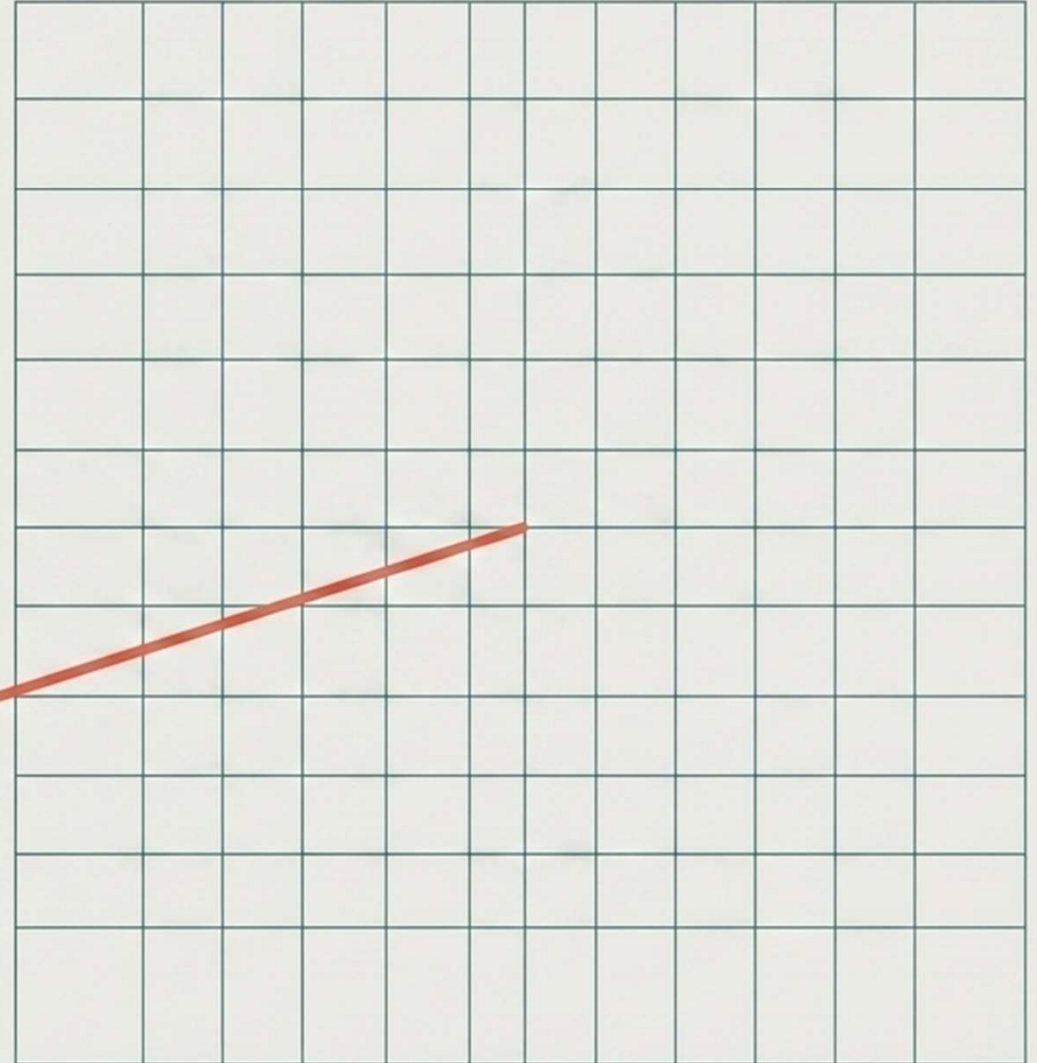


# Diagnosing Deviance in the Social Fabric

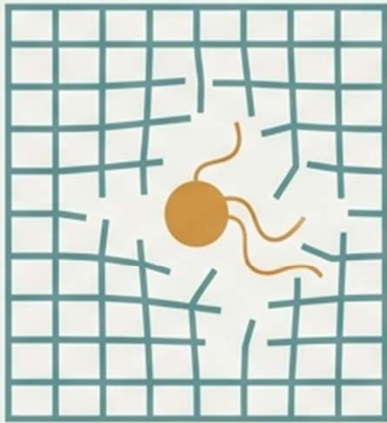
A conceptual framework of anomie, alienation, identification, and identity in criminological theory.

