

## OneillFINAL

🕒 Thu, 11/02 04:00AM · 42mins

Jose Sanchez 00:14

Hi everyone, my name is Jose Sanchez.

Jenn Tostlebe 00:17

And I'm Jenn Tostlebe. Welcome back to the Criminology Academy podcast where we are criminally academic.

Jose Sanchez 00:23

Today we are talking with Professor Jennifer O 'Neill about her work on symbolic interactionism and delinquency.

Jenn Tostlebe 00:30

Dr. Jennifer O 'Neill is an assistant professor in the Department of Criminal Justice at Indiana University Bloomington. She received her PhD in Criminology and Criminal Justice from the University of Missouri St.

Jenn Tostlebe 00:42

Louis in 2021. Jennifer's primary research interests include developing criminological theory, specifically focusing on rational choice and symbolic interactionist perspectives, as well as investigating the connections between school experiences, adolescent socialization, and delinquent behavior.

Jenn Tostlebe 01:00

Her recent work has focused on adolescent legal socialization within the context of the convergence of education in criminal justice institutes.

Jose Sanchez 01:10

In this episode, we talked to Jen about one of her publications, symbolic interactionism, role identities, and delinquency, examining the moderating role of social rewards, which was published in the Journal of Crime and Justice in 2023.

Jose Sanchez 01:23

With that being said, let's bring Jen in. Hi, Jen. Thanks for joining us today. We look forward to talking with you.

Jen O'Neill 01:30

Yeah. Great to be here!

Jenn Tostlebe 01:31

All right. So for today's episode, we're focusing on symbolic interactionism. And this is a theory that we have learned about and we've taught students about very briefly from the undergrad perspective.

Jenn Tostlebe 01:43

But we've actually never touched on this at all on this podcast. So we're excited to have you on to get some more information about it. We will discuss it more later, but it does seem like symbolic interactionism hasn't really caught on as like a mainstream, in quotes, theory.

Jenn Tostlebe 02:02

So for now, can you just give us an overview very generally of what symbolic interactionism or SI for short is?

Jen O'Neill 02:12

Yeah, so I can certainly try. It is, so symbolic interactionism is more of a perspective than a theory. So it's this broad umbrella comes out of philosophy and then social psychology and then sociology, where we spend all this time defining our key concepts.

Jen O'Neill 02:31

So I can talk about the sort of main concepts, part of the perspective that has then been outlined into relationships later on. So I guess you would, we'd call me the philosopher, the father of symbolic interactionism, but it doesn't get its name until Bloomer comes along.

Jen O'Neill 02:51

And it's this perspective on how we make sense of ourselves and how that relates to society. And I think at the time that these ideas start floating around in sociology, there was more of a, I've heard it described this way, like a top down approach.

Jen O'Neill 03:07

How does organized society, how do organized social institutions influence the individual? And so there's this understanding of individuals and how they see themselves and their identities based on the way they've been structured in society.

Jen O'Neill 03:24

And so Mead says, no, it's the other way. We have to start with the individual, kind of this bottom up approach where individuals interacting with each other, assigned meaning to things. They derive symbols and gestures and then comes to these like agreements on how we're going to communicate.

Jen O'Neill 03:45

And that builds into a larger society. So basic concepts from symbolic interactions are the idea of the social self, how a person comes to terms of who they are, their identity by viewing themselves from the standpoint of others.

Jen O'Neill 04:02

And so to come to define yourself, you're getting through things like role taking, that's a major concept in symbolic interactionism. And then you get into these questions of structured roles, your role in an institution, your role in society, and how you define that personally with some subjective meanings, your personal experiences.

Jen O'Neill 04:23

So there's all these like philosophy ideas going on here, but the basic perspective and how we use it, especially in criminology is this idea of the self being defined through our interactions with others and our perspective of how others view us and this role taking behavior in different groups over time.

Jen O'Neill 04:46

So I don't know if that's a good way to boil it down, it's a large perspective, but that's my point.

Jenn Tostlebe 04:50

attempt. No, that was great. Yeah. Thank you.

Jose Sanchez 04:54

Yeah, and I feel like it's always a struggle just like in the most simplest of terms explain what symbolic interactionism is, because they're just so much to it. But we're going to kind of keep going with this for a couple more questions.

