THE GROWTH OF CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORIES

by

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B.A., University of Montana, 2000

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

In the School
of
Criminology

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SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY

November 2003

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Title of Thesis: The Growth of Criminological Theories

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ABSTRACT

In the last 50 years, an extensive array of theories has appeared within the field of criminology, many generated by the discipline of sociology. With so many different, competing models and perspectives surfacing, it is often difficult to determine if theory growth is actually occurring in criminology, or if contemporary theories are merely older and recycled theoretical models. The question of growth is an important one to resolve because criminology, if it is truly a progressive form of social science, ought to be producing theories that are evolving and improving, and contributing to the accumulation of knowledge.

In order to assess the degree of accumulation, an existing model of theory growth proposed by David G. Wagner was applied to several different trajectories in the area of sociologically based theories within criminology. In brief, Wagner argues that in sociology, theory develops and grows in the context of theoretical research programs. Theoretical research programs are composed of sets of interrelated unit theories. The production of these unit theories is guided by the underlying philosophy of the research program, or as Wagner calls it, the program's orienting strategy.

The main finding of this research is that theory growth is occurring in at least two different ways within criminology. First, there is evidence of traditional scientific theory accumulation in which newly formulated theories build upon the foundations of their forerunners. Second, it was found that overarching perspectives are occasionally blended, and this fusion produces unique explanations of crime and criminality. These findings demonstrate the usefulness of Wagner's model and provide guidelines on how to proceed with integrative theorizing in criminology.

DEDICATION

To my father and mother, for their constant support and encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The Problem To Be Studied

This thesis examines the growth of criminological theory; more specifically, the question of whether or not theory accumulation has occurred in the field of criminology. In other words, does the notion of a scholarly community exchanging ideas hold true for criminology, or has the development of theory been a scattered and disconnected process with little interaction amongst theories and theorists? Both of these perspectives have received support in the criminological literature and one of the goals of this thesis is to determine which is the most accurate description of reality.

In sociology, Wagner (1984) has demonstrated that theory growth in sociology is occurring with some regularity. Wagner (1984) claims that accumulation can be seen when one applies the concept of theoretical research programs to sociological theory (also see Wagner and Berger, 1985). The field of criminology presents an interesting case of theory growth and development since it has theoretical influences stemming from a variety of different disciplines; the most prominent of these being the discipline of sociology[1]. However, one cannot conclude that growth has also occurred in criminology based only on its association with sociology. In order to demonstrate theory growth in criminology, one must analyze existing criminological theories and illustrate their connections to one another.

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[1] A potentially interesting question here is understanding how these influences have interacted with one another.

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To some criminologists, this analytical method may, at first glance, seem rather odd. Perhaps the reason for this is the popularity of substantive areas of research in the study of crime (e.g., violence against women, gangs, drug policy, media analysis, and terrorism). Cole (1975), after conducting a citation analysis of theories in deviance research from 1950 to 1973, concluded that the field might be better divided into substantive areas. Further, he suggested that these substantive areas are often dominated by one theoretical viewpoint (Cole, 1975). Naturally, the situation suggested by Cole does not encourage an understanding of connections between different theoretical approaches. Cole's points may well be sound, however, this does not mean that an alternative view of theoretical research programs is not possible or beneficial.

There is nothing fundamentally wrong with the dominance of a single viewpoint in each area of interest; different theories are often intended to explain different problems. Feyerabend (1975) has made the argument that theories ought to be treated as a sort of "methodological toolbox". However, this arrangement can create problems as it can sometimes lead to divisions. Wagner (1992) has mentioned several typical divisions in sociology: quantitative and qualitative; empirical and theoretical; and micro and macro. In a critique of Merton's directives for productive theorizing, Wagner (1992) asserts:

> We have seen the proliferation of theories about various concrete populations of social objects and events, rather than about abstract social structures and processes that are manifested in those populations. Thus, we develop "sociologies" of, say, the automotive industry, the one parent family, or the 1988 presidential election. How can we develop abstract theories of organizational inertia, socialization, or leadership from this sort of middle-range theory is difficult to see. It is as though we attempted to develop a theory of propulsion by studying the physics of Fords and

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Chevys. Even making our investigation cross-cultural (say by studying Toyotas as well) or generalizing our argument to deal with other means of propulsion (say bicycles) is unlikely to yield much greater knowledge about the underlying theoretical process. Increasing the number and variety of concrete entities to which we apply our ideas does not make those ideas more abstract. (Wagner, 1992, pp. 204-205)

The danger here, then, is that researchers often become entrenched in the theoretical viewpoint that dominates their substantive research area. The duty of understanding and appreciating outside perspectives falls on the shoulders of the researcher. Failure to live up to this duty is the reason for the divisions mentioned by Wagner (1992). These divisions lead to arguments as to whose theoretical orientation is the "best". One might speculate that the lack of coherent terminology in sociology and criminology (e.g., the meanings of both "theory" and "positivism" are notoriously unclear) is a result of the divisions that have been created.

Since theory is the hallmark of scientific activity, it will be necessary to demonstrate that there has, indeed, been theory accumulation and this is the main problem or puzzle being addressed in this thesis. Nevertheless, another definitional problem arises: what exactly constitutes accumulation or growth? *The Oxford Dictionary of Current English* 3rd Edition (2001) defines accumulation as to: "gather together a number or quantity of or to increase". Has theory gathered together and increased in quantity? In a sense it has; perspectives have been united and theories have built upon the foundations established by their forerunners.

To understand the direction of contemporary criminology, and also how new theories emerge, one must first clearly show that accumulation has occurred. Often, the argument has been made that criminological theorizing is nothing more than a constant

process of recycling existing theories. However, what these arguments tend to ignore are the changes in the underlying philosophical logic which often occur in the new incarnations of old theories. A secondary goal of the analysis presented here is to illuminate these logical changes.

It seems as though the concept of theoretical research programs could help bridge the gap between these divisions, and may also clarify what theory accumulation looks like in criminology and the social sciences, in general. Of course, this is not to say that competition and heated debates will not still take place; however, communication might simply be enhanced.

Methods

The empirical method utilized in this analysis differs from that of most theses. As alluded to previously, the concept of theoretical research programs suggested by Wagner (1984) will be applied to criminological theory. Through this application, connections between theories (and sometimes entire theoretical perspectives) can be established. The empirical data here then are the writings of criminological theorists. The various exemplary texts and articles about criminological theory were read and examined, with particular attention paid to citations and references. For example, it is quite common for theorists to discuss the contributions of their competitors. These discussions frequently yield valuable information about changes (e.g., adjustments to base assumptions, propositions) that have taken place in the different theoretical models.

There are, however, other sources of information which modern theoreticians have at their disposal beyond theory texts and journal articles. These modern tools

include electronic databases (in this case accessed via the Simon Fraser University library website at http://www.lib.sfu.ca/) such as the Web of Science, Sociological Abstracts, and the Humanities/Social Sciences Index. These databases allow one to conduct searches for related articles and also to carry out limited citation reference searches. Other net-based resources also exist; some scholars also maintain their own websites (notably, Professor Gregg Barak's website at http://www.greggbarak.com/). Using these tools, I have analyzed the sociologically based theoretical models articulated within the field of criminology since 1945.

The analytical approach taken in this thesis was three-fold. First, the philosophical underpinnings of the different theories of crime will be identified. Second, the key elements (e.g., the assumptions and the propositions) of each theory are discussed and then related back to the philosophies from which they came. Third, the contextual relations amongst these theories are identified. These contextual relations can be used to determine what connections exist between different theories and perspectives. Some attention will also be paid to scholarly networks.

Outline of Chapters

The following chapter will focus on a review of the literature on knowledge growth in the social and, to a lesser extent, the natural sciences. It begins by examining the philosophy of science debate over knowledge growth which originally began in the natural sciences. The thesis then moves on to examine sociological analyses of theory growth and theory construction. Chapter 3 discusses the knowledge that criminological

theorists and theoreticians have contributed to this debate on theory and theoretical growth.

Chapters 4 and 5 involve an analysis of criminological theory. The primary tool used in this analysis is the Wagnerian model of theoretical growth as articulated in *The Growth of Sociological Theories* (1984). Each of the chapters focuses on different theoretical research programs that have arisen during the course of criminological theorizing. The focus of Chapter 4 is on some of the earlier criminological theories, including the early 'Chicago school' and strain research programs. Chapter 5 consists of an examination of the control and learning research programs as well as a short analysis of the competition between the established research programs during the 1980s in criminology (i.e., strain, control, and learning), and also the recent genesis of the developmental 'effect' research programs.

The final chapter sets out the conclusions that have emerged during the course of this thesis. Additionally, the different contributions of this kind of metatheorizing to criminological theory are discussed. Finally, suggestions are made regarding future research in this area.

CHAPTER 2: THE PUZZLE OF THEORY

The Philosophy of Science Debate

The now well-known post World War II debate in the philosophy of science over the growth of scientific knowledge has its origins in the early 1960s with the publication of Thomas Kuhn's book, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (1962). In his work, Kuhn presented his paradigmatic theory of science; a theory developed on the basis of case studies and examples drawn from the intellectual and theoretical history of the natural sciences. Kuhn, argued that the 'mature' sciences (i.e., natural sciences such as physics, chemistry, and biology) develop primarily in the context of one dominant paradigm. This paradigm is a collection of methods and philosophies that aids the scientist in solving problems or puzzles.

A period during which one paradigm is completely dominant is known as the phase of 'normal science' (Kuhn, 1962). As this phase continues, anomalies (unsolved problems or puzzles) accumulate and the faith in the dominant paradigm is tested. Eventually, confidence in the dominant paradigm is stretched so far that scientists begin to ask whether or not the paradigm is still useful and appropriate for solving problems that are important in the field of study. This test of faith may cause some adherents to consider competing paradigms. Once a competing paradigm reveals itself as a more effective way of problem solving than the dominant paradigm, a paradigm revolution occurs, and the new paradigm replaces the old paradigm. Kuhn adds that these two paradigms are also usually incommensurable; that is, the paradigms are unable to be

compared to one another. Finally, for Kuhn, 'mature' science is constituted by a dominant paradigm and 'immature' science is characterized by competing paradigms (Kuhn, 1962).

There was a significant critical backlash against Kuhn's account of science, especially his use of the concept of the paradigm. In Kuhn's writing, the concept of the paradigm was vague and poorly explained. According to Mastermann (1970), in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* one can find at least 21 different uses of the word. In fact, inconsistencies in Kuhn's model were so frequent and widespread that several scholars criticized his thesis during an international colloquium on the philosophy of science in 1970 (Lakatos and Musgrave, 1970).

Karl Popper, a German philosopher of science, saw Kuhn's work as a threat to the institution of science. Simply put, Popper believed that we learn through our mistakes (Popper, 1962). Scientists begin with conjectures or bold guesses (sometimes unjustified anticipations) and then test them; consequently, for Popper, all theory must be testable and falsifiable. If the theory is not falsified this does not mean the theory is true as, for Popper, nothing can ever be truly verified. We can only get closer to the truth. Knowledge grows through bold conjecture, but more so through the criticism leveled at the conjecture. Specifically, criticism illuminates errors and weaknesses in scientific work and points out where adjustments are needed. Additionally, if sound scientific work is being conducted, one should be able to avoid making the same mistake twice. The entire process is comparable to evolution and, for Popper, is the key to understanding what sets science apart from other forms of knowledge acquisition (Wagner, 1984).

Important to the whole process of falsification is a constant questioning of one's point of view in an attempt to detect any sources of error. If one ceases to do this, the knowledge has started to take on a dogmatic nature (Popper, 1962). For example, Popper criticized what was the trend in teaching physics in the 1960s, something he called 'instrumentalism' and the 'dogma' of physical theory. (Popper, 1962). This method of instruction consisted of stressing pragmatic issues and ignoring the philosophical side of physics. In other words, the goal was practical application, and not a criticism of existing theories (Popper, 1962). Later, Popper likens this method of instruction to what Kuhn would have called the 'normal science' phase, and would further say that 'normal science' was a result of poor teaching and was not really 'normal' (Popper, 1970). While admitting that there is a need for 'applied science', Popper warned that this should not be stressed at the expense of 'pure science' or the development of original and novel theories and reformulations. Without new criticism and theorizing, no scientific breakthroughs occur and science ceases to grow. This termination of original and creative activity, in effect, turns science into dogma since its knowledge base becomes unquestioned (Popper, 1962, 1970).

Popper is extremely critical of the social sciences; mentioned specifically are the 'lunatic fringe' of sociology and psychology (Popper, 1970). This criticism was directed primarily at the historicist view of the social sciences. Briefly stated, Popper accused social scientists of often confusing historical and theoretical explanations of phenomena (Popper, 1962). Further, he asserted that the attempt to find natural laws about society was pointless. Instead, he challenged social scientists to "...trace the unintended social effects of intentional human actions" (Popper, 1962, p. 342).

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Kuhn perceived a 'flaw' in Popper's argument. All theories that have been falsified are not discarded and this 'flaw' was Kuhn's starting point. Many theories are retained in the face of apparent falsification for one reason or another and there are numerous examples of this in all areas of scientific inquiry. For example, in physics Newtonian mechanism is retained (on account of its utility) even though Einstein's work improves upon the work of Newton. In sociology (and criminology) Merton's strain theory (1938) remains popular even though it has tested poorly against competitors. To resolve this disagreement, Imre Lakatos, an Hungarian mathematician and philosopher, suggested a different explanation for the growth of scientific knowledge known as 'sophisticated-falsificationism' (Lakatos, 1970). Instead of abandoning theories immediately after they are disconfirmed, an hypothesis or a concept within the theory is changed and the theory is retested. Instead of testing just one theory, in reality groups of theories are tested. Lakatos dubbed these groups of theories as different and competing 'research programs' (Lakatos, 1970).

The concept of research programs can be understood using a war or conflict metaphor. According to Lakatos, research programs have two aspects, the negative heuristic and the positive heuristic. The negative heuristic consists of the domain assumptions or directives of the program, also known as the 'hard-core belt'. These are not tested, questioned, or challenged, and are defended from other theoretical assaults at all costs. The positive heuristic, also known as the 'protective belt', are those auxiliary hypotheses, which may be challenged or altered. This is the defense mechanism of the program, as the name indicates, and it is also where attempts are made to resolve

anomalies in order to increase the overall strength of the program, and its constituent theories (Lakatos, 1970).

Also important for an understanding of research programs is the idea of 'problem shifts'. According to Lakatos, to be considered theoretically scientific (and therefore acceptable) a research program must be in the process of defining and addressing a 'progressive problem shift'. To be progressive, the theory must meet several core conditions. First, it must have empirical content beyond the original theory: it must predict or explain 'novel facts'. Second, the new theory must account for the successes of its predecessor. Finally, excess empirical content must be corroborated with the preceding theory (Lakatos, 1970). In other words, a program is progressive if it is increasing its empirical content; this can be done not only by making novel predictions, but also by countering anomalies. Indeed, a scientist ought to seek out anomalies and attempt to purposely deal with them by generating further auxiliary hypotheses (Burawoy, 1990).[2]

Paul Feyerabend, another philosopher of science, has also made a significant contribution to the debate. Feyerabend's perspective has been viewed as similar to Kuhn's; however, there are important differences. Feyerabend disagrees with any conception of 'normal science'. He argues that this idea is a "fairy-tale" and this becomes clear when examining the history of science itself (Feyerabend, 1970). Instead,

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[2] Research programs failing to meet these criteria are involved in a 'degenerative problem shift' and are generally seen as declining in importance. These degenerating research programs tend to reduce their own scope in order to resolve anomalies and therefore cease to explain any further new facts; however, a small revolution or 'creative shift' may occur in the positive heuristic of the degenerating program and may well serve to revitalize it, shifting the program back into the progressive category (Lakatos, 1970).

he argues that science is always in a state of revolution and that the maxim 'anything goes' is more appropriate when attempting to describe how science operates in reality (Feyerabend, 1975). He also disagreed with Kuhn's distinction between 'immature' and 'mature' sciences; all science is always characterized by competition, every perspective (it matters not what field one examines) has its critics. He did agree, however, with Kuhn's characterization of science as an often irrational pursuit. Frequently, scientists will select a mode of thought that is in opposition to the dominant mode of thought (many times one that has been generated by way of critique), and often this competing perspective has not proven itself to be more progressive (Laudan, 1977). For Feryerabend, these critics are crucial to the growth of science in general for it is their criticism that forces theorists to improve and refine their ideas; the suppression of competing points of view *does not create* a full-fledged science (Feyerabend, 1970). When dealing with the Lakatosian model, Feyerabend struggles with the substitution of research programs for theories; he believes this distinction to be unnecessary.[3]

Even after the symposium, the debate about theory growth did not come to a close. Philosophers of science required a new and different way of seeing progress. Seeking to blur the distinction between scientific progress and rationality, Larry Laudan, a physicist and philosopher, presented his contribution to the debate in the book *Progress and Its Problems* (1977).

Laudan begins by pointing out two important differences between progress and rationality. First, progress tends to involve the notion of a process occurring over a span

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[3] He also feels that the ideas of progressive and degenerative problem shifts are pointless as they can only be articulated in hindsight.

of time (Laudan, 1977). Rationality, on the other hand, is often removed from any sort of temporal context. In other words, one can decide whether a theory is rational without consideration of its past history. He claims that, frequently, rationality takes precedence over progress. This creates a situation where progress is explained in terms of rationality; that is, progress is merely a series of increasingly rational choices (Laudan, 1977). The concern here is that an idea that is readily understood - progress - is defined by rationality, an idea that is quite obscure (Laudan, 1977, pgs. 5-6). Laudan's solution to this problem is to invert the usual hierarchy of progress and rationality. The new proposal he offers is that "rationality consists in making the most progressive theory choices" (Laudan, 1977, pg. 6).

Before continuing his discussion, Laudan refines his notion of progress by making an interesting distinction between moral and cognitive desirability. Laudan explains that these two concepts are related but often confused. He does not claim to address the issue of moral desirability and how it relates to theory choice. For instance, in the sciences the concept of progress is often used in lieu of the idea of "cognitive progress". The definition of the word "progress" seems to have become emotionally entrenched in moral issues; now the notion of progress is often attached to material, moral, social, and/or spiritual conditions (Laudan, 1977). Further, he argues that this focus on extraneous moral issues has obscured what the concept of progress actually means in the scientific world. The focus here is on cognitive desirability and progress (Laudan, 1977). Finally, Laudan believes that, by nature, science is a problem-solving activity. This makes the previous focus on falsification and the confirmation of theories (empirical issues) less

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important. If there is no other alternative, we keep theory even if it does test poorly (Laudan, 1977).

Due to his emphasis on cognitive progress as the key factor in theory selection and development, great importance is placed upon the competitive aspects of theorizing.[4] To further clarify his thoughts on this issue, Laudan distinguishes between conceptual problems and empirical problems (or anomalies). The former are within theories and do not exist independently of the theory; empirical problems are anomalies that the theory attempts to resolve. In other words, a theory that is a 'good problem-solver' will be retained despite any conceptual problems it may have. For instance, in criminology, many theories do not receive strong empirical support (e.g., Merton's strain theory) or test inconsistent (e.g., Hirschi's theory of social bonding) but some remain very popular and influential. Laudan's critique of the philosophy of science is that empirical issues have received too much attention (Laudan, 1977). He argues that even if empirical support for a theory is rather limited, it will not be discarded as long as it can edge out all other competitors in its explanatory domain.