**Dr. Mridul Srivastava**  
Ph.D., FISC, D.Litt.  
Assistant Registrar and Faculty in Criminology  
Dr. Ram Manohar Lohiya National Law University, Lucknow  
Mobile: 9453015679  
Email: [srivastavamridullko@gmail.com](mailto:srivastavamridullko@gmail.com)



# Four states define an individual's congruency with social norms

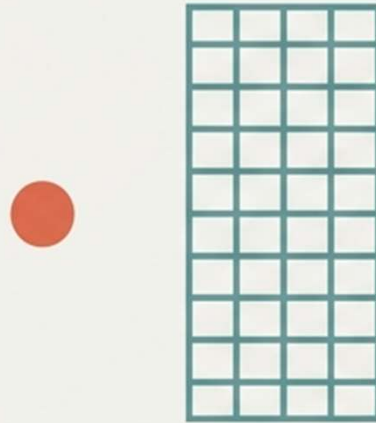
## Anomie



Personal disorganisation resulting from weakened, contradictory, or absent normative standards.

Core Deficit: Norms  
(Lawlessness)

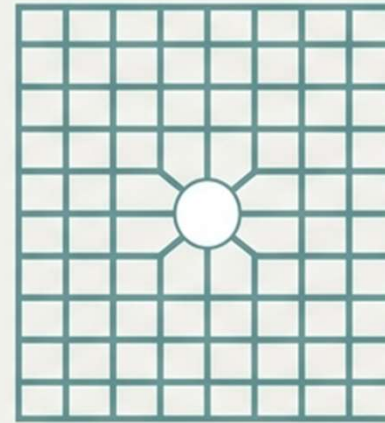
## Alienation



Estrangement from the outside world; aloofness from group behaviour and lack of loyalty.

Core Deficit: Integration  
(Asocial)

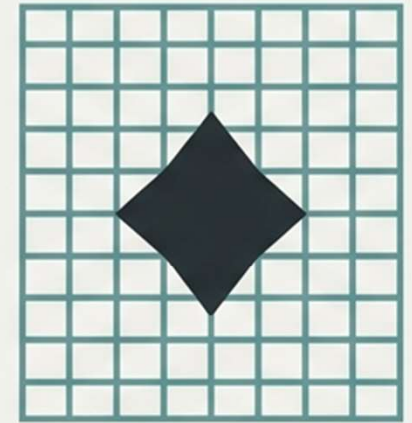
## Identification



The merging of the individual with a group; accepting the roles of those to whom one belongs.

Core Focus: Belonging  
(Merging)

## Identity



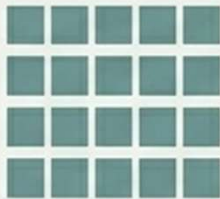
A self-concept expressed in individual strivings, values, and expectations within the group.

Core Focus: Self-Concept  
(Individuality)

## Durkheim's foundation: Deviance emerges when the collective conscience fragments

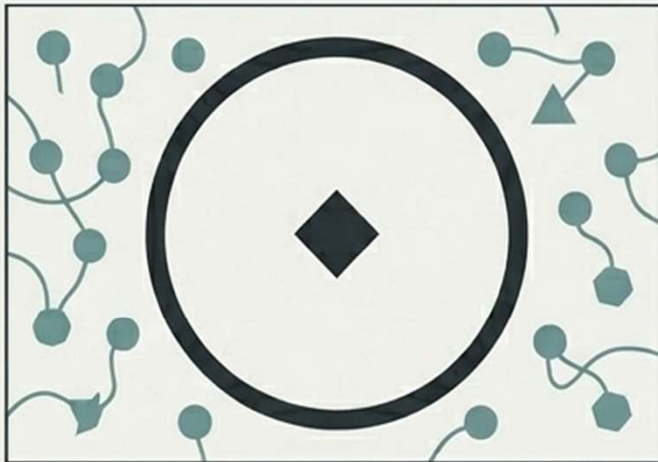
In 1897, Émile Durkheim revived the term *anomie* to explain how the shift from mechanical to organic social solidarity creates deep psychological casualties.