Jose Sanchez 05:07

So you know, you just mentioned, you know, we have like these symbols that we attribute meaning to, so you know, like an example would be like, if you see a ring on someone's left ring finger, I think a lot of people would attribute the meaning of all that person is married, right?

Jose Sanchez 05:22

So we attribute a meaning to these symbols around us. But something that you just mentioned is something like raw taking. Can you tell us more about what raw taking and role identities are?

Jen O'Neill 05:33

Yeah, so when me talks about role -taking, so back to this idea of our identity coming from how we perceive others perceive us. Role -taking is the process by which you would project yourself into the standpoint of somebody else and take on their perspective and think about how they expect you to act, how they view you as an object.

Jen O'Neill 05:59

So role -taking is just in your different interactions in your daily life, putting yourself into the standpoint of somebody else and viewing yourself as an object. So how do I expect this person to act?

Jen O'Neill 06:11

How will I react when they behave? And through that process of taking the role of the others, we come to an understanding of what meaning will be applied to our actions. So actually Mead says, when you're growing up, it's kind of a developmental

task here.

Jen O'Neill 06:29

So you're at first in these very specific groups, you're acting with your family and your parents, you're acting with your friend group, your teachers, and role-taking is first very specific. I'm taking the role of my parents, I'm taking the role of friends.

Jen O'Neill 06:44

And then later on, as you get a more concrete definition of self and how you fit into society, you can take the role of a general other, the generalized other, where you could just say like, how do other people react and use that to influence your perception of self and then how you're going to behave.

Jen O'Neill 07:03

So that's role-taking. You also asked about role identities. Yes. Yeah. So role-taking is the process of taking the standpoint of other's role identities. That term comes along later. It's something used by like Nicole and Simmons and Striker.

Jen O'Neill 07:20

If you break it down to role and identity, you see there's this structural component, like what role are you acting in? So in those structured groups, are you a child? Are you a sister? Are you a wife?

Jen O'Neill 07:34

Are you an employee? These structured roles. So that carries some connotation based on your perception of how others view that role. That carries some meaning, right? Like how am I supposed to behave as a partner, as a sibling, as a child?

Jen O'Neill 07:50

But then they also have the subjective component, the identities. So it's not just understanding your role and structure, but the meaning you've attached to that. So you can have these kind of more consistent role-related behaviors, like mother is supposed to be nurturing, but then you're also going to define it based on your personal experience interacting with people in that role.

Jen O'Neill 08:14

So what does that identity mean to you? So that's a role identity is encompassing the structural role in your subjective meaning there.

Jenn Tostlebe 08:23

This just makes me think, and I don't know if either of you did this back in undergrad, if you're taking classes on this. But is this the perspective where people have you cut out like four by four square and then write down the different identities that you've had?

Jenn Tostlebe 08:38

Have you ever done that?

Jen O'Neill 08:39

Yeah, so yeah, I have, because you can see this, this idea of having different roles, it's in other perspectives as well. It's talked about in psychology and just like development in general. And that's where you get ideas of like master status.

Jen O'Neill 08:53

Like here are all the roles I fulfill and like which one matters the most to me or which one do I spend the most time in. So yeah, all of that relates to, I think, the ideas we're talking about in interactionism.

Jenn Tostlebe 09:05

Yeah, master status. That is the word I was trying to think of. Thank you. All right. So on a general level, we've kind of covered symbolic interactionism and discussed role taking and role identities.

Jenn Tostlebe 09:15

Now we're interested in asking you about this concept of reflected appraisals, which is tying in with all of these other things. So what are reflected appraisals and how exactly do they fit in with role taking and role identities?

Jen O'Neill 09:31

Yeah, so I would say reflected appraisals and role identities, those are used really similarly just by different people. So that's

the kind of another challenge in defining symbolic interactionism is that because it's a perspective, there are all these identity theories, social structural identity theory that come out of it, and they use slightly different terms.

Jen O'Neill 09:54

So reflected appraisals are the appraisals that you perceive others make of you. So putting myself into the standpoint of other people, so that's role-taking. How are they then appraising me? Like, how do they view me?