Laudan goes on to elaborate his orientation and a few distinctions are made. He claims that often when people speak of theory, they are actually speaking of "great bodies" of theory.[5] In addition to these frameworks, Laudan asserts that there are smaller units (the components of the framework) which are much more specific.[6] Social scientists have often referred to both "great bodies" of theory and smaller theories as types of "social theory" and, because of this, the word "theory" has lost a great deal of its

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[4] This part of the argument is strongly reminiscent of Feyerabend's polemic (1970, 1975).
[5] For example, evolutionary or Marxist theory.
[6] Examples here include Einstein's theory of the photoelectric effect or Marx's labor theory of value.

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meaning. In an attempt to clear up some of this ambiguity, Laudan dubs the "great bodies" of theory "research traditions". A working definition of this term is also provided:

> ...a research tradition is a set of general assumptions about the entities and processes in a domain of study, and about the appropriate methods to be used for investigating the problems and constructing the theories in that domain. (Laudan, 1977, p. 81)

More specifically, all research traditions are thought to have some common traits. First, each tradition has specific theories that embody it. Next, research traditions generally have long histories. Finally, certain methodological and metaphysical commitments help to distinguish one tradition from another (Laudan, 1977).

Laudan also declares that research traditions are 'historical creatures', meaning that they are born, have periods of influence and, later, practically all die out. Examples abound in every scientific discipline.[7] But, it is made clear that these traditions are not *completely* eradicated from the theoretical landscape in most cases. Instead they lay dormant, waiting to be resurrected and re-created, a process that often involves combining or blending useful ideas of the vanquished "school" with more evolved points of view, updating them and adjusting them to work in the context of the time.[8]

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[7] Consider structural-functionalism in sociology. It likely peaked in popularity in the 1950s and early 1960s in North America and the United Kingdom. Then, in the 1960s and 1970s, there was a theoretical onslaught from many directions. Conflict sociology began to come into its own, and the ingrained macro dimensions of functionalism were being assailed by the micro-sociologists (Alexander and Colomy, 1990).

[8] This sequence of events can be illustrated by examining functionalism's most recent reincarnation. In the 1990s, a 'revival' of structural-functionalism, known as neo-functionalism took place in which the authors attempt to reconstruct Parsonian sociological thought (see Alexander and Colomy, 1990 and Parsons, 1937). This is an attempt to adapt Parsonian functionalism in response to critiques leveled at it over the years and there are many examples like this in contemporary social theory, especially in the field of criminology. For instance, consider Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) reworking of classical principles in

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Of course, things are not usually so cut and dried. There are also more loosely organized, less formal schools of thought which, as Laudan contends, still have "nonetheless a genuine intellectual coherence about them" (Laudan, 1977). These often lack some of the general criteria for standard research traditions and tend to be less "grandiose". However, they are too all encompassing to be considered normal theories, but also too narrowly focused to be regarded as research traditions.[9]

Equally as important to an examination of criminology is Laudan's thought-provoking discussion of intellectual histories and their role in the assessment of theory. Laudan makes it clear that he feels histories are extremely useful; however, he also emphasizes that they are all too often "discipline-bound". This simply means that cross-disciplinary interconnections are frequently ignored, and this arises from a tendency towards extreme specialization (Laudan, 1977). For example, when an historian examines a field of study it is usually only within a particular disciplinary framework. This 'boundness' masks the natural integrative character of the history of thought in general and this is often the case in criminology.[10]

Lastly, Laudan further expands his views concerning scientific irrationality. Often, scientists (in all disciplines) make theoretical choices, be it on the more general research tradition level or on the smaller theory level, which are irrational. The irrationality of this can be exemplified in a number of ways and goes beyond simple

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self-control theory, Agnew's (1992) resurrection of strain theory, or Sampson's (2002) recent pseudo-revival of the Chicago School's social disorganization research tradition.

[9] One could argue that criminology has a large number of these smaller research traditions, probably resulting from a high-level of multi-disciplinary interaction.

[10] Jock Young (1988) portrays theoretical evolution as occurring between two primary (and competing) paradigms, a mainstream or traditional perspective and a radical or conflict perspective. This interpretation of the situation downplays the influence of other peripheral (yet potentially influential) areas of theory (especially when discussing an interdisciplinary field of study such as criminology).

empirical assessment. Nevertheless, scientists usually have good reasons for the theoretical choices they make. It falls on the shoulders of sociologists (and in some cases, psychologists) to analyze and explain these actions (Laudan, 1977).

The debate in the philosophy of science touched many areas of academic inquiry in some way, but the social sciences were, perhaps, the areas most profoundly affected. Since most sociological theorists drew upon the model of science developed in the natural sciences, serious questions about theoretical progress began to arise in the social sciences, and sociology was an especially easy mark. Could one hope to study a phenomenon objectively if one was directly involved with it? Questions were posed about whether or not knowledge grows in the social sciences and at times the legitimacy of social "science" itself was questioned. Consequently, social scientists (especially sociologists) began to examine the important issue of theory growth and accumulation.

Offerings From Sociological Theoreticians

George Ritzer, a sociologist, has been called a "pioneer" in the area of meta-theory (Colomy, 1991). He has dedicated a great deal of time to organizing, writing about, and critiquing existing theory; eventually, this aided Ritzer in his attempt to formulate an integrated sociological paradigm (Ritzer, 1981). It also helped Ritzer stimulate an entire sub-field within sociology, called metatheorizing, devoted to studying existing classical texts and re-implementing the theories and theoretical concepts presented within them (Ritzer, 1990).

Thus far, Ritzer has enumerated three different types of metatheorizing: the study of theory to produce greater understanding (M_U); the study of earlier theory to produce

new theory (M_P); and the study of theory to create an overarching perspective (M_O). He states that the first two are of greater interest and are more useful; (M_O) is characterized as often counter-productive, primarily because attempts at creating overarching perspectives are overly ambitious and often lead to irresolvable controversies (Ritzer, 1991). The importance of sociology to the process itself is also made clear. Sociology is characterized by considerable self-analysis and criticism, more so than other social science disciplines. This stems from the fact that, in sociology, there is very little 'normal' scientific activity. This situation creates an atmosphere conducive to producing tools for the analysis of theory (what Ritzer calls 'meta-tools'). He goes on to emphasize that other social sciences such as anthropology, economics, psychology, and criminology all require these tools but are unable to produce them on their own (Ritzer, 1991).

Finally, Ritzer, like many other thinkers, endorses the idea of drawing upon intellectual-historical work done in other fields and disciplines:

> ...sociological metatheorizing has been practiced in relative isolation, even though an array of other fields have much to offer to metatheorizing. In fact, metatheorizing has been impoverished by the fact that it has not drawn nearly enough on neighboring fields. (Ritzer, 1990, p. 273)

These sentiments closely resemble Laudan's thoughts (1977) on the importance of intellectual histories to the social sciences. Metatheorizing could provide sociology with a crucial role in the social (and physical) sciences, making it valuable to other disciplines (Ritzer, 1991).

With the last thought in mind, another theorist expanded upon Ritzer's original metatheoretical taxonomy to produce yet another method: metatheorizing as adjudication (M_A) (Colomy, 1990). Colomy argues that the study of existing theory can enable one to

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determine a research program's degree of success. The author claims that Ritzer himself frequently uses metatheorizing to do this (see Ritzer, 1981) with little or no acknowledgement (Colomy, 1990). This seems to be a useful idea, although his article gives little specific instruction as to how one goes about performing this type of metatheorizing.

Colomy seems to take the opportunity to explain his own orientation, called "postpositivism" (Colomy, 1990; see also Alexander, 1982). Although postpositivism has a variety of different uses and meanings, there do seem to be a few general principles universally held by those involved in this affiliation. First, there is agreement that this movement emerged out of the philosophy of science debates discussed at the beginning of this chapter (Kuhn, 1962; Lakatos, 1970; Feyerabend, 1975). Next, postpositivists believe that all data are theoretically informed (Alexander, 1982). In other words, there is no such a thing as complete and true objectivity. Finally, the social sciences are organized around different and competing research traditions, which are composed of generalized discourses and research programs; these traditions 'stake-out' theoretical cores and explanatory domains which are examined and expanded upon by research programs. Generalized discourse offers presuppositions about ontology and epistemology, axiomatic strategies, and the ideological or metaphysical implications of sociological argument (Alexander and Colomy, 1990; Colomy, 1990).

Despite appearing to be a clear concept when it is first presented, the notion of postpostivism is not agreed upon by all. In his treatise on theoretical sociology entitled *Developing Sociological Knowledge* (1989), Bernard Cohen makes it clear that he feels sociology often deals with a subject matter that is controversial, and this tends to arouse

people's emotions. This atmosphere makes it considerably more difficult to maintain one's objectivity but Cohen claims that studying social issues scientifically is invariably better than merely accepting one person's opinion about the situation or phenomenon (Cohen, 1989). This is not to say that science itself is not influenced in certain ways; however, in science there is a conscious attempt to try to eliminate bias as much as possible. Cohen also argues that science is a tool, which precludes itself from exhibiting the properties of good or evil. Implementation determines the moral nature of science and, in the end, there is no truly objective use of science (Cohen, 1989).

At this point in the discussion, the issue of postpostivism again arises. Cohen seems equally as confused as any layperson about the exact meaning of this concept. Specifically, Cohen is questioning the difference between three frequently used terms; positivism, anti-positivism, and postpositivism:

> These controversies involve a number of different issues, and adopting a position on one issue does not predetermine positions on others. With the variety of different issues and possible positions on these issues, one can be a Positivist, an Anti-Positivist, and a Post-Positivist simultaneously. If positivism means a commitment to using evidence, then the author is a Positivist; if it means that nonobservable entities are inadmissible, then the author is an Anti-Positivist. If Post-positivism represents a concern with the theoretical relevance of observables, then this analyst is a Post-Positivist; and so on (Cohen, 1989, p. 44)

Despite this bewilderment over nuances in meaning, Cohen (1989) does support the idea of research traditions with cumulative theoretical research programs to verify them, and to further develop sociological knowledge.

When discussing theory specifically, Cohen is very precise about the meaning of the word. Theories are sets of interrelated and logically sound statements that offer

definitions and explanations of relationships between concepts (Szmatka, Lovaglia, and Wysienska. 2002). From this arrangement, one can make knowledge claims. The group of statements may be thought of as simple knowledge structures. To be theory, the simple knowledge structures must be empirically testable and have scope conditions (Cohen, 1989).

Theories are composed of a number of different elements. First, there are two types of terms, defined and primitive. Defined terms are contained within definitional statements. These statements simply elaborate on the exact definition of the term and do not normally say anything about the empirical world (Cohen, 1989). Primitive terms are terms that are left undefined and are used as a definitional basis on which to build a theory. In other words, primitive terms are used as reference points for other defined terms because it would be impossible to explicitly define every term in a theoretical construct (Cohen, 1989).

Other elements include theoretical statements or propositions. Cohen simplifies the situation here by using these terms interchangeably. Often, theorists use one or the other or even both when they write about theorizing and this increases confusion. The same is true with axioms and assumptions, which Cohen also treats as synonyms. It is made clear that assumptions are not literal truths; instead they suggest relationships between different concepts. Further, assumptions can sometimes reveal new relationships between concepts previously thought to be unrelated. These new relationships are called derivations or theorems (Cohen, 1989). Assumptions can be thought of as the core of the theory, and it is made clear that there must always be more

than one assumption since it is impossible to derive anything from a single assumptive statement (Cohen, 1989).

Cohen ends his discussion of the elements of a theory by discussing formal and discursive theory. A theory put forth with clearly defined elements (as previously described) can be thought of as formal theory. Discursive theory, on the other hand, is laid out using the 'natural conventions of language' (Gibbs as cited in Cohen, 1989, p. 187).[11]

In *The Growth of Sociological Theories* (1984), David Wagner proposes the most useful, accurate, and dynamic model of theory growth that is currently available. Wagner, like Laudan (1977), also believes far too much emphasis has been placed upon explaining growth in a purely empirical fashion. Many varieties of conceptual growth have been dismissed or even ignored and the traditional model based on falsification and theoretical elimination through refutation is discussed at great length (Wagner, 1984). Again, Wagner points out that many individual theories are retained, even after testing poorly, for many different reasons including the nature of theory construction, and contextual effects occurring during the theory's assessment.[12]

Wagner begins by taking careful steps to define what he believes theory ought to be. He first distinguishes between unit theories and orienting strategies. The claim is made that, in sociology, there is frequent confusion between the two concepts, given that

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[11] Discursive theory is still quite useful, it merely represents an earlier stage in the theorizing process. The key is to eventually take ideas presented within discursive expositions of theory, formalize them, and test them. In this way one can eventually determine if the discursive ideas are accurate or inaccurate.

[12] Wagner developed this model of theory growth while working on a theoretical research program devoted to studying and testing Berger's expectation-states theory (Wagner, 1984; Wagner and Berger, 1985). Interestingly, Berger designed his expectation-states research program after encountering Imre Lakatos and realizing that his concept of the research program could be adapted to research on theory in the social sciences (Walker, 2002).

they are both referred to as 'theory' (Wagner, 1984; see also Cohen, 1989; Walker, 2002).[13] Orienting strategies do not contain specific predictions most of the time; they are larger entities that seek to explain what factors are important to achieving an understanding of the nature of society (in the case of sociology). For example, both Marxism and structural-functionalism are viewed as orienting strategies. Marxists believe that the key to understanding society would require an examination of problems arising from competition between social classes. On the other hand, structural-functionalists believe examinations of social structures, how they relate to one another, and how they serve specific social functions, will allow for a greater understanding of society. Unit theories are more precise than orienting strategies and contain specific predictions and concepts, all of which are empirically testable. In order to understand theoretical growth properly, 'unit theories' and 'orienting strategies' must be kept separate, otherwise widespread confusion and conflict will result (Wagner, 1984, 1992; see also, Cohen, 1989; Walker, 2002).

The structural relations of theories are particularly important to Wagner's model, and most of his examples deal with some sort of structural comparison. Structure is doubly important because, much of the time when a theory tests poorly, a theorist will adjust it structurally and retest it, rather than discarding the theory altogether (Wagner, 1984). Five types of theory growth are discussed: elaboration; variation; proliferation; integration; and competition. The first four varieties deal with structural issues, the last one deals with the problem focus of the theory (Wagner, 1984).

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[13] Criminological theorists have also made this statement with considerable regularity (see Meier, 1989; Gibbs, 1985, 1989; Short, 1985).

Elaboration can be seen in a few different ways. First, it occurs whenever a theory is redesigned or readjusted to more closely fit the established data; this sort of empirical growth is perhaps most common (Wagner, 1984). There are more unusual and less common forms of elaboration as well. First, is the expansion of an existing theory to cover more explanatory domain; this is an attempt to make the theory more general. Attempts to make formulations within a theory more rigorous also fall into the elaboration category. These may involve clarification of certain propositions and terms or formalization of ideas into testable theory form (Wagner, 1984).

The next three relations – variation, proliferation, and competition - are less common than elaboration, but each still plays an important role in theory growth. Variant theories are nearly identical; they differ only because they incorporate slightly different explanatory mechanisms. These variant theories cover the same explanatory domain and have similar theoretical structures. Often these types of theories are in a competition with one another. In proliferation, ideas from one theory are applied to a completely different explanatory domain to create a new version of a particular theory. Finally, in competition, the theoretical structures are very different; however, the domains of explanation are similar, and the two theories conflict greatly in their predictions. Of all the types of theory growth, competition is said to be the least productive since the theories involved often have conflicts that are very difficult to resolve due to their differing structures and predictions (Wagner, 1984).

The last type of relation, integration, is perhaps the most complicated and uncommon of all the relations. A successful integration can advance knowledge substantially. Integration occurs when two (or more) theories are combined to form a

completely new theory that explains more than the original two. Wagner states that integration can actually be thought of as an elaboration of two theories rather than only one. It may happen between proliferants, variations, or competitors so, in reality, there are actually three types of theoretical integration (Wagner, 1984).

Wagner also supports the idea of systematic programs of research (calling these theoretical research programs) because he believes that "collective contribution" will encourage greater theoretical growth (Wagner, 1984). Theoretical research programs are interrelated theories or elaborations of a single theory and the related research. Research tests the theory and the theory guides the research; the aim here is to coordinate the work of theory and research in order to alleviate misunderstandings involving terms, concepts, labels, *et cetera* (Wagner, 1984; Wagner and Berger, 1985; see also, Szmatka et al., 2002). All research programs are composed of two types of formal theoretical sets; the core and auxiliary sets. The core sets (as their name indicates) are the concepts and elements that are absolutely necessary to the program. Core sets may include assumptions, axioms, or propositions and they are sometimes determined by the particular orienting strategy being utilized (e.g., a conflict versus a consensus view of society, assumptions concerning human nature, and free will versus determinism). Certain concepts and elements may also be included in the core because, without them, the theory tends to test poorly (or possibly fails to explain or predict anything). Core elements are unlikely to be abandoned, even as a result of poor empirical evaluation. Auxiliary sets are elements that are part of the supporting theoretical framework. In other words, these are elaborations and reformulations that are devised in response to persistent anomalous situations resulting from weak empirical testing. These auxiliary sets could

be removed or replaced without changing the overall structure of the theory and frequently represent the "branches" of the research program (Wagner, 1984).

Theoretical growth always occurs within the formal sets of the program and in two different types of ways. First, there may be a change in the core set. Often this happens when a part of the auxiliary set becomes accepted as more integral to the formulation of the theories in the research program. The movement of an auxiliary element into the core set indicates an increase in the scope of the theory or, in other words, a more generalized version of the model. Occasionally, an element not previously included in the theory will be added to some part of the formal set; more often than not, this element becomes part of the auxiliary set although this type of change in the core of this type would indicate a major reformulation and would be atypical. This type of change signifies an increase in range, or a new theory that is able to explain more social processes (Wagner, 1984). An important point to keep in mind when considering the formal sets of the program is that early on, more often than not, the core and auxiliary elements are not readily distinguishable. Empirical testing helps to determine which elements are part of the core and which are part of the auxiliary sets. This process represents the 'the working out of the core' (Wagner, 1984, pg. 100).

There are two more set groupings: the heuristic and the observational sets. Heuristic sets deal with the problem foci of the program. An increase in the heuristic set indicates that a new substantive problem has surfaced that the theory likely can solve. Consequently, expansion here is followed shortly by expansion in the auxiliary set (or in rare situations, the core) (Wagner, 1984). This is best understood when viewed as a sort of reflexive reaction effect: a new problem or anomaly requires a new explanation, and

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in response an ad hoc proposition is formulated. Finally, the observational sets simply explain how theories are evaluated against each other within the same program, should a conflict arise. The observational set also includes the different databases drawn upon to support changes in the theory (Wagner, 1984). Up to this point Wagner had characterized competition as detrimental to theoretical growth; after his discussion of theoretical research programs, Wagner revises his feelings about competition. Competition is detrimental when single unit theories are unable to change and grow in response to one another. However, in the context of competing theoretical research programs, he claims that competition can lead to fruitful growth, because of the inherent flexibility that a program has over a single unit theory (Wagner, 1984).

Shortly after the publication of *The Growth of Sociological Theories*, Wagner further refined his thoughts on theory growth and research programs (Wagner and Berger, 1985). He expanded more fully on the notion that research programs might have a unique character influenced by the activity of the unit theory(s). First, elaboration, proliferation, and competition are re-classified as basic relations. This is primarily due to their widespread occurrence in many research programs; however, they are all important to the growth of any program (Wagner and Berger, 1985). Simply put, the basic relations determine the character of the program. For example, if a program primarily evolves by producing a progressively larger and larger scope, then the program is designated as linear. A branching program's main source of growth is theory proliferation; this is a crucial phase of growth because it involves reaching out to a previously untouched explanatory domain.

