occurs when people define situation as appropriate for violating norms/laws;

(2) Such definitions are acquired through one’s past history of experience, particularly one’s associations with others

\* Sutherland asserts that learning deviance involves learning to:

 (1) Define certain situations as appropriate occasions for deviance;

 (2) Master the techniques of successful deviant activity;

 (3) Acquire motives, drives, attitudes and rationalizations

 justifying violations of norms/laws

\* All of these are learned in communicative interaction with others in intimate personal groups

\* Critical point: when one acquires an excess of definitions favorable to deviance over definitions unfavorable to deviance (i.e. deviance becomes probable)

\* Probability further depends on frequency, duration, priority and intensity of such associations

  **The Legacy of Differential Association:**

\* Normalizing our understanding of deviance

\* Deviance as learned is a widely accepted idea

\* Tests of theory:

(1) James Short (1957): linked exposure to delinquents & delinquent behavior;

 (2) Reiss and Rhodes (1964): close friendships & delinquency

\* Criticisms of theory:

 - too vague to be adequately tested;

 - difficulty operationalizing concepts

 - inapplicable to self-initiated deviance

 - ignores psychological/physiological/economic factors

 - overly deterministic/ignores choice

 - no need for face to face contact

  **Modifying the Image of Differential Association:**

\* Sutherland’s theory has been modified/extended in several ways:

(1) Daniel Glaser’s theory of differential identification (e.g. focus

 on media vs. firsthand contact in deviant learning);

(2) Sykes & Matza: focus on learned rationalizations (“techniques of neutralization”) avoids overly deterministic imagery

(3) Jack Douglas: strategies of emotional self-deception/self-seduction

(4) Burgess & Akers: Differential reinforcement of behavior

 **Social Control of Learned Deviance:**

\* Deviance may be controlled by either *preventative learning* or  *corrective learning*

\* Preventative learning (e.g. reducing TV violence)

\* Corrective Learning:

(1) Providing positive/anti-deviant role models (e.g. Big Brothers). (2) Surrounding deviant with others defining deviance in an

 unfavorable way (e.g. AA).

 (3) Behavior modification strategies (manipulating rewards and

 punishments). Two types:

 (i) Token economies (reward and punishment “points

 system” for privileges in institutions)

(ii) Aversive conditioning (associating deviant stimuli with negative consequences such as shocks/sickness)

  **Assessment of the Learning Perspective:**

\* Positives:

 (1) Normalizes our image of deviance (humanistic appeal)

 (2) Widespread acceptance (less so for Burgess and Akers)

\* Negatives:

 (1) Tendency to be *overly deterministic* (“soft determinism”

 preferable where deviance partly chosen/partly determined);

(2) Ignoring/underplaying the role of unconscious repressions in motivating deviant behavior;

 (3) Inattentive to gendered/multi-cultural models of learning;

 (4) No assessment of why certain behaviors seen as deviant/ little

 emphasis on conflicting social interests and power