**Mechanical  
Solidarity**  
Physics-based  
structure



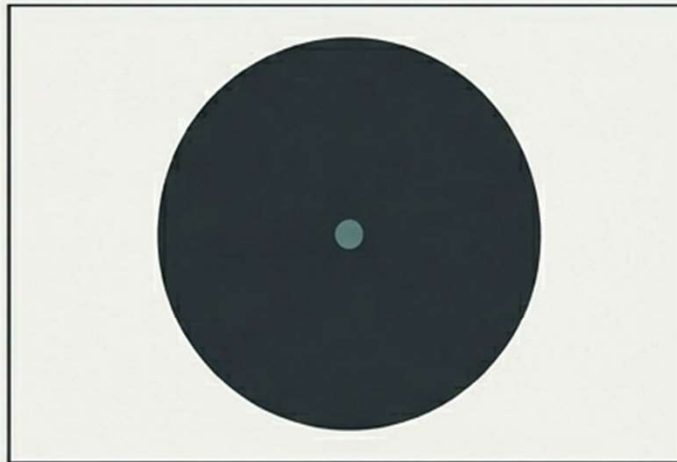
**Organic  
Solidarity**  
Biology-based  
individual awareness

### 1897 Le Suicide Typology



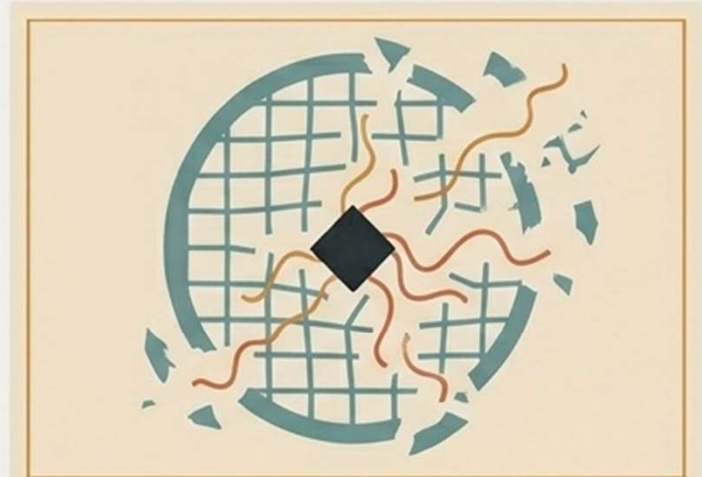
#### 1. Egoistic

The individual shuts themselves off entirely from other human beings.



#### 2. Altruistic

The individual is consumed by an overwhelming loyalty to a cause.



#### 3. Anomic (Anomie)

The individual acts destructively because their entire world and guiding rules have abruptly fallen apart.

## Merton's Strain Theory: The friction between societal goals and legitimate means

The culture dictates acceptable goals. The social structure dictates the legitimate means. Strain occurs when lower socioeconomic strata are denied access to these legitimate means.

