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ABSTRACT

The way that factors in the social environment regulate both the rates and differential modes of deviance among various groups within the school is examined. Using Mertonian analysis, three premises are central to the study including: (1) pressures to deviate occur when people are deprived of access to legitimate means to attain a desired goal; (2) differential rates of deviance among groups are a function of the distribution of these pressures; and (3) four different deviations to the pressures are possible including conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism, and rebellion. Applying Merton's model to school behavior, analysis reveals that restriction of opportunity to achieve academic success is a major source of school deviance. These pressures to deviate are strongest among minority racial groups with lower socioeconomic status. Response adaptions to this pressure are also patterned according to status. White, upper class students respond to the pressure with innovation, while lower socioeconomic status minority students respond with retreatism and rebellion. (Author/DE)

A MERTONIAN ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL DEVIANCE

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Although much research falling under the rubric of sociology of education is still characterized by the presence of sociological variables and the relative absence of a theoretical sociological framework, increasing efforts in the field are being made to apply substantive sociological paradigms to educational phenomena (cf. Blau 1973; Clark 1960; Collins 1971; Hill 1968; Parsons 1959). From our perspective, this trend is most welcomed. For, while it is not our intention to downgrade the usefulness of "variable studies," it is proposed that significant advancement toward a sociological understanding of the functioning of educational systems will not be realized unless theory receives greater consideration. This line of thought appears reasonable when one ponders the invaluable capacity of theory to systematize diverse empirical findings and to generate relevant research hypotheses (Merton 1968; Parsons 1937; Wallace 1969).

Consistent with the stance expressed above, the present endeavor represents an attempt to display the utility of employing a sociological paradigm -- Merton's (1938, 1959, 1964, 1968) model of deviance -- in the explication of deviant behavior in school settings. Although there are several competing sociological frameworks of deviance (for summaries see Cohen 1966; Schur 1969), Merton's model was chosen because it has shown tremendous explanatory power in its frequent and fruitful use in the past (Cole and Zuckerman 1964), and because the scheme has been successfully utilized in an educational

context by Hill (1968) in his study of cheating and by Clark (1960) in his exploration of the "cooling-out function" in junior colleges.

It should be noted at this point that the current work seeks to be both general and strictly sociological in its outlook. By general is meant that the analysis will not focus on one or two modes of deviant behavior (as Hill and Clark have done) but rather on a varied range. As a sociological presentation, the paper will try to delineate how factors in the social environment regulate both the rates and differential modes of deviance among various groups within the school.[1]

To accomplish the task at hand, a two-step process has been undertaken. First, a number of somewhat disparate topics were surveyed; and secondly, the findings were synthesized by use of Merton's framework.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Merton's model begins with the premise that when people are socialized to hold a certain cultural goal yet are deprived of access to institutionalized (legitimate) means to attain this goal, there will be a structurally-induced pressure on the actors to engage in nonconforming behavior. Applying his scheme to American society, Merton contended that widespread socialization into the goal of economic success and the presence of restricted economic opportunities combine to produce pressures to deviate in a significant segment of the population. Moreover, he went on to propose that differences in rates of aberration among varying groups in the U. S. (or in any social system) are a function of the differential distribution of these

pressures.

Having dealt with the source of deviance, Merton then turned to a second topic: the form the deviation would take. In all, Merton suggested that an actor confronted with a "disjunction" between a goal and available legitimate means would make one of five possible "adaptations" to pressure, the last four of which constitute a deviant response: (1) "conformity" -- continue to ascribe to goal and legitimate means despite the pressure to deviate; (2) "innovation" -- continue to ascribe to goal, reject legitimate means (using illegitimate means to obtain goal instead); (3) "ritualism" -- reject goal, continue to ascribe to legitimate means; (4) "retreatism" -- reject both the goal and legitimate means; (5) "rebellion" -- reject goal and legitimate means, substitute new goal and new means.[2]

