Week 6

Labeling and Symbolic Interaction in the Life Course

plan

Today (week 6):
Labeling Theories and Diversion
Review Midterm guide
Thursday: Summary and review

Week 7
Tuesday 10/15 (Abby in-class office hours)
Wednesday 10/16: Special Uggen Office Hours (if needed), 3:30-5 in 1014 Social Sciences
Thursday 10/17 MIDTERM EXAMINATION covering material through today

Next
Gangs, Neighborhoods, and Social Disorganization
midterm exam format

• default: multiple choice + short essay questions
  – ~40% MC – 20-2 pt. questions (time)
  – Choose 3 of 6 essays (1 or 2; 3 or 4; 5 or 6)
    • Same material as on review sheet, but not every part of every question (time)
• cut-off time at 2:25?

labeling theories

• Background:
  – Cooley, Mead and symbolic interactionism
  – Frank Tannenbaum (1938): The dramatization of evil and “tagging”
• Assumptions
  – Cultural relativism: no “core values” or universals; rules develop out of interaction
  – Labels affect behavior: Being caught and publicly labeled changes future behavior
  – Power affects rulemaking and enforcement

concepts

• Primary and Secondary Deviance (E. Lemert 1951)
  – Primary deviance: original nonconforming act
  – Secondary deviance: results from label and identity
• Rule creators/moral entrepreneurs (H. Becker 1963)
  – create deviance by making the rules whose infraction constitutes deviance, and by applying those rules to particular people and labeling them as outsiders
• Deviant careers
  – a sequence, one thing leads to another...
Rios on “Hyperlabeling”

- Youth are hypercriminalized by law enforcement, but communities are also underpoliced. How?
  - Spatial demarcation (p. 56)
  - Anderson’s “Code of street” – aggressive preemptive attacks
- P. 52: all in study saw selves as “inherently criminal” - part of persona
  - Tyrell making “conscious choice” and calculations, given alternatives (p.50-51)
  - P. 58 Jose – publicly identified as criminal at 8; milk story p. 59

sequence or career

- 4 Ds: diversion, decriminalization, due process, and deinstitutionalization
  - If justice system "like quicksand," divert at door
  - Net widening? Radical non-intervention or alternate programming?
  - Often used for status offenses and property crimes
- Wilson & Hoge 2013 meta-analysis of 73 diversion progs (15k diverted; 19k controls)
  - Lower recidivism for diverted in 60 of 73 programs
  - Average recidivism of 33% diversion; 41% controls
  - Effects weaker in most rigorous designs (.93 v. .6) and published work (publication bias?)
  - Sum: “more effective than traditional processing and considerably cheaper” (p. 514)
Mears et al., 2016
juvenile court diversion

• Help, Harm, or Both? Program quality varies
  – Benefits: lower costs
  – Costs: net-widening
    • Incentives for private vendors
  – We can “divert” into alternative program, rather than let go

• “Civil citation” & police initiated diversion
  – Police directly processing and sanctioning

• Challenges
  – Defining diversion (dismiss, informal, formal progs)
  – Unclear theory and logic behind activities
  – Inconsistent use across groups (race, sex...)
  – Measurement and evaluation

• “Great promise, yet to be fulfilled”

lessons

• “Radical nonintervention” “works” as well or as poorly as “treatment” in national evaluation

• Diversion can be extended to (nonviolent?) non-status offenders

• [But...] Diversion is “treatment without trial;” “alternative encapsulation” and net-widening.

critique

• Incomplete (Becker 1973)
  – Explaining primary deviance?

• Social construction sometimes exaggerated (“crime doesn’t exist”)

• Emphasizes formal labels (v. informal)

• Research evidence spotty
  – weak label effect on crime (some studies)
  – strong label effect on work, college...
extensions - Matsueda

- Symbolic interactionism (Matsueda 1992): DA+SI+ (informal) labeling
  - Role-taking: project oneself into the role of others and imagine how they see you, the situation, and possible actions
  - Reflected appraisals: how you perceive others to see you (parents, friends, and teachers)

- Findings
  1. Parental appraisals & prior delinquency predict reflected appraisals
  2. Reflected appraisal as rule-violator increases future delinquency
  3. Reflected appraisals "mediate" effects of parent appraisals, prior delinquency, & background

Matsueda (1992)

deviance & adulthood (massoglia/uggen 2010)

- "Symbolic Interactionism" – DA & label
  - Age norms & delinquency; "measuring up" as adult
  - Seeing yourself as an adult

- Labeling question: Must you “settle down” to attain adult status
  - Stand shoulder-to-shoulder with fellow citizens
  - Relative conception – work & family transitions still expected of adults
  - From "hell-raiser to family man" or woman

- Subjective adulthood as collective adherence to domain-specific roles
  - Behavioral and labeling effects
**hypotheses**

1. Desistance will covary with other behavioral markers of adulthood. (S&L)
2. People feel less like adults while engaged in activities defined as deviant and more like adults when engaged in activities defined as conforming. (SI)
3. Recent arrestees will be less likely to feel "on time" in attaining behavioral markers of adulthood than non-arrestees. (LA)
4. Recent arrestees will be less likely to "feel like an adult most of the time" than non-arrestees.
5. People who think they commit less crime than others their age will feel more like adults than people who think they commit more crime than others their age. (DU)
6. People who think they commit less crime than they did 5 years ago will feel more like adults than people who think they commit as much or more crime as they did 5 years ago. (SI)

**design**

- **Data: Youth Development Study**
  - Longitudinal survey of St. Paul public school cohort
  - Age 30-31; 75% white; 43% male
  - 45% married, 55% had children by 2002
- **Estimation**
  - Latent class analysis for H1 [skip today]
  - Simple static-score logistic regression (controls for prior levels of dependent variable (adult status))

\[
\log \left[ \frac{P(\text{Adu}\text{r}_{2003}=1)}{P(\text{Adu}\text{r}_{2003}=0)} \right] = 0 + \beta_1 \text{Arest}_{2002-2003} + \beta_2 \text{Adur}_{2003} + \ldots + \beta_N \text{Marke}_2002
\]

**H2: Do 30 year olds feel like adults while engaged in conforming or deviant activities?**
### H3: Logistic regression estimates of effect of arrest in the past 3 years on feeling “on time” in each domain

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### H4: Arrest and Subjective Adult Status - Logistic Regression Estimates

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### H5: Reference Group Desirability, Subjective Desirability, and Subjective Adult Status - Logistic Regression Estimates

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decent support for hypotheses

1. YES: Desistance will covary with other behavioral markers of adulthood. (S&L)
2. YES: People feel less like adults while engaged in activities defined as deviant and more like adults when engaged in activities defined as conforming. (SI)
3. YES: Recent arrestees will be less likely to feel “on time” in attaining behavioral markers of adulthood than non-arrestees. (LA)
4. YES: Recent arrestees will be less likely to “feel like an adult most of the time” than non-arrestees.
5. MAYBE: People who think they commit less crime than others their age will feel more like adults than people who think they commit more crime than others their age. (DU)
6. YES: People who think they commit less crime than they did 5 years ago will feel more like adults than people who think they commit as much or more crime as they did 5 years ago. (SI)

other extensions

• Braithwaite: content of label
  – Stigmatizing vs. reintegrative shaming
  – Restorative justice: welcome back into family, community
• Life Course (Hagan, Sampson & Laub, Moffitt)
  – Formal labels affect life chances (work and family) which, in turn, affect delinquency
• Labeling “insights” prevailed but not as a comprehensive theory

next

• No (new) reading until 10/22
• Good luck with the study guide and the exam!