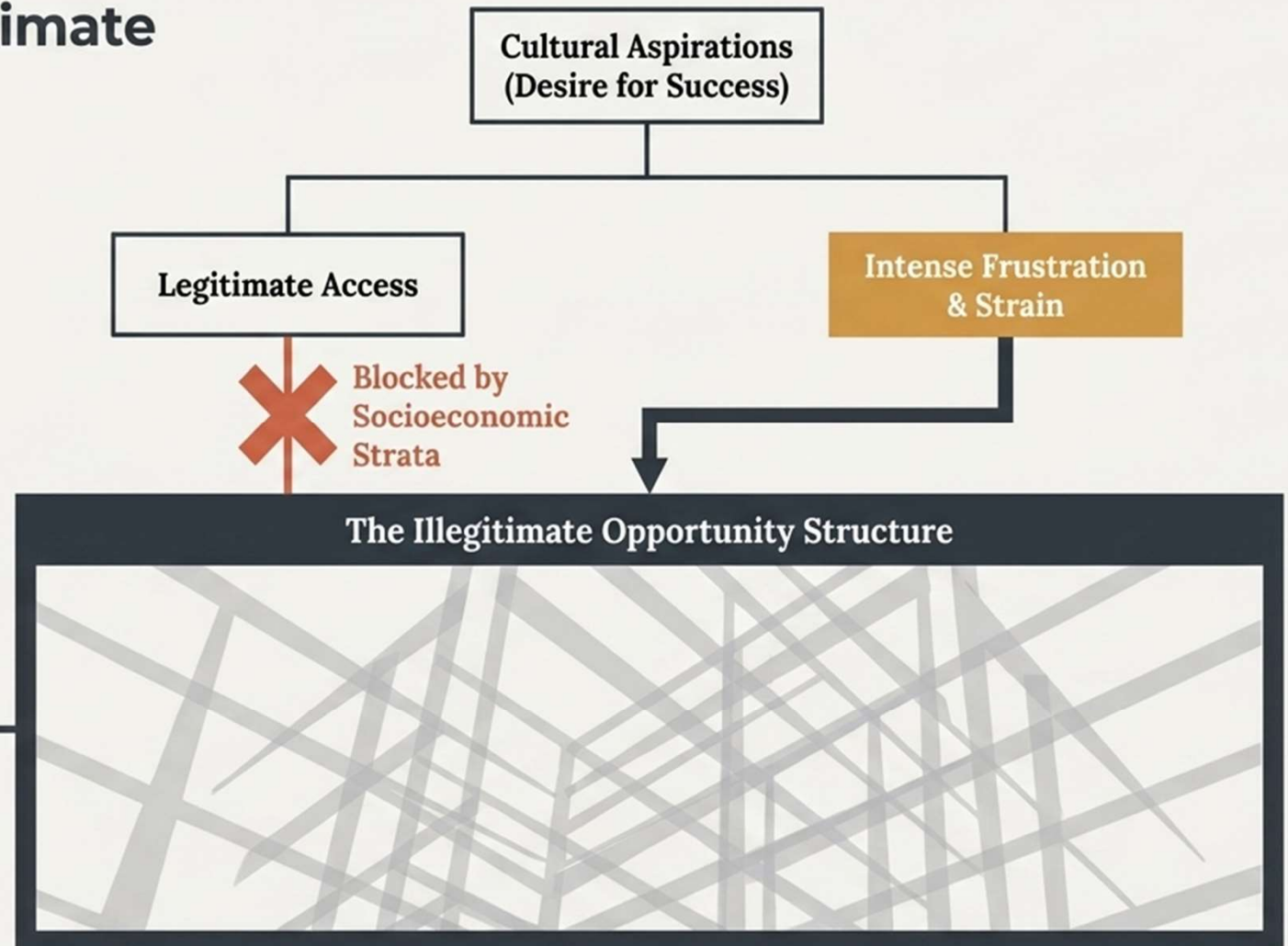
Adaptation Mode	Culture Goals	Institutionalised Means	Modern Example
I. Conformity	+	+	Accepts both. The most common and stabilising adaptation.
II. Innovation	+	-	White-collar crime, the Robin Hood syndrome, theft.
III. Ritualism	-	+	Scaling down aspirations to play it safe without rocking the boat.
IV. Retreatism	-	-	Vagabonds, addicts, true aliens retreating from society.
V. Rebellion	+/-	+/-	Rejects arbitrary structures to establish a modified social order.



Strain is the misalignment of goals and means.

## Cloward and Ohlin introduce the variable of illegitimate opportunity

Not everyone has equal access to illegal opportunities. Anomie creates the desire to deviate, but the environment dictates the ability to do so.



**The Synthesis:** Differential access to illegitimate systems bridges the gap between Durkheim's anomie and Sutherland's learned cultural behaviour.