Perhaps the most interesting of the trio is the competing (competitive) program. In one sense, a competing program could be one that has a group of variant theories competing against one another over an explanatory domain. This could also be exemplified by imagining two different linear programs, both striving to conquer the same explanatory domain. Not surprisingly, elaboration is a common occurrence in this context given the presence of the two competitive linear programs constantly trying to surpass one another. However, the emphasis is more on the competition between the two, which is the primary spur for further elaboration (Wagner and Berger, 1985). The relations of any of the basic types may occur in any program; the programs are merely characterized primarily by one of the basic relations. The sequences in which the basic relations occur may also be different for each program; they could be viewed as stages depending upon the approach taken by the theorist.

Special types of relations are also discussed; these include theory variation and integration. These are denoted as special types of relations because they occur only in the presence of well-established programs of research. They are dependent upon the basic relations; if the latter are not present, not enough is understood about the model to create these special relations. For example, in variation, variants commonly arise either in response to an older theory (trying to explain the pertinent phenomenon more coherently or completely) or the theorist generating the variants in the hopes of testing the main theory. Both of these actions require that there be considerable knowledge of the original theory; variants of a unit theory are extremely difficult to create if the propositions and assumptions of said unit theory are not clearly explicated. Variation is very important

because testing variants against one another is a way to refine existing theoretical structures (Wagner and Berger, 1985).

Integration can be thought of as the converse of variation (Wagner and Berger, 1985). The relation occurs when, as previously mentioned, two theories are combined to produce a third theory. Here Wagner makes clear exactly what happens when the integration involves variants, proliferants, and competitors. When variants are combined, the synthesis often involves specifying when it is appropriate to apply each theory. A fusion of proliferants typically requires an explanation of the linkage between the phenomena being addressed by each theory. Integration arising from competition involves the absorption of certain principles of one theory into the basic framework of the other theory, and is portrayed as an uncommon occurrence (Wagner and Berger, 1985).

The Wagnerian model may be viewed as superior to the other models of theory growth for several different reasons. First, the model is not overly restrictive. Wagner advises that the categories of growth are not exhaustive; in fact, they are characterized as "idealistic" (Wagner, 1984). This means the model can be changed and adjusted to grow along with the theoretical perspectives it explains. He demonstrates this by making several illuminating adjustments himself in his article with Berger (Wagner and Berger, 1985).

Wagner addresses the concepts of competition and integration very clearly and effectively. As mentioned earlier, integration has generated a great deal of debate and has produced numerable (and incompatible) categorization schemes. Theory competition is also often a sensitive subject for both researchers and theorists. Often theories are tested against one another empirically in an inappropriate manner (see Bernard and

Snipes, 1996). The distinction between orienting strategies and unit theories is particularly useful as it explains what theories are appropriate to test against one another, and both solves and explains the problem of using 'theory' inconsistently.

In criminology, it is particularly easy to illustrate all of these forms of growth. Within the last twenty years, there has been a great deal of activity in criminology, particularly arising from both competition and proliferation primarily in the context of research programs. These two relations in particular - proliferation and competition - are quite important to the study of crime and criminality. Competition is crucial because criminology is an interdisciplinary and, therefore, potentially competitive affair. Proliferation has also occurred with regularity in criminology, and this has given rise to many branches in the different theoretical trajectories.

It seems as though the model developed by Wagner does the most effective job of explaining cumulativeness in criminology. Theoretical progression in criminology can be particularly difficult to see from the vantage point of an outsider, primarily because of the disjointed nature of the various criminological perspectives. Specifically, most offerings thus far make the *assumption* that one of the perspectives is more or less *right,* and that all of the others are more or less *wrong.* This bias is rarely explicitly stated and it obscures the relations that theories have to one another. Any connections between the different intradisciplinary competing perspectives are completely lost and interdisciplinary connections begin to seem too ridiculous to even consider. The following discussion of criminological theory will illustrate these points.

CHAPTER 3: THE DIVIDED WORLD OF CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORIZING

The Crisis in Theory Production

It comes as a surprise to some, that it took a crisis in the area of theoretical criminology to prompt substantial instructive writing of any kind on the subject of criminological theorizing.[14] Starting in the late 1970s and continuing into the 1980s, more discussions of theorizing in general began to appear in journal articles (Hirschi, 1973, 1979; Cohen, 1974; Downes, 1978; Young 1981). The realization early on was that the competitive mode of theory testing had ceased to encourage theory growth. In most cases, this was attributed to the method of testing rather than the competition itself (Meier, 1985; Messner, Liska, and Krohn, 1989). There was the sense that theoretical progress had halted and that action needed to be taken. The traditional ways needed questioning, and quite possibly alteration. But in what direction should theorists and analysts go?

Meier offers an explanation and some suggestions for the problematic situation of criminological theory. The author endorses what he calls a "theoretical methods" approach to theorizing. Simply put, this entails an examination of all existing perspectives, rather than totally committing to one point of view while denying the validity of all others. He explains that the established research traditions in sociological

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[14] Before this time, any sort of instructive guides or hints about theory construction were almost always embedded deep within the discussion section of an empirical test of a theory or in a theorist's exemplar text (often, both focused exclusively on that particular theorist's disciplinary orientation and personal perspective).

criminology (control, anomie/strain, learning, radical/conflict) all seem to have a kernel of truth to them; so much so that any criminologists would hesitate to say which tradition is the best. To add to the confusion, many of the proponents of the different theoretical orientations have spent a great deal of time attacking and criticizing each other's work and this halted progress in the field of criminology overall (Meier, 1985).

This situation has led some to believe that none of the established work in the field really carries any weight. Others seem to adopt whatever perspective strikes their fancy and proceed to ignore or deny all other arguments. There is very little acknowledgement that all perspectives could have something important to say. Meier (1985) asserts that future attempts at theorizing will require a critical analysis of the foundations of theory in all areas. Not only must basic assumptions be examined, but explanations leading up to contemporary theories must also be explored. Arguably, these efforts will allow upcoming theorists to not only avoid previous theoretical pitfalls but also think about existing theories in new and different ways. A less immediate effect could be the generation of new theories (Meier, 1985). Meier's quest for a critical analysis of theoretical foundations failed to capture the attention of criminological theorists. Instead, the theorists shifted their attention to attempts at integrating existing criminological theories in order to increase explanatory power (Elliot et al., 1979; 1985).

In 1989, an entire conference was held concerning integration at the State University of New York (SUNY). A handful of theorists took this opportunity to express their own views on how to proceed with criminological theorizing. While doing this,

several extremely important points emerged about integration and how this relates to the growth of criminological theory.

Ron Akers, co-founder of social learning theory, seems to have mixed feelings about the possibility of producing good integrated theories. His skepticism arises from his support for the past criticism of integration offered by Hirschi (1979). Specifically, Hirschi pointed out that integration inevitably compromises crucial base assumptions within at least one of the constituent theories thereby effectively destroying the original character of the affected theory. Interestingly, base assumptions are influenced to a great degree by one's choice of orienting strategy (Wagner, 1984).

Akers, however, also acknowledges that keeping theories separate may not be a good idea either because similarities between theories and their perspectives may be overlooked or ignored (Akers, 1989). Here, again, the importance of an orienting strategy is readily apparent. Often links between theories are revealed when one thoroughly examines various aspects of each theory's orienting strategy. For instance, Akers draws upon his own experiences while developing his social learning theory to illustrate how these connections can be important. Akers was able to see a point of connection between an unexplained portion of Sutherland's theory of differential association (the mechanism by which the learning takes place) and the principles of Skinnerian operant conditioning. The key was that Sutherland's cognitively-oriented theory drew heavily upon ideas developed in the area of symbolic-interactionism. Akers seems to have noticed philosophical similarities between symbolic-interactionists and behaviorists, and this is what he capitalized upon when he constructed his theory.

Furthermore, it is now known that George Herbert Mead, one of the founders of symbolic-interactionism, was a bit of a behaviorist himself (Akers, 1989). So, what at first appear to be completely unrelated theories are, in fact, connected by common assumptions made about human nature; specifically, the idea that people react to each other's behavior in social settings and that this can be a source of deviance. Akers goes on to make an argument in favor of the conceptual integration of different theoretical perspectives. In his eyes, practically all other theories could be absorbed into the social learning framework, since it is more abstract and empirically validated than its competitors (Akers, 1989).

Travis Hirschi disagrees with much of Akers' argument, especially his conclusion (Hirschi, 1989). Hirschi begins by asserting that the evolution of criminological theory started with the founding of oppositional traditions. In Hirschi's opinion the progression occurred in the following fashion:

> Traditional positivistic theories of crime were oppositional in character, simultaneously attacking one view of the phenomenon and aggressively defending another. Thus, Lombroso constructed an image of the criminal that denied the classical image of man as a rational calculator and affirmed the new scientific image of man as a social animal. Thus, Sutherland constructed an image of the white-collar criminal that denied the Lombrosian image of the offender as defective and affirmed the even newer scientific image of humans as always social animals. Thus, Merton and Cloward and Ohlin constructed images of the criminal that denied the Freudian image of defective socialization and affirmed the social sources of the offender's criminal behavior (Hirschi, 1989, p.37).

In other words, early criminological theory grew through the operation of competing perspectives and these possessed internal consistency and conceptual clarity. However, with the advent of social control theory, this cycle was broken. By embracing social

control, theorists "closed the circle" of fresh theorizing and began to repeat themselves, since this perspective drew heavily upon ideas put forth by the classical criminologists (Hirschi, 1989).

Based on the fact that these oppositional traditions were, as their name implies, constructed to be *in opposition* to competing viewpoints, Hirschi concludes that integration is neither desirable nor necessary. In fact, he seems to view the integrationist movement itself as somewhat threatening because of its adherents' desire to purge the field of competing theories by uniting them all (Hirschi, 1989). Indeed, eliminating the competitive nature of any field or discipline would likely retard theoretical growth since it is exactly this competition that induces growth. The theories involved are constantly attempting to gain ground on one another, and elaborations are made to make one theory fit the data better than the other.[15]

Instead of integrating, Hirschi, like Akers, advises that theorists search for similarities among theories and theoretical perspectives. As an example of more productive theorizing, Hirschi mentions the family of theories that include routine activities, rational choice, and social control perspectives. These focus on individual restraint and pay less attention to criminal motivation, and he goes so far as to say that these could be considered the same theory.[16] In the end, Hirschi's advice is to attempt to use existing data and empirical observations to unite theories once thought to be different (Hirschi, 1989). On this last point, Hirschi seems to be in agreement with Akers.

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[15] Apart from clearing the field of competition, Hirschi reiterates his earlier point (1979) regarding the violation of key base assumptions, which he feels occurs often during the act of integration.
[16] He places his own general theory of crime that he was developing at the time (with Michael Gottfredson) in this complex of theories as well (Hirschi, 1989, p. 44).

Like Hirschi, Thornberry argues in favor of competition, stating that through this competition, growth occurs during the elaboration process (Thornberry, 1989). To explicitly demonstrate the pitfalls of integration, Thornberry attempts to lay down some ground rules since there was little consensus in the field as to what integration actually was, let alone how to successfully accomplish it. First, he offers a definition of integration which is: "the act of combining two or more sets of logically interrelated propositions into one larger set of interrelated propositions, in order to provide a more comprehensive explanation of a particular phenomenon."(Thornberry, 1989, p. 52). He also makes clear that conceptual integration does not satisfy these requirements. To truly achieve theoretical integration, the "building blocks" of theory must be combined; these are propositions, not concepts (Thornberry, 1989). Second, he suggests that integrations ought to be evaluated on the basis of how much they advance the overall explanations contained in both of the constituent theories, and not, as suggested by Elliot and his colleagues (1979, 1985a), by increases in predictive power. Finally, internal conflicts occurring between theories involved in the integration must be logically resolved. For example, as Elliot and his colleagues (1985b) have pointed out, the assumptive conflict existing between social learning theory and control theory is people's motivations to commit crime. More specifically, is motivation considered a constant (as in control theory) or a variable (as in social learning theory)? This problem must be resolved before one can attempt an integrated theory with these particular theories as its constituents (Thornberry, 1989). .

If one can satisfy all of the rules, Thornberry claims a true integration will result. This would be quite a boon to the field of criminology, as it would rapidly advance an

understanding of not only the constituent theories involved, but also those theories that are related to them. On very rare occasions, such a significant advance could be made that the new theory might serve to shatter a dogmatic wall dividing some competing perspectives, illuminating similarities that these perspectives might bear. But, alas, often achieving all of these tasks at once is next to impossible, or at least quite difficult and the costs of accomplishing it can be quite high. Ultimately, the question posed by Thornberry is whether or not there is a better approach to encourage more integrated theoretical growth.

The alternative suggested by Thornberry is pure elaboration, meaning that the theorist chooses a perspective and tries to logically extend it as far as possible to build a more comprehensive model. He also identifies several ways in which elaboration might take place. Elaboration takes place whenever the theorist reformulates an existing proposition. New propositions might also be added to the model. Conversely, propositions may be reduced either by simply deleting the unnecessary, or combining existing, propositions. Second, further empirical observation is also certain to lead to more elaboration. Finally, propositions from other models may be introduced into the existing formulation, especially those with strong empirical support.[17]

Robert Meier, the supporter of the "theoretical methods" approach suggests the integration dilemma springs from metatheoretical and ideological roots. Meier makes several extremely interesting observations concerning the state of theoretical

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[17] Thornberry (1989) admits that this is similar to integration and this is essentially his point; through elaboration, the desired type of integration, propositional integration, will occur more easily and naturally. On the other hand, in the Wagnerian model, true integration would involve combining all propositions from each model into a coherent theory (see Wagner, 1984; also Wagner and Berger, 1985).

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criminology. He begins by explaining Wagner's differentiation of metatheory and unit theory, Meier notes that many of the social philosophers responsible for the genesis of sociology (e.g., Durkheim and Weber) were metatheorists. Unit theory gained prominence only because it could be tested and supported (Meier, 1989). An implication of this was that many early sociologists used the existing metatheoretical base to generate unit theories (e.g., Merton's elaboration of Durkheim's ideas of anomie). From this, two problems in criminology become somewhat easier to understand. First, the obscure relationship of metatheory and unit theory has been used to level disguised ideological critiques. This is wonderfully illustrated with an example from Meier:

> ...the connection between metatheory and unit theory in the study of deviance has often been obscure. Labeling theory, for example, which might reasonably be considered an example of metatheory, has been criticized for its inability to develop testable unit theories (Gibbs, 1966). Yet within labeling theory, a unit theory has developed (i.e., the theory of secondary deviation; see Lemert, 1951), and that theory can be held accountable to an empirical test. It is inappropriate, however, to condemn the metatheory of the labeling perspective by confusing it with unit theory. (1989: 202)

The other problem, as seen by Meier, is a lack of a solid metatheoretical base in the study of crime and deviance. No metatheory in criminology addresses the important core concepts in the field: control; deviance; and social problems. Instead, these core concepts have been used as the basis for "theoretical camps" (Meier, 1989). Without a *complete* metatheoretical foundation, unit theories cannot properly grow. Integration will never occur until these metatheoretical disputes have been resolved.

So, exactly how much insight came out of this conference devoted to integration and the "crisis" that was occurring in criminological theorizing? First, the importance of

competition to theoretical growth is stressed by two of the contributors: Hirschi (1989) and Thornberry (1989). The points they make fit within the Wagnerian framework of theory growth, and this seems to reinforce the model's relevance for criminological theory. Secondly, and perhaps more significant, is the importance of using standardized terminology when attempting theoretical integration. Many of the articles in the integration symposium are merely suggesting definitions, for or ways of seeing, integration (Messner, Krohn and Liska, 1989; Akers, 1989; Thornberry, 1989). The absence of some standardized terminology is one of the focal points for Meier, although, like Wagner, he stresses the importance of properly distinguishing between unit theory and metatheory before even attempting to deal with integration (Meier, 1989). Clearly, this is because we must agree on what a theory really is before we can even consider, or coherently discuss, integration.

One may assume, given the amount of time that has elapsed between the symposium devoted to integration (1989) and now (2003), that the issue of integration has been resolved, but this could not be further from the truth. Instead, the field of criminology as a whole is still asking itself: *what exactly do we mean when we say integration in the first place?* Barak (2002) addresses just this issue in an article entitled "Integrative Theories, Integrating Criminologies". Before delving into a discussion of the types of integration, Barak makes clear that the goal of integration does not necessarily have to involve the generation of one, grand and all-encompassing theoretical model (Barak, 2002). Instead, one could see integration as a useful method for fine-tuning existing theories to be more effective problem-solvers or for constructing new theories to deal with challenging and resilient anomalies.

After describing the many existing and disparate frameworks for conceptualizing integration, Barak presents his own ideas. He divides integrations into three general categories: modernist; postmodernist; and post-postmodernist types. Modernist integration refers to a situation when two theories are in some way linked, combined, and/or synthesized into more comprehensive formulations. He notes that approaches to achieving this kind of integration vary a great deal, as there is no specific formalized technique for performing this task (Barak, 2002). Postmodern integrations are more concerned with knowledges than theories, and unlike modernist integration, postmodernist integrated theories do not follow simple linear or multiple causalities; instead, they are focused upon interactive causality and dialectical causality (Barak, 2002). Finally, beyond even postmodernist integrations, references are made to post-postmodernist integrations. Post-postmodernist integrations attempt to combine facts and values from modern empiricism with post-structuralism (Barak, 2002). These models are what Barak calls 'transdisciplinary', meaning they draw upon a variety of established methods for seeking knowledge. In effect, these types of integrations are meant to bridge or connect different offerings from various disciplines (Barak, 2002).[18]

In order to bridge the gaps between the warring perspectives and introduce a more uniform terminology into the world of criminological theory, theoreticians have suggested several strategies. Recently, there has been a request for more reflexivity in criminological theorizing, stemming from the postmodern influence in criminology mentioned by Barak (2002) (Nelken, 1994). The lack of reflexivity arose from the

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[18] Despite the fact that there is still no common terminology, there are indications that theorists are starting to acknowledge the importance of using consistent terms when constructing theory.

political nature of crime and the funding issues that go along with it. Historically, the energy in criminology has been devoted to the study of criminal justice and crime prevention (Nelken, 1994) and this has led to widespread fragmentation. It has been suggested that this rift is between the mainstream and the radical camps (Young, 1988). Some see the fragmentation as more severe and indicate that criminologists have dealt with it in a number of ways. Some regard criminology as a field concerned with crime control and regulation (this is noted as the dominant view), some associate with a master discipline (effectively divorcing oneself from the exclusive study of crime), and still others see criminology as a united critical practice (Ericson and Carriere, 1994). Members from each faction have often attempted to impose artificial uniformity upon the field and in the course of doing so level unfair and unwarranted critiques at opposing views. This creates a situation where some come to believe that they have to 'pick a side' and attack all competitors, rather than attempting to learn from them (Ericson and Carriere, 1994; Pavarini, 1994). In any case, criminological theorizing has fallen by the wayside and this has done little to encourage the formal growth of theory and could be the reason for the constant "crisis" which seems to be occurring in the area of criminological theory. For example, the factioning of closed theoretical camps could conceivably contribute to a lack of communication on the part of theorists working in the different perspectives. Obviously, this kind of interaction causes a sort of theoretical inbreeding, in which each camp develops its own definitions of theory, metatheory, and integration. In order to escape this predicament and encourage the healthy growth of criminological theory, theorizing about crime and criminality must be seen as a practical activity in and of itself (Nelken, 1994).

