

The Eastern Mind

Melius Est Petere Fontes Quam Sectari Rivulos

Shame, Shame: An Application of Labeling Theory (Case Study: China)

May 24, 2015 *October 15, 2015*

Though cultures vary in many ways, each has developed a consistent set of ideals or norms of expected behavior. When an individual acts against societal norms, the punishment represents the collective majority's moral reaction. That reaction often includes assigning deviant status to the individual, or labeling. Social reaction to crime is an integral component of labeling theory.¹

Image Source: <http://www.couriermail.com.au> (<http://www.couriermail.com.au>)

While Western society goes to extreme measures to avoid labeling juveniles, **the Chinese have embraced labeling theory as a means to prevent and reduce juvenile delinquency and rehabilitate youthful offenders. Because in Chinese culture violating societal norms is seen as undesirable and disgraceful, the Chinese believe the juveniles will resist delinquent behavior to avoid being shamed.** The two cultures differ most in the personal reaction to the deviant label. In Western society, individuals labeled "deviant" come to internalize the label and see deviant status as part of their identity. They often start reoffending in a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Chinese culture is very dependent on social groups and bonds with family, friends, peers, and neighbors as the primary basis for interaction, and even for the basic necessities of life. Moreover, social conformity is a key element of Chinese culture. Those who act selfishly by seeking personal satisfaction through criminal acts are scorned, labeled, and eventually cast out of their original social group. Mass public trials and public announcements of judicial rulings are a significant threat to social bonds. Individuals labeled "deviant" in the Chinese culture will do everything in their power to shed the status of criminal in order to remain accepted members of society.

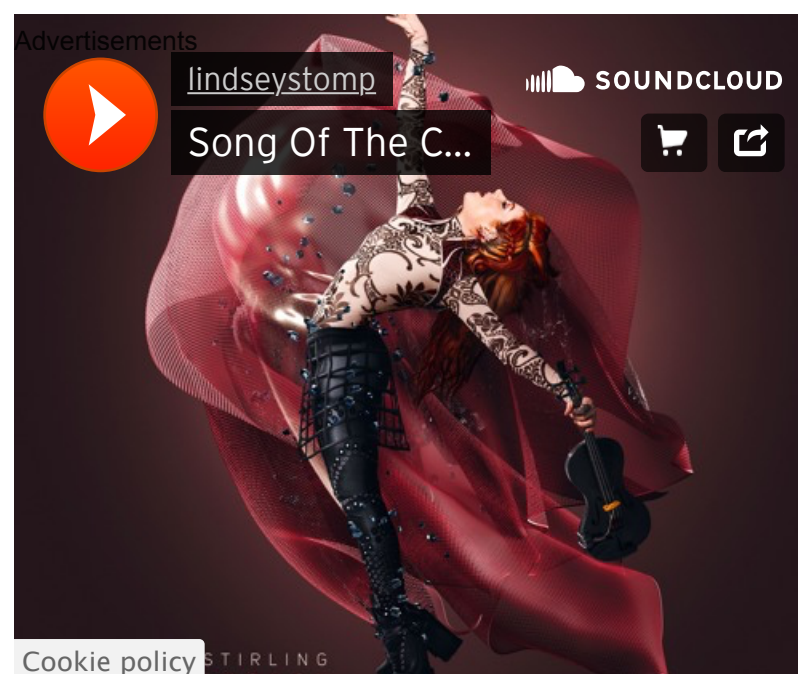
Social control measures for preventing delinquency among Chinese youth begin with shaming methods of punishment. However, shaming becomes more effective when combined with efforts at reintegrating offenders back into the community so as not to create a permanent and terminal sense of alienation.²

Sheila R.J

References:

Murphy, K., & Harris, N. (2007). Shaming, Shame, and Recidivism: A Test of Reintegrative Shaming Theory in The White-Collar Crime Context. *British Journal of Criminology*. doi: 10.1093/Bjc/Azm037

Chen, Social Control in China, 2002; Chen, X. (2002). Community and Policing Strategies: A Chinese Approach to Crime Control. *Policing and Society*, 12(1), 1-13



REPORT THIS AD

REPORT THIS AD

[CREATE A FREE WEBSITE OR BLOG AT WORDPRESS.COM.](https://www.wordpress.com)



REPORT THIS AD