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## The Psychology of Workplace Deviant & Criminal Behavior

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## BOOK REVIEW

### THE PSYCHOLOGY OF WORKPLACE DEVIANT & CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR

WILLIAM BRICE\* & DEBORAH E. RUPP\*\*

STEVEN M. ELIAS, ED., *DEVIANT AND CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR IN THE WORKPLACE* (NYU PRESS 2013), 253 PP.

The 2013 book *Deviant and Criminal Behavior in the Workplace* addresses the psychological constructs, situations, and environments underlying active counterproductive workplace behaviors. Building on a diverse range of psychological findings, this book highlights that the field of criminology needs to expand outside of the realm of violence and instead look at how deviant workplace behaviors can tie into—and motivate—other types of crime.

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## INTRODUCTION

Workplace deviance is a form of behavior that violates organization norms and negatively impacts the well-being of organizations and their

members. The theoretical perspectives and corresponding empirical evidence presented within Elias's *Deviant and Criminal Behavior in the Workplace* offers significant insights for the field of criminology. By taking a multidisciplinary approach to the causes of workplace-related crime, this book highlights a number of ways the fields of organizational psychology, sociology, and management can inform criminology through the elucidation of the roots of deviant and criminal behavior in the workplace.

In this review, we provide a synopsis of the primary themes within each section, broken down by individual chapters. We then compare this volume to similar published works and discuss the unique contribution this book provides to the available literature.

## BOOK CONTENTS

### A. FOUNDATIONS

#### *Chapter 1: Conceptual Foundations: Insights from the Criminology and the Sociology of Work*

RANDY HODSON AND GARY F. JENSON

HSBC, Europe's largest bank,<sup>1</sup> paid \$1.9 billion in penalties to settle a money laundering probe involving Mexican drug cartels, Iran, and other illegal operations.<sup>2</sup> Wells Fargo paid \$175 million in restitution after discriminating against minority borrowers by increasing their interest rates.<sup>3</sup> Swiss bank UBS blamed a rogue trader at its London office for a \$2.3 billion loss as the result of fraud.<sup>4</sup> From aiding and abetting terrorists and criminals to discriminating against minorities, criminal behavior occurs in myriad ways in the workplace. Yet, as Hodson and Jenson point out, workplace crime has received relatively little attention in the criminology literature. Whereas the causes of street crime (e.g., murder, rape, burglary) tend to remain consistent across time and settings, far less is known about the psychology of workplace crime.

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<sup>1</sup> *The Largest European Banks 2013*, BANKS AROUND THE WORLD, <http://www.relbanks.com/top-european-banks/assets> (last visited Dec. 3, 2014), archived at <http://perma.cc/95E8-H5JZ>.

<sup>2</sup> Devlin Barrett & Evan Perez, *HSBC to Pay Record U.S. Penalty*, WALL ST. J., Dec. 11, 2012, at C1.

<sup>3</sup> Charlie Savage, *Wells Fargo Will Settle Mortgage Bias Charges*, N.Y. TIMES, July 13, 2012, at B3.

<sup>4</sup> Dana Cimilluca et al., *UBS Raises Tally on Loses*, WALL ST. J., Sept. 19, 2011, at C1.

These authors apply three different approaches to understanding the causes of workplace deviance: anomie theory, differential association–social learning theory, and social control theory.

*Anomie theory* (also known as strain theory) addresses the conflict within a culture of what constitutes success in life and the appropriate ways to achieve those goals. Anomie originated with Emile Durkheim as a way to address how population growth was reducing interactions between different groups, leading to reduced understanding.<sup>5</sup> This term was then adopted by Robert K. Merton to address the differences between culturally expected norms/goals and the actual ability to reach those goals.<sup>6</sup> Complementary to anomie theory is the concept of workplace justice, or the extent to which employees feel fairly treated at work.