But this begs an important question: should theories be concerned with practice and policy issues? S. Cohen suggests that pressure from attempting to be instructive in this situation can create problems for theorizing (as cited in Nelken, 1994). The issue here is the tension between trying to be an objective, autonomous scholar while retaining the "moral pragmatism" necessary to act to correct a wrong, even if the outcomes of the actions taken cannot be fully predicted (Nelken, 1994). Young, on the other hand, believes that there is actually a need to integrate theory and practice to a greater degree and that this should be one of the main goals of the theorist in criminology (as cited in Nelken, 1994).

Clearly, there is a need for more research devoted to theory in criminology and, this will eventually lead to more reflexivity in the field. There have, however, been a few scattered attempts at theoretical reflexivity and these will be the focus of the final section of this chapter.

Other Attempts to Survey Criminological Theory

Theoretical analyses have taken place in several different areas in the field of criminology. Many of the earlier efforts seemed to be spurred more by the interaction of criminology with the sociology of deviance in the British context, than by any widespread perception of theoretical stagnation (Downes, 1978; Young, 1981). Also important for this earlier body of work were efforts to apply terms such as 'research programs', 'problemshifts' and 'paradigms' (spawned by the philosophy of science debates) to the field of criminology (Cole, 1975; Downes, 1978; Young, 1981).

The earliest attempt to apply any of the material generated by the philosophy of science debates in criminology is Cole's (1975) citation study of Merton's strain theory. Specifically, Lakatos' notion of research programs is applied to strain theory. Using citations as an indicator of influence, Cole examined the lasting influence of the strain program in deviance research during the 23-year period from 1950 to 1973. Interestingly, he found that Merton was in the top two most frequently cited scholars throughout the entire period examined, except for a small four-year span at the end of the period (1970-1973) (Cole, 1975).

During the course of the analysis, some other interesting facts emerged. Cole concluded that it would be an error to see strain theory as merely a single theory; instead it ought to be seen as a collection of related theories and extensions of the original. This is the reason he feels that the Lakatosian research program is the most effective way to explain the changes this particular body of theories went through (Cole, 1975). At this point, Cole was also able to make some speculations about the importance of intellectual networks between the adherents of the different theoretical orientations. Through a close examination of the strain article sample, Cole attempted to determine if strain theory was really utilized by researchers in competing areas or if they were merely using it as a vehicle for criticism. He found that the competing researchers often drew upon Merton's ideas but rarely criticized them (Cole, 1975).

Cole also used the concept of intellectual networks as a partial explanation for strain's early lack of influence among sociologists and criminologists. Structural-functionalism began to develop in the 1930s, although this progress was interrupted by

World War II. Then, during the late 1940s and early 1950s, structural functionalism again started to become more prominent in some of the leading graduate centers in the United States. However, it took some time before Ph.D. students trained at these schools could get into the field and proceed to effectively 'spread the word' (see Cole, 1975, pgs. 205-206).

Cole's analysis also revealed that there were 'entities' that also appeared to be similar to theories in some ways. Foremost amongst these was the symbolic-interactionist perspective, first in the form of the influential differential association theory from Sutherland and then, in later periods, in the guise of the labeling perspective, especially the most recent era (1970-1973) (Cole, 1975). Interestingly, it was during this most recent era that there was a serious decline in the levels of consensus in the field of deviance research in general (Cole, 1975).

David Downes' article, "Promise and performance in British criminology" (1978) was another early theoretical examination addressing the changing and growing world of criminological theory. As the title indicates, Downes focused on theoretical growth in British criminology rather than on expansion in the field in general. As Downes (1978) points out, even at the time of the publication of his article, criminology was a wildly popular field, growing at an incredibly rapid pace. His work specifically examines the shift of interest (in Britain) from traditional criminology to the sociology of deviance occurring in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Given this context, Downes focused on a number of different research programs, but they were either orthodox/mainstream

criminology or confined to the perspectives generated by sociology (e.g., strain, socio-cultural, labeling).

From this examination of research programs, Downes draws several intriguing conclusions. He makes it clear that there were several influential studies not fitting neatly into any research program. Some of these pieces of research were overlapping and might well have fallen into several different programs (Downes, 1978). *The New Criminology* (Taylor, Walton, and Young, 1973) is seen as a particularly exciting progressive problemshift. The focus on the political economy and its relevance to crime filled in gaps left by previous criminological theory. However, Downes (1976, pg. 497) also points out that the 'doctrinal baggage' of Marxism must be left behind if this work is to produce any kind of fruitful theory growth.

In "Thinking seriously about crime: some models of criminology" (1981), Jock Young sought to apply the Kuhnian notion of paradigms to the study of crime. Essentially, his work amounted to an overview of the history of criminology. The author delineated six major criminological 'paradigms' in operation: classicism; positivism; conservatism; strain; new deviancy theory; and Marxism (Young, 1981). Perhaps more impressive than the mere categorization of different perspectives is Young's method of analysis. He distinguished different aspects of each paradigm such as their view of human nature, the social order, the extent and distribution of crime, and how to deal with the problem, *et cetera* (Young, 1981).

The most recent treatment of criminological theory concentrates specifically on the development of positivism (Neyhouse, 2002). It is argued that positivist theory

develops at an increased rate during periods of economic contraction. The claim is made that this can be illustrated by examining events occurring in the 1840s, 1870s, 1930s, and the 1970s (Neyhouse, 2002). Great social unrest is thought to be a side effect of economic plight; social unrest requires more control-oriented theory. Positivism, Neyhouse (2002) argues, is seen as being especially useful in these situations as it is focused on controlling human beings.

Neyhouse's argument requires a leap of faith since some of the assertions made seem to be quite subjective. For example, some positivists have mentioned the 1970s, in particular, as a time of little theoretical creativity and activity. Often, this period is characterized as a time when vague discursive theories and ideological warfare dominated the criminological scene (see Wellford, 1989; Gibbs, 1985, 1989). Perhaps it is better to see the 1970s as an era when new metatheoretical foundations were being laid. Despite the refutability of her claims, during the course of Neyhouse's analysis a thought-provoking issue comes to the forefront: is positivism merely a method or is it an ideology? The answer is not as straightforward as one might expect. Neyhouse concludes that it is most definitely an ideology. The relevance of the question here arises from the fact that a great of criminological unit theory was developed using positivist methods. If positivism is an ideology, it is merely another system of beliefs and science's goals of seeking truth and explaining reality are lost.

Perhaps positivism is often used in criminology as an ideological and control-oriented philosophy; however, this fact does not seem to imply that it cannot function as a method. For example, it is argued that during the later part of his life, Marx was a

positivist (or at least was using many of the prescribed methods of positivism) (Neyhouse, 2002). In attempting to deal with this contradiction, Neyhouse concludes that positivism is incompatible with the tenets of Marxism (Neyhouse, 2002). This creates a strange retelling of historical events in which Marx, at the end of his life, was himself an anti-Marxist.[19]

There are several additional and fascinating efforts that have been made to better understand criminological theory. These range from in-depth interviews with some of the most influential criminologists of the 20th century (Laub, 1983) to detailed histories of the entire field conducted entirely in a postmodern context (Morrison, 1995). These all contain important information for anyone grappling with issues relating to criminological theorizing, but not to the specific task in hand: to examine and explain theory accumulation in criminology.

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[19] In any case, this confusion is not new; others have previously commented on the troublesome nature of positivism (see Taylor, Walton, and Young, 1973; Cohen, 1989).

CHAPTER 4: ORGANISMS, MACHINES AND SAMURAI

Foundations of the Monolith: The "Chicago School" Orienting Strategy

Nearly every sociologically based theory of crime and criminality is connected in some way to the work of the 'Chicago School'. The 'Chicago School', rather than being devoted exclusively to the study of crime, was actually a group of American sociologists and urban planners. Crime became a major issue because of the increased visibility of criminal activity in the context of the relatively new urban environment. The new emphasis on social factors in explaining crime that characterized this work can be understood as a reaction to the previous and almost exclusive focus on legal, biological, and psychological explanations of crime, which were the mainstay of criminology prior to the 1920s. To further understand how and why the shift to sociologically based theories occurred, it is necessary to consider the intellectual roots of the 'Chicago School'. Careful examination of these links to the past will reveal important aspects of the orienting strategy guiding the theorizing taking place during this important period for criminology. Wagner's ideas about the formation of orienting strategies and how they influence theory growth will be of particular importance here.

The writings of Herbert Spencer and Emile Durkheim seem to embody the essence of the 'Chicago School' orienting strategy. While Durkheim's work has received widespread recognition in many criminological texts, Spencer's contributions often go unmentioned (see Einstadter and Henry, 1995; Lily et al., 2002). Nevertheless, the

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influence of Spencer is clearly evident in Cooley's remarks about early sociologists in the United States: "at first we were all Spencerians." (Ashley and Orenstein, 2001, pg. 145). Since the 'Chicago School' criminologists were actually sociologists by discipline, the influence of Spencer seems to be of some importance to understanding the history of criminological theorizing.

For Spencer, society was a living entity and this meant that society could be studied using methods similar to the natural sciences. To illustrate the similarities, Spencer noted several parallels between biological and social organisms. For instance, both kinds of organisms increase in size and, as this happens, there is also an increase of internal structural complexity. In addition, he claimed that growth occurs through evolution (Spencer was profoundly influenced by Darwinian and Lamarckian thought) and this characteristic allows different species, or in the case of societies, 'societal types', to be observed and identified (Ashley and Orenstein, 2001).

Durkheim embraced many of the Spencerian ideas about society and used them to formulate his own notions of the social world (see, Ashley and Orenstein, 2001, pgs. 84-85). Especially important to Durkheim was the concept of society and the different 'societal types' that may arise in the course of any given society's evolution. Transitional stages are particularly crucial for Durkheim as he noted that during transitions, society is often characterized by high rates of social disorganization giving rise to many social problems. According to Durkheim, social disorganization stems primarily from the inapplicability of socio-moral rules from the previous evolutionary stage. The older rules

become obsolete once the newer, more complex stage is entered, and this creates social problems and disorganization (Ashley and Orenstein, 2001).

At this point, one may ask: how are these ideas reflected in the orienting strategy of the 'Chicago School'? First, the orienting strategy put to use in this work not only accepted, but also encouraged the scientific study of society. It was from this premise that the 'Chicago School' research program began to grow. By examining Figure 4-1, one can see the underlying philosophical underpinnings (represented in orienting strategy influences), the progression of the 'Chicago School' unit theory, and the relations between the unit theories.

Robert Park is perhaps most responsible for laying the foundations for the 'Chicago School' program, and he could be considered something of a metatheorist. Park (1925) notes that, at the time, most of the knowledge of the city had been recorded by the literary world, and while acknowledging the importance of these stories and accounts, he suggests that more organized and systematic study would be useful. These remarks are suggestions about how one ought to study the phenomenon of crime and this kind of prescription is a crucial aspect of any orienting strategy (Wagner, 1984). Next, the conceptual scheme that views society as a living entity is adopted. It is accepted that society has what Durkheim called a *'sui generis'* reality or a social reality not able to be reduced to other less complex realities (Ashley and Orenstein, 2001). In the 'Chicago School' this idea is more specifically applied to the city:

> The city, from the point of view of this paper, is something more than a congeries of individual men and of social conveniences-streets, buildings, electric lights, tramways, and telephones, etc.; something more,

Figure 4-1: The Early "Chicago School" Research Program
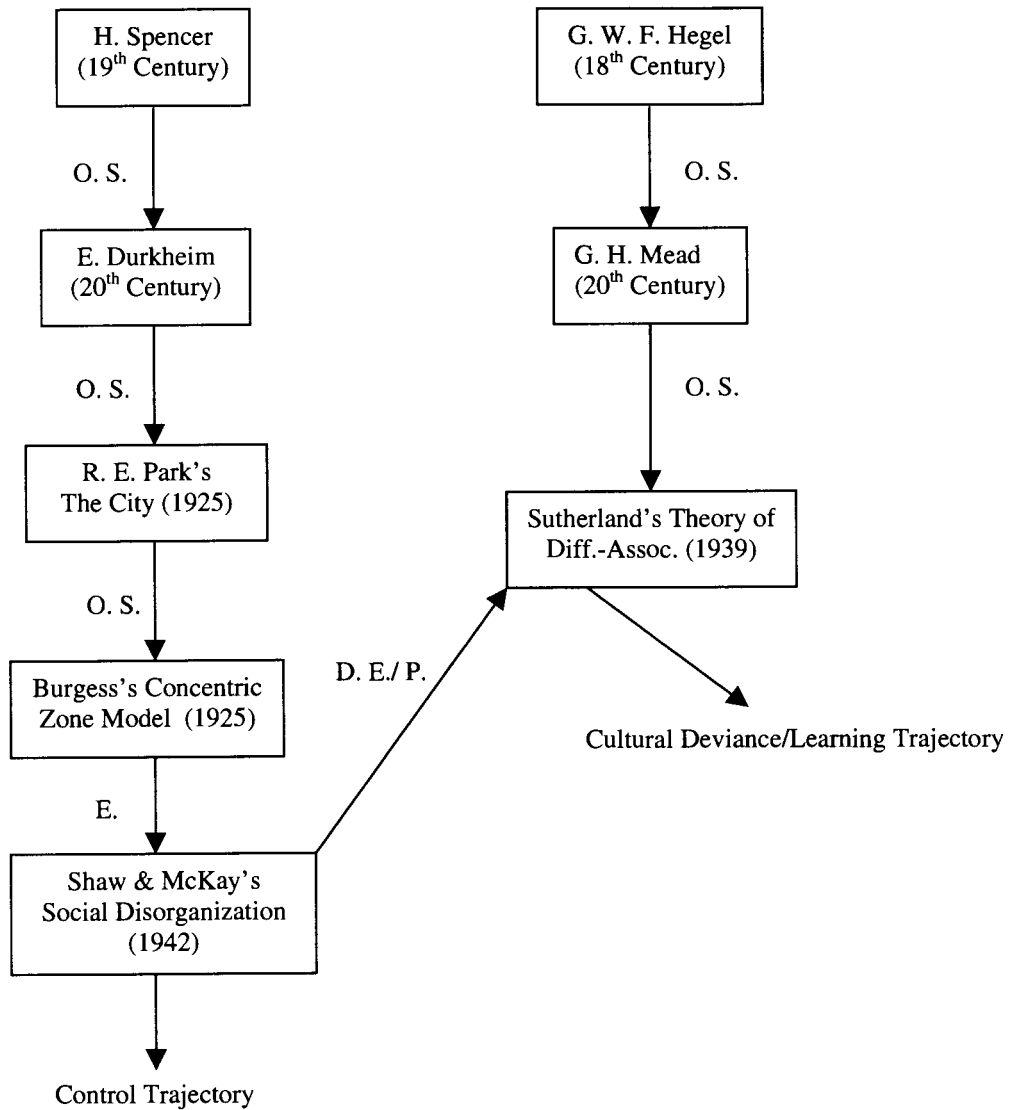
H. Spencer (19th Century)	G. W. F. Hegel (18th Century)

Figure 4-1: The Early "Chicago School" Research Program

H. Spencer (19th Century)

O. S.

E. Durkheim (20th Century)

O. S.

R. E. Park's The City (1925)

O. S.

Burgess's Concentric Zone Model (1925)

E.

Shaw & McKay's Social Disorganization (1942)

Control Trajectory

G. W. F. Hegel (18th Century)

O. S.

G. H. Mead (20th Century)

O. S.

Sutherland's Theory of Diff.-Assoc. (1939)

D. E./ P.

Cultural Deviance/Learning Trajectory

Key

O. S. = orienting strategy influence   E. = elaboration

D. E. = direct elaboration   P. = proliferation

also, than a mere constellation of institutions and administrative devices-courts, hospitals, schools, police, and civil functionaries of various sorts. The city is, rather, a state, a body of customs and traditions, and of organized attitudes and sentiments that inhere in these customs and are transmitted with this tradition. The city is not, in other words, merely a physical mechanism and an artificial construction. It is involved in the vital processes of the people who compose it; it is a product of nature, and particularly of human nature (Park, 1925 p.1)

The city is conceived of as an ecological unit composed of living entities (people) with a reality all its own (Park, 1925). Park also makes an assumption about the true nature of social reality, and this is another key portion of any orienting strategy (Wagner, 1984). Specifically, Park claims that "the city is rooted in the traditions and customs of the people who inhabit it" and, consequently, the city has both a moral and physical organization (Park, 1925 pgs. 4-5). The city is divided into neighborhoods based upon both this moral organization and the physical characteristics of population density and distribution. Often, these neighborhoods are also segregated by race and/or by vocation, which in many cases is directly linked to class. The atmosphere created by this setting is one of competition. In other words, the assumption here is that while there are some consensually agreed upon norms, all norms and laws are not necessarily embraced by all equally (Park, 1925).

A final, important part of this orienting strategy is another conceptual scheme based upon the Durkheimian concept of social disorganization. The scheme is supplemented with some outside concepts (introduced by Cooley) to help explain the mechanism by which social disorganization takes place (Park, 1925, pgs. 23-25). The assumption is made that the structure of the big city inherently erodes primary (or intimate) group interaction through increased secondary interactions. More simply put, a

person is more likely to deal with strangers as opposed to intimate others in the context of a large city. Eventually, this leads to a breakdown of different traditional institutions normally involved with primary group interactions; specifically mentioned are the family, school, and church. This breakdown allows the evils of vice and crime to occur through the lack of informal social control (Park, 1925, pg. 24). The core cause of all these problems is, as Durkheim suggested, the stage of transition and the rapid changes caused by the switch from a rural to an industrial economy (perhaps one characteristic of the different 'societal types') that demands the formation of cities.

Ernest Burgess, a colleague of Robert Park's at the University of Chicago, supplied the first true unit theory for the 'Chicago School' research program. This model, although empirically testable, was not laid out in formal propositions. It does, however, have a distinguishable set of both core and auxiliary elements. The core includes the concept of a continuum of social organization ranging from organization to disorganization. Every city is thought to fall somewhere along this continuum and it is likened to the metabolic processes which occur in biological organisms (Burgess, 1925). Several core propositions illuminate the importance of this concept for the theory. First, a moderate amount of disorganization is considered normal, even desirable, as it will often encourage more social organization (e.g., through community reaction). However, problems will arise when rates of disorganization become too high. Rapidly expanding cities with high levels of residential mobility are portrayed as particularly vulnerable to social disorganization (Burgess, 1925). Of note is the influence of the earlier described metatheoretical directives; especially obvious is the reliance on the natural scientific

processes, and Durkheim's notions of transitional societies and social disorganization.[20]

It is common for directives such as these to be directly represented in the core elements

of any research program (Wagner, 1984).

The auxiliary set includes several statements meant to further explain different

aspects of the core. One must keep in mind that these elements are less crucial to the

theory and are usually tested (as we shall see shortly) (Wagner, 1984). The auxiliary set

here includes a set of propositions associating higher levels of social disorganization with

geographical area. Burgess suggested that the city of Chicago was growing in concentric

circles, radiating out from the downtown area. The areas with highest concentrations of

crime were those around the downtown area and which he called zones-in-transition.

Other factors linked to socially disorganized communities are ethnic and vocational

(essentially class) composition (Park, 1925; Burgess, 1925). Also in the auxiliary set are

some suggested indices of social disorganization including increased rates of crime, vice,

disease, disorder, insanity, and suicide that seem to result from higher levels of social

disorganization (Burgess, 1925, p. 57).