Jen O'Neill 10:11

What do they see me as? That's a reflected appraisal in terms of like operationalization. You see that measure a lot because it's so you can ask questions like, how much do you agree that your friends view you as X, Y, Z?

Jen O'Neill 10:26

And that would capture your reflected appraisal, your perception of how others appraise you. And so that I've seen reflected appraisal and role identity used kind of hand in hand. I think role identity, because it's used by the like structural symbolic interactions, it's really attached to that structural role.

Jen O'Neill 10:45

Like, what does the role of a parent need to be a partner and employee? So that you can make a distinction there, where one is like a general attitude null appraisal of others, but they're both capturing that view that others have of you, your perception of how others view you.

Jenn Tostlebe 11:03

And speaking of perhaps using terms interchangeably, maybe this is where Jose and I were struggling with some differences, but is there any distinction between reflected appraisals and then Cooley's looking glass self?

Jen O'Neill 11:17

I would say that it's reflected in Priscilla's has just gotten more concrete, like more a stronger like definition of the concept, because Cooley, he's a pragmatist who influenced me, and then me to start splitting them up.

Jen O'Neill 11:32

So it's like, we have this intellectual heritage of symbolic interactions on where you see people like William James, who say we have as many selves as people we interact with, and people like Cooley, who said she comes up with this distinction between the social selves, or he says the social self is yourself.

Jen O'Neill 11:52

And then he talks about the mind and reaction to the social self, and Cooley introduces looking glass. So we understand ourselves by looking in a mirror, others are a mirror, and they reflect back at us.

Jen O'Neill 12:04

So that's certainly a straight line to reflect it for his roles. I think he just when Cooley talks about looking glass self, he talks generally about the idea that we're having appraisals reflected us back in us from others.

Jen O'Neill 12:21

And that matters to our identity. And then when we get more development from perspective to theory, we can kind of narrow in on what a reflected appraisal actually is. So short answer is, I think, third similar.

Jen O'Neill 12:36

But one is more concretely defined.

Jenn Tostlebe 12:40

And through the more concrete definition, we can actually operationalize this concept.

Jose Sanchez 12:46

So I was saying a little earlier that I just recently gave a lecture on symbolic interactionism to my students. And so that's, and it's, I usually do it and this was no exception. I usually do it as a precursor or a setup for other theories like labeling theory.

Jose Sanchez 13:02

And labeling theory was kind of really born out of symbolic interactionism. And so whenever I teach this theory class, one of the things I like to do is also discuss. So this is what the theory is. This is what it's arguing.

Jose Sanchez 13:15

These are some of the criticisms. Right. So, and so for symbolic attractionism, some of the criticisms are one that people may interpret symbols differently. And so I use the example of like the wedding ring earlier, but, you know, that's not maybe not a universal thing, different cultures where their wedding rings in different.

Jose Sanchez 13:32

So some of my word on the right hand instead of the left hand, right? Symbols can be differently or inaccurately. Another criticism is that it's too subjective and therefore it's difficult to test the theory.

Jose Sanchez 13:45

Do you know how scholars have gone about trying to maybe address some of these criticisms of symbolic attractionism?

Jen O'Neill 13:52

Yeah, so I'll start with the second criticism of these kind of processes are too subjective. These definitions are like totally hanging on a personal interpretation of interactions. I think that is true, but also just like resonates with background of the theory that like truth is there's no objective truth and it comes out of interaction and all that.

Jen O'Neill 14:20

So I don't really necessarily see it as a downfall because we see this in a lot of other lengths too. Like, you know, there are perceptual measures you can use and I think there are a lot of concrete, more concrete like hypotheses that come out of theories influenced by some of interactionism.

Jen O'Neill 14:38

And so some of the ways that it's been overcome or I guess kind of acknowledged in work is by introducing those ties to structural roles. So like if you look at the work of Striker and other sociologists, social structural symbolic interactionism, they can have measures in there for perceptions attached to different roles, but also tie it back to like just to objectively you are in this position.

Jen O'Neill 15:09

You have you carry this role in your family or you're in this position in the workplace. So there are ways to there's so many relationships to test coming out of the perspective that you can draw some sort of like standardization across people.

