

Instructor's Manual and Ancillary Materials

J. William Spencer's

Contexts of Deviance: Statuses, Institutions, and Interactions

Manual Compiled by

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NOTES TO THE INSTRUCTOR

A SHORT REVIEW

In reading *Contexts of Deviance* for the first time, it becomes quite apparent that this book was written with today's college student in mind. The author's writing style is conversational and focuses on quality rather than quantity—*Contexts* selects the most energizing, important, and substantive portions of readings so that the reader (perhaps engaging academic material for the first time) does not feel overwhelmed by entire (and as we know may be at times quite dry) academic journal articles. Moreover, the topics and themes woven throughout the book are studies college-age readers can easily relate to, such as music piracy, popular television shows, school shootings, college fraternities, and so on. The author chose many well-known and real-life examples that capture the attention of the reader and simultaneously provide valuable academic information. Most importantly, *Contexts of Deviance* provides just that—Spencer introduces each Part with a contextualizing summary, provides the same for each subpart, and then settles each topic or theme within sociological contexts—perspective frameworks for examining deviance and control.

The undercurrent for the text is a refreshing theoretical framework that loosens hard-and-fast divisions between positivism and constructionism, presenting positivist, subjectivist, and blended epistemological perspectives from section to section. This is important, for it recognizes the overlapping and less-at-odds field of deviant behavior than in decades past. Many textbooks talk about types of deviance, but the rigor of the field is lessened in an attempt to target undergraduates, an unfortunate reality for those who will be asked to read large quantities of academic material if they should go on to graduate school. Spencer strikes the right balance, not only by challenging undergraduate readers successfully but also by retaining the rigor so that the text could be used for graduate studies as well. *Contexts of Deviance* is, certainly, “just another deviance reader”—Thio, Adler and Adler, and others use similar samplers of deviant behaviors and their own arrangement of theoretical frameworks to analyze specific studies and phenomenon. The difference Spencer offers is one of style and structure, content and form, all the while expanding the sociological imagination by showing how the academic world relates to the real world.

RATLIFF SYLLABUS TEMPLATE & EXAMPLE COURSE SCHEDULE

This template does not include institutionally variable policies and instructor-to-instructor variable assignments. It does, however, give a general framing, overview, and one of many potential iterations of a course schedule using the Spencer text materials and some of the suggested/provided additional readings, materials, and so forth. One potential and useful teaching tool I have employed for years in teaching my deviance course is providing a “Theme Ballot” where I allow the class to vote—literally, where students mark certain topics under major headings, and I tally them—on specific themes/topics to which I match readings from the book, bring in additional readings, videos, and the like. Thus, I first hand out a “skeleton” syllabus, which includes only readings through week two, then provide a revised syllabus (noted in the example below) with the themes students voted on. The following is a hypothetical syllabus iteration I foresee resulting from the Spencer text.

SOCIAL DEVIANCE
TERM YEAR, COURSE NUMBER
Room, Time
INSTRUCTOR NAME
Office:
Phone:
E-mail:
Office hours:

The best way to contact me is via [?]. Please include your class and question in the subject line of any e-mails. For example: “Subject: Deviance (DAY OF WEEK CLASS MEETS): Help studying for exam.” This will increase my response time.

Required texts:

J. William Spencer. 2015. *Contexts of Deviance: Statuses, Institutions, and Interactions*. Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199973576.

Specific requirements: Access to [course web platform] is necessary to complete the requirements for this course. Course updates and materials may be provided online. Students should also have computers with Microsoft Word and Adobe Acrobat Reader. Let me know if you have any difficulties with these requirements.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is designed to investigate behaviors, individuals, and groups considered deviant in human societies. We will critically engage the process of constructing deviant definitions and the role of power in defining deviance. Topics may include, but not limited to, serious crimes by

individuals and organizations, Internet deviance, diverse lifestyles, collective behaviors, violence, inequalities in deviance, suicide, drugs, and mental illness.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Describe the fundamental forms of deviance in contemporary society and how power plays a role in socially constructing the “deviant.”
2. Compare and contrast sociological approaches to deviance.
3. Identify and explain how certain contexts of deviance influence deviant definitions, deviant action, and the consequences of dealing with so-called deviants.
4. Broaden student perspectives on law and order, social control, and deviant behavior.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Any readings NOT in the Spencer text will be available on [your web platform]. Readings and assignments should be read **for the day** they are shown. For example, you will be responsible for having read Heckert & Heckert before class on January 24. The Spencer reader will be indicated with a (S) in the reading column; readings made available by other means are indicated with an (X); when you have no readings due for a particular day, you will see two dashes (--). NOTE: Students are **required to read all introductory material** provided by Spencer that introduces each part and subsection.