As we have previously stated, Merton's model is predictive of what the rates of deviance will be among groups within any social system; they are held to be determined by the distribution of pressures among the system's groups. However, it is essential to note that one major criticism levied against the latter section of the model dealing with potential adaptations to pressure is that it is merely typological and not predictive in nature (Dubin 1959). Specifically, although he set forth a logical scheme of possible responses to a given pressure, Merton failed to specify the conditions under which any one mode of response (adaptation) will transpire. Indeed, as presently, formulated, all the paradigm really says is the when a pressure to deviate impinges upon an actor, anything -- ranging from innovation to rebellion -- can happen! In light of Popper's

(1960) work, the seriousness of this weakness becomes evident: by covering all possible responses, the latter section of the model does not present any "falsifiable" propositions and hence undermines the model's claim to be a scientific enterprise.

To resolve this difficulty, Cloward (1959, 1960 with Ohlin, and 1974 in correspondance) has proposed that, in addition to delineating factors creating pressures to deviate, it is necessary to uncover and then include in the model a second set of variables which function to regulate the distribution of various adaptations among differing groups within a given social system. The present essay will employ this revision of Merton's model.[3]

Lastly, it must be emphasized that deviance in Merton's model is defined as any departure from the formal (not informal) normative standards governing the appropriateness of both what goal should be held and what means should be employed to attain this goal.

APPLYING MERTON'S MODEL TO THE SCHOOL

I. Pressures to Deviate

As stated, Merton's basic contention is that the phenomenon of deviance is a function of pressures created by the simultaneous occurrence of actors seeking a goal and constraints preventing acquisition of the desired end. To utilize a Mertonian analysis of school behavior, then, it appears essential to determine whether pressures to deviate within the school are being generated by the inability of students to satisfy a commonly-held goal. Moreover, if there are pressures, it is also necessary to discern

how these pressures (and hence deviance) are distributed among various groups.

Success Goal. Hill (1968) and Reiss and Rhodes (1959) have stated that the overriding formal goal of our schools is that of educational success. Yet, one must question the extent to which students actually ascribe to this goal. Coleman (1961; cf. Gordon 1957), in his study of the sources of student status, has popularized the idea that students place relatively little importance on academic success. However, the methodological techniques employed by Coleman have led us to question this contention. Specifically, Coleman did not measure student committment to academic success directly, but used a comparative measure instead. That is, students were not asked to specify the extent to which they valued academic success as a goal in-and-of itself, but rather how important it was as compared to the goals of athletic and social proficiency. While it may indeed be true that students ascribe to the ends of athletic and social success to a greater degree, this in no way precludes the valuation of educational success to a high, though lesser, extent.

To obtain a clearer picture of whether Coleman correctly depicted the importance that doing well in school has for students, several other sources of data were called upon. First, in marked conflict with Coleman, a number of works have found that academic success is positively related to student popularity on both the elementary and secondary school levels (Bonney 1943; Gronlund 1959; Ryan and Davie 1958; Turner 1964). Bearing more directly on the topic, data from Hill (1968), Holloway and Berreman (1959), Reiss and Rhodes (1959), and SCOPE (see Boocock

1972:92-93) reveal that from 66% to 79% of the students believe getting good grades is "very important." As a further indication, our survey of twenty-two studies measuring educational aspirations or plans of high school students showed that 51% (unweighted mean) of the students wanted to attend college (Alexander and Campbell 1964; Bennett and Gist 1964; Drabick 1965; Gibbons and Lohnes 1966; Haller and Sewell 1957; Hyman 1953; Kandel 1971; Kraus 1964; McDill and Coleman 1965; Pine 1964-65; Rehberg and Westby 1967; Reiss and Rhodes 1959; Rhodes and Nam 1970; St. John 1966; Sewell 1964; Sewell and Armer 1966; Sewell et. al. 1957; Sewell and Shah 1968b; Spady 1970; Stephenson 1957; Stout 1969; Wilson 1959). Thus, contrary to Coleman's view, these data are suggestive of the conclusion that the goal of educational success is quite pervasively held by students.

