

Overview

- finish discussion of Control theories
- Review Quiz 4
- Assumptions of the labeling perspective
- Early social reaction theories
- Labeling theory
- Empirical examples

Self-Control Theory Cont'd

- analogous behaviours and crime are not causally related, instead both are caused by low self-control

Major causes of low self-control:

- *Family socialization*
- lack of nurturance/attachment, lack of supervision, inability to recognize and correct bad behaviour, parental low self-control, family size
- inadequate, ineffective and inconsistent family socialization
- *Socialization at school?*

Characteristics of Self-Control

- *Grasmick et al (1993) self-control scale:*
- has 6 elements/characteristics:
 1. Impulsivity - I often act on the spur of the moment without stopping to think
 2. Simple Tasks - I frequently try to avoid projects that I know will be difficult
 3. Risk-seeking - I like to test myself every now and then by doing something a little risky
 4. Physical Activity - I almost always feel better when I am on the move than when I am sitting and thinking
 5. Self-centeredness - I try to look out for myself first, even if it means making things difficult for other people
 6. Temper - I lose my temper pretty easily
- there 4 questions for each of these components that scholars use when trying to measure self-control

Social Bond vs. Self-Control Theory

Social Bond	Self Control
- people's involvement in crime can ebb and flow (experiences beyond childhood can affect a person's attachment to society)	- criminal is set in childhood (relatively stable over life because your level of self-control is stable)

Social Bond	Self Control
- locates control in a person's relation to society (how connected people are)	- control is internal to the individual

Criticisms of Control Theories

- is motivation really irrelevant?
- ignores crime in groups
- ignores differences between serious and minor delinquency
- ignores situational/structural factors e.g. strains like homelessness
- causal ordering? Do weak social bonds cause people to be involved in crime or is it plausible that you engage in crime and that weakens the social bonds?

Social & Criminal Justice Implications

- need action early in childhood (i.e. child rearing practices). Later reactions are useless. This therefore means involvement in child rearing practices
 - identify weak families that have trouble supervising and disciplining their children and thereby strengthen the family and improve the quality of family child-rearing practices
 - target single parent families
- make school the site of socialization
- community programs
 - Big Brother/Big Sister
 - YMCA/YWCA
 - Boy Scouts/Girl Guides
- identify chronic offenders and use selective incapacitation (since self-control is set early in life, must identify those who do not "grow out of criminality")

Social Reaction (Labeling) Theories

Exam

- she will mark all of the long answer
- she will give us 6 possible questions before, 2 will be on the exam and you pick one
- focus on the similarities and the differences between the theories

Angels with Dirty Faces

- 1938 American gangster film
- Rocky and Jerry are childhood friends who get into mischief
- Explain the life trajectories of Rocky & Jerry from the point of view of a labeling theorist*
- Jerry got away and Rocky didn't, Rocky took the fall
- they made a criminal out of him, he's not a bad person, he just got caught"
- if Jerry had been caught, the tables would have been turned

Choose one other criminological perspective to explain why Rocky turns to a life of crime while Jerry remains committed to a law-abiding life.

Labeling Theories

- focus on social and institutional response to the individuals

Assumptions:

- **Human Nature:** largely passive, forced into the role of a “criminal”
 - it's not that people inevitably internalize a negative label
 - not entirely passive but are largely passive
 - influenced by how others think about us but our behaviour isn't entirely determined by that
 - **Nature of Society:** conflict-based approach, lacking consensus
 - social norms and crime and deviance are socially constructed
 - important principle is that the law is differentially applied to different groups in society
 - law is used to benefit those that hold economic and social power
 - **Nature of Crime:** nothing inherently or objectively harmful about the acts we define as criminal
 - crimes are simply acts that we designate as crime
 - deviance and crime are in the eye of the beholder
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- the labeling perspective addresses an important gap
 - it looks on the social reaction to crime
 - by reacting to crime we are increasing it

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Social Reaction (Labeling) Theories Cont'd

Seeds of Labeling Theory

Charles Horton Cooley

- The “looking Glass Self”

Edwin Lemert

- **Primary Deviation** - initial act, doesn't get labelled as a deviant
 - **Secondary Deviation** - rarely initiated by a single act - dynamic process between the individual engaging in crime and the societal reaction to deviation
 - secondary deviation is likely to result in labeling
 - label has become the primary identifier
 - the deviant event has to come to the attention of somebody
 - resocialization into a deviant role
 - deviance amplification effect - people feel isolated from mainstream society which locks them into a more deviant role, they may seek out people who have also been labelled
- * main idea of labeling theory: deviance is a process in which somebody's identity is transformed
- efforts to control offenders actually make things worse, even treatment does this