The Working Out of The "Core Set": The Research of Shaw and McKay

With the metatheoretical foundations laid, and the first unit theory proposed, all

this program required to set it into motion was some research to test the concentric zone

model. Interestingly, the researchers who filled this void were not academics by trade,

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[20] Some scholars have called this an ecological tradition, and claim that it is responsible for "the continuing hold of positivistic assumptions in American sociology" (Taylor, Walton, and Young, 1973, p. 111).

model. Interestingly, the researchers who filled this void were not academics by trade, but, rather, were two social workers: Clifford Shaw and Henry McKay.[21]

The first important contribution of Shaw and McKay was to quantitatively test the concentric zone model. To perform this test, they used juvenile delinquency as an indicator of social disorganization and proceeded to apply the concentric zone model to the city of Chicago (Shaw and McKay, 1969). Later, they also examined other problems taken to be indicators of social disorganization, including rates of tuberculosis and infant mortality. Finally, they eventually examined rates of juvenile delinquency in other cities including Cincinnati, Boston, Cleveland, Philadelphia, and Richmond. Some of these findings lent direct support to the model; however, other findings did not provide direct support (Shaw and McKay, 1969). The results were not as disastrous for the theory as one might think. In reality, the research (even disconfirming evidence) aided the program overall by providing a database of relevant and consistent observations. This indicates substantial growth in the observational set of the research program (Wagner, 1984). Additionally, this research provided clues about what sort of alterations needed to be made to the theoretical structure.

At this point, it ought to be made clear that the entire theory was not discarded when it failed to receive strong support; the model was merely adjusted. Specifically, some auxiliary elements seem to have been discarded in response to the findings. The ideas that social disorganization (as indicated by juvenile delinquency) was directly associated with race, and with geographic area, were both eliminated (Shaw and McKay,

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[21] The two had become acquainted with Ernest Burgess and Robert Ezra Park through their work in a juvenile research facility at the University of Chicago (Lily et al., 2002).

1969, pp. 383-384). Instead, Shaw and McKay claimed that stable institutional structures are the most important factor. Often, instability in these structures can be attributed to limited resources in certain areas of the city, bearing in mind that these are not always the poorest sections of town (Lily Cullen, and Ball, 2002). These changes represent an elaboration as a result of empirical testing, an important form of elaboration (Wagner, 1984).[22] This research would later generate the perspective now known as control theory that will be discussed later in this thesis.

The test of the concentric zone model was only one important aspect of Shaw and McKay's research. They also conducted in-depth, qualitative interviews with youth living in the delinquent areas. The crucial finding here was that conflicting sets of values seemed to be at work in these areas. In addition to the mainstream set of values, a 'criminogenic' set of values was being circulated within the groups with the highest rates of delinquency. In fact, these values were actually being 'passed down' from older siblings and friends (Shaw and McKay, 1969). This introduced a new substantive problem into the heuristic set of the 'Chicago School' research program. The new puzzle was to explain how exactly these criminal values were being transmitted. A young colleague of Henry McKay's, Edwin Sutherland would attempt to provide an explanation with a new theory called "differential association". However, before discussing this theory further, it will be necessary to unpack the roots of Sutherland's new and unique orienting strategy.

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[22] Shaw and McKay did manage to make suggestions as to how one could adjust the theory to make it more precise (Laub, 1983).

Branching Trajectories: Sutherland's Theory of Differential Association

Edwin Sutherland seems to have been profoundly influenced by his time as a faculty member in the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago (Laub, 1983; Lily et al., 2002; Sampson, 2000).[23] An important source of inspiration for Sutherland was his exposure to the symbolic-interactionist perspective. This orientation, along with the emphasis on urban and socio-ecological studies discussed previously, was also quite popular in the Department of Sociology at the University of Chicago. This particular faction has also been called the 'Chicago School of Social Psychology' (Lily et al., 2002). Later, this group would grow into what some have called 'The Second Chicago School' (Fine, 1995). There were several early contributors to this burgeoning theoretical seedbed, perhaps the most influential, for Sutherland, being George Herbert Mead.

Mead has been referred to as "the father of symbolic-interactionism" (Akers, 1989, p. 24).[24] To formulate his ideas about the self and society, Mead utilized Hegel's notion of the dialectical relationship. Mead believed that the individual emerges from society and that society emerges from the individual. During the ongoing process of social interaction people alter their behavior in response to other peoples' actions. This constant process of adjustment and re-adjustment can be thought of as a type of learning (Ashley and Orenstein, 2001). According to Mead, this learning is made possible by the dual nature of the self. Simply put, the self is composed of two parts, the "I" and the

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[23] As far as personal relationships go, Sutherland was close friends with Henry McKay and would keep in touch with him even after leaving the University of Chicago (Lily et al., 2002).

[24] Additionally, Sutherland specifically mentions Mead as being a major intellectual influence along with Charles Cooley and W.I. Thomas (Sutherland and Cressey, 1966, p. 60).

"me". The "I" is the creative, intuitive part of the self and the "me" is the reflexive part of the self, containing all previous learning and knowledge. As these two parts interact, we create different selves to deal with different aspects of our lives. In other words, this relationship explains why most people may behave differently when at school as opposed to a party (Ashley and Orenstein, 2001).

Mead's ideas about the self and learning are reflected in Sutherland's orienting strategy, and aided him in formulating his theory of differential association. In this theory Sutherland claims that criminal behavior is learned from groups of intimate others, just as non-criminal behavior is learned (Sutherland and Cressey, 1966). This re-orientation and extension of principles did a great deal to change the original Chicago School research program, so much in fact that this would later produce an entirely original theoretical trajectory known as cultural deviance or learning theory.

When Sutherland formulated his theory of differential association in 1939, he initiated several important changes to the core of the existing Chicago research program. Sutherland accepted a great deal of Shaw and McKay's findings; however, he chose to focus more on the findings from qualitative research. Sutherland also decided to replace social disorganization with a less value-laden term: "differential social organization".[25] The ultimate goal for Sutherland was to explain variations in rates of crime rather than attempting to directly explain individual conduct:

> The differential association statement, similarly, is a "principle of
> normative conflict" which proposes that high crime rates occur in societies

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[25] This change was prompted at the urging of a student named Albert Cohen whom Sutherland would later influence (Lily et al., 2002).

and groups characterized by conditions that lead to the development of extensive criminal subcultures. The principle makes sense of variations in crime rates as well as against it, and then observing further that crime rates are unequally distributed because of differences in the degree to which various categories of persons participate in this normative conflict. Sutherland invented the principle of normative conflict to account for the distribution of high and low crime rates; he then tried to specify the mechanism by which this principle works to produce individual cases of criminality. The mechanism proposed is differential association (Sutherland and Cressey, 1966, p. 97)

As previously mentioned, differential association is a group learning process. The learning process consists of two separate elements; first the techniques involved in the commission of crime (which maybe simple or complex), and second the direction of the motives and rationalizations (Sutherland and Cressey, 1966). The specific direction of the motives and rationalizations are determined by one's definitions of the law. Definitions involve the way in which a person observes the legal codes and are particularly important to Sutherland's theory. These definitions may be favorable (giving rise to non-criminal behavior) or unfavorable (giving rise to criminal behavior). However, most individuals have inconsistent and mixed feelings towards the law, especially in the American context (Sutherland and Cressey, 1966, p. 81). The definition proposition explains why a person's associations are so crucial; people observe intimate others for cues of how to behave when feelings of inconsistency arise. These differential associations are thought to vary on four different dimensions: priority (which associations happened first?), frequency (which associations occurred most often?), intensity (which associations involved the most influential and/or closest relationships?) and duration (which associations lasted the longest?)(Sutherland and Cressey, 1966).

The primary effect of Sutherland's adjustments and additions was an increase in the rigor of the theoretical structure, and this was accomplished by direct elaboration (Wagner, 1984). To explain further, Sutherland set up his theory in formal propositions; Shaw and McKay never really proposed any kind of formal theory (Laub, 1983). Sutherland also made other important changes to the formal sets of the program. First, he increased the overall scope of the existing explanation. So, how exactly did Sutherland accomplish this feat? He merely deleted a tightly held core assumption, specifically the class association with crime (Merton, 1957, pg. 90). Up to this point, there had always been a heavy focus on the social class of the criminal; it had been taken for granted that crime tended to be a lower class problem. Nevertheless, Sutherland claimed his theory could also explain white-collar crimes (Sutherland and Cressey, 1966). By inserting the symbolic-interactionist learning elements into the formulation, Sutherland was able to account for all criminal behaviors rather than just those of the underprivileged.

Another mode of growth at work here is that of proliferation, or the application of a theory to a new explanatory domain (Wagner, 1984). Sutherland had always doubted the validity of the official statistics that were used by many 'Chicago School' researchers, which made it appear that criminal activity was limited primarily to the lower classes (Sutherland and Cressey, 1966). Sutherland's actions essentially set into motion a transformation of the 'Chicago School' research program. The program started as a linear program (characterized by elaboration) and became a branching program (characterized by proliferation). All of this amounts to an increase in the heuristic density for the overall research program since its ability to address different problems was significantly improved (Wagner, 1984).

Sutherland: Criminological Colonist, Sociological Samurai

Sutherland joined the faculty at the University of Chicago in 1930, and held a post for only five short years before leaving for Indiana State University where he would stay until his death in 1950 (Lily et al., 2002). During most of his years at the 'Chicago School', Sutherland had a very cordial relationship with Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck, a husband and wife research team working in the area of juvenile delinquency at Harvard University. In their work, the Gluecks drew upon many different disciplinary sources including psychiatry, law, psychology, and education. Sutherland corresponded with the Gluecks a great deal and was very encouraging of the work they were doing with multiple factor explanations of crime (Sampson and Laub, 1991). However, in 1934 there was a dramatic change in Sutherland's position and he began to critique the Gluecks' research at every opportunity. He felt that the couple's atheoretical approach to research was useless and misleading, and even potentially destructive (Sutherland and Cressey, 1966; Sampson and Laub, 1991). Sutherland's primary explicit objection seemed to be his feeling that the Gluecks were confusing cause and correlation. The approach of the Gluecks might be thought of as an early attempt at integration, although their methods lacked theoretical rigor.

Many theoreticians have attempted to explain this radical shift in thought and, thus far, the best answer seems to come from a brief examination of the world of sociological criminology at the time. With the profoundly influential work of the 'Chicago School', sociology had staked its claim to the phenomenon of crime. When he arrived at Indiana in 1935, Sutherland was already an influential figure and his reputation would only grow larger during his tenure there. Sutherland would eventually be

successful at establishing what some have called an 'intellectual colony' for 'Chicago School' criminology at Indiana State University (Laub, 1983, p. 6, 188). He had hoards of graduate students, several of whom would become influential scholars themselves so, at the time, crushing the Gluecks' work (and with it their reputations) was not a problem.

But what was the exact nature of this argument? Was it simply a responsible academic blowing the whistle on weak research? Upon closer examination, it is apparent that there may be more to the story. Rather than being a mere theoretical debate, this had become a disagreement over "proper" orienting strategies. As Wagner suggests:

> Most metatheoretical debates are unresolvable; even when they are resolvable that accomplishment requires a considerable amount of time. In any case, since not all such debates can be resolved, the replacement of one strategy or paradigm with another is more adequately described simply as change, not as progress or growth. To the extent that growth does occur, it is associated generally with growth of cultural and institutional frameworks supporting the strategy or paradigm, not with the growth of theoretical knowledge itself. (Wagner, 1984, pp. 29-30)

Clearly, the disagreement in the Sutherland-Glueck debate is at a metatheoretical level. Sutherland had relied upon a new method of theorizing known as 'analytic induction' to elaborate upon his own differential association theory (Sampson and Laub, 1991). Briefly stated, analytic induction means that the theorist formulates a theory based on the available facts and then searches for cases that contradict the theory. When anomalous cases are located the theory is modified to fit the new data. It has been suggested that this was the only way in which he could make sense of the existing data on crime. In addition, Sutherland was successful at insulating his theory from competition with other theories from other perspectives since Sutherland claimed that crime was a social phenomenon and could not be explained by anything other than social factors.

This fusing of disciplinary interests with positivist concepts virtually guarantees that research outcomes will be consistent with whatever disciplinary lens is being used (Sampson and Laub, 1991).

Interestingly, this seems to be the exact act the original 'Chicago School' was reacting to, except in their case it was the disciplinary interests of biology, law, and psychology. Not surprisingly, there would be reactions against this sociological stance as well. Two scholars would resurrect the interest in the Gluecks' research over 50 years after these events. However, to fully understand how and why this happened, the next 50 years of criminological theory must be more thoroughly examined.

Robert Merton: Functionalist Prophet

As has been previously demonstrated with the "Chicago School" program, and the work of Edwin Sutherland, new theoretical trajectories in criminology are frequently set into motion by the genesis of new orienting strategies. In most cases, several different metatheories are drawn upon to create a new, unique orienting strategy. In other cases, orienting strategies are imported from other perspectives and disciplines and are applied to explain the pertinent phenomenon.

The validity of this argument is reinforced upon examination of Merton's strain research program. Merton embraced many of the same Spencerian and Durkeimian principles that the Chicagoans did, but there are also clear differences in his orientation. Instead of seeing society as a sort of organism, functionalism views society as more closely resembling a machine. Perhaps the rapidly growing influence of technology

during this period began to affect how people were seeing society, as this orientation would soon take hold of sociology and a great deal of the field of criminology.

Most criminological texts connect Merton's theorizing directly to Emile Durkheim; however, a more direct influence, Talcott Parsons, is often left undiscussed (see Lily et al., 2002; Einstadter and Henry, 1995). Parsonian functionalism is key to accurately understanding and interpreting Merton's mode of theorizing.[26] Parsons essentially created and developed the sociological version of structural-functionalism[27] and could be thought of as a metatheorist. Merton would later be the first to use functionalism as a vehicle with which to study crime and deviance (Merton, 1957). Some have gone so far as to say that Merton was somewhat of an intellectual pariah early on because of his pioneering work (Cole, 1975). This isolation is a partial explanation for the well-known delayed popularity of strain theory. Merton articulated the original theory in 1938, but it did not come into prominence until the 1950s (Cole, 1975).

Parsons provided inspiration for the main conceptual scheme present in Merton's work. This exportation of concepts is quite common when developing orienting strategies (Wagner, 1984). For the core of his theory, Merton borrowed the Parsonian concept of the unit act, which explains action through the explanatory mechanism of the means-ends relationship. In other words, unit acts consist of actors who are striving towards ends by using some sort of means. Ideally, the means utilized are of the

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[26] While attending Harvard, Merton was a student of Parsons', and the two remained friends after Merton assumed his faculty position at Columbia University (Merton, 1957, p. x).
[27] Another anthropological version of structural-functionalism was developed by A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, and later his student B.K. Malinowski developed his own version called "instrumental functionalism". Parsons was Malinowski's student for a brief period; however, Parsons version of functionalism more resembles that of Radcliffe-Brown. See A. Giddens, *Studies in Social and Political Theory* (1977) pp. 96-99 for further discussion.

legitimate sort (legal and socially accepted), but their availability is dependent upon the actor's environment. A limited availability of legitimate means to achieve an end may cause the actor either to make an 'error' (meaning they select illegitimate means) or to fail in attaining the desired end (Parsons, 1937, pp. 44-50). In addition to using the means-ends schema, Merton also elaborated upon the concept of function, differentiating latent and manifest functions. Finally, he agreed with Parsons that the denial of legitimate means would inevitably lead to some type of adaptation or adjustment (Merton, 1957).

Durkheim was also a major influence for Merton; perhaps most apparent and important is Merton's reformulation and re-implementation of the concept of anomie or 'normlessness'. The growth pattern of the orienting strategy and unit theories of the strain theory research program can be seen in Figure 4-2. An influence that cannot be seen in the figure is that of the implicit political content of Merton's theorizing. Arguably, this aspect of Merton was also inspired by Durkheim. We shall return later to this point, which can be illustrated by examining some of the criticism directed at strain theory. Since its rise to prominence in the 1950s, functionalism has been the target of a great deal of criticism. Many of these attacks were directed at Parsons and the massive influence he had over the direction of American sociology after World War II[28]. The main problems with Parsonian metatheory revolve around his translation and interpretation of the classical European social thinkers. Most important to the study of crime was his exposition of Durkheim. The argument has been made that Parsons

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[28] This dominance, in turn, affected the development of criminology because of its sociological lineage

Figure 4-2: Strain Research Program
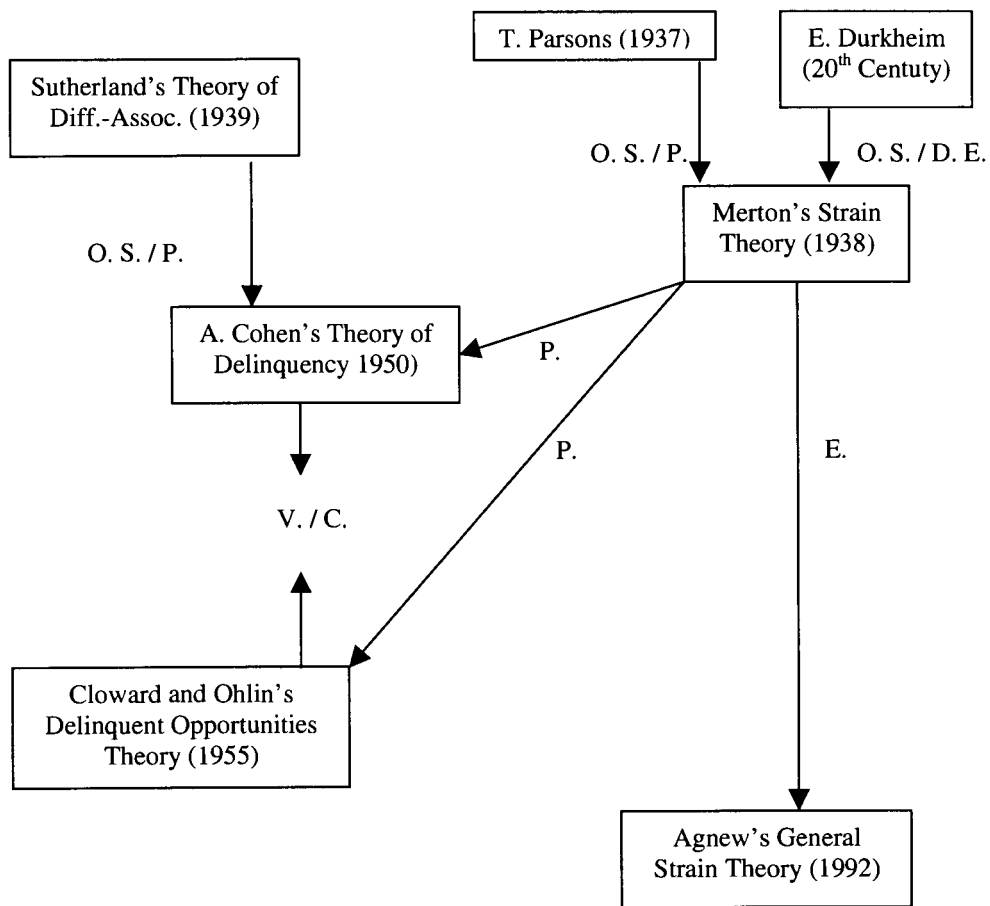
Key

O. S. = orienting strategy   E. = elaboration

D. E. = direct elaboration   P. = proliferation

C. = competition   V. = variation

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omitted (or misinterpreted) certain areas integral to understanding the true nature of Durkheimian thought. As many have pointed out, there is an implied radical critique present in the work of Durkheim, which does not seem to appear in the Parsonian translations (see Taylor, Walton and Young, 1973; Goulder, 1970; Giddens, 1977; Gibbons, 1979).[29]

However, upon a close examination of Merton's writings, it does appear that he may not have been as guilty of 'crass theorizing' as one might expect. Merton was clearly the primary spokesman for functionalism; however, he was critical of many aspects of his own orientation. Some of these included the functionalist tendency towards conservatism and its acceptance of the status quo as functional (see Taylor, Walton, and Young, 1973; Giddens, 1977). This can be seen as a definite change in Merton's own orienting strategy when compared to the metatheory of Parsons. A change in an orienting strategy over time in response to unit theory development is interesting, and will be seen later in this program in particular.[30] In addition to this, Merton always retained some implicit Marxism (albeit well-disguised) in his work (see Gouldner's foreword in Taylor, Walton, and Young, 1973). Merton has even argued that functionalism is not incompatible with dialectical materialism, although some have suggested that this notion may be untenable (Giddens, 1977, pp. 100). Nevertheless, one must keep in mind that at the heart of Merton's theory is the concept of the "American

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[29] There have been a few speculations made as to why these omissions occurred from suggestions that certain important writings and lectures espousing this philosophy were unavailable to American biases against Marxism (Taylor, Walton, and Young, 1973) and radicalism (Gouldner, 1970; Gibbons, 1979).
[30] Wagner and his colleagues acknowledged that orienting strategies do indeed grow and change, (see Berger and Zelditch, 1993) but have yet to do any comprehensive work in the area.

