CHAPTER 9

Integrating Criminological Theories: A Critique

OVERVIEW

     The final section of the book starts with this chapter, which looks at some of the various issues involved in integration. Barak generates a friendly critique of modernist integration, which is aimed at 'causative-predictive' criminology. Many of these relate to dialectical causality, which involves multiple variables that are simultaneously interacting and instantaneously transforming; it is how the world works, but is not incorporated into traditional modernist models. He reviews integrative efforts that fall into the categories of social process-micro, social structure-macro, and agency-context (micro-macro). While generally supportive of modernist integration, Barak finds them limited and attempting to prove the value of one set of integrative variables over another.

OUTLINE

I Introduction
     A. Interest in integration from
          1. Glut (rather than paucity) of knowledge
          2. Desire to develop central notions/provide coherence
          3. Develop comprehensive explanation
     B. Modernist/propositional v postmodern/conceptual
          1. Chapter 9 to critique modernist causative-predictive criminology

II Integrating Criminology: Meanings and Approaches
     A. Specific integrated theories focus on specific form of criminality (domestic violence) while general integrated theories apply to broader range
     B. Conceptual integration likens concepts from different theories while propositional integration links separate theories

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C. principles of propositional integration
    1. End to end: causal ordering of theories
    2. Side by side: appreciate overlapping and unique areas of explanation
    3. Up and down: one theory deduced or subsumed by changing level of abstraction
D. Static/consensus v dynamic/conflict theories

III A Discussion of Modernist Integration and Causation
A. Fission (kept on separate plates) v fusion (mixed up)
B. Causality
    1. Necessary cause: B cannot happen without A
    2. Sufficient: B will be produced by A, but can also happen without it
C. Causal Relationships
    1. Linear: sequential, conditional
    2. Multiple: many sufficient causes or combined causes co-produce event
        a. No required temporal order
    3. Interactive/reciprocal: cyclical, spiral process
    4. Dialectical/codetermination: multiple interactive causality
        a. Cause and effect not discreet but overlapping
        b. No causal priority because simultaneously transformative
        c. Instantaneous reciprocal influence
D. Dialectical causality questions temporal ordering that underlies formal and propositional models, path analysis and predictive efforts

IV Modernist Constructions of Integrated Theory
A. Social process/micro/kinds of people
    1. Wilson and Herrnstein's *Crime and Human Nature*
    2. Krohn's networking theory
B. Social structure/macro/kind of organization
    1. Quinney's *Class, State and Crime*
    2. Colvin and Pauly's structural-Marxist framework for delinquency production
    3. Stark's propositions for deviant places
C. Agency-context/micro-macro/kinds of culture
    1. Johnson's *Delinquency and Its Origins*
    2. Box's *Power, Crime and Mystification*
    3. Pearson and Weiner's social learning + everything else
    4. Benard's unified conflict theory of crime
    5. Coleman's *The Criminal Elite*
    6. Hagan's *Structural Criminology*
    7. Braithwait's *Crime, Shame and Reintegration*
    8. Kaplan's Self-Attitudes and Deviant Behavior
    9. Tatum's neocolonial model

V Conclusions
     A. Modernist integration limited, reductionist and concerned with trying to prove the value of one set of integrative variables over another
     B. Formal and propositional integration worth pursuing, but theories, data and methodology too primitive to discern relative impact of variables
     C. Relationship of integration to falsification

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1] Review the types of integration and the issues involved with them

2] Outline a variety of integrative efforts to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of modernist theoretical integration

IDEAS FOR LECTURES & DISCUSSION

The goal is to create theory that can explain individual differences in offending while also being able to grapple with aggregate patterns. An important discussion, then, relates to the factors, concepts and processes that help explain individual differences *and* make sense of gender, class and race differences. More generally, what theories (or aspects of theories) do the students think are most significant? Are there any other ideas from section two of the book that should be integrated but were not mentioned in the list of theories?

This chapter is also a good forum from which to raise issues about the data analysis part of research methods. Specifically, some of the assumptions of basic multiple regression (linearity and additive) might not hold in the real world. Problems with assumptions can lead to findings being an artifact of methodology, and many of the subsequent debates about models are largely irrelevant. Causal interactions in the real world are too complex to model and data is too poor to engage in sophisticated analysis. The dialectical causality discussed by Barak needs to be modeled in terms of complexity theory, which uses non- linear dynamics and has 'sensitivity to initial conditions'. Because functions are non-linear, small changes in time one produce enormous differences after several iterations, so measurement error (of the type found in social science and criminology) makes this approach problematic for achieving positivist models even though it is the most accurate reflection of processes in the real world.