Jen O'Neill 15:25

But then the other way of going about it and it gets to your first criticism as well, like the misinterpretation of symbols is that when you see qualitative work influenced by Symboc a sample, you can have participants that have like more shared meaning and you can get into those methods allow you to get more into like how are these symbols interpreted, what meaning does it carry in certain contexts.

Jen O'Neill 15:59

And that way you can recognize that not everyone's going to interpret symbols the same way. But if you're narrowing in on a specific reference group and setting, you can get at more consistency. There's qualitative research that probably has methods that can get at that a little bit better.

Jen O'Neill 16:17

But then there's also just advancements in the quantitative space that lets you measure perceptual just use perceptual measure get at some of these subjective meanings. I think it's a limitation that you have to look when we get to my own paper, different identities are going to be interpreted differently.

Jen O'Neill 16:35

That's part of the perspective, right? You have your personal interpretation of the reflected appraisal. So human behavior is messy yet. I still think we should test it.

Jenn Tostlebe 16:47

Okay, so on a similar note, but kind of moving more into what we do know, can you just give us a lay of the land very broadly about the state of the research when it comes to symbolic interactionism?

Jenn Tostlebe 17:00

Have we seen an increase in the use of the perspective and how we test it?

Jen O'Neill 17:05

I would say overall, in criminology, which has to be talked about a little separately, I don't think we've seen an increase across all research areas. I do think it's having a moment in my assistance research.

Jen O'Neill 17:22

So that is a concrete example in criminology that has been using an interactions framework. So we had pattern officer in Bushways, identity theory of distance, and then Giardano or Neo -median theory, like using a lot of interactionist concepts to understand within -person changes, which is another great way going back to my last question of getting at those subjective meanings.

Jen O'Neill 17:52

If you can look within the individual, it gets you a little more clarity. So I think we're seeing it in distance work, and then the labeling piece you see in criminology a lot. I also think it's having, we're seeing it influence work on gender and race identities and power and status, and that uses a lot of interactions concepts in that.

Jen O'Neill 18:16

I think it was early 2000s, there was this paper about the demise of symbolic interactionism, and it was more about how, because it's a perspective, and it has all these ideas, it gets its place in different disciplines is diffuse, because we're just kind of like, we're using this piece and we're using this piece.

Jen O'Neill 18:36

So I think it's very much still present. I wouldn't necessarily say it's increasing, although we're seeing it more in specific research areas, but the concepts are still there, right? I get influences, learning theories, it's other ones work, that's still very much has its place in criminology.

Jen O'Neill 18:54

So I don't know that it's on the rise, but I'll say that it's still kicking, and it's still like a notable discipline in sociology and social psych.

Jose Sanchez 19:05

All right, so let's start moving into your paper, which is titled Symbolic Intractionism, Role Identities and Delinquency, examining the moderating role of social rewards. In this paper, you assess whether social rewards moderate the association between reflected appraisals and delinquency.

Jose Sanchez 19:21

We used the National Youth Survey and you had a final sample of just over 1400 participants. We looked at social rewards as a construct and identity formation, specifically a delinquent identity, and you look at role identities from the viewpoint of peers.

Jose Sanchez 19:37

So our first question for you is what was the motivation behind writing this paper?

Jen O'Neill 19:43

Yeah, so there is, I have a couple other papers in this that I'm working on now in this area where I'm really interested in how aspects of the symbolic interaction perspective can be integrated with concepts from rational choice.

Jen O'Neill 20:00

So that was really a starting point that was percolating in grad school and making me think about things like symbolic interactionism when we talk about role taking and taking the standpoint of others to think about ourselves and our own behavior.

Jen O'Neill 20:18

That carries with all these connotations of thinking about the costs and rewards and risks of our behavior. And so I really wanted to look at reflective appraisals, role identities and how they relate to our perceptions of the costs and rewards of delinquent behavior.

Jen O'Neill 20:40

So that was one general idea of how these perspectives can be integrated and how they can inform testing. But at another level, I was just interested in peer influence and how, as I mentioned, Sutherland's influence by symbolic interactions and these ideas of definitions in peer influence can be traced to interactionist processes.