Dream". This idea appears to support capitalist society but, in reality, can be interpreted as a critique of the capitalist system itself. These adjustments represent alterations to assumptions and directives that comprise crucial aspects of any orienting strategy, and will often have important effects on the subsequent theorizing process (Wagner, 1984).

An important base assumption to the core of the strain program concerns human nature. Merton proceeds from the assumption that people naturally follow norms; it is strain that pushes people into deviance and crime (Merton, 1957). Other central concepts and propositions can be easily summarized. First, for Merton, there are goals agreed upon by most everyone that inevitably become part of a society's culture. As discussed above, in the context of the United States the goal is one of monetary success or the "American Dream". However, it ought to be mentioned here that Merton himself acknowledged that there are other goals that people have, it is merely financial success which most agree upon (Merton, 1957, p. 157, 181). In other words, the concept of the goal is central to the theory, but its exact definition is definitely malleable as will be demonstrated in later reformulations. The "American Dream" is portrayed as being equally attainable by anyone; it is one's own fault if they cannot achieve financial success in a society filled with opportunities. This idea, Merton argues, has become part of the cultural structure and is only half of the problem. The cultural structure interacts with the social structure and this relationship produces deviance. The cultural presentation takes for granted that everyone has equal opportunities to the legitimate means; however, in reality access is limited by one's position within the social structure. A specific proposition here is that as social standing increases so do opportunities to access the legitimate means (Merton, 1957). This could be characterized as direct elaboration upon

Parsonian concepts. Merton is reformulating ideas, applying them to a specific phenomenon, and making them empirically testable (Wagner, 1984).

The previously described malintegration of means and goals creates expectations within people; when these expectations are not met, people become frustrated. In order to alleviate the strain created by this situation, people adapt in one of five ways: conformity; innovation; ritualism; retreatism; and rebellion. Conformity is the only adaptation resulting in adherence to both means and goals. Other adaptations characterize people as rejecting the means (as in innovation), rejecting the goals (as in ritualism), rejecting both (as in retreatism), or rejecting both and replacing them with new means and goals (as in rebellion) (Merton, 1957). As strain increases, and less people conform, society becomes increasingly unstable. Simply put, norms begin to lose hold because they become difficult to recognize since so many people are deviating. This effectively creates a paradox in which deviance is the norm, also known as anomie (Merton, 1957). Thus, we have more direct elaboration by Merton upon Durkheim (Wagner, 1984. pp. 41). The difference between Mertonian and Durkheimian anomie is cogently illustrated by the contemporary strain theorist, Robert Agnew (1997), "For Merton, normlessness refers to those norms regulating goal achievement, whereas for Durkheim, it refers to those norms regulating goals." (pg. 37).

Connecting Traditions and Theoretical Branches

Up until the 1950s, the strain program had primarily been characterized by elaboration, first of Merton upon Parsons and Durkheim and then, later, with Merton's reformulations of his own initial theory. As mentioned previously, a program

characterized by frequent elaboration is known as a linear program. The next round of theorizing would initiate the branching phase of the program (Wagner and Berger, 1985).[31]

Albert Cohen would put forth his strain theory formulation in 1955.[32] Rather than studying individual gang members (as the Chicagoans did), Cohen chose to focus on the gang collective itself (Gibbons, 1979). He felt that in order to understand the transmission of criminal values the delinquent subculture of the gang must be examined. This represents a change in orienting strategy as a new directive (i.e., focus on the gang collective) is added (Wagner, 1984). Cohen (1955) argued that the gang arises in the context of working class culture as a result of a type of strain. This strain is different from the Mertonian sort, as it is related to a denial of status rather than wealth. Specifically, lower class children are judged by the middle class "measuring rod" creating expectations that they cannot live up to. Status is denied to them, and they become strained (Cohen, 1955). This amounts to an adjustment in the auxiliary set as Cohen has described an alternative method of explaining what gives rise to strain. Note that this is not a new element instead Cohen merely changed the definition of an existing element, the goal (Wagner, 1984). To relieve the frustration, some children adapt by joining a gang and seek a different type of status. Again, here the concept of adaptations is revealed to be part of the auxiliary set, as it is altered from Merton's original

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[31] Not surprisingly, the theorists responsible for generating the branches of the strain program had intellectual connections to Merton. Less expected is the connection each had to Sutherland, who would influence the orienting strategy they would utilize.

[32] As an undergraduate, he had taken a course from a young Merton while attending Harvard University. Later, in his graduate training, Cohen also worked with Edwin Sutherland (Lily et al., 2002). The influence of both of these scholars is clearly apparent in Cohen's work.

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formulation. Additionally, the heuristic set is expanded upon since new problems are being addressed (Wagner, 1984). Elements from psychology (reaction formation) are added to the auxiliary set to account for the 'malicious' and 'hedonistic' nature of the subcultural delinquency (Kornhauser, 1978).

Cohen's theory (1955) caused other competing models to emerge, the most important being Cloward and Ohlin's Opportunity theory (1960).[33] Cloward and Ohlin's theory, like Cohen's, preserves the basic core of Mertonian strain theory while using an orienting strategy based on the importance of subcultures with great influence from Sutherland. However, there are several significant differences in this particular formulation when compared with Cohen's model. For Cloward and Ohlin, the societal goal was one of wealth and was, therefore, closer to the Mertonian "American Dream" concept. They also retained the conceptual schema of typologies; however, this scheme focuses on types of subcultures: criminal, conflict, retreatist (these could be thought of as group adaptations) rather than on the individual adaptations (as in Merton's theory) (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960). Perhaps Cloward and Ohlin's greatest contribution to theorizing in criminology was their treatment of legitimate and illegitimate opportunities. Merton's explanation of individual adaptations fails to address the reasons why one would pick one type of adaptation over another. To confront this issue, Cloward and Ohlin draw upon Sutherland's differential association theory. An important, but undiscussed, implication of differential association theory is that access to illegitimate

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[33] Like Cohen, this duo had also been exposed to the work of both Merton and Sutherland. While studying at Columbia Richard Cloward had been Merton's student, and Lloyd Ohlin had studied under Sutherland at the University of Chicago. The two would later work together on Columbia's social work faculty (Lily et al., 1995).

means will also be differentially available (Cloward and Ohlin, 1960). One must be taught or mentored in the proper techniques of crime (e.g., picking locks, hotwiring cars, cracking safes, and committing burglaries) (Sutherland and Cressey, 1966). So here, Cloward and Ohlin have added another dimension to the concept of access to means. All of this amounts to adjustments in the auxiliary set; specifically, adaptations and means definitions are redefined (Wagner, 1984).

The theories dealing with delinquent subcultural strain (Cohen, 1955; Cloward and Ohlin, 1960) changed the trajectory of the strain research program in a variety of ways. First, the functionalist orienting strategy originally articulated by Parsons was altered significantly. A great deal of this overarching perspective was lost or disregarded in the theorizing process especially when the program began to branch[34]. This is not surprising given that it has been acknowledged that orienting strategies change and grow in response to theory testing and building (see Wagner and Berger, 1985; Berger and Zelditch, 1993).

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[34] Some aspects of Parson's work were retained which could possibly be thought of as remnants of his original orienting strategy. Notably, Cohen utilizes a Parsonian explanation of general delinquency and uses it to deal with the problem of explaining middle-class delinquency (an Achilles heel of strain theory). To be brief, Parsons suggested that a great deal of delinquency is explained by failure to identify with a powerful male role model. This failure is a result of the typical father's absence in his son's life necessitated by the father's commitment to his work role. In contrast, girls have their mothers as role models of socialization. The boys seek to prove themselves as 'men' and began to act out. This purports to explain the overrepresentation of males as criminals and deviants. Cohen (1955, p. 162-164) sees this as particularly applicable to the middle class delinquency and subsequent subcultural formation. On the other hand, Cloward and Ohlin (1960 p. 49-50), while acknowledging that this notion of masculine identification may have a reinforcing effect upon delinquency and subculture formation, consider it less central to the argument. Thus, in Cohen (1955), we have a brief reappearance of part of Parsonian functionalism that could be considered orienting strategy even though it comes in the form of an adhoc explanation. Cohen uses Parsons to answer a specific question: how do we deal with middle class crime and deviance. The answer is that by examining the functionality of family relationships in the middle class (and perhaps elsewhere) we can explain the crime and deviance occurring here.

The most obvious relationship at work here is proliferation. Both Cohen's (1955) and Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) theories can be considered proliferants of Merton's (1938) original strain theory. Each one has started a new theoretical branch, the subcultural branch for Cohen's formulation and the opportunity branch for Cloward and Ohlin's theory. The sign of a successful proliferation is a new branch, in which new intellectual puzzles reveal themselves and these, in turn, spur on more research in the branch (Wagner, 1984). All of this also indicates that elements have been added to the heuristic set of the program, in this case two theories dealing with the explanatory domains of subculture and opportunity (Wagner, 1984, p. 102). In the overall program, the breadth has been significantly increased, however, the density seems to be relatively unaffected (Wagner, 1984, p.103-104).

Cohen's (1955) and Cloward and Ohlin's (1960) theories are also variants of one another. Variation (as a theoretical relation) is much less easy to see, and its effects are somewhat difficult to understand (Wagner and Berger, 1985). This is compounded by the fact that these theories are proliferants and therefore tend to be less rigorous, precise, and comprehensive (Wagner, 1984, p. 77). Further, as Wagner points out (1984) these theories in particular are difficult to compare since the argument is imprecise and the scope is unspecified (pg. 67). Consequently, they are not really competing with each other since the theories involved are not clearly empirically testable. Despite these shortcomings, they definitely contributed to the overall growth of the program.

Out of the Ashes: Agnew's General Theory of Strain

After falling into disuse for a number of years, a new incarnation of strain unit theory appeared on the theoretical landscape of criminology. Robert Agnew has drawn upon research in several different areas including psychology and restorative justice to formulate his new general theory of strain (Agnew, 1992; 1997; 2001). Agnew argues that strain theory can be differentiated from social learning and social bonding theory because it focuses on negative relationships. Further, he claims that Merton discussed only one type of negative relationship in his work, that which prevents one from achieving positively valued goals (Agnew, 1992).

With his work, Agnew expands upon Merton's theory by specifying two additional types of negative relationships: those which remove positively valued stimuli and those which present negative and/or noxious stimuli. These negative relationships may eventually lead to strain which can cause frustration and anger. The new proposition can be stated in the following way: the more strain experienced from negative relationships, the greater the chances that delinquency will result. Note here that the effects of strain are cumulative, so multiple negative relationships will cause strain to accumulate. It is also mentioned that the effects of strain may be mitigated by effective coping strategies (Agnew, 1992).

In Wagnerian terms there are several interesting consequences resulting from Agnew's adjustments. First, since Agnew has specified more negative relationships, he is elaborating upon Merton's original theory. Further, by shifting the focus to negative relationships, Agnew has redefined parts of the orienting strategy being used in this

program. The emphasis here now falls more upon the individual and less upon societal and cultural structures. Consequently, Agnew has reduced the scope of the theory to a social psychological level (Agnew, 1992). Finally, Agnew has increased the observational set of the program by taking into account research done in psychology, social psychology, and the area of restorative justice (Agnew, 1992; 1997). Consequently, the core of this program has been drastically altered. This is more than likely in response to inferior empirical testing of Merton's strain theory when compared to Aker's social learning theory and Hirschi's theory of social bonding (Chapter 5 contains further discussion of this competition between established research programs).

CHAPTER 5: BONDS, LEARNING, AND DUELS

Control Theory Orienting Strategy

During the popularity of strain theory and functionalism, a new and competing program began to take shape. Growing directly out of the 'Chicago School' of social disorganization (i.e., Shaw and McKay) control theory began a slow rise to prominence in the early 1950s. Since these theories were heavily influenced by the work of the 'Chicago School', the orienting strategy for the control program is very similar to that of the original 'Chicago School' social disorganization program. For example, Durkheimian ideas are readily apparent and there is a strong commitment to the use of the scientific method. There are, however, a few differences worth mentioning. First, control theorists introduced aspects of psychoanalysis (e.g., ego, self concept) (Reiss, 1951; Reckless, 1955; Hirschi, 1969). In the 'Chicago School' of social disorganization (the forerunner to control theory), individual factors were practically ignored in favor of social, structural and institutional variables. Specifically, this shift to a more psychological focus caused an increased emphasis on individuals. This change of focus makes a statement about the subject matter under investigation, and is noted as an important component of an orienting strategy (Wagner, 1984).

The second important change in orienting strategy involves the nature of theory construction. Early on, many of the models were laid out informally (Reiss, 1951; Reckless, 1955; Sykes and Matza, 1957; Nye, 1958), meaning that *all* the elements of the theory (e.g., the propositions and the assumptions) were not clearly delineated. However,

these elements would later be clearly presented and illustrated in Hirschi's theory of social bonding (1969). It ought to be kept in mind that this process of formalization occurred slowly; some aspects of all the earlier theories were clearly laid out, others needed specification and formalization. This move towards the use of more formal logic is a significant departure from Shaw and McKay's work (1942), which focused more on pure empirical research than formal theory generation. This is essentially a new orienting strategy directive, informing the theorist of the way in which a unit theory ought to be constructed (Wagner, 1984, p. 28).

It is important to keep in mind that these are merely aspects of an orienting strategy that is still taking shape. The ideas are tested and compared, some are kept, and some are discarded but this is not to say that all the defeated competitors simply cease to contribute to further theoretical growth. It is only after Travis Hirschi's model appears that the control theory orienting strategy is clearly developed, and the same is true of many of the core elements in the formal sets (i.e., the working out of the core has not yet fully occurred) (Wagner, 1984, pg. 100). Hirschi's model would eventually become dominant, and production or elaboration of new unit theories in the control program would come to a virtual halt. However, proliferation of Hirschi's theory would continue. These processes are clearly noticeable in Figure 5-1.

The Early Control Program: Cases of Non-Competitive Variants

One of the earliest control formulations, Reiss's personality oriented control theory (1951), illustrates the aforementioned changes to the orienting strategy, and also laid the theoretical foundation for the social control program (Williams and McShane, 1999).

Figure 5-1: Control Research Program

Key
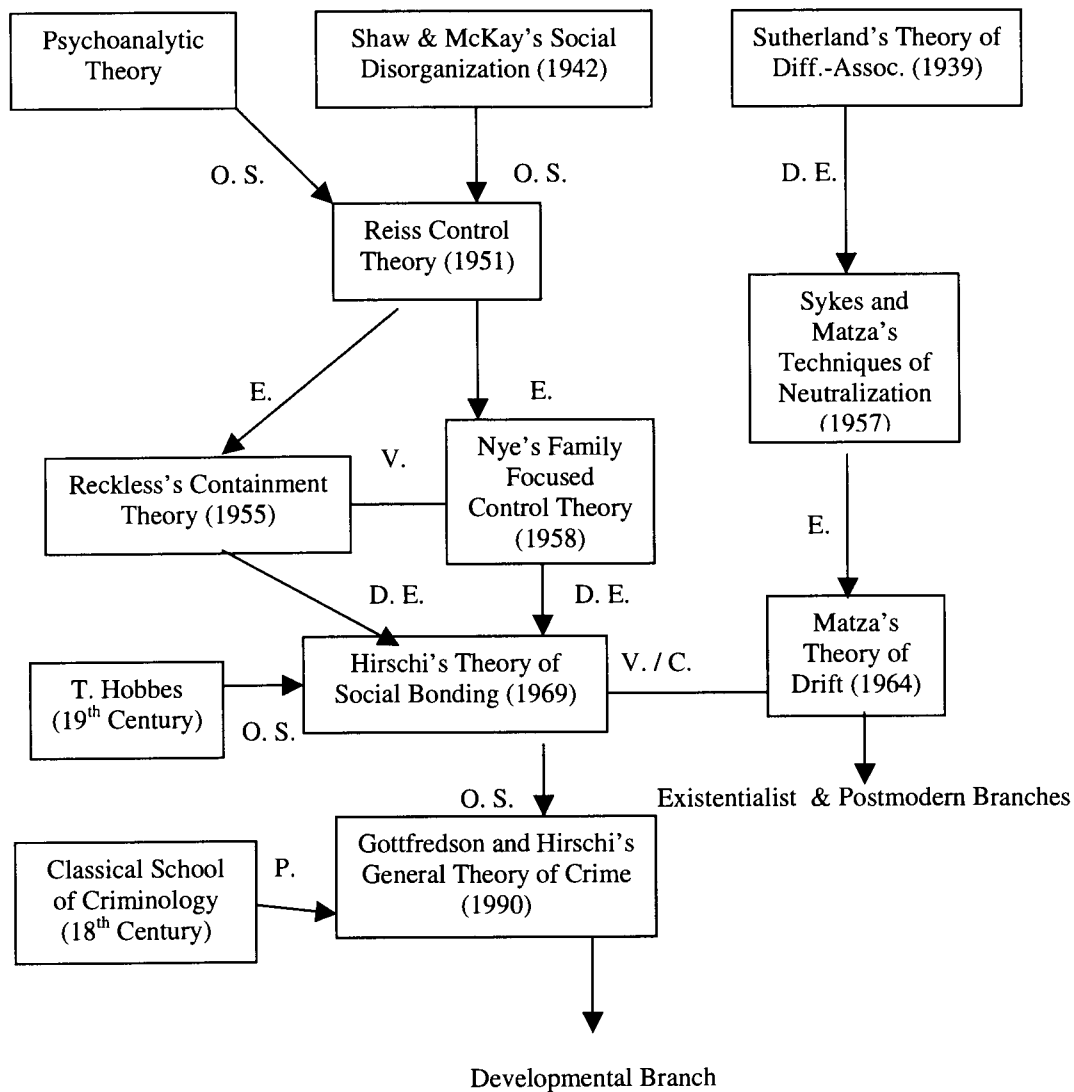
O. S. = orienting strategy influence

D.E. = direct elaboration

C. = competition

E. = elaboration

P. = proliferation

V. = variants

Reiss's control theory was the product of a doctoral dissertation completed at the University of Chicago in 1949. He was attempting to develop an instrument that could be used to predict juvenile delinquency. A theory emerged from his research and he presented it in a concise, nine-page article (Reiss, 1951).