One additional topic of interest is that the holding of the academic success goal is patterned according to status characteristics (i. e. by group membership). Of relevance to the present work is that committment to educational success -- as measured by educational aspirations -- is positively related to ses (Alexander and Campbell 1964; Bell 1963; Bordua 1960; Duncan et. al. 1968; Gibbons and Lohnes 1966; Herriot 1963; Holloway and Berreman 1959; Hyman 1953; Kandel and Lesser 1969; McDill and Coleman 1965; Osborne 1971; Rehberg and Hotchkiss 1972; Rehberg and Westby 1967; Reiss and Rhodes 1959; Rhodes and Nam 1970; Sewell 1964; Sewell and Armer 1966; Sewell et. al. 1957; Sewell and Shah 1968a, 1968b; Spady 1970; Stephenson 1957; Weiner and Murray 1963; White and Knight 1973; Wilson 1959), is related to race -- a greater proportion of blacks than

whites are committed (Boyd 1952; Brown 1965; Gist and Bennett 1963; Hindelang 1970; Holloway and Berreman 1959; Kandel 1971; Phillips 1972; Reiss and Rhodes 1959), and is related to sex -- a greater proportion of boys than girls are committed (Haller and Sewell 1957; Herriot 1963; Kandel 1971; Sewell 1964; Sewell and Armer 1966; Sewell et. al. 1957; Williams 1972).[4]

Restricted Access to the Success Goal As Havighurst and Neugarten (1967) and Heynes (1974) have noted, one of the primary functions of the school is that of selecting out the able from the unable. On a strictly meritocratic level (i.e. in terms of ability), then, the school is ideally programmed to deny academic success to a segment of the student body. Assuming that IQ scores are perhaps a rough indicator of ability, it would seem that the school is accomplishing its task of ferreting out the untalented. For the evidence is quite strong that school success is associated with (measured) intelligence (Boocock 1972; Duncan et. al. 1972; Heynes 1974; Jencks 1972). In addition to these meritocratic factors, studies on the effects of such things as home environments, ses, race, culture-biased IQ tests, cooling-out processes, tracking, and teacher expectations suggest that ascriptive characteristics also operate (both directly and indirectly) to restrict the opportunity for educational success (cf. Bernstein 1960; Bowles 1972; Clifford and Walster 1973; Cicourel and Kitsuse 1963; Clark 1960; Cullen 1974; Duncan et. al. 1972; Heyns 1974; Jencks 1972; Rist 1970; Rosenthal and Jacobson 1968; Simon 1971; Tree 1968).

Thus, although no exact figures are available, it seems reasonable to contend that the combination of meritocratic and

ascriptive forces constrain a significant number of students from "winning" in the academic "contest."

Pressures and Deviant Behavior Thus far, we have proposed that (1) a large proportion of the students hold the academic success goal, and (2) a portion of the students is being blocked from achieving this goal. Given that these two conditions obtain, the logic of Merton's model leads us to suggest that the interaction of these two conditions is a major source of the deviance that occurs within the school. Of particular import to note here is that support for the premise that a disjunction between the goal of academic success and lack of opportunity to attain the goal is actually linked to the occurrence of deviant behavior within the school can be gathered most clearly from Elder (1971), Hill (1968), and Kandel (1971) but also from a number of authors who have maintained that educational failure is a root cause of school-related aberration (Feldhusen et. al. 1970, 1973; Hangstrom and Gardner 1969; Heath 1970; Jablonsky 1970; Thurston et. al. 1964; Watternberg 1967).

Distribution of Pressures Having offered the general proposition that a means-goal disjunction produces pressure to deviate and in turn deviant behavior within the school, an attempt will be made to further refine our discussion. Specifically, it is our contention that the above-mentioned pressures are patterned according to status characteristics, and, as such, result in differential rates of deviance among the various (status) groups that populate the school. To help garner support for this stance, the present analysis will focus on the relation of pressures to three major status characteristics: race (black and white), ses, and sex.

First, it would appear that, in contrast to whites, a greater proportion of blacks experience pressures to deviate. In line with a Mertonian explanation, this is primarily the consequence of the simultaneous occurrence of two conditions: widespread ascription (greater percentage than whites) to the goal of academic success (see pp. 6-7), and a comparative (to whites) lack of opportunity to attain this desired end (see summary of research by Boocock 1972:41-50). It should be stressed that some corroborative evidence for the position expressed here can be gained from Elder (1970, 1971) who, backed by empirical data, has presented a quite similar argument.