*Differential association–social learning theory*, originally proposed by Edwin Southerland, postulates that organizational culture has a strong impact on deviant behavior. That is, employees will observe the current workplace culture, reach conclusions of what is acceptable, and modify their behaviors to remain consistent with those conclusions.<sup>7</sup>

*Social control theory* purports that employees' internalized relationships, commitments, values, norms, and beliefs have an impact on their willingness to engage in deviant behavior. This theory is closely related to ideas involving personality and self-control.

## B. EMPLOYEE CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH DEVIANT WORKPLACE BEHAVIORS

### *Chapter 2: Emotions and Deviance*

REBECCA MICHALAK AND NEAL M. ASHKANASY

In their chapter Michalak and Ashkanasy discuss counterproductive work behavior (CWB), organizational misbehavior, interpersonal deviance (bullying, sexual harassment, incivility), and organizational deviance (sabotage, theft, unauthorized absenteeism). The authors specifically consider the connections between emotions and workplace deviance via five complementary theoretical perspectives. For the purpose of this chapter, emotions are defined as a biosocial expression system with reactions that are short, intense and focused, and typically attached to an object or cause.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> KENNETH ALLAN, *EXPLORATIONS IN CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY: SEEING THE SOCIAL WORLD* 128 (2005).

<sup>6</sup> Robert K. Merton, *Social Structure and Anomie*, 3 AM. SOC. REV. 672 (1938).

<sup>7</sup> Edwin H. Sutherland, *A Sociological Theory of Criminal Behavior*, in *CRIME AND CRIMINALS* 211, 211 (Frank R. Scarpitti et al. eds., 2d ed. 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Nico H. Frijda, *Varieties of Affect: Emotions and Episodes, Moods, and Sentiments*, in

A *within-persons approach* to deviance draws on affective events theory to establish the differences between emotion- and judgment-driven behaviors. Affective events theory focuses on how emotions and moods can affect job performance and satisfaction.<sup>9</sup> By examining counterproductive workplace behaviors through this lens, the authors highlight the emotional and rational components that prime the individual for workplace deviance. This theory helps explain how perceived injustice relates to behaviors such as theft, sabotage, and cyber-loafing (i.e., an individual using the Internet or other electronic devices instead of engaging in work tasks). Furthermore, the extent to which employees feel that the organization has violated their shared psychological contract can contribute to the number of revenge actions they take, the amount they abuse others, and the degree to which they engage in withdrawal behaviors.

An *individual differences approach* focuses on how perpetrator and victim traits interact with one another. By understanding and identifying how personality characteristics contribute to workplace deviance, employers can take steps, like screening and selection, to limit the presence of deviant individuals.

An *interpersonal interactions approach* deals with how employees' workplace interactions contribute to deviant behavior. From the stress of surface acting to abusive situations and bystander effects, the interactions between individuals offer plenty of potential to inhibit or exacerbate the presence of workplace deviant behaviors.

A *team perspective* focuses on the relationships between coworkers. This perspective considers how relations between leaders and subordinates impact the relationships among other group members; how leaders can moderate the emotional responses of and between team members; how emotions are transferred within a group; and what determines the individual social ties made within a group.

An *organizational culture perspective* considers how norms within an organization impact the likelihood of workplace deviance. Culture impacts emotional experiences within work settings and employees' ability to regulate their emotions—both of which can foster or prevent deviance.

Emotion has a direct impact on deviant and criminal behavior within an organization. Theft, sabotage, increased healthcare costs, damage to employer reputation, and retaliatory behavior are but a few results of emotional reactions to workplace conditions. Without an understanding of

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THE NATURE OF EMOTION 59 (Paul Ekman & Richard J. Davidson eds., 1994).

<sup>9</sup> See generally Howard M. Weiss & Russell Cropanzano, *Affective Events Theory: A Theoretical Discussion of the Structure, Causes and Consequences of Affective Experiences at Work*, 18 RES. ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAV. 1 (1996).

the emotions and traits involved in workplace deviance, it is difficult to identify, limit, and prevent many causes of workplace crime.