Day/Date	Theme/Topic/Question(s)	Readings	Assignments & Activities
Tue, Jan 17	Introductions to the class and classmates	--	Explain theme voting ballots; deviant ice breakers
Thurs, Jan 19	What is deviant behavior, and how do we study it?	Introduction (S)	Lecture
Tue, Jan 24	Who defines deviance? Article: “A new typology of deviance.”	Heckert & Heckert (2002) (X)	Theme voting due
Thurs, Jan 26	Planning session: Readings for next week assigned	--	Discuss papers and theme voting
Tue, Jan 31	Macro theory	Durkheim (S), Jolin (S)	Lecture; revised syllabus posted
Thurs, Feb 2	Meso theory	Best & Luckenbill(S), White & Terry (S)	Lecture
Tue, Feb 7	Social-psychological theory	Hirschi (S), Lemert (S)	Lecture

Thurs, Feb 9	Language and social encounters	Goffman (S), Scott & Lyman (S)	Lecture
Tue, Feb 14	Social Control: <i>The Fight Against the Total Surveillance State In Our Schools</i> (YouTube clip)	Marx (S), Weiss (S)	Interactive lecture & video
Thurs, Feb 16	<i>Griner: No Talking Sexuality at Baylor; Sexy Sports: The Naked Truth About</i> (YouTube clips)	Blinde & Taub (S)	Watch video; top-of-mind prompt response
Tue, Feb 21	Statuses & identities (gender): <i>Homophobia, violence, and hate</i>	Kimmel & Mahler (S), Alden & Parker (X)	Lecture & discussion
Thurs, Feb 23	Statuses & identities (sexual orientation): <i>1950s Anti-Homosexual PSA</i>	Conrad & Angell (S)	Watch video; top-of-mind prompt response
Tue, Feb 28	Statuses & identities (race & ethnicity)	Blazak (S), Perry (S)	Lecture
Thurs, Mar 1	Race & ethnicity: Documentary: <i>Skinhead USA</i>	--	Watch video; top-of-mind prompt response
Mar 5–9	SPRING BREAK	NO CLASS	
Tue, Mar 13	MIDTERM EXAM	Taken in class	--
Thurs, Mar 15	Family	Button & Gealt (S)	Lecture
Tue, Mar 20	Film about sibling/family violence: <i>Child of Rage</i>	--	Watch video; top-of-mind prompt response
Thurs, Mar 22	Medicine	Conrad & Schneider (S)	Lecture
Tue, Mar 27	Video and reading: <i>On Being Sane in Insane Places</i>	Rosenhan (X)	Watch video; top-of-mind prompt response
Thurs, Mar 29	Media: Documentary: <i>Manufacturing Consent: The Political Consent of Mass Media</i>	--	Watch video; top-of-mind prompt response

Tue, Apr 3	Media and Education Meet: Video file: <i>Massacre at Virginia Tech</i>	Burns & Crawford (S)	--
Thurs, Apr 5	Mass Media and Technology	Ingram & Hinduja (S), Gans-Boriskin & Wardle (S)	--
Tue, Apr 10	Subcultures	Atherton (S), Kidd (S)	Lecture
Thurs, Apr 12	<i>You Can Find Me at the Club/Church</i>	Kelly (S), Till (X)	Lecture
Tue, Apr 17	Documentary about rave subculture: <i>Synergy—Visions of Vibe:</i>	--	Watch video; top-of-mind prompt response
Thurs, Apr 19	Social Movements	Gillham & Noakes (S)	Lecture
Tue, Apr 24	Documentary by Media Activists depicting 1999 “Battle in Seattle.” <i>This Is What Democracy Looks Like</i>	--	Watch video; top-of-mind prompt response
Thurs, Apr 26	Wrap up	--	--
DAY/TIME	FINAL EXAM PERIOD	--	--

INTRODUCTION

1. READING/LECTURE NOTES
2. STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES
3. KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS
4. LECTURE IDEAS & CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES
5. RECOMMENDED RESOURCES
6. MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS
7. ESSAY/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. READING/LECTURE NOTES

The Social Contexts of Deviance and Social Control

- When sociologists study deviance they quite often study it in relation to other topics; that is, they study deviance in social contexts.
 - Think of “contexts” as a perspective or framework for the ways we think about deviance and control.
 - When we study deviance in a specific context, we use what we know about the context to examine some aspect of that phenomenon.

