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LABELING THEORY AND RESEARCH—
A Selected Bibliography

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During the past decade those interested in the sociology of deviant behavior have witnessed the emergence of a conceptual model that has at once stimulated more speculation, more critical commentary, and less solid empirical research than virtually any paradigm in the theoretical armamentarium of sociology. Depending upon one's evaluation of what has come to be termed "labeling theory," the perspective may be viewed as a critically important turning point in the development of our understanding of deviant behavior or as a logically inconsistent and overly vague restatement of an approach that has been at our disposal for many years. Truthfully, our own reading of a rapidly growing if frequently redundant literature on the topic suggests that it is simply too soon to tell how viable the rather crudely developed paradigm actually is, and the predictive utility of the model, whatever its contemporary popularity, will remain subject to speculation until a considerably larger number of systematic empirical investigations of key labeling propositions have been completed.

This brief bibliography represents one segment of the initial work on what we hope will prove to be a significant
examination of selected labeling theory propositions as they pertain to the consequences of contact with formal social control agencies on the subsequent attitudinal orientations and behavior patterns of a relatively large sample of juveniles in two urban juvenile court jurisdictions in Virginia. The study, which will be conducted over the next year and a half, is being sponsored by a grant from the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, #75-MI-99-0031.

We certainly do not suggest that our bibliographic work has been exhaustive, and we regret that we have not reached a point at which we could provide those interested in this area of research with at least a topically indexed set of citations. To the contrary, these materials are very preliminary and are being expanded on virtually a daily basis. Still, recent experience with the preparation of a separate bibliography on research relevant to the deterrent effect of sanctions has shown that there are many who appreciate the utility of such bibliographic work as this and at least a few who are kind enough to share the products of their own searches for information with us. We hope that this past experience can be replicated and, if so, that we will be able to circulate a more sophisticated and comprehensive set of citations within the not too distant future.

In short, we hope that you will find this listing of material on the labeling perspective to be of some utility to you in your own teaching and research. Should you have the
time to inform us should there be errors or necessary additions of citations to either published or unpublished works in the area, we would be most appreciative of the assistance and we will be careful to make the necessary modifications before preparing a more complete bibliography for circulation.
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