*Chapter 3: Born to Be Deviant? An Examination of the Relationship  
Between Workplace Deviance and Employee Personality*

CHRISTINE A. HENLE AND MICHAEL A. GROSS

Two basic assumptions made within workplace deviance research are (1) that behaviors are voluntary and (2) that deviant employees intend to harm the organization or its members directly. However, Henle and Gross make two important observations: first, that personality traits and organizational context interact to affect the likelihood of engaging in workplace deviance, and second, that they also can serve to encourage or discourage these same behaviors. If everyone is treated the same, why do some people engage in deviant behaviors while others do not? Do certain personality traits impact how likely someone is to engage in, or be the target of, workplace deviance? The answers to these questions lie in the concept of situation strength.<sup>10</sup> In “strong situations,” there are clear-cut signals of what is acceptable or expected (e.g., do not talk during a presentation). However, in “weak situations” there is greater individual discretion in what actions can be taken (e.g., hearing verbal sexual harassment at work).<sup>11</sup> Across a number of studies, perpetrators of interpersonal deviance have been found to be low in the personality traits of conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience.<sup>12</sup> In addition, victims of interpersonal deviance have been found to be lower in emotional stability<sup>13</sup> and higher in negative affectivity<sup>14</sup> (i.e., emotionality). Reactions to injustice (i.e., deviant behaviors) often result from the interaction of personality traits and organizational environment. For example, perceived unfairness has been linked to deviance in employees who are high on impulsivity, low on agreeableness, or low on socialization.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> See Mark Snyder & William Ickes, *Personality and Social Behavior*, in *THE HANDBOOK OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY* 883, 904–07 (Gardner Lindzey & Elliot Aronson eds., 3d ed. 1985); Murray R. Barrick & Michael K. Mount, *Yes, Personality Matters: Moving on to More Important Matters*, 18 *HUM. PERFORMANCE* 359, 364 (2005).

<sup>11</sup> Barrick & Mount, *supra* note 10, at 364.

<sup>12</sup> Jesús F. Salgado, *The Big Five Personality Dimensions and Counterproductive Behaviors*, 10 *INT’L J. SELECTION & ASSESSMENT* 117, 122 (2002).

<sup>13</sup> Iain Coyne et al., *Predicting Workplace Victim Status from Personality*, 9 *EUR. J. WORK & ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOL.* 335, 341–45 (2000).

<sup>14</sup> Karl Aquino & Murray Bradfield, *Perceived Victimization in the Workplace: The Role of Situational Factors and Victim Characteristics*, 11 *ORG. SCI.* 525, 532 (2000).

<sup>15</sup> Shane Flaherty & Simon A. Moss, *The Impact of Personality and Team Context on the Relationship Between Workplace Injustice and Counterproductive Work Behavior*, 37 *J. APPLIED SOC. PSYCHOL.* 2549, 2564–68 (2007).

The authors suggest that an organization can reduce the prevalence of deviant behavior through a combination of approaches, including: integrity prescreening, interviews, and mentoring, as well as programs focusing on employee engagement, fairness, and a reduction in interpersonal conflict. By identifying how environment and personality interact to create workplace deviance, the authors hope that interventions can occur before workplace deviance takes place.

#### *Chapter 4: The Role of Occupational Stress in Workplace Deviance*

SHARON L. GRANT

Grant shows connections between occupational stress and workplace deviance. Individuals go through the three phases of cognitive appraisal when facing stressors: primary appraisal, appraisal of available actions, and reappraisal. Coping mechanisms are implemented to either alter the source of stress or change the emotional response to the stressor.

