

SOC 3290 Deviance
Overheads Lecture 16:
New Directions for Theorizing About Deviance & Crime

* Today we review the following recent theoretical developments in deviance:

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| (1) Routine activities theory | (5) Self-control theory |
| (2) Left Realism | (6) Peacemaking criminology |
| (3) Feminist theory | (7) Reintegrative shaming |
| (4) Power-control theory | (8) Postmodernism |

(1) Routine activities theory:

* Cohen and Felson (1979): Victimization Requires:

- (i) A motivated offender
- (ii) A suitable target
- (iii) Absence of suitable guardianship

* Focus on changes in last two elements (routine activities shifted away from home since WWII, increasing victimization across the board)

* This theory has much supporting data

* Problems:

- taking offender motivation as given/constant
- can't explain why some, not others, commit crime in same circumstances
- relative weights of 3 elements unclear
- difficulties explaining expressive crimes

(2) Left Realism:

* Left realism attempts to avoid the problems of conflict approaches:

1. Idealism;
2. No realistic solutions to crime;
3. Exclusive focus on the crimes of the powerful;
4. No realistic analysis of predatory crime among the working class

* Lea and Young (1984) Basic principles of left realism:

- (1) Take crimes against the disenfranchised seriously
- (2) Use both qualitative and quantitative methods to challenge conventional wisdom
- (3) Utilize/advocate short-term anti-crime strategies
- (4) Use the 'Square of Crime' (victim, offender, state & the public)

* Left realists contribute the following:

- explaining crimes by/against disenfranchised
- challenge right wing notions of crime/control
- proposing progressive control/prevention policies
- a new energy for critical criminology generally

* Criticisms:

- caricaturing early simplistic Marxists, not current writers
- no real methodological innovations
- undercutting analysis of elite crime
- questions whether really a theory at all

(3) Feminist Theory:

* Emerged as mainstream criminology ignored: (1) Women as victims & offenders; & (2) The role of gender in organizing social relations

* Feminist theories attempt to right both these imbalances

* Three broad categories:

(1) *Liberal feminism*: Socialization explains male-female differences in crime/victimization. Seeks equal protection & treatment in the CJS

(2) *Radical feminism*: Organized around theme of “patriarchy”/ argues that male domination of women & violence is built into the structure of society, including institutions like the CJS

(3) *Socialist feminism*: Explores crime & social control through the intersection of class & gender relations

(4) Power-Control Theory:

* Hagan, Gillis & Simpson (1989):

- Development of capitalism assigned men & women to different spheres
- Public production (male) vs. private consumption (female)
- Growth of justice system largely concerned with public (male) sphere
- Men instruments & objects of formal control
- Women instruments & objects of informal control
- Boys encouraged in risk taking by families/ girls to passivity
- Delinquency may be seen as risk-taking: hence follows from these gendered processes
- Gender gap narrowing due to increasing participation of women in labor force

(5) Self-Control Theory:

- * Gottfredson & Hirshi (1990): General theory of crime focuses on low self control rooted in childhood with inconsistent punishment
- * Official policies aimed at deterring adults misplaced, focus of preventative policy should be on family & childrearing
- * Criticisms: - self control hard to measure
- circular reasoning

(6) Peacemaking Criminology:

- * This approach is:
 - opposed to traditional struggle between CJS and offenders
 - rooted in Eastern philosophies/ Christianity
 - emphasizes acting to reduce human suffering - the root of crime
 - focuses on compassion and non-violence
 - real issue not how to stop crime but how to make peace
- * Harold Pepinsky & Richard Quinney emphasize:
 - the perpetuation of violence by current criminological approaches
 - the role of education in peacemaking
 - commonsense theories of crime become officially self-fulfilling
 - crime control as human rights enforcement
 - conflict resolution within community settings
- * Basically: “without peace within us & in our actions, there can be no peace in the results...Peace is the way”

- * Criticisms: -not a testable, explanatory theory, but utopian philosophy
 - practices advocated are not new
 - incorrect to identify with conflict theory & feminism

(7) Reintegrative Shaming:

- * John Braithewaite (1989): social control may be accomplished through “reintegrative shaming” / invoking remorse in the wrongdoer while showing them respect
- * Some empirical support: changes in nursing home operators compliance with regulations

(8) Postmodernism:

- * This is an “approach” with a focus on power/knowledge & situated linguistic analysis
- * Rooted in work of Foucault, Derrida, Lyotard, and Baudrillard
- * Generally deconstructs dominant claims of truth, knowledge, power & progress/attempts to promote “alternative discourses”
- * Language = both prison bars and keys to liberation
- * Vold, Bernard & Snipes: court procedures marginalize voices of parties/enact official reality
- * Assessment:
 - contributes by debunking ideology, pretences to justice
 - overly relativistic for some/ ignores value of science
 - uses its own privileged language
 - idealistic, little to offer public policy
 - still may be useful for analysis of new forms of crime