# The Subculture Ecosystem: Three paths of collective lower-class frustration

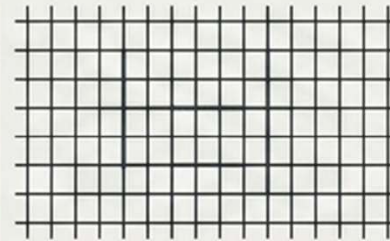
When youths internalise conventional goals but face intensely blocked access, they form collective subcultures to solve their shared disparity.

Collective  
Frustration



Architectural  
Branching

## 1. The Criminal Gang (Acquisition)



Focuses on stealing to acquire property and money.

Emerges where stable illicit enterprises provide a training ground.

## 2. The Conflict Gang (Aggression)



Focuses on fighting other gangs and vandalism.

Emerges in disorganised areas lacking both legitimate and stable illegitimate opportunities.

## 3. The Retreatist Gang (Escape)

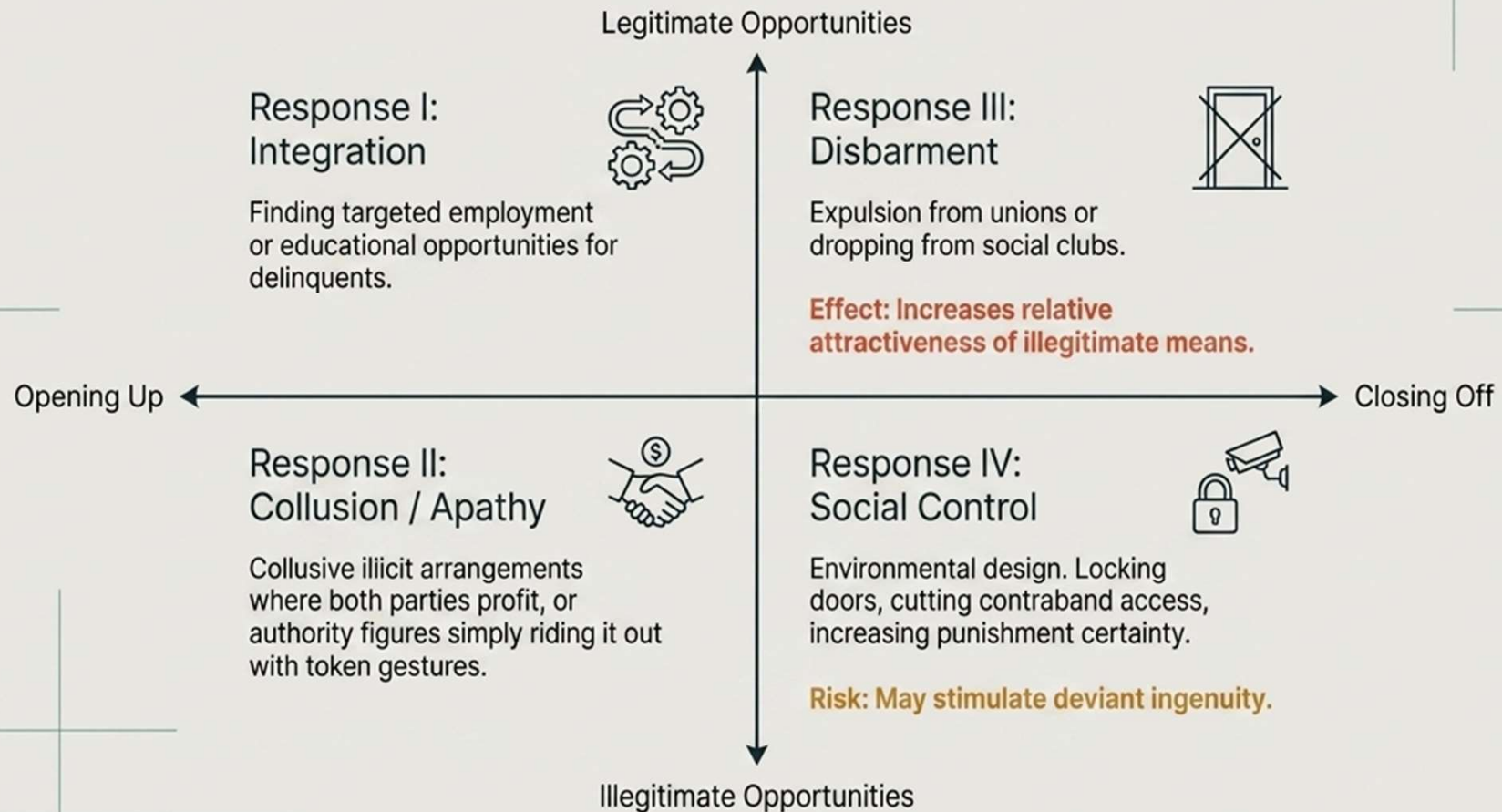


Focuses on self-indulgent use of drugs or alcohol.

Emerges as a double failure (failing in both legitimate and illegitimate spheres), blocking out the world entirely.

# Societal Responses: Modifying the opportunity structure

Cohen noted that societal reactions dictate the contraction or expansion of future criminal paths.



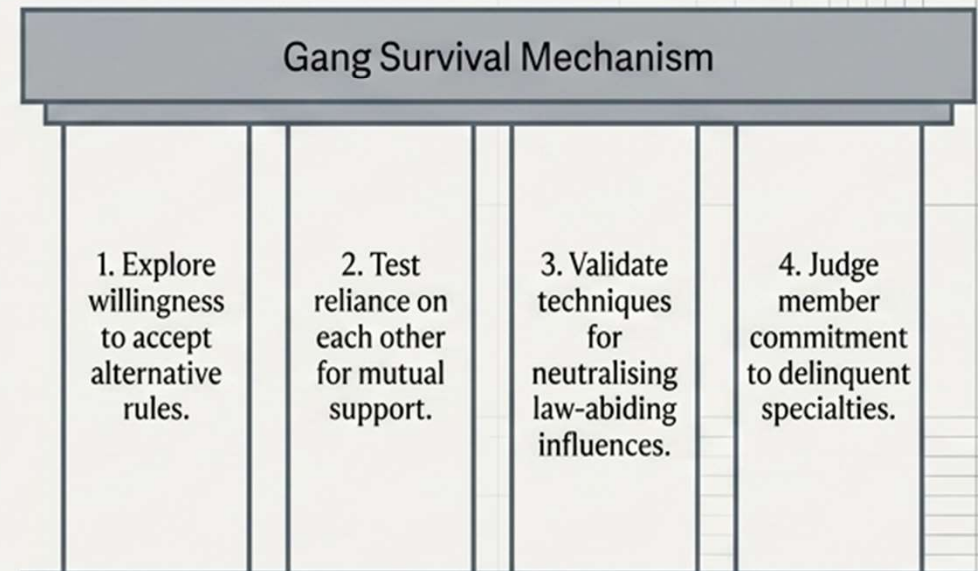
# The Architecture of Alienation and the formation of the gang