Occupational stress is related to health, well-being, and performance-related outcomes.<sup>16</sup> It has been associated with conditions such as insomnia, high blood pressure, depression, and anxiety. Even though the onset of these conditions is gradual, longitudinal research has established a strong case for stress as a causal mechanism. Occupational stress has been found to have additional short-term impacts on substance use, relationship quality, and social isolation.<sup>17</sup> Within the workplace, organizational stress has been linked to productivity, morale, attendance, and communication issues, as well as work–family conflict. It is estimated that up to 50% of absenteeism is due to occupational stress,<sup>18</sup> with an estimated one million Americans missing work every day.<sup>19</sup>

Individuals' attempts to cope with stress will depend on their perceptions of the situation.<sup>20</sup> Whereas positive appraisals of stressors can lead to higher levels of organizational citizenship behaviors, negative

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<sup>16</sup> Joyce A. Adkins, *Base Closure: A Case Study in Occupational Stress and Organizational Decline*, in *THE NEW ORGANIZATIONAL REALITY: DOWNSIZING, RESTRUCTURING, AND REVITALIZATION* 111, 111–141 (Marilyn K. Gowing et al. eds., 1997).

<sup>17</sup> See Sandra L. Robinson & Rebecca J. Bennett, *Workplace Deviance: Its Definition, Its Manifestations, and Its Causes*, in *6 RESEARCH ON NEGOTIATION IN ORGANIZATIONS* 3 (Roy J. Lewicki et al. eds., 1997).

<sup>18</sup> Paul J.G. Schreurs et al., *Workplace Health Programmes*, in *HANDBOOK OF WORK & HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY* 463, 465 (Marc J. Schabracq et al. eds., 1996).

<sup>19</sup> Am. Inst. of Stress, *Workplace Stress*, STRESS.ORG, <http://www.stress.org/workplace-stress/> (last visited Dec. 3, 2014), archived at <http://perma.cc/RY2D-RP6D>.

<sup>20</sup> Paul E. Spector & Suzy Fox, *An Emotion-Centered Model of Voluntary Work Behavior: Some Parallels Between Counterproductive Work Behavior and Organizational Citizenship Behavior*, 12 *HUM. RESOURCE MGMT. REV.* 269, 275 (2002).



appraisals have been shown to lead to counterproductive work behaviors (such as deviance). In addition, situations perceived as uncontrollable are more likely to be interpreted in a negative way, whereas situations perceived as controllable are more likely to be reacted to via problem-focused coping strategies. Emotion-focused coping strategies are more likely when the situation is not perceived as changeable and must be endured, and this sort of coping can have negative ramifications in the long run. For these reasons, it is important to understand how personality can affect the type and level of stress an individual might experience, the coping mechanisms he or she might employ, and behaviors that might follow. It has been proposed that personality will limit the options an individual might feel are available to him or her to cope with stressors.<sup>21</sup> As such, individuals with fewer coping strategies may be more likely to engage in deviant behaviors. The author highlights a number of organizational strategies that might help reduce stress-related deviant behaviors. Organizations can create positive organizational climates by clarifying job role expectations, improving communication, implementing reward systems, and introducing other interventions aimed at enhancing employees' sense of control. Organizations can also provide stress management training aimed at helping employees identify their own sources of stress. Training employees to deal with negative emotions in a constructive way can help them identify and constructively deal with stress as a way to help reduce workplace deviance.

#### C. ORGANIZATIONAL INFLUENCES ON DEVIANT WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR

##### *Chapter 5: Accounting in Organizational Environments: Contextualizing Rules and Fraud*

WILLIAM L. SMITH, BRANDON HILL HAINES, AND CINDY L. SEIPEL

Smith, Haines, and Seipel illustrate how organizations might mitigate employee fraud through a combination of internal and external controls. Employee fraud can range from a few dollars stolen on a sale to a corporate executive embezzling millions from shareholders. Whereas large-scale acts can obviously have immense consequences and enable more formal organized crime, smaller scale acts can have serious consequences as well.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Tracey A. Revenson, *All Other Things Are Not Equal: An Ecological Approach to Personality and Disease*, in PERSONALITY AND DISEASE 65, 81 (Howard S. Friedman ed., 1990).

