

# CALL FOR PAPERS

**RETHINKING OUTSIDERS.**

**BECKER AND THE NEW FORMS OF "DEVIANCE"**



*In memory of Howard Gault Becker  
(1928 - 2023)*

## Special Issue of the Journal *Criminologia, Vittimologia e Sicurezza*

With the passing of Howard S. Becker, sociology has lost one of its most original voices—one capable of radically transforming how we view “deviance” and the social practices that produce it. His seminal work *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance* (1963) not only introduced a new theoretical perspective—the labelling theory—but also redefined the role of the sociologist as a critical observer of the processes by which normality is socially constructed. Starting from the idea that deviance is not a quality of the act itself but rather a consequence of the application of rules and sanctions by others, Becker opened a line of inquiry that has profoundly influenced not only the sociology of deviance, but also cultural studies, epistemological and methodological reflection, critical criminology, the sociology of art, and urban ethnography.

To celebrate his work, his insights, and his theoretical contributions, the *Rivista di Criminologia, Vittimologia e Sicurezza* is dedicating a special issue to the theoretical, methodological, and political legacy of his thought. We invite scholars, researchers, and PhD candidates to submit theoretical or empirical contributions that explore, question, or critically revisit Becker’s legacy and the labelling theory in light of contemporary transformations.

### Possible topics include, but are not limited to:

- ☐ Topical relevance and limitations of labelling theory in the context of new forms of social control;
- ☐ Labelling and identity in digital environments;
- ☐ Stigma, marginality and agency: new theoretical and methodological perspectives;
- ☐ Deviance, art and culture: Becker’s contribution beyond crime;
- ☐ Connections between Becker and other sociological traditions;
- ☐ Methodological reflections on ethnography and the role of the researcher;
- ☐ Youth groups, subcultures and pathways to marginalisation: between imposed identities and practices of resistance;
- ☐ Drug studies and the social definition of substance use;

- ☐ The relationship between moral entrepreneurs and processes of criminalisation;
- ☐ The role of moral entrepreneurs in defining gender, sexual and racial “deviance”;
- ☐ Contemporary rule creators: media, political movements and the “defence of traditional values”;
- ☐ Invisible rule enforcers: digital platforms, artificial intelligence and opaque rules;
- ☐ Memory, archives and biographical pathways between science and social commitment;
- ☐ Deviant careers and agency: trajectories, choices, narratives;
- ☐ Objectivity, neutrality and positionality in social research.

<b>Deadline abstract (max 500 words)</b>	<b><u>15 september</u></b>	<b>Expected publication</b>
<b>Abstract acceptance</b>	<b><u>30 september</u></b>	December 2025 / January 2026
<b>Proposal submission</b>	<b><u>31 october</u></b>	

Proposals	Contacts
<p>Proposals may be submitted in Italian, English, or French. All contributions will undergo double-blind peer review.</p> <p>For submissions or further information</p>	<p>Points of contact:</p> <p>Sandra Sicurella: sandra.sicurella2@unibo.it</p> <p>Simone Tuzza: simone.tuzza2@unibo.it</p> <p><b><u><a href="mailto:redazione@vittimologia.it">redazione@vittimologia.it</a></u></b></p>