Week 5

Finish learning theories; Begin social control and self control

Heller et al. (2017) [econ, learning, cbt] 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 juv. 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?

Thomas Hobbes

- 17th Century English Philosopher
  - (Non-sociological) conception of life as “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short,” a “war of all against all” with strong dominating weak
  - Breakdown of social v. construction
  - “Leviathan” as Hobbes’ solution
- “Hobbesian problem of order”
  - How can we build a society in which self-interested people don’t use force and fraud to satisfy their (criminal, sexual, substance-using….) wants? (Pandemic?)
Q: why isn’t there more deviance?

• Social Controls
  - We would if we dared...
• 3 “solutions” to Hobbesian dilemma
  1. Normative – socialization and internalization of shared norms and values (Durkheim, Merton, Parsons: coordination between means and ends)
  2. Exchange – desire to maintain mutually beneficial relationships in interdependent society (rational choice: amoral)
  3. Conflict – coercive power of legitimate social control agents (Hobbes)

three solutions as lenses

• Appeal to morality, reason, or fear using social controls (coach/boss/prof)
• Social Control
  – Learn self-control through socialization
  – Informal social controls – unofficial, private, often face-to-face sanctions
  – Formal social controls – official sanctions, especially law (e.g., Leviathan)
    • institutions (U of M), agents (Prof), deviance (cheat), and sanction (expulsion)
    • Do we “legislate morality”? Should we?
    • Law based on harm, morality, and enforceability
    • Policing – and what would replace it? [GFS]

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”
  – Ruth Kornhauser, Irv Piliavin at Berkeley
  – Social: 1950s-1960s emphasis on school and family
• Assumptions
  – Tendency to commit crime is “natural”
  – 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
conceputal 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”
  – 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
  – Integrated theories (and critique)

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

 LOW INEFFECTIVE SELF-CONTROL
 EARLY CHILDHOOD + OPPORTUNITY + [ACCIDENTS]
 SOCIALIZATION ———> DELINQUENCY [IRRESPONSIBILITY]
 + AGE
 • self-control consistent with psychological research on externalizing, personality, and antisocial behavior
 • Moffitt et al. 2011: Self-Control predicts physical health, substance problems, income, and criminal conviction (next slide)
self-control & adult convictions
(Moffitt et al. 2010 PNAS)

- N=1000 in NZ
- Correlation w/ SES (class)
- Bivariate + controls for class, etc.

Self-control, health, and SES

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
### 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

### Breakout Questions:

A. Which explanation of delinquency do the show’s writers adopt? Identify specific evidence supporting either a social control or a differential association interpretation of delinquent behavior.

B. Albert Cohen once said that much delinquency seems “malicious, negativistic, and non-utilitarian.” Which delinquent acts in the show were utilitarian (and more easily explained by rational self-interest) and which were “non-utilitarian”? What does this mean for prevention and control of these delinquent acts?

C. Does control, learning, or deterrence theory, best explain your mask-wearing in pandemic? Explain by using concepts from the theories (e.g., specific deterrence, commitment, differential associations)

### Next: Week 6 – 10/14 Labeling and Symbolic Interaction

- **Labeling Theories and the Life Course**

- **Summary and Review of Social-Psychological Theories & Data**