<sup>22</sup> Fraud costs an estimated \$18 billion annually, with employee theft consisting of 90% of all fraud cases but only resulting in 20.8% of all revenue losses. ASS'N OF CERTIFIED FRAUD EXAM'RS, REPORT TO THE NATIONS ON OCCUPATIONAL FRAUD AND ABUSE 13-14 (2010),

It is important for criminologists to understand the potential causes of fraudulent behaviors in an attempt to uncover strategies for reducing their prevalence.

For employees to engage in fraud, there must be both incentives and opportunities within the work environment. In addition, employees must have the ability to rationalize their fraudulent activity. Employees may view fraudulent accounting practices to be for the good of the organization, as within their rights, or as retribution for an observed injustice. These perspectives are influenced by workplace climate and how criminal activities are socially constructed within the workplace. The chapter further illustrates how organizations might mitigate fraud by implementing internal and external controls.

*Chapter 6: Human Resource Management and Deviant/Criminal Behavior in Organizations*

PHILIP G. BENSON, GLENNIS M. HANLEY, AND  
WESLEY A. SCROGGINS

Benson, Hanley, and Scroggins convey the role human resources (HR) departments play in criminal/deviant behavior management. A number of strategies are presented by which HR can help mitigate the rate of deviant behaviors.<sup>23</sup> This chapter also speaks to the role of organizational culture and disclosure policies, and how they can shape employees' attitudes and behaviors. The authors argue that employees' rights to privacy and fair treatment are quite relevant in implementing practices designed to curb deviant behavior. Employers must balance the need for careful screening with the potential for bias and discrimination. Further, employers with lax policies run the risk of hiring employees who, through their deviant behaviors, harm others. In addition, different legal standards surrounding personal information, its ownership, and its protection present challenges when standardizing employment practices across state and national borders.

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available at [http://www.acfe.com/uploadedFiles/ACFE\\_Website/Content/documents/rtnn-2010.pdf](http://www.acfe.com/uploadedFiles/ACFE_Website/Content/documents/rtnn-2010.pdf), archived at <http://perma.cc/F3NY-TYQT?type=live>.

<sup>23</sup> These strategies include engaging in selection procedures through recruitment; initial screening and selection; training and development; performance management; and terminations.

#### D. THE ROLE OF (IN)JUSTICE AND SOCIAL POWER IN DEVIANT WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR

##### *Chapter 7: Hazards of Justice: Egocentric Bias, Moral Judgments, and Revenge-Seeking*

RUSSELL CROPANZANO AND CAROLINA MOLINER

When individuals are (or believe they have been) treated unfairly, they retaliate in a variety of ways. Injustice perceptions have been linked to deviant behaviors such as sabotage, violence, and aggression. Cropanzano and Moliner discuss how an employee's perceptions of fairness may be biased in favor of himself or herself. This phenomenon creates difficulties for organizations in terms of both negotiating outcomes and resolving conflicts. Since perceptions of injustice include a moral component, they are often enduring and unforgiving, potentially resulting in retaliation and revenge behaviors. These characteristics can create spirals of conflict resulting in the escalation of workplace aggression. This chapter provides a rich background on the philosophy and psychology of justice and ethics, and their ties to deviance. Each section provides insight into what can be done to break such dysfunctional and counterproductive cycles of workplace hostility (e.g., via transparency, information sharing, and behavioral consistency). Finally, the authors summarize the chapter by saying that although the task is usually thankless and difficult, organizations should prioritize treating their employees well to minimize the potential negative outcomes associated with employee injustice perceptions.