Deviance and Social Control Are Two Complex and Multidimensional Concepts

1. Two dimensions of deviance

- a. *Objective phenomenon*—Deviance is a behavior that violates socially accepted guidelines or expectations.
 - Examples: robbing a bank; standing very close (a few inches from another person’s face) when talking.
 - Not all deviance is illegal; much deviance just violates norms, expectations, or assumptions.
- b. *Subjective phenomenon*—deviance is a matter of social definitions; what counts as a violation of a norm may not be something we can assume.
 - Just because some action may be—objectively—a violation of a norm or an expectation doesn’t necessarily mean it will be defined as such in social context.
 - Example: binge drinking among college students.
 - Criminal problem—Address the problem using police and jails.
 - Addiction problem—use a more treatment-orientated approach.
 - Behavior is deviant—at least in part—because it is socially defined that way.

2. Social control

- **Social control** is everywhere and takes many forms—sometimes it is formalized, and other times it is much more informal. Sometimes it involves entire social systems and other times it involves the smallest and most mundane of social encounters.
- Social control includes laws and formal regulations as well as informal or unstated (but understood) expectations.
- James Chriss (2013) described social control as how conformity is induced in humans, including the people in your life—mothers, friends, schoolmates, wives, boyfriends, and so forth. These people and other social forces exert pressure on us to meet the expectations of those significant others.

How Sociologists Study These Phenomena

1. Epistemologies {theories of knowing or knowledge}

- a. An epistemology is a stance or perspective on the social world providing humans with a set of assumptions and focus, guiding how we might study and understand the social world. Epistemologies guide the way we approach the study of deviance: they provide grounding assumptions, a focus, and orient us to certain research questions.
- b. We can understand sociological epistemologies of deviance through the analogy of three types of baseball umpires—the umpires represent different kinds of sociologists who approach the study of deviance from different perspectives.
 - First umpire (positivism): “I call them the way they are.”
 - A ball is a ball and a strike is a strike—balls and strikes are objective or empirical phenomena.
 - Deviance → objective phenomenon.
 - Criteria is used to define what is a strike or ball—we only have to observe the pitch to make a determination.
 - Focus on behavior when studying deviance.
 - By focusing on deviant behavior as objectively real, positivists tend to make assumptions about the deviant status of their study (and, perhaps, the deviant person such a label is attached to).
 - They take for granted that the behavior they study is not normal or that it is dangerous, abnormal, pathological, or simply odd.
 - Positivists don’t ask why something is socially defined as deviant but want to know the how and why of the behavior itself
 - Examples: Why do people get tattoos? How do burglars go about deciding when and where to steal? What are the causes of mental disorders?
 - Second umpire (“blended” or integrated): “I call them the way I see them.”
 - Balls and strikes are objective or empirical phenomena, but how the pitch is called or defined may not necessarily align with the rules.
 - There is an objective reality to balls and strikes, but how pitches are defined during the course of the game is another matter.
 - It could be about perspective—the way the umpire observed the pitch; there is a “reality” to balls and strikes and there are the umpire’s calls.
 - Middle of the continuum of epistemological orientations.
 - The second sociological umpire is “blended” or “mixed” theoretically because both behaviors and definitions matter.