Jen O'Neill 21:06

So I wanted to see how your once view of themselves, like their identity in their frame group, how that could be related to delinquent behavior. So I was like, Metsweda's work using the reflected appraisal framework.

Jen O'Neill 21:22

And I thought kind of the next step was to see how these different reflected appraisals relate to our expectation of rewards for delinquent state.

Jose Sanchez 21:33

So as I was reading your paper, something that stuck out to me was when you were describing your sample and you know, because the actual sample of the NYS is a little bit bigger than what you ended up using.

Jose Sanchez 21:44

So you're talking about, you're kind of walking us through why you removed certain people from your analytical sample. And so you remove people who reported not having any close friends from your analytic sample.

Jose Sanchez 21:56

And then the reason you give for this was that there's research that shows that people who have no close friends or report having no close friends are substantively different from people who report low levels of peer influence.

Jose Sanchez 22:10

And so this kind of just stuck out to me a little bit. So I want to ask if you could maybe tell us a little bit more about this not having close friends versus reporting low levels of peer influence and like what the difference is there.

Jen O'Neill 22:23

Yeah, so well, one thing purely methods wise, like a lot of times when we talk about peer influence or measures are actually asking about friends. So like a little more specific than peers, what we're talking about, like who you hang out with and often use the word friends.

Jen O'Neill 22:38

So I wanted to distinguish between those who say they didn't have close group of friends and those who are talking about friends influencing their behavior. And that was, yeah, basically, as you mentioned, based off of the research on social isolates, like demuthin, creator, have pieces on adolescents who don't identify any group of friends are considered social isolates or other terms.

Jen O'Neill 23:05

And they're on average less delinquent, although there's some confusion over if the isolation is due to like conflict with friends, then that could be a risk factor for delinquency. But they're just delinquency patterns or behaviors a little bit different than somebody who would say like, I don't have a lot of friends who approve of delinquency or I don't have a lot of delinquent friends.

Jen O'Neill 23:28

So when we're talking about peer influence, and especially if we're measuring it based on their friends, we're looking at two aspects, kind of the normative peer influence, where I hang out with people who transfer definitions that are pro crime.

Jen O'Neill 23:44

And then there's also like situational characteristics like as good opportunity, like I hang out with a lot of friends and that increases opportunity for crime. Those are like two aspects of peer influence.

Jen O'Neill 23:55

Both don't really come into play if you're talking about somebody who isn't hanging out with friends. So that's why I made that separation. I did like for a robustness check, include them as well. It doesn't change the results.

Jen O'Neill 24:09

But I think we don't know enough about social isolates, because then there's also work that the work that says like they're different also shows that sometimes it's very short lived, like somebody who says like, I don't have a close group of friends, they could be like, I just got in a fight with them and now I'm not hanging out with anyone.

Jen O'Neill 24:28

And so it's usually like really short term relationships, which again, would matter if you're influenced if you think about like frequency and interacting with people, but it's a more complicated question.

Jen O'Neill 24:40

So I wanted to separate them out for that reason. It doesn't really change substantively the results, but I think they should be recognized as like a different group.

Jose Sanchez 24:50

Yeah, now that makes sense.

Jenn Tostlebe 24:52

It's also really now that you're talking about like social isolates, that's just, I see, and I feel like that would be a really interesting area of research. Because I feel like some of them could be actually very, very delinquent involved.

Jenn Tostlebe 25:08

Delinquents that are involved, I don't know the right term, whereas others wouldn't be. And it's like, why not that this has anything to do with your paper. But yeah, it would just be interesting to look at why some would be more involved in delinquency and others not.

Jenn Tostlebe 25:21

And then also the length of how long they're isolated for sure.

Jen O'Neill 25:26

Yeah, well, just I agree. Like I think there's really, especially in terms of like identity as well, like if you identify as like a loner or something like that, I do think it has important questions and even within the like framework I'm working in.

Jen O'Neill 25:41

But it was more like, I can't do everything in this paper. Yeah, yeah. Oh yeah, for sure. A different set of questions. Yeah.