## Srole's Measurement Scale

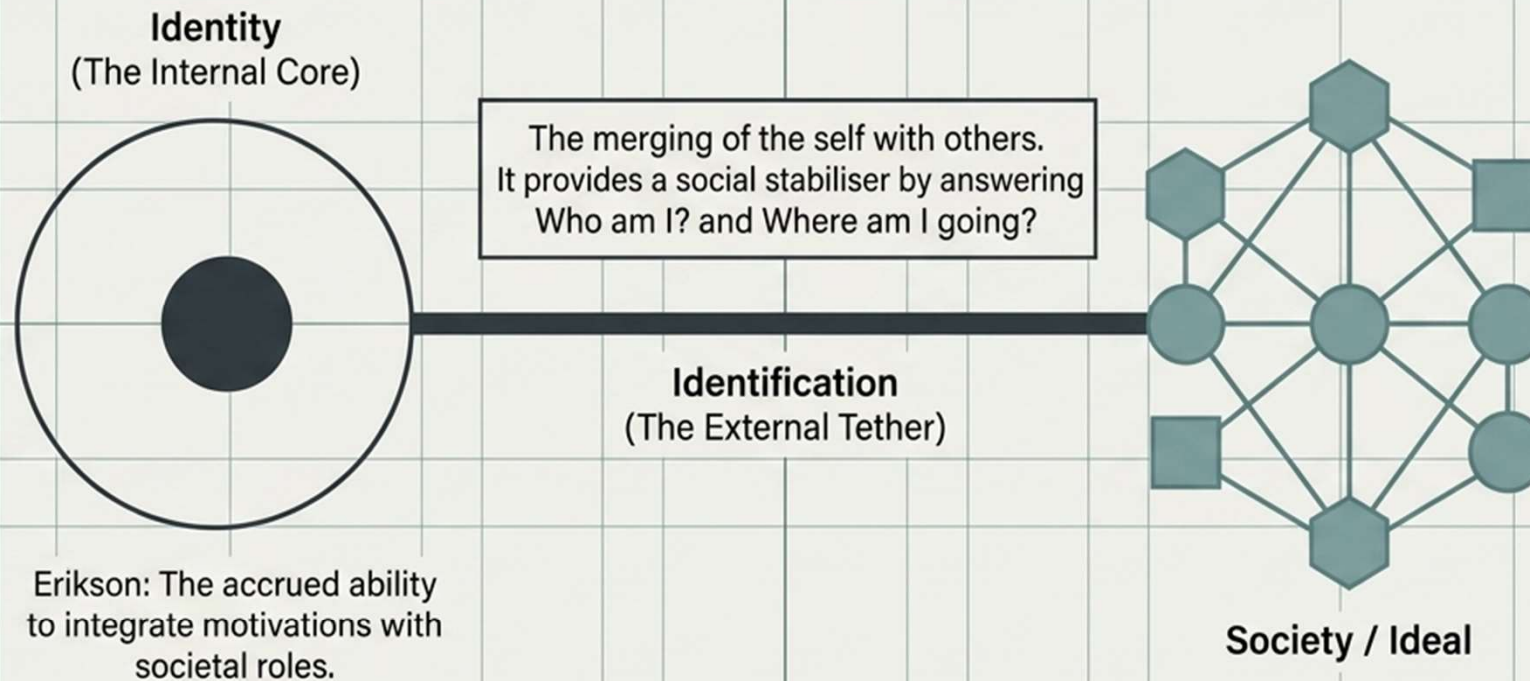


## The Four Functions of the Gang (Cohen)

Alienation prompts the search for collective support to neutralise constraints.