Turning to ses, the picture is not at first so clear. In contrast to the previous case where blacks (as a group) not only had less opportunity but also were committed to educational success in greater proportions, socioeconomic status is positively related to both access (Boocock 1972; Bowles 1972; Heyns 1974; Rist 1970) and ascription to the goal of success (see p. 6). That is to say, while more upper-class students may desire educational success, more also possess the opportuntiy to be successful; conversely, while fewer lower-class youths hold the success goal, those who do hold it are less likely to have the opportunity to obtain it. Under this situation, it is no simple task to determine whether more higher- or lower-ses students are subject to means-goal disjunctions. Wide generalization is not possible as it was in our inspection of race; what is needed is comparative data specifying the exact numbers of both upper- and lower-class pupils who hold the success goal but do not have access to the opportunity structure.

Although we do not possess this information, it is possible to gain a rough estimate by utilizing an indirect measure of means-goal disjunction employed by Spergel (1964) in his study of juvenile delinquents: the discrepancy between an actor's aspirations and his expectations. More specifically and stated in terms conducive to the current analysis, if we (1) take the percentage of students aspiring to four or more years of college (or any other agreed upon dependent variable) as an indicator of the percentage of students committed to the goal of academic success, (2) take the percentage of students expecting to complete four or more years of college as a proxy for student perception of the opportunity available to them to secure this goal,[5] (3) subtract the expectation percentage from the aspiration percentage so as to compute the percentage of students experiencing a means-goal disjunction; and in turn (4) do this for each ses group, then it would seem possible to secure at least a general idea of the proportions in each group suffering pressure to deviate.

Fortunately for the present concern, Della Fave (1974) has conducted research dealing with this exact topic. He found that the likelihood of experiencing a gap between aspirations (or what he called "preferences") and expectations was inversely related to ses among high school students. Indeed, our re-analysis of his table (see Della Fave, 1974:160) revealed the following discrepancies between the percentage of those aspiring to four or more years of college for each socioeconomic group: I (highest ses) = 3.8%; II = 8.3%; III = 15.6%; IV = 27.6%; V (lowest ses) = 26.6%. Based on these data, then, we would submit that means-goal disjunctions and the pressure to deviate it engenders are

more prevalent among lower ses students.

It should be recognized, however, that our discussion of social class has centered exclusively on high school students. One might question, then, whether the same inverse relationship between ses and pressure obtains at lower educational levels. Although our data are by no means complete, it is our contention that the association may even be stronger within the elementary school. This would appear to be the consequence of two related factors.

To begin with, the work of McDill and Coleman (1965) suggests that the educational aspirations of lower class students tend to decrease as they pass through school. This notion receives additional support when one compares Hindelang's (1970) finding that 82% of low ses elementary pupils had "high educational-occupational" aspirations to those of such authors as Della Fave (1974), Hyman (1953), Kraus (1964), Sewell et. al. (1957), and Weiner and Murray (1963) who found the percentage to be substantially less (ranging from 28% to 72%) among low ses high school students. The import of these research results is that they are indicative of the fact that a greater proportion of low-ses grammar as opposed to secondary school students are committed to the goal of educational success. If we can in turn assume, as at least some evidence suggests (cf. Rist 1970), that lower-class elementary students are restricted from access to educational success in ways similar to their older counterparts, then, in light of the results on committment to success, it seems reasonalbe to posit that the percentage of low-ses students experiencing a means-goal disjunction on the elementary level is greater than in high school.

Secondly, data from McDill and Coleman (1965) also supports the idea that the educational aspirations of upper-class students increases as they progress through school. If we can assume once again that the opportunity structure for high-class pupils remains constant on all educational levels, then we can surmise that, due to lower commitment to success, the percentage of upper-class students possessing a means-goal disjunction is less in the elementary school.