##### *Chapter 8: The Role of Social Power in Sexual Harassment and Discrimination*

STEVEN M. ELIAS, LINDSEY A. GIBSON, AND CHET E. BARNEY

According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, there are 23,000–27,000 claims of sexual harassment and 75,000–100,000 claims of workplace discrimination per year.<sup>24</sup> The costs associated with such behavior (e.g., court settlements), not to mention the psychological implications for victims, are staggering. Both types of behaviors are often discussed as issues of social power and dominance. A majority of harassment cases have female victims (although these statistics are slowly shifting). Research has shown that deviant behavior can result from feeling harassed, discriminated against, and essentially, powerless. In this chapter, Elias et al.

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<sup>24</sup> *Charge Statistics FY 1997 Through FY 2013*, U.S. EQUAL EMP'T OPPORTUNITY COMM'N, <http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/statistics/enforcement/charges.cfm> (last visited Nov. 4, 2014), archived at <http://perma.cc/4DPC-AZPS>.

review research reporting on the prevalence and consequences of harassment and discrimination. They review these two phenomena through the lens of social power, describing both the consequences of harassment and discrimination and how organizations can intervene to change power dynamics. They conclude that the social power dynamics within an organization have a significant impact on the rates of discrimination and sexual harassment, leaving it up to the organization to be knowledgeable of these factors and proactive in reducing not only harassment and discrimination, but also the retaliatory deviant behaviors that often follow the reporting of such behaviors.

#### E. VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

##### *Chapter 9: When Employees Turn Violent: The Potential Role of Workplace Culture in Triggering Deviant Behavior*

RICKY W. GRIFFIN AND YVETTE P. LOPEZ

In the United States, it is estimated that at least one person is killed and twenty-five more are injured per week due to workplace-related violence. This violence results in immense losses, not only to the victims and their families, but also to organizations in litigation costs and lost productivity.

Griffin and Lopez delve into what triggers such behaviors. One category of “triggers” involves personality characteristics. The primary personality traits that have been identified are dispositional aggressiveness,<sup>25</sup> Machiavellianism, narcissism, and locus of control.<sup>26</sup> A second class of triggers includes experiential influences. Employees are more likely to engage in violence if they face frustration and perceived injustice. These experiences interact with a third class of triggers: motivations. This category includes expressive motivation, or the need to release pent up anger and frustration, and instrumentation motivation, or the need to obtain balance and restore equity.

Finally, the authors argue that organizational culture plays an important role in promoting or preventing workplace violence. Organizational culture includes norms, rewards, and orientations towards employees. If an organization’s culture tolerates, enables, or approves of deviant behavior, or if it is highly competitive or treats employees as expendable, it can become a breeding ground for violence. The authors propose an interactionist model of deviance where aspects of the organizational environment interact with personal characteristics to shape the propensity for workplace violence. This

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<sup>25</sup> The tendency to respond to a situation with aggression.

<sup>26</sup> Individuals’ beliefs about the amount of control they have over events that impact them.

model provides a simplified approach towards understanding the causes and conditions associated with violent behavior and serves as an excellent segue into the final chapter covering strategies for workplace violence prevention.

*Chapter 10: Workplace Violence: Prevention and Aftermath*

ALLEN K. HESS AND CLARA E. HESS

Hess and Hess make the point that, whereas most media coverage of the topic of workplace violence involves employees murdering employees, the range of violent behaviors (and their transgressors) is broad. The authors classify violent acts according to the parties involved. These classifications include criminal intent, when the offender has no legitimate relationship with the victim; customer or client violence; employee-on-employee violence; and intimate partner violence, where the perpetrator is from a previous or ongoing relationship, and the violent act occurs in the victim's workplace.

After reviewing the widespread impact of workplace violence, the authors review strategies for violence prevention. Environmental strategies revolve around changing the physical environment (e.g., bulletproof glass, additional security). Organizational and administrative strategies involve developing programs and policies that promote a safe environment (e.g., via employee selection, employee assistance programs, and termination policies). Behavioral and interpersonal strategies involve the training of staff in violence prevention techniques, including how to identify potentially violent situations, how to decrease the likelihood of an incident, and how to respond to conflict within the workforce. Each of these strategies has an impact on the four types of workplace violence.