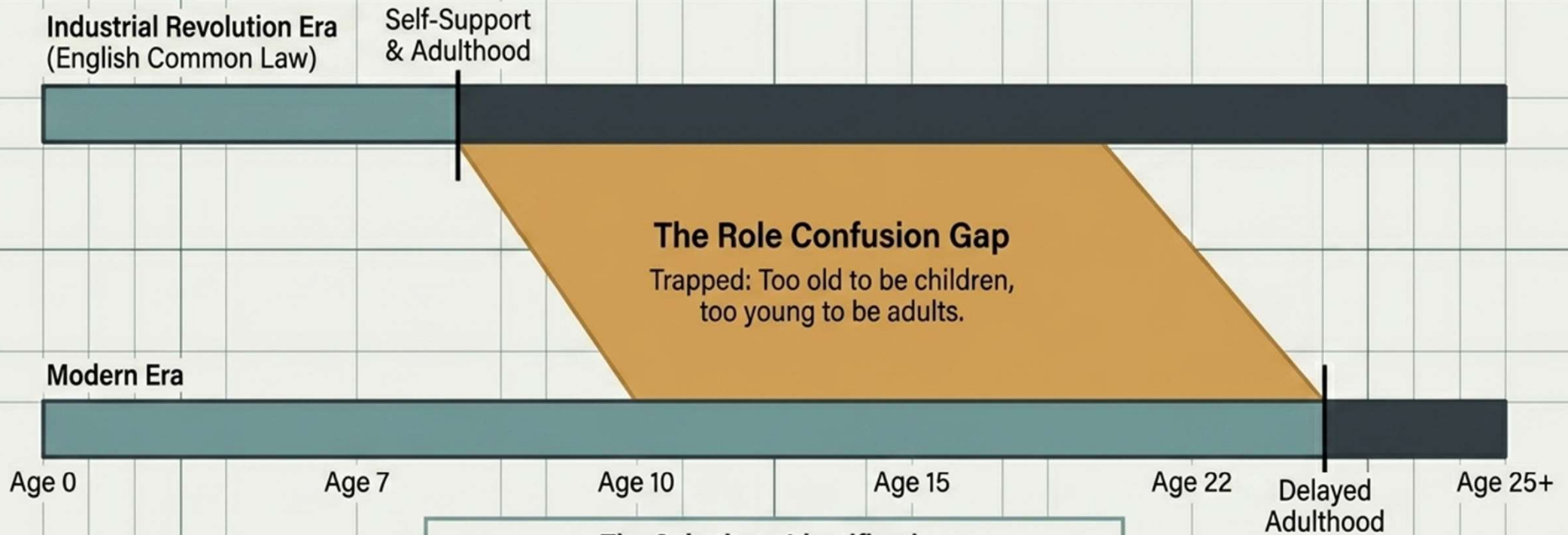


# The Psychological Anchor: Bridging inner development and cultural forces



**Identity Conflict:** Originates in disturbed parental patterns. Without trusted adult models, youth are vulnerable to psychological deviations and substitute identifications.

# The Adolescent Identity Crisis: A historically widening gap of role confusion



### The Substitute Identification

To establish independence, youth must devalue their parents. During this vulnerable phase, they seek substitute ideals—a coach, clergy, or street gang member—to emulate for peer approval and a tough exterior defence mechanism.

# Manifestations of the Frayed Thread: Case studies in extreme alienation

## Case 1: William Cook (Pure Alienation)

**Background:** Raised in an abandoned mine shaft; rejected by foster systems; institutionalised early.

**Pathology:** Unfriendly, hostile, completely alienated from societal norms.

**Outcome:** A terrifying, vicious killer of six who determined early on to live by the gun. Victims surrendered purely out of fear of his countenance.

## Case 2: Bonnie and Clyde (Anomie & Rebellion)

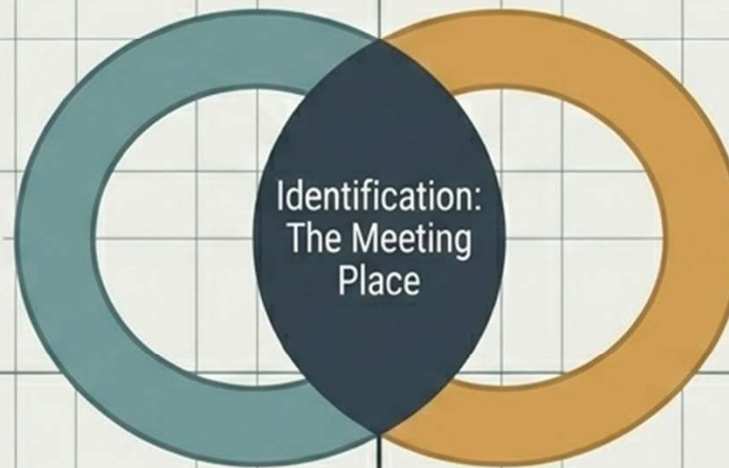
**Background:** Sharecropper backgrounds facing crushing poverty in the 1930s.

**Pathology:** Mindless, illogical social truants. They viewed robberies as retaliation for mortgage foreclosures on small farmers.

**Outcome:** A murderous partnership illustrating anomie to perfection—destroying the societal system that they felt had abandoned them.

# Reweaving the Fabric: Synthesising theory into community resolution

**Differential Association**  
(Learned Environment / External Learning)



**The Patient Model**  
(Anomie & Internal Motivation)

## **Constructive Community Interventions** (Structural Amelioration over Enforced Compliance)

**1. Interracial Community Councils**  
Designed to negotiate and resolve neighborhood encroachments.

**2. Modifying Opportunity Structures**  
Using public schools and recreation to integrate minority groups into the social power structure.

**3. Fostering Trusted Adult Relationships**  
Providing models for positive identification to stabilise youth identity and prevent substitute alienation.