Finally, taking these two results together -- namely, that more lower-class elementary students and fewer upper-class elementary students are subject to means-goal disjunctions than their secondary school counterparts, then we are left with the conclusion that the inverse relationship between ses and pressure found on the high school level is as strong if not stronger on the elementary school level.

Moving on to the status characteristic of sex, it is helpful to start by noting that data from SCOPE (in Boocock 1972: 92-93) reveals that the importance of earning "good grades" is similar for girls (slightly greater percentage) and boys. Indeed, the research on aspirations referenced earlier in this essay (see p. 7) supports the premise that there may even be more boys than girls committed to the goal of educational success. However, as an extensive review of the literature by Boocock (1972:80-81; cf. Alexander and Eckland 1974) suggests, when it comes to actually attaining academic success, boys fall far short of girls on both the elementary and high school levels. This latter finding indicates that boys, perhaps due to such factors as maturational differences, sex-role expectations, and personality characteristics (Boococok 1972:79-96), do not have

equal access to the goal they pursue. Following the logic of Merton's model, then, we would propose that, as a result of similar committment to educational success in the face of differential opportunity, a greater proportion of boys experience pressure to deviate than their female classmates.

Pressures and the Distribution of Deviant Behavior Thus far, an effort has been made to lend credence to the proposition that pressure to deviate if differentially distributed among various groups within the school. Specifically, it has been argued that suffering a means-goal disjunction and the pressure it generates is more prevalent among blacks than whites, low-ses students than upper-ses, and boys than girls. Yet, one must question whether, as Merton's model would lead us to expect, the rates of deviance are actually higher among these groups. Bearing directly on this issue, our survey of the literature on such topics as attendance, cheating, classroom behavior problems, dropping-out, school-related alienation, and student rebellion, has revealed that, with few exceptions, the occurrence of deviant behavior has in fact been found to be proportionately greater among blacks (Elder 1970, 1971; Heussenstamm and Hoepfner 1971; NEA 1963; Ptaschnik 1973; Silverman and Blount 1970; Varner 1967; Worcester and Ashbaugh 1972), among lower-ses students (Bachman 1972; Clarkson and Hayden 1970; Cloward and Jones 1962; Curley et. al. 1971; Dentler 1964; Glidewell 1961; Heussenstamm and Hoepfner 1971; Hill 1968; Jablonsky 1970; Leveque and Walker 1970; Mullin 1955; Thurston et. al. 1964; Varner 1957; Waternberg 1967), and among boys (Balow 1966; Glidewell 1961; Hangstrom and Gardner 1969; Heussenstamm and Hoepfner 1971;

Rouman 1956; Schab 1969; Varner 1967; Zeitlin 1957).[6]

II. Distribution of Deviant Adaptations

Beyond the issue of the distribution of pressures to and subsequent rates of deviance, there remains the critical task (in light of Cloward's work) of discerning both how and why the various deviant adaptations are patterned according to status characteristics. That is to say, having determined the relative proportion of actors in various (status) groups involved in nonconformist activity, we must now examine whether (when they do become deviant) blacks as opposed to whites, low-ses pupils as opposed to high-ses pupils, and boys as opposed to girls engage in similar or differing kinds of aberrant behavior.

Unfortunately, the paucity of existing research geared to deal with this type of inquiry necessarily places limitations on our ability to present a definitive analysis. Nevertheless, drawing as much as is possible from what data is available, a preliminary attempt will be made to contribute to our understanding of the topic at hand. Before confronting this task, however, it would appear that the forthcoming discussion would benefit by the inclusion of a brief section of the correspondence of Merton's adaptations to actual school behavior.

School Correlates of Merton's Adaptations As specified earlier, Merton has claimed that an actor possessing a means-goal disjunction could make one of four deviant adaptations. In relating his paradigm to the educational system, it would seem helpful to inspect what school behaviors correlate with and can be used as indicators of the adaptations he has set forth. Toward this end, we would propose the following examples: ~~innovation~~ -- cheating; ritualism -- the student who

just "goes through the motions;" retreatism -- alienation, dropping-out, truancy, withdrawal; rebellion -- aggressive behavior, student riots.