Jenn Tostlebe 25:50

Okay, so earlier on in the episode, I asked you about reflected appraisals. And in your study, you focus on two very specific appraisals, the sociable appraisal and the rule violator appraisal. Can you describe to us what constitutes these two different appraisals?

Jen O'Neill 26:08

Yeah, so both are measures of how you think others view you. And so the sociable appraisal is trying to get at this. The idea that you are viewed as somebody who gets along well with others, you know, well, like those are like the two measures that go into it, but on a broader, like conceptual level, it's like a pro -social identity seen as like a well -liked person and like affable, easygoing, those kinds of traits.

Jen O'Neill 26:37

I think we're limited in the measures, but it was a more pro -social identity, which is why I was interested in it. Because on the flip side, we have the rule violator appraisal, which captures things like the perception that you're a bad kid, a troublemaker, that you break the law, and that already has these negative connotations.

Jen O'Neill 26:58

Even if somebody personally was like, that's what I want to do. It has societal level, like a negative connotation that you're doing something wrong. So both those appraisals were linked to delinquency and increase in delinquency and prior work.

Jen O'Neill 27:13

And so I wanted to focus on those two that capture these different meanings, where one is specifically defined by behavior, so breaking rules. And one is just like, I think more abstract idea of just being like a good, get along well with others, kids.



Jen O'Neill 27:29

So one of the issues with it is that like, I want to know more about what social needs, when people are saying, yeah, that's how I view myself. But I, in contrast to the other one, I thought that was an interesting way to look at things.

Jenn Tostlebe 27:43

Yeah. And you just said that both of them have been linked to delinquency in prior work. And, you know, I instantly went back to like high school where it was like, always the popular kids who were involved in, you know, minor forms of delinquency, like drinking underage and so on.

Jenn Tostlebe 28:00

And so can there be an overlap between these two appraisals? Can someone be sociable and a rule violator at the same time? Or is it like one or the other?

Jen O'Neill 28:09

Yeah, there can be an overlap and there was in the sample I had to use them as controls because you can think that your friends view you as a troublemaker and also it's like and that it gets into exactly what you're talking about and that's kind of the lane I went down in the research is looking at like popular kids and offending because it gets out of this general idea that like delinquency in so many ways is normative in adolescence.

Jen O'Neill 28:39

It's like actually could be and totally expected behavior like minor rule breaking. So you can certainly say you're appraise both ways and then I think just on a more like cognitive level there'd be distinctions and navigating how to behave and that goes in interactionism and rule taking.

Jen O'Neill 28:59

It's the idea that when you get to a situation where like habits can't guide you, that's when you're more likely to project into the standpoint of others and think about okay like what behavior am I going to pursue here.

Jen O'Neill 29:13

So I think especially in adolescence you're in these problem situations right where like I'm expected to like go along with the group and be easy going here but I'm also viewed as like a rule violator so what does that mean for this situation like how am I supposed to act?

Jose Sanchez 29:29

Yeah. Okay. So let's start getting into the results of your paper. So you had two main hypotheses that you were interested in. So the first hypothesis was that the social book, Prazo, would be associated with higher levels of delinquency for those who had higher levels of perceived social rewards.

Jose Sanchez 29:48

And so we want you to break this down a little bit for us. So why did you theorize this was going to be the relationship?

Jen O'Neill 29:56

Yeah, so one thing about world taking and developing these more specific role identities in a reference group is that it's supposed to be a developmental process where especially as an adolescent, you're not quite clear in your experimenting.

Jen O'Neill 30:14

I think my friends view me this way, but what does that actually mean? So I'm wanting to know how behavior like delinquency gets linked to an appraisal. So if they expect me to act this way, that means being delinquent or breaking a rule or doing whatever in that situation.

Jen O'Neill 30:35

So I expected based on way role taking is defined in real identities that when you're taking the role of another and working out how do they view me, how do they expect me to act, you're also thinking about will they reward this behavior?

Jen O'Neill 31:04

That helps you define delinquency as identity consistent. So if somebody says my friends expect me to be sociable, sometimes that might not mean engaging in delinquency. But if you're trying to navigate a situation and you think my friends expect me to be sociable, and I know that they improve of delinquency, then you're going to link that behavior to the

identity.