Howard S. Becker “Outsiders”

	Conforming Behaviour	Norm-Violating Behaviour
Perceived as Deviant	Falsely Accused (identified as deviants or criminals even though they are not)	Pure Deviant (engage in crime and get labelled and caught)
Not Perceived as Deviant	Conformist (abide by the law and are seen that way)	Secret Deviant (have committed acts of deviance but it has gone undetected)

- Becker prefers the term of interactionist theory because it is the interaction between the person who engages in deviance and those who respond to it
- labeling theories aren't looking at the deviant act itself
- why are some people/groups of people labelled as deviant and others aren't
- why are some actions labelled and others aren't
- what criminologists should study was not the actual act of offending, focus on the act of identifying or labeling the crime
- social groups create deviance by making the rule whose infraction constitutes deviance and by applying the rules to particular people and making them outsiders
- nothing inherent in the actual behaviour
- Conformists and Pure Deviant both accurately perceived by society as the behaviour they have taken part in
- Falsely Accused and Secret Deviants are often misjudged by society
- he thought the Secret Deviants was a big group
- **Master Status** = the label that everybody sees you first as, the more negative the label the more likely it is to be the master status
- most prominent influence in how people view you

Labeling Theory

- Primary Deviance -> Reaction (including labeling) -> Stigma -> Change in Self-Concept to Negative -> Secondary Rule Violation -> Career/Secondary/Role Deviance
- people are rational actors
- people can escape the effect of labels - e.g. a girl gets caught drunk driving and gets off because her dad is a judge

Back to Angels with Dirty Faces

Explain the life trajectories of Rocky & Jerry from the point of view of a labeling theorist

- Rocky gets caught and Jerry doesn't
- Rocky got labelled as one of the worst gangsters, that became his master status
- Rocky went through the criminal justice system and spent time in the reformatory with other criminals
- Rocky then continues criminal behaviour

- Jerry got away and didn't get labeled
- something is missing from labeling theory = you can see a difference between the two boys even at the beginning of the film, Rocky is more motivated to commit crime
- during the trial Rocky says that he already has family problems and he would probably be good in reform school

Choose one other criminological perspective to explain why Rocky turns to a life of crime while Jerry remains committed to a law-abiding life.

- social learning - when Rocky is in reform school he learns more values favourable of deviance than unfavourable
- strain theory - does it for money reasons
- biological - family problems Rocky mentions

The Role of Delinquent Friends

According to the labeling perspective, do delinquent friends influence offending? If so, how?

- yes, once there has been a label and then you associate with other people who have similarly been labelled

Would a social learning theorist agree or disagree with a labeling theorist regarding the role of delinquent friends in shaping offending behaviour?

- disagree
- learning theorists - you are learning from your friends
- is it that birds of a feather flock together (labeling) or is it that these kids are learning from each other?

Empirical Evidence

Chambliss (1978) - The Saints & the Roughnecks

- looks at who is being labelled

Pager (2003) - the effect of a criminal record on employment

- focuses more on the effect of the label

The Saints & the Roughnecks

The "Saints" and the "Roughnecks":

- engaged in delinquency at an equal rate
- the "**Saints**" were perceived to be 'good boys who went in for an occasional prank'
- the Saints would write doctors notes for each other to leave class early, on the weekends they would travel 25 minutes away from the city where they would go to night clubs, get drunk, drive drunk and reckless
- would find a construction site and disassemble the barriers
- they would rebuild these barricades in dangerous spots
- the Saint were definitely no angels, they didn't define themselves as being delinquent they just felt they were having a bit of fun
- pretty good students, involved in sports and student council
- if they ever got caught in school or by the police they apologized and were very polite
- were constantly occupied with skipping school, vandalism and driving wildly
- the "**Roughnecks**" were perceived as 'a bunch of bad boys' heading for trouble
- in school their behaviour wasn't that disruptive

- attempted to avoid school but were less successful
- perceived as being uninterested and incapable of reaching a high academic potential
- delinquency focused mostly on theft, drinking and fighting
- ripped off small things (comic books, watches), stole gas
- couldn't get away too often so often paid a local drunk to get liquor for them
- mostly fought each other
- there was mutual distrust between them and the police

Which group was more delinquent?