Distribution of Adaptations As we have stated, the key issue to be explored in this section is the extent to which actors occupying differing statuses within the school engage in varying adaptations when confronted with a pressure to deviate. Similar to our discussion on pressures, three status characteristics will be investigated: race, social class, and sex.

Our survey of the school-deviance literature would appear to support the observation that when blacks deviate they are far more likely than whites to make a rebellious (Elder 1971; Phillips 1968; Worcester and Ambaugh 1972) or, as data on alienation, attendance, and dropping-out would indicate, a retreatist adaptation. (Heussenstamm and Hoepfner 1971; NEA 1963; Phillips 1968; Ptaschnik 1973; Silverman and Blount 1970; Varner 1969). In contrast, it is more probable for whites to be innovative when they violate the normative standards of the school. (Kingston and Gentry 1961). While no definitive reasons can be provided for these empirical differences, several potential and hopefully plausible ones will be offered.

To start with, Coser (1956) has proposed that a crucial determinant of whether rebellious sentiments are actualized in the form of rebellious behavior is the extent to which an actor questions the legitimacy of the existing social arrangements. In the realm of education, Elder (1971; cf. Turner 1960; Znaniecki 1936) has similarly posited that school rebelliousness by black students is largely contingent on whether they consider

the contest for academic success to be fixed in favor of their white classmates. Taking this theme into account, it would appear that a primary factor regulating why blacks experiencing a means-goal-disjunction select a rebellious adaptation in greater proportions is that they are more likely to view the structure of the success contest as discriminatory and thus illegitimate in nature. In juxtaposition, whites are socialized into the ideology of equal opportunity and are not confronted with counter-ideologies such as "black power." As a result, they would tend not to question the legitimacy of the system and hence would be constrained from making a system-threatening adaptation such as rebellion.

Turning to the prevalence of retreatism among blacks, one possible explanation is that blacks are less likely than whites to encounter resistance when they attempt to make this adaptation. Indeed, the work of such authors as Rist (1970) and Kozol (1967) implies that teachers may (unwittingly) encourage minorities to behave in this fashion. Moreover, it may be gathered from the work of Dentler (1964) that a reason for the comparatively high dropout rate among blacks -- retreatism in Mertonian usage -- is that they are less likely than whites to receive support from either peers or family to continue with their education.

Finally, two factors would appear to be central to why whites experiencing pressure to deviate are apt to engage in innovative behavior. First is that they are constrained -- due to such variables as we have suggested above -- from making alternative adaptations. And secondly, suspected less than blacks

and therefore not subject to as stringent measures of social control, they may have greater opportunity to be innovative. It should be stressed here that access to illegitimate means -- that is, to the opportunity to be deviant -- has often been cited as an integral element in the commission of deviant acts in general (Cloward 1959; Cloward and Ohlin 1960; Sutherland 1944, in 1973 edition) and of innovative (cheating) behavior within educational contexts in particular (Fischer 1970; Hetherington et. al. 1964; Steininger et. al. 1964; Tittle and Row 1974; Uhlig and Hawes 1967; Zastrow 1970).

Moving on to social class, the distribution of adaptations by ses is not readily apparent. Primarily, this results from the fact that low-ses students appear to possess higher rates of nonconformity for all adaptations. Subsequently, in light of this finding, we must seriously question whether there is any patterning of modes of deviance when we take as our point of reference the comparison of low- vs. upper-ses groups. Moreover, the nature of the available data restricts our capacity (particularly with regard to low-ses pupils) to fruitfully employ an alternative approach to determine whether patterning transpires along another dimension: namely, by focusing on only one group at a time, to see if the students of a given ses engage in certain adaptations to a greater degree tha other adaptations.[7] Despite these limitations, however, three tentative propositions would seem to be warranted.