Jen O'Neill 31:30

And then maybe it becomes more habitual over time. So that's breaking down the hypothesis I thought, in general, on average, kids who identify as sociable might be engaged in a little more delinquency.

Jen O'Neill 31:44

But that's going to be even stronger for kids who also expect delinquency is rewarded. If they're supposed to get along well with others, go along with a group. And they think their friends think delinquency is cool or approved of in some way, then being sociable is going to come to me.

Jen O'Neill 32:02

I go along with delinquency and I offend. So that's why I expect that relationship to be stronger.

Jose Sanchez 32:08

And so what did you end up finding?

Jen O'Neill 32:11

So I did find support for that hypothesis with the sociable relationship. There was evidence of moderation, kids who are sociable engage in a little more delinquency than kids who don't have that reflective bias.

Jen O'Neill 32:26

And that relationship's even stronger if they anticipate social rewards. So for that one I supported.

Jenn Tostlebe 32:33

And then your second hypothesis then is talking about the rule violator appraisal. And you hypothesized that the rule violator appraisal would be associated with higher levels of delinquency for those who had higher perceptions of social rewards.

Jenn Tostlebe 32:49

And so just like before, can you break down this hypothesis and why you thought this would be the relationship?

Jen O'Neill 32:56

Yeah, so again, based on the process of you expect your friends appraise you as a rule violator. If you also expect that they reward delinquency, I have thought that delinquent behavior will be defined as consistent with your role.

Jen O'Neill 33:13

And so you'd engage in even more offending than those kids who say, yeah, my friends expect me to be a rule violator, but I know they don't approve of delinquency. So I expect the same sort of relationship as sociable rewards are going to strengthen that link.

Jen O'Neill 33:27

I did not find that I found moderation actually in the opposite direction. And so what that suggests is that kids who expect that their friends view them as a rule violator, they engage in more delinquency than others.

Jen O'Neill 33:41

But when you compare all the rule violators to each other and the ones who expect delinquency is rewarded and the ones who don't, actually the kids who identify as rule violators and don't think their friends reward behavior engaging more offending, since the opposite direction is that the social rewards for delinquency actually weaken that relationship to the behavior.

Jen O'Neill 34:08

So I did kind of leave that one as a little more exploratory because of that distinction between the two appraisals. Sociable is this, oh, get along well with others. It's kind of vague. Rule violators explicitly getting out behavior, right?

Jen O'Neill 34:24

If you think people view you as a rule violator, that is directly attached to violating rules, right? Breaking laws is one of the questions too. So social rewards acted a little differently. I think because of the content of that appraisal, if you're identifying as a rule violator, whether your friends approve of the behavior or not, doesn't matter as much to define the role as it would for somebody who's sociable aware or that appraise a little more vague.

Jen O'Neill 34:55

So you consider the expectations of your friends, whether they'll reward or disapprove of the behavior, whereas if you're a troublemaker rule violator, maybe that identity is already clear and what this would be an empirical question, that it's possible that the rewards of friends is actually not going to be identity consistent then.

Jen O'Neill 35:22

Like if you're expected to be this troublemaker, then friends approving of the behavior wouldn't be role consistent, right? You're expected to be kind of rebellious and like not acting the way people will reward.

Jen O'Neill 35:35

And so that could be why I find moderation in the opposite direction. Rule violators more likely to offend than non -rule violators, but expecting rewards is going to weaken that association, whereas if your friends disapprove, that's more role consistent.

Jen O'Neill 35:50

That makes more sense.

Jenn Tostlebe 35:51

That's like exactly what I was going to ask if, and I didn't know if there'd been any research on it, I'm guessing not since you just said it would be an empirical question. But yeah, it's this idea of like, oh, they approve of it, but you wouldn't want them to necessarily.

Jen O'Neill 36:08

It's also like a complication with measuring rewards. Like the question, the operationalization I had available to me in the data was like, do friends approve of delinquency? And it's not clear what that means.

Jen O'Neill 36:22

I think having more like nuance and like, do they think it's cool? Or like, do they want you to do it? Like, how do they reward it? Does you have an increase in status because of that? Or is it just like something that they don't have strong feelings about?