Reiss's first proposition stated that as levels of personal and social control drop, delinquency rises. The second proposition stated that recidivism would plague those offenders with the lowest levels of both types of control. Finally, the importance of one's primary groups is stressed (Reiss, 1951). Generally, most control theories accept portions of these elements as part of the core set; however, some theories stress one aspect of control over another. In this particular model, Reiss argues that there is a relationship between the two types of control, personal and social. These two crucial elements are clearly defined by Reiss:

> Personal control may be defined as the ability of the individual to refrain from meeting needs in ways which conflict with the norms and rules of the community. Social control may be defined as the ability of social groups or institutions to make norms or rules effective. (Reiss, 1951, p. 196)

For Reiss, these elements seem to build on one another. For instance, personal controls may be weakened by economic deprivation; parents have less time to impart strong personal values (which produce personal control) when they are financially overwhelmed (Reiss, 1951). At a macro level, this relationship will eventually affect social controls:

> This formulation is not in contradiction with formulations, which view certain types of delinquency as a consequence of social control in the delinquent gang. The delinquent peer group is here viewed as a functional consequence of the failure of personal and social controls in the social

system to produce behavior in conformity with the norms of the social system to which legal penalties are attached. Acceptance of the delinquent gang as an agency of control results in the rejection of the conformity norms of the larger social system and/or submission to conflicting norms and rules. (Reiss, 1951, pg. 197)

The suggested relationship would later be revealed to be part of the auxiliary set of the program, since the working out of the core had not fully occurred at this point (Wagner, 1984).

Walter Reckless, who was also closely associated with the University of Chicago, would make the next attempt at a control theory.[35] Reckless (1955) suggested that there are two aspects of control, which he called external and internal containments. The external containment consists of something similar to primary group or institutional controls (Reckless, 1955). The internal containment (considered to be far more important) was an obscure list of psychoanalytic and personality theory terms including ideas like self- concept, ego strength, self-control level, *et cetera*. Reckless believed that the external component was relatively unimportant, as long as the inner component was sturdy. In other words, one's close friends could not make a person commit crime if their inner containment was strong.[36]

Reckless also discussed various "pushes" and "pulls" to commit crime. The strength of each push or pull is related to the strength of the internal and external containments (Williams and McShane, 1999). However, these pushes and pulls are

[35] Reckless happened to be a student of Robert Ezra Park's, an early 'Chicago School' metatheorist (see Gibbons, 1979)
[36] Note the similarity to the concepts presented in Reiss's model (1951); the key difference is that Reckless explicitly stresses one containment/type of control over the other instead of arguing for a relationship between the two.

vaguely defined, and this is where problems begin within the theory. First, Reckless fails to focus on causation. This is illustrated by his discussion of pushes and pulls, which seem disconnected from the rest of the theory, making these terms of little use (see Reckless, 1951, pgs. 40-52). In general, many of Reckless's key terms are extremely vague, his empirical indicators are not clearly specified, and his theory contains few or no interrelated propositions (Schrag as quoted in Gibbons, 1979, pgs. 117-118). In combination, these shortcomings make it nearly impossible to accurately test Reckless' model. Indeed, apart from being a vehicle begging for elaboration and clarification, this model did very little to advance theoretical growth in the control program overall.

The next model, formulated by F. Ivan Nye, shifted the direction of the previous control theories in an important way. Nye argued that since delinquent behavior is often a more convenient method of attaining goals that we need not attempt to explain delinquency and crime in a positive sense. Instead, we ought to ask why more people do not choose the easier delinquent path (Nye, 1958, pgs. 3-4). This is an assertion concerning the nature of social reality which was previously implicit. This later will become an important base assumption in the core (Wagner, 1984, p. 91-93) of the control research program.

To answer his own question, Nye suggests four interlocking types of controls. First, there is internal control; this is similar to the idea of conscience and is a product of effective socialization. Next, is indirect control, and this refers to control operating out of fear of disappointing the members of one's intimate groups including parents, friends, and peers (Nye, 1958). Third, there is control stemming from direct sources and this can

be formal (e.g., laws, police) or informal (e.g., threat of punishment from parents and teachers). The last type of control mentioned is that of the alternative means of needs satisfaction. This sort of control may take many different forms, from delinquent activities to extracurricular activities; it simply refers to activities taking place outside the context of the family (Nye, 1958).

When discussing these different control types the key is to understand how one may be related to another (i.e., how they are interlocking). For instance, excessive direct control (e.g., strictness or excessively harsh discipline) may decrease parental identification thereby lowering levels of indirect control. Alternatively, excessive direct control may push youth into gangs in which they achieve an alternative means of needs satisfaction in lieu of the family (Nye, 1958). These relationships are of particular importance since one may deduce logical propositions from them. Unfortunately, given the fact that these propositions are not clearly presented, the theory remains buried in the data; Nye fails to clearly and cogently separate his theory and his research. Consequently, Nye's control theory is very difficult to test.

Although several models emerged early on in this program, very little significant theoretical growth took place for several reasons. These theories are for the most part elaborations on portions of Reiss's original control formulation; this suggests that the program is in a linear stage (Wagner and Berger, 1985). However, this linear program contained few variants and, further, they were unable to compete against one another, a somewhat unusual situation. This lack of competition is related to the inability of these theories to be empirically tested. When theories contain few clear propositions and vague

concepts (as in Reckless' containment theory) or the theory is embedded within data (as in Nye) they cannot be measured against one another. This is not to say that empirical testing is the be all and end all of theoretical growth. As previously demonstrated, proliferation is a highly fruitful path of growth; however, these particular formulations also failed to generate any proliferants. This lack of growth can be further illustrated by examining changes in the breadth and density of the program overall. There was no noticeable increase in the diversity of the phenomena covered (breadth), or in the specificity or completeness of the arguments presented in the theory (density) (Wagner, 1984, pg. 101).

Reaction from the West Coast: Dueling Unit Theories

During most of the 1950s, the control research program was confined mainly to the Midwestern United States, especially the University of Chicago (Reiss, 1951; Reckless, 1955; Nye, 1958). However, late in the decade, David Matza and Gresham Sykes (1957) would formulate what has come to be called neutralization theory. Matza would later continue to expand upon this work with his theory of drift (Matza, 1964).

This new model would drastically depart from the standard structure of the rest of the control theories. First, Sykes and Matza imported a part of Sutherland's differential association theory. Specifically, they attempt to further explain the meaning of rationalizations and justifications mentioned in proposition number four of differential-association theory (Sutherland and Cressey, 1966). In other words, the theory elaborates upon Sutherland's work by specifying the meaning of an unclear concept (Wagner, 1984). Sykes and Matza identified five ways in which people rationalize their delinquent

behavior: denial of responsibility, denial of injury, denial of the victim, condemnation of the condemners, and appeal to higher loyalties (Sykes and Matza, 1957). These neutralizations all serve to justify the behavior of the offender; they relieve the offender of responsibility, at least in the offender's mind.

It has been argued by some that, at this point, Matza was not really a control theorist since he was working well within the Sutherland tradition (Akers, 1998). Others have argued that neutralization theory does not constitute a full-blown theory and might be integrated into Reckless' containment theory (Ball, as cited in Lily et al., 2002). Nevertheless, Matza himself would continue to expand on the ideas in neutralization theory, and eventually would propose drift theory in *Delinquency and Drift* (1964). Essentially, this means that Matza made the original neutralization theory more comprehensive by including it in a larger framework (i.e., drift theory). In drift theory, it is argued that the techniques of neutralization erode the bonds to the social order. When this erosion process occurs, the individual is thrown into a state of drift that allows one to commit crime without a sense of guilt. At this point, Matza seems to have become something closer to a control theorist; or at least this is the argument that some have made (Akers, 1998).

Perhaps the most important aspect of Matza's work is his challenge to the very notion of scientific (or hard) determinism (Matza, 1964; 1969). Matza took issue with hard determinism because theories using this logic (i.e., strain, social disorganization, other control models) over-predicted delinquency. Instead Matza (1964, 1969) suggested that social scientists use soft determinism, which gives more thought to individual free

will and action[37]. This new perspective on determinism requires the fusion of elements from both the classical and positivist approaches to crime. Naturally, this means we must find middle ground between these equally valuable approaches (Matza, 1964). The notion of soft determinism is a valuable one, primarily because it gave credence to several important theoretical movements that would later occur in criminology (i.e., labeling theory, social constructionist criminology, and existentialist/postmodern criminology) (Morrison, 1995). In other words, Matza's drift theory would set the stage for several branching perspectives; however, the actual unit theory is still under-developed in many of these areas. Further, variants of soft determinism are promoted by many contemporary theorists (Agnew, 1995).

Matza's (1964) idea to combine the classical and positivist approaches to crime would later resurface in Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) general theory of crime, which itself would contribute significantly to theoretical growth as we shall see later. However, Gottfredson and Hirschi's approach would differ greatly from Matza's, who focused more attention on the power of legal institutions to criminalize (Matza, 1964).

In 1969, Travis Hirschi would articulate his theory of social bonding in *The Causes of Delinquency* (1969). This work represented a major advancement in the field of criminology (and criminological sociology) for several reasons. First, Hirschi united and expanded upon various portions of previous control theories. For example, one can

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[37] Other theorists have carried this notion further (Agnew 1995); however, this is more of a metatheoretical suggestion than an actual unit theory.

detect Matza's influence[38] in the theory of social bonding. Hirschi embraced the idea that an individual may become 'free' to engage in delinquency; however, he believed this drift occurred without the actor's direct involvement, so, there is no need for an offender to produce neutralizations (Hirschi, 1969). Next, Hirschi formulated his model very clearly with explicitly stated interrelated propositions, assumptions, and hypotheses. This can be thought of as direct elaboration upon the previously existing control theories of Reiss (1951), Reckless (1955), Sykes and Matza (1957), Nye (1958), and Matza (1964, 1969) (Wagner, 1984). It has been said that "...he had come closer to the classic model of formulating a theory..." and that "...his endeavor was close to being unique in criminological theory at the time and remains a model for others to emulate to this day." (Akers, 1998, pg. 14). He not only made his model lucid and empirically testable, but he also included supporting data demonstrating how to test the theory. Finally, Hirschi's theory clearly stressed sociological forces without completely disregarding psychological factors. Up until this point in the control theory program, the criminal's environment took a back seat to the criminal's psychological makeup (Williams and McShane, 1999).

The basics of the theory itself are straightforward; Hirschi argues that individuals form a bond to society during socialization. Once the bond is damaged or broken or if it fails to be formed, individuals are free to commit crime. Note here that this damage or ill-formation requires no direct action on the part of the potential offender. There are four elements composing this bond: attachment, belief, commitment, and

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[38] David Matza was actually part of Hirschi's committee during his dissertation while at the University of California, Berkeley (Laub, 2003).

involvement (Hirschi, 1969). The main proposition is that the likelihood of delinquent behavior rises as bonds are weakened or broken.

Hirschi's theory emerged in the program as a credible challenge to Matza's theory of drift (Laub, 1983). Hirschi had succeeded in transforming the control research program from a linear type program into a competitive one, consisting of two separate sets of linear elaborations (his own and Matza's drift theory) (Wagner and Berger, 1985). Further, one can draw an important conclusion at this point concerning the observational set of the social control research program (Wagner, 1984). Hirschi (and his forerunners) almost exclusively used data gathered from self-report questionnaires. In fact, when other methodological techniques are utilized to gather data, social control theory does not receive as much support. Some have gone so far to say that this set of theories is "methodologically-bound" (Williams and McShane, 1999, pg. 196). In any case, the tendency to use certain types of techniques and procedures to evaluate theories within the program is mentioned as being an important characteristic of the observational set (Wagner, 1984, p. 96).

Hirschi's model would eventually dominate the program on account of its clarity and empirical testability. Rather than continue competing against rival control theories, Hirschi's theory of social bonding would enter into a different sort of competition, one between the more developed and established research programs. However, before describing this contest, we must briefly examine the final participant.
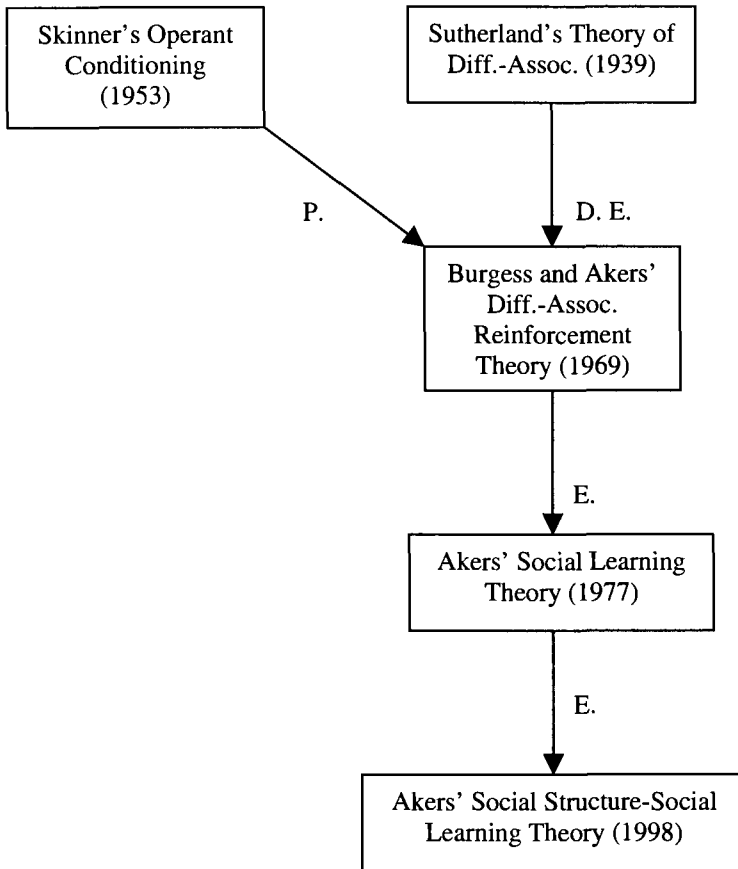
Akers' Social Learning Theory: Symbolic-Interactionism Strikes Back

Shortly before Travis Hirschi set out his social control theory, another important model emerged. A sociologist, Ron Akers, and a psychologist, Robert Burgess introduced their differential association-reinforcement theory (1966). This particular theory is unique because it illustrates several different theoretical relations. The two were working within the tradition of Sutherland's theory of differential association (Akers, 1998). In their model, they hoped to incorporate some aspects of Skinnerian behaviorism into the work of Sutherland. This was achieved by using operant conditioning principles of reinforcement to explain how the learning takes place in Sutherland's theory (Akers, 1998). In Wagnerian terms, the exact explanatory mechanism of the learning is specified in Burgess and Akers' theory; behavior is learned through positive and negative reinforcement (Wagner, 1984). Akers (1977, 1998, 2003) would continue to work on this model alone.

From the point of view of Sutherland's theory, the Burgess and Akers reformulation can be seen as a direct elaboration of differential association (i.e., the learning concept in differential association is formalized and made more precise). This elaboration is achieved through the proliferation of Skinnerian theory into the explanatory domain of crime and deviance so, therefore, Akers' theory is also a proliferant of Skinner's work (Wagner, 1984, pg. 49). The influence of Sutherland and Skinner upon the Burgess and Akers reformulation can be seen in Figure 5-2.

Additional elaboration is seen within the differential association core with the concept of definitions. Akers (1985) eventually added different types of definitions,

Figure 5-2: Social Learning Research Program

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┌─────────────────┐        ┌─────────────────┐
│ Skinner's Operant│        │ Sutherland's Theory of│
│   Conditioning  │        │  Diff.-Assoc. (1939) │
│      (1953)     │        └─────────────────┘
└─────────────────┘                 │
         \                          │
       P. \                   D. E. │
           ↘                        ↓
          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │  Burgess and Akers' │
          │     Diff.-Assoc.    │
          │    Reinforcement    │
          │    Theory (1969)    │
          └─────────────────────┘
                     │
                  E. │
                     ↓
          ┌─────────────────────┐
          │ Akers' Social Learning│
          │    Theory (1977)    │
          └─────────────────────┘
                     │
                  E. │
                     ↓
          ┌─────────────────────────┐
          │ Akers' Social Structure-Social│
          │   Learning Theory (1998)  │
          └─────────────────────────┘
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Key

E. = elaboration   D.E. = direct elaboration

P. = proliferation

general and specific. General definitions are these that encourage conformity, including deeply ingrained religious beliefs and moral and conventional norms and standards. Specific definitions refer to specific acts, and are most easily conceptualized as exceptions to the rule. For instance, one may consider crime (in general) to be wrong (meaning violent and/or property crime), but may consider victimless crimes (e.g., drug use) to be justifiable or excusable. Furthermore, there are two subcategories of specific definitions, positive and neutralizing types. Positive definitions are often held by members of subcultural or extremist groups (e.g., religious fundamentalists, gangs, and drug-users) and actually encourage deviant acts, sometimes minor (the use of a particular drug), sometimes very extreme (murder of certain types of people based on race, class, *et cetera*). Neutralizing definitions[39] simply excuse some specific behavior: for example everyone breaks the speed limit, so it is alright; I am justified stealing from corporations, they will not miss the money.

More proliferation from the discipline of psychology can also be seen with the introduction of the Banduran notion of imitation (Wagner, 1984). In later formulations (Akers, 1977; 1998), it is acknowledged that imitation may be of some importance, although it applies more to the initial acquisition of behavior than to the maintenance of behavior over time. This can be seen as a new addition to the auxiliary set of the program (Wagner, 1984).

Some have also referred to this theory as an example of integration, and indeed, it may be the closest, in the field of criminology, to an example of a clearly successful

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[39] Note the similarity here to Sykes' and Matza's techniques of neutralization (1957).

integration. Then again, it is debatable as to whether or not operant conditioning principles have truly become part of the core of differential association or if this reformulation of the model is even in the "true spirit" of Sutherland's original theory.[40] In any event, this theory has been successful and is an excellent example of theoretical advancement.

Most recently, Akers (1998) has introduced a macro theoretical counterpart to his original micro theory. The basic assumption is that social learning is the process linking individual behavior to the larger social structure (Akers, 1998, pg. 322). Factors such as race, class, gender, and age may influence one's location in society. These factors determine the reference groups to which one is exposed. Expanding on this idea, social structural variables could possibly be used to estimate rates of crime. In other words, social structural variables affect social psychological processes because they play a role in determining one's place in society. An individual's place in the society influences their primary groups. The main proposition, then, is that individual social psychological processes, in turn, affect individual criminal behaviors that produce macro crime rates. Akers (1998) admits that this aspect of social learning theory is still somewhat undeveloped, and more research is required to determine its validity; this fact would place this part of the theory in the auxiliary set of the program (Wagner, 1984).