First, it appears that when upper-class students do deviate, their most prevalent mode is innovative behavior. This conclusion is largely derived from a comparison of (1) research

by Hill (1968) who found the rate of cheating among high-ses pupils to approach that of low-ses pupils, and (2) our literature review which failed to reveal any substantive similarities between the two status groups in the incidence of other adaptations. Once again, we would propose that the relative facility with which an innovative as opposed to an alternative adaptation can be made, may be a key element in the high rate of this form of deviance among upper-class students. Primarily, this would result from the occurrence of two conditions: (1) the presence of constraints (e.g. value supportive of the legitimacy of existing arrangements, expectations of "significant others") which preclude the adoption of such adaptations as rebellion and retreatism, and (2) the comparative availablity of the opportunity (perhaps due to the difficulty of detection) to be innovative.

Secondly, the possibility exists that high-ses students might also engage with a degree of regularity in ritualistic behavior; that is, going through the motions of appropriate school behavior despite deviating by giving up on the goal of academic success. In contrast to rebellion or retreatism which entail outright rejection of the system, this would seem to be an attractive adaptation to high ses students. Its attractiveness (as opposed to other modes) would be mainly an outgrowth of the fact that, because ritualism is internal (attitudinal) and not external (behavioral) in nature, it is often mistaken for conformist behaivor and, as such, does not elicit negative sanctions from those who expect the upper-ses pupil to conform.

Thirdly, it may very well be that such factors as ethical

orientation, teacher and parental expectations, only limited access to the opportunity to employ illegitimate means, and the extent to which they have a stake in the system constrain a number of upper-ses students from making any deviant adaptation. That is to say, impinged upon by a variety of deviant-deterring forces, the upper-class student is perhaps more likely than his lower-ses classmate to choose to live with the pressure and make a conformist adaptation. If this is indeed the situation, then it would at least partially account (in conjunction with the differential distribution of pressures) for the comparatively depressed rates of deviance among all adaptations for high-ses students.

Our final status characteristic to be considered is that of sex. As in our discussion of social class, one group -- in this case males -- appears to have greater rates of aberration for all four deviant adaptations. Consequently, one must question whether sex operates to regulate the occurrence of differing modes of deviance. However, in light of research documenting that females are socialized to be comparatively docile and passive within the school (Boocock 1972), we would like to suggest two propositions. First, when females do deviate, they are most likely to be ritualistic -- an adaptation which requires no assertive behavior; and secondly, when experiencing pressure, girls are more likely than boys to willingly accept this disjunctive state and make a conformist adaptation.

CONCLUSION

In light of our discussion, three main conclusions appear to be in order: (1) restriction of opportunity to achieve the

widely-held goal of academic success is a major source of deviance within the school, (2) pressures to deviate (and hence deviance) are differentially distributed among various student-groups, and (3) to at least some extent, adaptations to pressure are patterned according to status characteristics.

To complete our analysis, several additional comments seem necessary. To begin with, although there are undoubtedly many limitations to the present work, two shortcoming -- both of which belie the complexity of the phenomenon at hand -- seem of particular import. First, in examining the distritution of pressures and adaptations by one status trait at a time, we have not confronted the issue of how pressures and adaptations are patterned according to status-sets (e.g. how white, lower-class females differ on these dimensions when contrasted with black, upper-class males). Secondly, by dealing with the nature of the association of status characteristics to aberration in the school population at-large, we have failed to explore the potential relationship of characteristics to deviance within particular school and classroom contexts. It should be noted that our failure to focus our attention on these two issues was largely precluded by the dearth of literature on these topics -- a fact that future researchers may wish to take into consideration.

Next, it appears essential to emphasize that we have specified one, albeit major, source of deviance within the school; that other sources are also operative is not debated. And lastly, while we have contended that the frustration of educational success results in school deviance, it is perhaps instructive to realize that this can also function as an etiological factor in

the causation of deviance that occurs outside the boundaries of the school (cf. Cloward and Ohlin 1960; Palmore and Hammond 1964; Silberberg and Silberberg 1971; Thurston et. al. 1964).

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FOOTNOTES

[1]This essay will attempt to generate propositions relevant to the occurrence of deviance on both the elementary and secondary school levels. However, due to the nature of available data, the generalizations arrived at in this paper may prove to be more applicable to the behavior of high school students than to their elementary school counterparts.