- It's not really clear, the saints endangered people's lives fairly regularly, yet it is the roughnecks that are perceived as bad

What was the cause of this disparity?

- social standing, the Saints came from wealthy family and therefore more resources so they could get away with it more often - they could take their deviant behaviour away from town - visibility was lower
- their demeanor was very different when they got caught, the Saints were very polite and the Roughnecks weren't
- the Saints don't see themselves as delinquent whereas the Roughnecks have accepted their deviant identity
- there is a built-in class bias about what constitutes serious delinquency e.g. getting drunk in a club and getting into a car is more likely to be viewed as a mistake
- the families make an impact - the upper class will resist the label and get the kids out of it whereas the lower class will usually agree with the school punishment

What was the result of this disparity? Did the two groups live up on the expectations of the community?

- we saw evidence of the self-fulfilling prophecy
- the Saints ended up being very successful in life
- the Roughnecks didn't do very well, 2 went onto university, 1 attempted suicide, 2 never finished high school, 1 pled guilty to murder
- the 2 groups did live up to their labels
- good illustration of the effect of labeling

The Mark of a Criminal Record (Pagers)

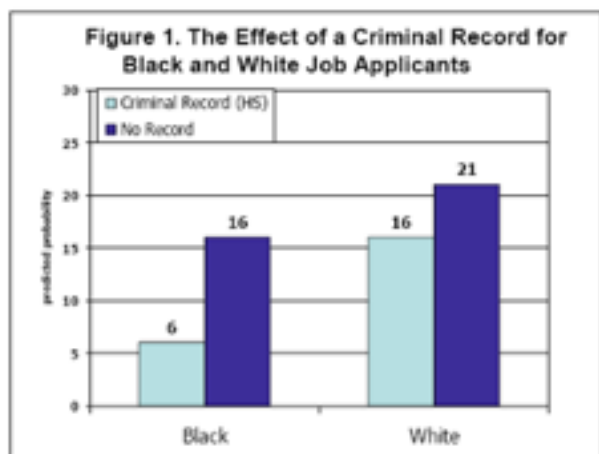
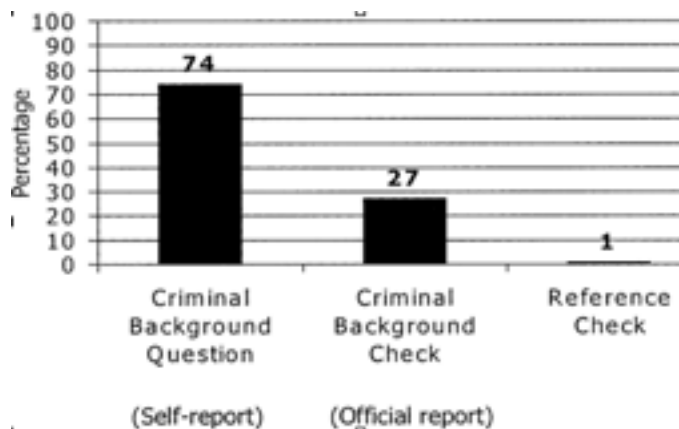
- how a criminal record shaped chances of getting a job
- matched participants with equal backgrounds and gave them fictitious resumes
- sent them to apply for entry-level jobs that they all would have been qualified for
- mainly focused on criminal record but also on race
- how much would the criminal record serve as a barrier for employment
- criminal record may be less influential for a black applicants because of stereotypes, employers are more likely to assume that african americans will have a criminal record
- not as surprising or problematic as if it is a white person

Do employers use information about criminal histories to make hiring decisions?

- criminal record does act as a negative barrier, most employers are looking at whether or not people have a criminal record

Does the effect of a criminal record differ for black and white applicants?

- black applicants at the end of the day are much more effected by having a criminal record
- white applicants with no record were significantly more likely to get a job than white applicants that did have a criminal record
- much bleaker for african american - the same percentage of african americans without a criminal record were being hired as white applicants with a criminal record
- not only does having the label of criminal history matter for both white and black but it is a lot stronger for the African Americans
- * really strong support for labeling theory



Policy Implications of Labeling Theory

- Radical non-intervention - do nothing! - criminal justice system is actually maintaining and magnifying crime - more tolerant especially with young people, let them experiment - not terribly popular
- Diversion Programs - but may cause “net-widening” and still labels people
- any formal criminal justice intervention may have negative effects - causes secondary deviance and adoption of label