Week 5

Finish learning theories (econ/psych); Begin social control and self control

Heller et al. (2017) [econ learning] Thinking Fast & Slow/BAM

- RCT to change “decision making”
  - Black/Latino low-income 7th-10th grade boys
  - 27 1-hr weekly sessions (30 sec “the fist”)
- Reduce arrests 28-35% (violent 45%)
  - Reduce JTDC readmits by 21%; grad rate+
  - <$2k/person; “fight only when need to”
- Why? “give back 10 minutes” of life
  - “Not” self-control, EQ, skills, social capital
  - “Automaticity” hypothesis – reexamine automatic assumptions on street
- Soc skeptical of CBT; critique?

Social control or “bond” theory (Travis Hirschi 1969)

- Background
  - Intellectual: Hobbes, Durkheim (not Sutherland)
  - “We are moral beings to the extent that we are social beings”
  - Social: 1950s-1960s emphasis on school and family
- Assumptions
  - Tendency to commit crime is “natural” (p. 79 CWB)
  - Normative consensus around cultural universals
    - a “central value system”
  - Absence of controls causes delinquency
    - “given that man is an animal...” (p. 31 Hirschi)
    - little variation in motivation
conceptual tool: social bond

- Four elements of bond to society
  - Attachment [to others]
  - Commitment [to conventional activities]
  - Involvement [in conventional activities]
  - Belief [in the moral order]
- Evaluation (CWB- Michael Gottfredson)
  - Parents create self-control through “reciprocal bond” (p. 88)
  - Peers (birds of a feather/selection versus learning & imitation in DA/SL theory)
  - Best support from surveys like our class survey (adolescent hell-raising; not hardcore)

critique & extensions

- Critique
  - Role of delinquent friends
  - Causal order and endogeneity
  - Portrayal of delinquent as “detached drifter”
  - Cracks in consensus assumption
- Extensions (all 1990s)
  - Sampson & Laub: Adult social bonds
  - Tittle: Control/Balance
  - Integrated theories (and critique)

Gottfredson & Hirschi (1990): “general theory” of low self-control

LOW SELF-CONTROL  

INEFFECTIVE SOCIALIZATION  

EARLY CHILDHOOD + OPPORTUNITY + AGE 

[ACCIDENTS] DELinquency [irRESPonsiBILITY]

[self-control consistent with psychological research on externalizing, personality, and antisocial behavior]
matza’s drift theory

• “tweener” theory
• conceptual tools:
  – Drift (p. 28, committed to neither delinquent nor conventional enterprise)
  – Neutralization (p. 60, norms may be violated without surrendering allegiance to them)
  – Sounding & status anxiety (p. 54), each thinks the others are committed to delinquency

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differential association vs social control

• Role of culture and subculture
  – (normative consensus vs. conflict)
• Attachment to friends (and family)
• Nature of “beliefs”
• Delinquency is natural vs. learned
• Nature of causality

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video (if time): the telltale head

• form groups of 3-5
• discuss questions on sheet (about 15 minutes)
• turn in one sheet with names of all group members
• Strong support from survey data
• Two visions
  – Socialized to nothing (SC) or socialized to delinquency (DA)