

# You decide

[Sociology](#)



Sociological Analysis of a Deviant Act I went to a restaurant, and ordered Pina Colada. Once the waiter brought the drink, I poured it into my plate, and started sipping it directly from the plate. To do this, I took the plate in my hand and using both hands, I brought it to my lips and sipped the drink. I did not just sip it, but also I made strong sipping sounds as well, like “shhssssrrup...shhssssrrup” so that I get noticed.

The people around me showed different reactions. One thing that was common in all reactions was that none of them was encouraging. Some got irritated and passed me nasty looks, others put their hands over their ears to keep the sound from approaching them. One person sitting next to my table actually stood up facing me like as if he was wanting to say something to me, but then thought better of it. The waiter was no less apprehensive of my act. He got perplexed when I ordered a second drink. I felt like being the center of attraction but in a negative way obviously. The act was not easy for me to perform given I understood that it was discomforting the people around me, though I tried my best to maintain an indifferent attitude to all the looks I was receiving. I guess this made others feel even more uneasy. In the end, when the waiter brought me the bill, I said in a loud voice, “ Oh, just \$30!” Again, this was intended to catch others’ attention. I paid the waiter an extra \$20. This surprisingly changed everybody’s behavior. Someone said, “ Wow, rich man!” Another said, “ Well, that must be the new style in the town. Hey waiter, bring me a Pina Colada” The waiter also smiled thankfully. And everybody seemed to have forgotten how I had drunk the Pina Colada. I felt like being honored.

According to the conflict theory, power and coercion are the most important drivers of social order. Conflict theory emphasizes that power rests with

those who have the greatest resources. Although my act was absurd, yet in the end I felt like being honored because the extra \$20 tip had spoken out loud about me being rich. My rich impression on others made them think of my act as style, and everybody seemed to have remembered nothing but that I was rich.

Like the conflict theory, labeling theory also emphasizes upon the role of power in determining who labels whom and how. According to the labeling theory, labels are typically imposed by powerful individuals in the society. Since I had demonstrated my monetary power, people stopped labeling me immediately and rather started showing positive attitude toward me and my act.

The sociological concept of culture emphasizes on the role of culture in shaping people's attitudes. I overheard someone saying, " It's a culture there in the East to drink things that way. My Indian friend drinks tea like that." Having drunk Pina Colada in the plate, I made some people feeling like I was from India. This made me feel a little easier because at least some people thought it was because of my culture that I was drinking Pina Colada like that.