The authors conclude their chapter with a discussion of post-incident management. A management plan that puts into place a protocol is crucial for resuming normal operations as quickly as possible. A well-rounded prevention plan is predicted to reduce the occurrence of workplace violence, and an incident response plan is predicted to limit the damages and make the return to normalcy a much more efficient process.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

A. THEMES

Three major themes emerge from the text as a whole, which presents a uniquely psychological perspective on deviant and criminal behavior in the workplace. The first theme involves the role of personality characteristics, situational characteristics, and their interaction in predicting a wide range of deviant/criminal behaviors. For example, in Chapter 3, we see how perpetrator characteristics, victim self-esteem, and fair treatment interact in

influencing deviant behavior at work. We also see in Chapter 4 how personality traits interact with situational demands in determining the ways in which individuals cope with workplace stressors (which can include deviant behaviors). Whereas economic, sociological, and even anthropological perspectives on the topic of workplace crime might have provided a wider range of insight into this complex and multifaceted topic, the largely psychological position taken by this text is one that is often overlooked, but provides direct guidance as to the management of deviance within organizations.

A second overarching theme is intervention. Across the chapters, readers are offered a number of strategies for preventing workplace crime and deviance. For example, Chapter 4 describes steps that organizations might take to reduce the types and amount of stress an employee might experience, and, as a result, mitigate counterproductive responses to work-related challenges. Chapter 10 provides strategies by which organizations might prepare for or recover from events involving workplace violence. We see how organizations might reduce the impact of workplace violence—or prevent it altogether—through targeted interventions, action planning, and policy implementation. As such, this text goes beyond a strict social scientific review and provides some concrete guidance surrounding prevention and culture change.

A final theme is a focus on the perpetrator. Some authors seem to take a “perpetrator as victim” stance. For example, we learn in Chapter 3 that certain dispositions such as passive aggressiveness can cause aggressive or hostile reactions to certain types of workplace events. We can see how certain attributes can interact with environmental characteristics to result in deviant workplace behavior such as bullying or harassment, and how such experiences can also turn victims into subsequent perpetrators of deviance and crime. Similarly, in Chapter 8, we learn about the role that organizations can play in workplace discrimination. In particular, the authors discuss the dangers of idealizing particular personality traits and advancing those with such traits into positions of power. We learn in Chapter 7 about the enduring nature of revenge and retaliation due to the extent to which perceived injustice is morally imbued. There is certainly value in these investigations. The positions taken are strongly backed by psychological theory and empirical research, and, as mentioned above, considering the dispositional and environment influences on potential perpetrators can aid organizations in mitigating deviance through human resources practices and social/cultural interventions. That being said, a focus on the actual victims of harassment, bullying, and other forms of crime and deviance also deserves psychological analysis, and could be seen as equally relevant for organizations wanting to

mitigate the effects of workplace victimization. For example, as a notable exception to this theme, we learn in Chapter 3 that perpetrators tend to target individuals who are perceived as easy victims. Considering what makes potential victims vulnerable, and how victims cope with targeted deviance is yet another way in which organizations might develop more complex deviance management strategies.

## B. SIMILAR WORKS

While unique in its overarching themes, *Deviant and Criminal Behavior in the Workplace* overlaps in scope to some degree with other works. These include texts that speak more generally to how individuals respond to workplace events, interpersonal interactions, and organizational cultures.

For example, *Problematic Relationships in the Workplace*,<sup>27</sup> edited by Janie M. Harden Fritz and Becky L. Omdahl, focuses on “difficult” or “problematic” individuals in workplace relationships. Unlike the Elias text, this edited book, comprised primarily of chapters written by communications scholars, takes more of a “victims” perspective. Rather than focusing on individual differences or cultural influence, this book focuses more on goal setting and relationship management. There is, however, a focus in one chapter on stress, burnout, and mental health consequences of problematic work relationships.