[2]For a more in-depth discussion of Merton's model, see Merton (1938, 1959, 1964, 1968).

[3]Although it is clear that Merton failed to systematically confront the problem of the distribution of deviant adaptations, notice should be taken that he did touch upon this issue in his original and major statement of his model, "Social Structure and Anomie (1938; see especially 1968 reprint, pp. 205-207). Also, it should be underscored that in a later article, Merton (1959: 189) agreed that this issue must be pursued if an adequate theory of deviance is to be realized.

[4]Although the evidence is overwhelming that a greater proportion of high-ses, black, and male students have high aspirations than their low-ses, white, and female counterparts, we did encounter a few contrary findings. To be more exact, (1) in reference to ses, Brookover et. al. (1967) found no relationship between aspiration and ses, while Bennett and Gist (1964) found the relationship to be in the expected direction but not to be significant; (2) in reference to race, both Hirschi (1972) and St. John (1966) found whites to have higher aspirations; and (3) in reference to sex, Carter et. al. (1972) could discern no sex differences in aspirations, while Kandel (1971) found that female aspirations, though lower among whites, were higher among blacks. Also, it should be stressed that we used parental education as a proxy for ses when analyzing the studies of Osborn (1971) and Sewell and Shah (1968b).

[5]Lindesmith and Gagnon (1964) have proposed than an actor's perception of whether or not opportunity to achieve a desired end is available, and not the actual opportunity available to him, is the crucial determinant of the occurrence of a means-goal disjunction. While we would agree that under certain conditions this idea merits attention, the variable "perception of opportunity" has not been incorporated into our analysis throughout the essay for two reasons. First, its inclusion would introduce another level of complexity into our analysis which, in light of the data available and the intended scope of our endeavor, would be quite difficult to handle in an effective manner. And more importantly, a strict reading of Merton leads to the opposing conclusion that an actor seeking to achieve a goal in the face of limited opportunity would experience pressure regardless of his perception of opportunity. This is not to say, however, that perception of the nature of the opportunity structure would not be integrally involved in what adaptation an actor eventually selects. (see pp. 15-16 in this essay).

[6]It should be noted that a few authors have reported results contrary to those we have cited supporting Merton's model. To be more specific, Zeitlin (1957) and Greene (1972) did not find blacks to have greater rates of school deviance. Similarly, work by Zeitlin (1957) and Hangstrom and Gardner (1969) could discern no inverse relationship between ses and school behavioral problems. Finally, the study by Heussenstamm and Hoepfner (1971) referenced above was supportive of the propositions offered but only within certain school contexts.

Also, it should be recognized here that we have not dealt with the issue of the comparative rates of deviance for elementary as opposed to secondary school pupils. In light of our section on the relationship among grade level, ses, and pressure to deviate (see pp. 11-12), we might have been expected to. However, we have chosen not to focus on this issue because we did not encounter any substatial data comparing the incidence of deviance for grammar vs. high school students.

[7]It might be helpful to realize at this junction that, depending upon one's point of reference, adaptations can be seen to be patterned along one of two analytically separate dimensions: between groups (e.g. does a higher proportion of high- or low-ses students engage in innovative bahavior), and among each group (e.g. among low-ses pupils only, which adaptation[s] is chosen with the greatest frequency).

[8]Merton (1968:204) has effectively captured the essence of our argument in the following passage:

> "It is something of a terminological quibble to ask whether this [ritualism] represents genuinely deviant behavior. Since the adaptation is, in effect, an internal decision and since the overt behavior is institutionally permitted though not culturally preferred, it is not generally considered to represent a social problem .... Whether this is described as deviant behavior or no, it clearly represents a departure from the cultural model in which men are obliged to strive actively, preferably through institutionalized procedures, to move onward and upward in the social hierarchy."

Also, it should be emphasized that in proposing that upper-ses students find ritualism an attractive adaptation, we have not meant to imply that lower-ses youths do not engage in this mode of behavior. Indeed, it is likely that lower-class pupils choose a ritualistic adaptation in proportions equal to or greater than their upper-class counterparts (cf. Rist 1970).