Jen O'Neill 36:35

That could kind of get at. Am I acting in a way that I know it's going to be disagreed of because that's my thing? Like that's what I wanted to do. Or it was something more specific than that.

Jenn Tostlebe 36:49

Yeah, or even looking at like if there's monetary rewards versus status rewards and how that impacts it.

Jose Sanchez 36:57

Yeah, super interesting. And I already started to delve into this a little bit, but what are the implications of this study for future research?

Jen O'Neill 37:06

I think so one goal for my overall motivation was to start really tying in these expectations of rewards, costs, and risks into an interaction of spring work. So I think one advantage of the paper was just to show like, get at work.

Jen O'Neill 37:25

So that leads to more questions, but it also makes theoretical sense, it makes empirical sense to consider how reflected appraisals mark up with these expectations of rewards is what I talked about, but I'd also like to get into other types of rewards, other types of costs.

Jen O'Neill 37:43

So I think that was one indication, I was like to just keep moving forward with this work, but I also, because I found different relationships for sociable and rule violator, I think it gets at the need to just have more of these measures available, to show limited and reflected appraisals, but be able to tease out the different meanings attributed to these roles.

Jen O'Neill 38:05

Like I expect that I'm supposed to act this way, but what does that mean, like one of those behaviors mean? And if one is, I

want to stand out, I want to be rebellious, then rewards are going to act differently versus one that's going long out with others.

Jen O'Neill 38:22

So I think just showing that contrast and not exploring that more is an important first step there, because a lot of the work on reflective appraisals focuses on that rule violator, like or of a criminal or troublemaker, even other data sets, other work has used like an explicitly criminal or delinquent identity, which is really interesting work, but especially when we're talking about adolescence, that you can have other identities that relate to delinquency.

Jen O'Neill 38:50

A lot of times we're not thinking about it as a criminal behavior. So I think that was an important step in showing that contrast and hopefully informing future directions with it.

Jenn Tostlebe 39:03

I just had one other question because we talked about how this sociable and rule violator appraisal could mesh together. Did you look at that in your study of people who maybe scored higher on both of these aspects?

Jen O'Neill 39:19

That was one thing that it's a pretty small group that's for high in both because they're continuous measures. They, and they're negatively correlated in the sample. So it's not likely, but you can have like, you know, you could be like neutral on both, which I don't really even know what that.

Jen O'Neill 39:35

What that means. But I would like to look into that work as well, just like what it means to have these two appraisals at the same time. That's one of the challenges with the reflected appraisals is that your it's great in that you're getting at the subjective meaning of like how your friends expect you to act.

Jen O'Neill 39:54

But even within those questions, it's like, oh, that can be interpreted differently.

Jose Sanchez 40:01

Those are all the main questions that we had for you today. Thank you so much for taking time out of your day to speak with us. If anyone has any questions, where can people find you? Email Google Scholar X, formerly known as Twitter.

Jen O'Neill 40:15

I think email would be the best. I try to stay off the social media. I know that it's great for others. It's not great for me. But so yeah, you can use my IU email address is just jennoniel at IU .edu.

Jen O'Neill 40:31

I would be so open to a cold email. It's fine with me, especially when you're an early figure scholar. Yeah, I'd love to hear from you.

Jenn Tostlebe 40:40

Awesome. Well, thank you so much, Jen. It was great having you on and getting to see you again in a while. Hopefully we catch you at ASC if you're going to be there this year.

Jen O'Neill 40:51

I'll be there. And yeah, thanks for having me on. I'm always down to talk about interactionism and its challenges and triumphs.

Jenn Tostlebe 40:59

Yes, it seems like there's a lot on both sides. Yeah. It's interesting.

Jen O'Neill 41:03

Yeah.

Jenn Tostlebe 41:04

Hey, thanks for listening.

Jose Sanchez 41:07

Don't forget to leave us a review on Apple Podcasts or iTunes or let us know what you think of the episode by leaving us a comment on our website, [thecriminologyacademy.com](http://thecriminologyacademy.com).

Jenn Tostlebe 41:17

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Jose Sanchez 41:29

or email us at [thecrimacademy@gmail.com](mailto:thecrimacademy@gmail.com). See you next time.