*Antisocial Behavior in Organizations*,<sup>28</sup> edited by Robert Giacalone and Jerald Greenberg, conceptualizes antisocial behavior as a response to frustrations at work. A frustration is defined as any event or situation that interferes with employees achieving specific goals.<sup>29</sup> In this case, an individual will engage in antisocial behavior as an attempt to remove the cause of the frustration. Some examples of this include: theft of resources, destruction of problematic equipment, and displacement of retaliatory behavior. This text shares some of the perspectives offered by Elias and colleagues in that it factors in many of the environmental and cultural influences on deviant behavior (although the chapters in Elias’s text provide significantly updated literature reviews). Elias remains unique, however, in his in-depth exploration of dispositional influences.

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<sup>27</sup> 2 PROBLEMATIC RELATIONSHIPS IN THE WORKPLACE (Janie M. Harden Fritz & Becky L. Omdahl eds., 2012).

<sup>28</sup> ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR IN ORGANIZATIONS (Robert A. Giacalone & Jerald Greenberg eds., 1997).

<sup>29</sup> Paul E. Spector, *The Role of Frustration in Antisocial Behavior at Work*, in ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR IN ORGANIZATIONS, *supra* note 28, at 1.

*Managing Organizational Deviance*,<sup>30</sup> edited by Roland E. Kidwell, Jr. and Christopher L. Martin, also focuses on the organizational environment and how it influences and potentially incentivizes deviant behavior in otherwise good employees. Whereas a number of themes similar to those of Elias are inherent to this work (especially the focus on practical implications), this text is fundamentally more applied in nature and practitioner-focused as compared to Elias. Each chapter provides case studies illustrating the topics covered, and, as such, contains less theoretical depth in comparison. Chapters are authored, however, by a number of top ethics scholars, and thus this work could serve as a nice companion to the Elias text.

*Handbook of Workplace Violence*,<sup>31</sup> edited by E. Kevin Kelloway, Julian Barling, and Joseph J. Hurrell, Jr., focuses solely on the causes and effects of workplace violence. The chapters presented focus primarily on the forms and sources of violence, as well as the preventative measures that can be taken to curb such behaviors. This work extends the Elias chapters, which are more generalized in their scope, by organizing chapters around violence in specific workplace contexts, including nursing, schools, police departments, labor unions, war settings, peacekeeping efforts, and community work (even including cyber-deviance and violence between young workers). The last section of chapters focuses directly on intervention. As with the Kidwell and Martin text, this volume contains the work of many influential thought leaders in the area of workplace violence and as such would also serve as complementary to the Elias text.

#### CONCLUSION

Elias's *Deviant and Criminal Behavior in the Workplace* is a valuable resource for scholars and practitioners alike, providing other fields with an up-to-date understanding of the prevalent psychological approach to deviant and criminal behaviors in the workplace. Together, the chapters cover the full landscape of both personality and situational characteristics influencing counterproductive, criminal, and violent behaviors that occur in workplace settings. The authors comprehensively cover these issues and situate them in the legal, organizational, and psychological context, which can both enable and bind organizations' ability to prevent and respond to such behaviors. We hope this text will introduce law and criminology to the research of organizational psychologists. Further, we hope organizational psychologists will think more critically about the legal implications of their research

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<sup>30</sup> MANAGING ORGANIZATIONAL DEVIANCE (Roland E. Kidwell, Jr. & Christopher L. Martin eds., 2005).

<sup>31</sup> HANDBOOK OF WORKPLACE VIOLENCE (E. Kevin Kelloway et al. eds., 2006).



findings—fostering a multidisciplinary approach to addressing this important topic. Finally, this book serves as a guide for organizations in understanding what they can do to mitigate and prevent deviant and criminal behaviors, which not only aids in protecting their assets, but also considers the needs of both the potential victims and perpetrators of such acts.