- Example: Local TV stations → carry more stories about street crime, especially violent street crime, than stories about crimes committed by corporations
 - This could make it seem like violent crime is the more common of the two.
- Question: Do media portrayals of crime match the reality of crime?
 - To find the answer we need to compare the amount of violent street crime (i.e., official statistics) to the percentage of violent crimes that comprise the total number of crime stories on the local news.
- Third umpire (subjectivism): “They’re nothing until I call them.”
 - There may be rules or guidelines that define balls and strikes, but they may not be terribly important for what happens in the course of a game; what counts during the game depends entirely on the umpire’s call—even if the pitch is really a ball, if the umpire calls it a strike then it is a strike.
 - Deviance is a matter of social definition.
 - It is a label or meaning that is applied to people and their behavior (and feelings, thoughts, or physical characteristics).
 - Subjectivists are interested in the kinds of social definitions attributed to a certain behavior at a particular time/place and how those definitions are applied to people, their behavior, and factors or conditions shaping those definitions (i.e., powerful people).
 - More interested in social definitions than they are interested in the behavior that is being defined.
 - Example: Views of homosexuality over the course of the 20th century.
 - Different social meaning defined by different groups in society (i.e., sin, lifestyle choice, genetic trait, crime, mental disorder, etc.).
 - Subjectivists → look at which meaning was dominant at a certain time and how social forces influenced that meaning.
 - NOT interested if homosexuality is sin or mental disorder; not interested in causes of homosexuality, but how it comes to be defined as deviant.

2. Methods {tools for analysis and discovery}

- a. *Methods* are types of data or information sociologists use to study the social world, tools used to collect those data, and techniques of analyzing those data.

- b. Data collection tools:
 - Surveys
 - Interviews and observations
 - Archives (e.g., official government statistics, historical or cultural records)
 - c. Once data are collected, data analysis is concerned with finding recurring patterns in those data.
 - In principle, data, data collection tools, and techniques of analysis can be mixed and matched to some extent, but, in practice, sociologists tend to use some tools and techniques in combination more than others.
 - d. Two broad methodological categories.
 - Quantitative methods: Reducing the social world to numbers and statistical relationships aimed at determining causal relationships.
 - This type of method is often used by positivists.
 - Questions asked:
 - How much deviance is there?
 - How does deviance change over time?
 - What causes deviance?
 - In answering these questions, we conceptualize the social world in terms of variables, and we look for statistical relationships (often called correlations) among these variables.
 - Sociologists who use quantitative methods use surveys and official statistics to collect large samples or numbers of cases.
 - Example: Teenagers with tattoos engage in more delinquency than their non-tattooed peers.
 - Does this mean that tattoos cause delinquency?
 - Not necessarily.
 - This only shows a statistical connection.
 - There could be another, mediating or moderating factor that leads teens to get tattoos and delinquency.
 - Qualitative methods: Rather than describing the world using numbers and statistical relationships or deciphering causality, these sociologists use words, text, and meaning to help us understand the social world.
 - There is an affinity between qualitative methods and subjective epistemology.
 - Looking at social processes related to deviance and trying to understand how meaning is produced and used by actors.
 - Many qualitative sociologists work in the “field”—they go out into the social world and conduct interviews and observations.
3. Levels of analysis
- a. Face-to-face interaction or “the encounter” (see Goffman 1961)

- Subjectivists might be interested in cultural definitions of mental illness.
 - Defining these behaviors and these definitions vary by culture and over time.
- IMPORTANT TO NOTE: The macro level of analysis does not tell us about individuals in groups studied; we must be wary of biases of aggregation.

Strengths and Limitations of Positivism and Subjectivism

1. Positivism

a. Strengths

- Can be used to identify causes and potential solutions to social problems.
- Methods used are powerful tools for exploring the “whys” of deviance and social control in the social world.

b. Limitations

- Correlation does NOT always equal causation.
- We don’t always have the data we need to identify which correlates are causes and which are not.
- We don’t always have the data to adequately identify the correlates themselves.

2. Subjectivism (see Berger and Luckmann 1966)

a. Strengths

- Draws attention to the social meanings or ideas associated with deviance and social control.
- Underlying assumptions: Humans are different from most other animals in at least one fundamental way—our behavior is based on the meanings we attribute to our world.
- Through focusing on social meanings it questions or perhaps challenges taken for granted understandings of people and their behavior.

b. Limitations

- Moral issues
 - Example: A subjectivist might study child abuse and in doing so problematize the prevailing cultural meanings of this behavior.
 - They could be accused of suggesting that child abuse is not inherently abhorrent and evil, but we only define it so.
- Method and focus issues
 - The methods used by subjectivists—as well as their focus on meanings—are designed to answer “what” and “how” questions: What the social meanings are, and how they are produced and used by social actors.

- These methods aren't terribly well suited for answering "why" (that is casual) questions.

2. STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Define the term "context" and its importance for studying deviance.
- List and define the two dimensions of deviance.
- List and define the epistemologies sociologists use to study deviance and social control.
- Define methods, and be able to list and differentiate types of methods.
- Define levels of analysis, and be able to list and differentiate levels of analysis.
- Describe the strengths and weaknesses of positivism and subjectivism.

3. KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Context: A perspective or framework for the ways we think about deviance and control.

Deviance: As an *objective phenomenon*, deviance is a behavior that violates socially accepted guidelines or expectations; as a *subjective phenomenon*, deviance is a matter of social definitions, so that what counts as a violation of a norm may not be something we can assume from one social context to another.

Social control: Includes laws and formal regulations as well as informal or unstated (but understood) expectations.

Epistemology (theories of knowing or knowledge): An epistemology is a stance or perspective on the social world providing humans with a set of assumptions and focus guiding how we might study and understand the social world.

Positivism: Focuses on behavior as an objectively real phenomenon to be studied; we can know the empirical reality of a behavior and make the judgment that it is deviant or not and understand the properties of that behavior.

Subjectivism: Deviance is a matter of social definition; deviant behavior is a meaning or label applied to people and/or their behavior, feelings, thoughts, or physical characteristics at a particular time/place in a particular social context influenced by the power to define said behavior in certain situations.

Blended epistemology: A "blended" or "mixed" epistemology usually makes an attempt to integrate or use different components of positivistic or subjective epistemologies—both behaviors and definitions matter.

Methods: Types of data or information sociologists use to study the social world, tools used to collect those data, and techniques of analyzing those data.

Quantitative methods: Often used by positivists, these methods reduce the social world to numbers and statistical relationships aimed at determining causality.

Qualitative methods: Often used by subjectivists, these methods use words, text, and meaning to help us understand the social world.

Face-to-face level of analysis: This level of analysis examines what social actors do and say in everyday interaction.

Social-psychological level of analysis: This level of analysis focuses on the interrelationship between individuals and their social environments.

Meso level of analysis: This level of analysis is located somewhere between the macro and social psychological or interactional level of analysis; pinpointing or defining this level of analysis can be problematized when looked at relatively (depending on the macro or micro frame of reference).

Macro level of analysis: This level of analysis examines social, structural, or institutional relationships, entire societies, or compares different societies.

4. LECTURE IDEAS & CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Day One: Class and Classmate Introductions

The first days of a class on deviant behavior (or social deviance) are always interesting. I find it particularly humorous when people from outside academia ask me, “What do you teach?” “Well,” I answer, “this semester I am teaching deviant behavior.” It always raises an eyebrow, spurs a laugh, or speeds the conversation along. In the same way, I like to present my students with that irony quickly—we are studying themes and topics most students never thought they would hear about in a classroom. As a result, my first icebreaker on day one (in addition to the normal administrative tasks associated with that day) is to hand out note cards and have students write down the following:

1. Name
2. Major
3. A random “favorite” thing (like movie, book, place, etc.)

4. What is the most deviant thing YOU ARE WILLING TO SHARE in class?

Note the all capital section of number four; it strikes everyone (or is intended to do so) with the line between “normal” and “deviant” as well as what is “normal” and “deviant” in certain contexts. After we discuss our lives, and certainly have a few chuckles on the way, I present the students with an obvious question, pointing out the elephant in the room: Would you have said something different if your parents were here, you were with close friends, sitting in a police station, on a job interview, and the like? Then, we struggle, at times mightily, to understand why those contexts are so very different and how they impact not only what we would tell others is a deviant act we committed but also the nature of the way we do such “telling on ourselves.”

Introductory Lecture(s)

Getting the wheels churning in the first days of class are crucial to building rapport with each group of students you engage. The introductory lecture is crucial in this regard because you do not want to regurgitate an introductory chapter the students *should* have read. Of course, the important “should” does come into play, so we do want to highlight the most important aspects of our readings, at the very least providing a holistic set of interactive lecture and activity moments where we (as instructors) talk, students apply terms and concepts to real-world examples (which gets students talking), and we move the flow of our lecture components and class discussion in a (fairly) directed style—not digressing too far afield, but allowing students to shape the conversation to show that not only have they engaged and understand the material, but that this also allows them to develop group discussion abilities and perhaps form new lines of thought and action for themselves and their classmates. Based on the reading/lecture notes associated with this introductory chapter earlier, one might use the following activities after highlighting key content:

- a) Use the example of binge drinking among college students to show the fine line between deviance as an objective and subjective phenomenon by having students attempt to define this behavior. Write their responses on the board. As a general pattern begins to emerge, try to get the students to operationalize their definition—in other words, present them a scenario where they were going to try to measure how much binge drinking occurs on their campus. Then, ask them, “How many drinks is *really* binge drinking?” As the debate will most certainly emerge, split the class into three teams (if possible) and have them take the role of each “umpire.” Allow the students 20 minutes to formulate a position **from the perspective** of each umpire and allow the umpires to debate.
- b) Refreshing student memory regarding the difference between quantitative and qualitative methods is important for majors and nonmajors, freshmen or seniors, and so on. After you briefly define each method, have a list of potential research topics on a set of note cards. Divide students into groups and have them define whether each proposed study is quantitative or qualitative; then have them formulate a research question based on their answer.

- c) Divide the class into groups representing each level of analysis. Have them name five phenomenon or subjects suitable to study at each level of analysis within their group. Then have each group select the subject they feel best illustrates each level of analysis and have them formulate a research question or state a set of relationships that could lead to a set of hypotheses for that subject. Have them state this to the class and discuss.

5. RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Adler, Patricia A. (2006). "The Deviance Society." *Deviant Behavior*, 27:129–148.

Berger, Peter L., and Thomas Luckmann. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in The Sociology of Knowledge*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.

Best, Joel. (2004). *Deviance: Career of a Concept*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Cast, A. D. (2003). "Power and the Ability to Define the Situation." *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 66(3):185–201.

Goffman, Erving. (1961). *Encounter: Two Studies in the Sociology of Interaction*. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill.

Goode, Erich, and Nachman Beh-Yehuda. (2009). *Moral Panics: The Social Construction of Deviance*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.

Heckert, A., and D. Heckert. (2002). "A New Typology of Deviance: Integrating Normative and Reactivist Definitions of Deviance." *Deviant Behavior* 23(5): 449–479.

6. MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. Officer Jones was walking his beat in the City when he saw a teenage girl spray painting a set of initials on an alley wall. Officer Jones shouts at the girl to stop. She stands there and sadly shakes her head no. Jones walks over and notices that the initials are those of a young man who was shot two days earlier in that very spot. He talks to the girl for a moment and then walks on as she finishes her initials. This scenario is an example of deviance as

- a. an objective phenomenon.
- *b. a subjective phenomenon.
- c. a criminal problem.
- d. answers a and c are correct.

2. _____ includes laws and formal regulations as well as informal or unstated (but understood) expectations.

- a. Deviance
- b. Power
- *c. Social control
- d. Fascism

3. By focusing on deviant behavior as objectively real, _____ tend to make assumptions about the deviant status of their study.

- a. subjectivists
- *b. positivists
- c. mixed theorists
- d. none of the above are correct

4. _____ methods reduce the social world to numbers and statistical relationships in an attempt to determine causal relationships.

- *a. Quantitative
- b. Qualitative
- c. Mixed
- d. Ethnographic

5. Jane Researcher was examining the role that state repression plays in the rate of suicide among underprivileged youth. To pursue this study, Jane went to three countries and requested the number of deaths due to suicide for the previous three years and the personal information of the deceased as well as the family income and neighborhood of residence. In this study, Jane is most likely examining suicide from the _____ level of analysis.

- a. face-to-face
- b. meso
- *c. macro
- d. social psychological

7. ESSAY/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Describe the differences between the two broad methodological categories. What types of epistemologies are more likely to be used for each?
2. How does social context impact the study of deviance and social control?
3. What are the primary strengths and limitations for subjectivism and positivism?
4. How might we conceive of face-to-face and social-psychological levels of analysis as a micro level of analysis? By doing so, do we complicate our demarcation of the meso level of analysis? Put differently, can we define a clear continuum from micro to macro or is the meso always relative to other levels of analysis as defined by their contexts?
5. Describe, in your own words, a behavior you feel is clearly deviant OR a behavior society defines as deviant that you feel should not be considered as such. In your description make sure to tell why in either case. Then use a particular theory from one of the sociological perspectives you feel best explains this form of deviance (or “non” deviance, in your opinion). Be sure to explain in detail how the theory describes it, and DO NOT just say “theory X describes deviant behavior Y” and leave it at that.