Battle for a General Theory of Crime and Deviance: Dueling Research Programs

During the 1980s, the emphasis shifted from theoretical development and competition within research programs to competition between research programs. The

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[40] See Taylor, Walton, and Young, 1973, pgs. 131-133 for a discussion of this issue.

reason for this shift seems to have been that each program (strain, control, and learning/cultural deviance) had become sufficiently expounded, and also locked into a linear mode characterized mainly by elaboration. In other words, one central core theory had become dominant in each program and no new competitors had emerged. The only other (obvious) option for theoretical advancement was to challenge representative theories from outside programs. The prize here was the entire explanatory domain of crime and deviance. Unfortunately, the hope of a general theory was immature as certain important areas of criminology were (and still are) too underdeveloped to contribute their own piece to the puzzle. In any case, this development could be seen as a new competitive program with representative theories (Merton's theory of strain, Hirschi's theory of social bonding, and Akers' social learning theory) from the three most well-established research programs (strain, control, and learning theory/cultural deviance). Wagner and Berger mention something strikingly similar in a passage when discussing competitive research programs:

> As might be expected, theory elaboration occurs frequently in this program as well, although theory competition is the defining characteristic. It may be reasonable to think of some competing programs as composed of two (or more) linear programs involving distinct conceptual schemes that are related to one another through competition. A competing program is probably the most complex form of theoretical growth, for it brings two or more different theoretical arguments to bear on a problem or phenomenon at the same time. (Wagner and Berger, 1984, p. 720)

In this new and interesting contest, strain would consistently lag behind and, in most instances, social learning theory consistently seemed to garner the strongest empirical support much of the time. There are several potential reasons for these outcomes. First, strain theory may have suffered from the methods of empirical testing, suggesting that

perhaps the means used to compare the three theories were inappropriate.[41] Similarly, control theory may have been at a significant disadvantage because of its over reliance on self-report survey data discussed earlier, although control theory (especially that of Hirschi) has remained quite successful in spite of weaker support.

Eventually, social learning theory seemed to 'win out', although few would say that it could adequately explain all crime or that it should replace the other two models. Strain theory seemed to fall into a degenerative mode, in which scope is reduced to retain explanatory power. Finally, Travis Hirschi would abandon his wildly successful theory of social bonding to begin work on a new unit theory (and perspective).

Gottfredson and Hirschi's general theory of crime, while arguably still part of the social control research program, is a significant departure from some of the previous efforts in the area (Williams and McShane, 1999). Rather than control arising from outside institutional sources (e.g., bonds to family, school, friends, church and society in general) Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) argue that it is quickly internalized during the early stages of the child-rearing process. This formulation challenges the validity of many of the important concepts of previous criminological theories, including race and class connections to crime (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990). According to Wagner (1984) these alterations would likely represent changes to the "conceptual schemes and definitions considered important in analyzing social phenomena..."(pg. 30). Like Hirschi's original theory, the general theory of crime does assume both the existence of some societal consensus and that there need be no motivation to commit crime. These

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[41] This argument has been made before, specifically when discussing strain theory (Morrison, 1995).

two important assumptions represent remnants of the core of Hirschi's former social control theory (Wagner, 1984). Further, like Matza (1964), Gottfredson and Hirschi were seeking to connect elements of the classical and positivist traditions. However, departing from Matza, they hoped to achieve this via a direct reinterpretation of the classical school of criminology; specifically, examining behavior as it related to pain and pleasure. Naturally, this emphasis leads them to one of their newly added auxiliary concepts: behaviors analogous to crime (including drinking, smoking, overeating, and promiscuous sex). These occur in the absence of high levels of self-control, and may be seen as proliferations from the classical school of criminology (Wagner, 1984). In other words, Gottfredson and Hirschi are using principles from the classical school of criminology to address a new explanatory domain known as "emergence".[42]

But how does low self-control result? Certain traits such as impulsivity, self-centeredness, and insensitivity are thought to adversely affect self-control levels. In many cases, however, these characteristics can be counteracted through effective child rearing (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990). Again, here we have a new theoretical element receiving emphasis, thus becoming part of the auxiliary set of the program (Wagner, 1984).

Developmental Theories: Dueling Proliferants

Despite the success of Gottfredson and Hirschi's general theory, it has not been without its critics. In a critique of the self-control model, Robert Sampson and John H.

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[42] Personal correspondence with David G. Wagner, May 1st, 2003.

Laub, (1993) have proposed an age-graded theory of informal social control.[43] With this theory, they are attempting to compete over the explanatory domain originally introduced by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990).

This model can be seen as a proliferant of the core control theory (Hirschi's theory of social bonding).[44] The most important difference is that Sampson and Laub (1993) argue that bonds may be mended in various ways throughout the life course trajectory of any given individual. For instance, one's bond may strengthen when important life events take place (e.g., marriage, having children, getting a new job). Sampson and Laub (1997) have further elaborated on their initial model by including elements of labeling and ecological theory to produce the theory of cumulative disadvantage. Interestingly, these theories are based upon a new interpretation of Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck's old data set.[45] Rather than taking a static approach, Sampson and Laub embrace a dynamic approach called "the life course perspective" which acknowledges that nearly all people change over time.[46]

Sampson and Laub are not the only theorists who have entered this cutting edge battle over explanatory domain. Many new models have surfaced, mostly from the well-established research programs such as strain theory (Agnew, 1997) and social learning theory (Conger and Simons, 1997). Wagner has called this type of program, an effect

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[43] Both Sampson and Laub are former students of Travis Hirschi (Laub, 2002).
[44] This model also incorporates aspects of ecological theory and the labeling perspective
[45] Travis Hirschi has discussed his efforts to gain access to this data during his years as a student (Laub, 2002)
[46] The life course perspective was imported from work done in sociology and sociological social psychology developing during the 1960s and 1970s, especially influential is the work of Elder (1993).

Figure 5-3: The Developmental Theories Effect Research Programs (ERP)
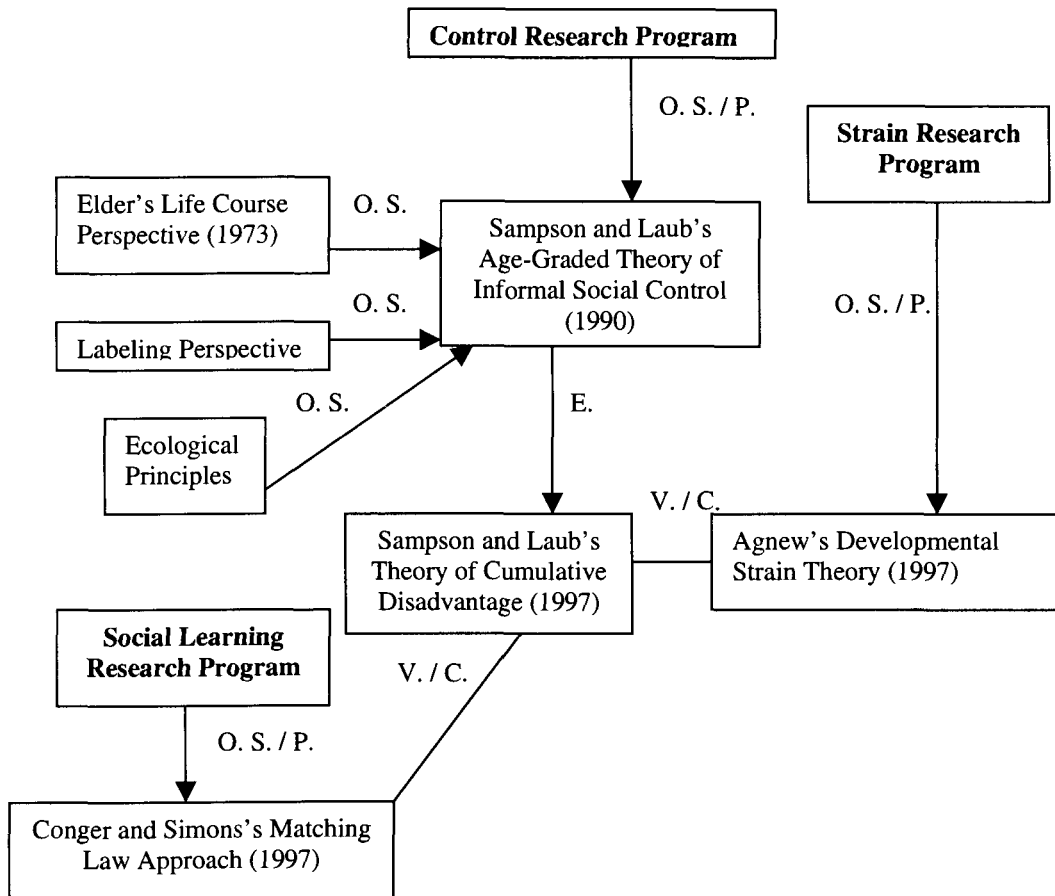
Key

O. S. = orienting strategy influence   E. = elaboration

D.E. = direct elaboration   P. = proliferation

C. = competition   V. = variation

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research program (ERP). These types of programs occur when a new explanatory domain surfaces, in this case, the emergence of criminal behavior as a new domain. [47] These programs are characterized by a great deal of variation, some competition and much elaboration (in response to other competing theories), making this equivalent to a competitive program (Wagner and Berger, 1985). Finally, it is important to bear in mind that ERPs are usually successful only when there are well-developed theoretical research programs (TRPs) to send representative theories to compete.[48] The development of the effect research program based on "emergence" can be seen in Figure 5-3. Clearly, these developments indicate that theoretical growth is still occurring with some regularity.

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[47] Personal correspondence with David G. Wagner, May 1st, 2003.
[48] Ibid

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

Throughout this analysis, I have argued that theory accumulation in criminology has occurred, and can be most easily understood through an application of Wagner's (1984) model of theory growth in sociology. This has been demonstrated through an examination of only a small part of criminological theory, primarily that which has emerged from sociology. The main finding here is that theory accumulation in criminology occurs in two main ways. First, some theories build on the foundations of existing theories; this is the more scientifically traditional type of accumulation. The most prominent example of this type of growth is exhibited by the social learning theory research program. Aker's social learning theory (1998) builds first on Sutherland's differential association theory (1949) by adding the Skinnerian principles of operant conditioning, and then there are a series of elaborations on the new formulation. The second sort of accumulation or growth (and perhaps more important) occurs when different elements of orienting strategies are fused together to provide a basis with which to produce new unit theories to explain new phenomena. There are many examples of this sort of growth throughout the literature including Sutherland's theory of differential association (1949).

There are more inferences that can be drawn from this investigation which go beyond the domain of theorizing. For instance, some comments might be made regarding the practicality of efforts such as this one. In other words, the important questions left to answer are: what has been discovered here that was not known previously and, further,

why is work like this practical, useful, and necessary? After these issues are dealt with, several suggestions for future research will be offered.

The Importance of Proliferation

After examining the contextual relations between the theories presented, it becomes apparent that the relations are equally important, and that each can take a theoretical research program (TRP) in a slightly different direction. In criminology, elaboration seems to be the most common relation; this is unremarkable as the situation is the same in sociology (and likely in most social sciences) (Wagner, 1984). While this is not a surprising finding, others have discussed the importance of pursuing elaboration at length (Hirschi, 1989; Thornberry, 1989). Therefore, rather than restating the obvious, the focus of this discussion will be on proliferations. These relations often have effects on the orienting strategy of the program in which they occur. These effects frequently alter or change the orienting strategy and this, in turn, has significant effects on the direction of the TRP.

Several examples of proliferation surfaced during the course of analysis, and as Wagner (1984, p.100) speculated, the resulting program branches can indeed be analyzed in the same fashion as their parent programs. To summarize, branches are more likely to appear when a theorist makes an adjustment to the core set of the program, usually through changes in the orienting strategy directives. The change to the orienting strategy is usually spurred by the outside perspective of the theory being imported (i.e., the proliferation's original strategy).

Despite its important role in guiding theory growth, philosophers of science have paid little attention to various forms of proliferation (Wagner, 1984). However, Feryerabend does mention the significance of this process:

The consistency condition which demands that new hypotheses agree with accepted theories is unreasonable because it preserves older theory, and not the better theory. Hypotheses contradicting well-confirmed theories give us evidence that cannot be obtained in any other way. Proliferation of theories is beneficial for science, while uniformity impairs its critical power. Uniformity also endangers the free development of the individual. (pg. 24)

At this point, it will be useful to revisit several examples to illustrate how orienting strategy changes can generate unique metatheories, and eventually give rise to new and unique TRPs.

One of the earliest branches began with Sutherland's theory of differential association. He was working primarily with theoretical concepts introduced through the work of Shaw and McKay; however, Sutherland chose to emphasize elements of symbolic-interactionism rather than the control aspects of Durkheimian thought. This caused a shift in the orienting strategy directive in the core set, and eventually gave rise to a new orienting strategy: the cultural deviance or learning perspective.

Merton also developed his own orienting strategy, although he began with Parsonian metatheory. His use of Parsons could be thought of as very similar to proliferation, as Merton applied these ideas to the study of crime. It is important to bear

in mind that the theory of action (Parsons, 1937) was not specifically intended to explain crime; Merton merely combined Parson's ideas with his own interpretation of Durkheimian concepts and came up with the strain perspective. The work of both Cohen (1955) and Cloward and Ohlin (1960), present two more examples growing out of strain theory. Both parties were working in the strain tradition, but they imported elements from differential association to help explain deviant subcultures. This importation required changes to the original core of strain theory in the form of subtle orienting strategy directives. This research led to the generation of two more varieties of orienting strategy: subculture theory (for Cohen); and opportunity theory (for Cloward and Ohlin).

Two recent examples of orienting strategy generation can also be found by examining the control theory research program. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) seem to have been successful in uncovering a new explanatory domain (emergence), and this is an important part of the branching process. This proliferation makes use of principles from the Classical School to explain the emergence of criminal behavior. Again, one could consider this a new type of control theory orienting strategy, and the beginning part of a new branch. The critique from Sampson and Laub (also a proliferation) actually contributed more to theoretical growth in criminological theory in general. An alteration was made to the assumption stating that theory should be static rather than dynamic. This adjustment allowed other competing TRPs (i.e., strain, cultural deviance) to produce proliferations to compete with one another, forming a rather large and active competitive branch. Again, both of these contributions have altered elements of their orienting strategy (in the form of base assumptions) and this has generated further branching (Wagner, 1984). The key difference is that Sampson and Laub (1993, 1997) were

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working within the confines of an already established research program (control) whereas Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) were trying to jumpstart a new program with a heavy emphasis on elements from the Classical School of criminology.

What can one conclude from these events? Tentatively, one can speculate that the mixing and blending of orienting strategies and their attached metatheoretical directives, will often lead to a new orienting strategy, and eventually (if unit theories are developed in the area) a new theoretical research program. In most of the cases presented above, there was always some sort of proliferation in the strict Wagnerian sense of the term. However, the exception is Merton's development of strain theory. As described above, this does bear many similarities to proliferation. Further, it is important to keep in mind that Merton generated this perspective from pure metatheory; he was not working in a well-established research program. So, one could argue that he was blending Parsonian and Durkheimian elements to formulate an orienting strategy and then later a unit theory.

The work of Matza (1957, 1964) and that of Akers (1966) are both unusual cases, but, nevertheless, they can also be adequately explained. First, Matza actually anticipated several branches (postmodernism, existentialism, labeling) when he suggested the shift from hard to soft determinism. This alteration is also part of an orienting strategy, although it ought to be regarded as much more general to the pursuit of science. In other words, this suggestion actually challenged the nature of social science. Matza suggested a change in a base assumption (i.e., strict hard determinism) that every orienting strategy seemed to take for granted. Akers, on the other hand, did not seriously

alter the original orienting strategy articulated by Sutherland[49]. Thus, Akers' changes focused more on the theoretical core than the metatheoretical core of Sutherland's theory.

The preceding points have been made with the intent of illustrating two important and related findings emerging from the analysis. First, lack of uniformity can enhance theoretical growth indirectly through competition. However, as Wagner (1984) suggests, this is usually only true in the context of competing theoretical research programs. Second, proliferation often undermines uniformity[50] by encouraging competition through the constant formation of new orienting strategies; these orienting strategies can potentially give rise to new competing unit theories.[51]

Practical Uses of This Work

So far it seems as though the analysis has suggested that Wagner's ideas are quite useful for understanding the relations between theories in criminology and how these relations contribute to theoretical growth. Apart from merely understanding theory on a deeper level, what other uses does work such as this have?

First, this research could be used as an effective teaching tool. Students of criminology are often intimidated and confused by the dazzling array of criminological theory available. How can there be so many different perspectives, orienting strategies, metatheories, and theories about the same phenomenon? (Williams and McShane, 1999).

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[49] Akers himself insists that he is working well within the research tradition of Sutherland (Akers, 1989; Akers, 1998). Further, Cressey, one Sutherland's most prominent students and colleagues, has argued for the utility of quantifying Sutherland's theory, and this is precisely what Akers did (Matza, 1966 p.8).
[50] Or the consistency condition as Feryerabend (1975) called it.
[51] Otherwise, as Laudan (1977) proposes, these traditions lay dormant until a theorist decides to make use of them.

With all the substantive areas in criminology, and with each having its own theoretical viewpoint, the multitude of explanations is not surprising (Cole, 1975). A deeper understanding of the contextual relations existing between seemingly unrelated theories could help to ease this confusion. Finally, the antiquated idea that there is one "best" theory or orienting strategy might be put to rest. As Feyerabend put it, "…all methodologies, even the obvious ones, have their limits." (Feyerabend, 1975, p. 23).

Second, this work, as well as further metatheorizing, is extremely useful for guiding integrative efforts. McCord (1989) has made a similar argument, suggesting that studying metatheory (i.e., the base assumptions and propositions of unit theories) can be helpful in detecting problems in integrations. Carrying this argument a bit further, one might suggest that more work of this type could help criminologists avoid problematic integrations completely. It could also suggest which theories can be integrated with one another. Hirschi's (1969) comments support these ideas, as he contends that most integrations involve theories with conflicting base assumptions (e.g., Hirschi's theory of the social bond and Akers's social learning theory).

Suggestions For Further Research

It is clear that there are many different options for further research, as one could not possibly address and analyze all aspects of the massive body of theory in criminology in a mere 106 pages. For example, this investigation covers only some of the sociological (and some social psychological) offerings in criminology. There simply was not room to examine Marxist and postmodern criminology adequately while contributions from psychology, biology, and other disciplines are completely absent.

Integrated theories were also not discussed in great detail even though an in-depth discussion could reveal the strengths and weaknesses of existing integrations and provide hints on how to integrate successfully. Further, analysis of research programs also ought to be done regularly, in order to understand the direction of the different programs and to keep up with the changing landscape of criminological theory in general.

There are also other potential research opportunities beyond simply analyzing more areas of theory. For instance, it might be possible to examine interaction rituals and the effects they have on theoretical growth (Collins, 1998). During the course of the research for this thesis it became evident that scholarly "chains" consisting of teacher-learner and colleague connections seemed to play a prominent role in the growth of criminological theory. These connections were touched upon in the thesis, but could be expanded and discussed in more detail in further work. This aspect is important to understand, as it illustrates how the enterprise of criminology is truly a community of interrelated scholars sharing ideas.

Finally, one could use a combination of metatheorizing and historical analysis in an attempt to understand how criminological theory impacts public attitudes. This will lead into an examination of the degree to which theory is represented in public policy. In order to do this, it would be necessary to examine the social context in which theory is presented (Wagner, 1984). Why are some theories able to influence public opinion and policies more effectively than others? Consider Merton's (1957) strain theory and its effects on public attitudes. The argument has been made that it served as one of the many driving forces behind the U.S. War on Poverty in the 1960s and 70s (Lily et al., 2002).

Hirschi's (1969) theory of social bonding also seems to have made an impression on the public. Why were these theories so successful? Did it have to do with the theory itself or the time in which it was articulated? Do successful theories have structural elements in common? What role do societal and political factors play in the growth and development of theory? In short, what factors make criminological theories successful?

These are all important questions that need to be answered. Metatheorizing and theoretical analysis has been long disregarded in the field of criminology. If criminology is to continue to grow and evolve, more attention needs to be paid to the factors that influence criminology's development as a social science.

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