A Not-So “Radical” Urban Political-Economic Narrative: Transforming Failed Liberal and Conservative Approaches to Poverty

R. K. Piper
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R. K. Piper
Minshuai Ding
2017
Problems in Political Economy: An Urban Perspective

1971 (1st Edition)
1977 (2nd Edition)
David. M. Gordon
Three Theoretical Narratives

- Conservative
- Liberal
- "Radical"
Research Question:
Which theoretical narrative is most valid?
Think BIG!
7 Fields of Social Problems

- Poverty
- Unemployment
- Race and Class Disparity
- Education
- Crime
- Health
- Housing
Look Small!

60 Variables
## Found Patterns

### Major Worsening Social Problem Outcomes and Conditions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Magnitude of Change</th>
<th>Positive or Improving (+) Conditions</th>
<th>Negative or Worsening (-) Conditions</th>
<th>No Significant Change (∅)</th>
<th>Net Total Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Modest Change or No Change (+, −, ∅)</td>
<td>14 (+)</td>
<td>16 (-)</td>
<td>5 (∅)</td>
<td>2 (-)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major Changes (++, --)</td>
<td>7 (++)</td>
<td>18 (--</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>11 (--)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Found Patterns (30 Variables)**

Major Worsening Social, Economic and Class Divides and Disparities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grouping Category</th>
<th>Magnitude of Change</th>
<th>Positive or Improving (+) Conditions</th>
<th>Negative or Worsening (-) Conditions</th>
<th>No Significant Change (0)</th>
<th>Net Total Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Social-Problem Outcome Changes</td>
<td>Major Changes (+++, --)</td>
<td>3 (+++)</td>
<td>3 (--)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnic Group Outcome Changes</td>
<td>Major Changes (+++, --)</td>
<td>2 (+++)</td>
<td>0 (--)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>2 (+++)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcome Changes by Socio-Economic (Income &amp; Wealth) Class</td>
<td>Major Changes (+++, --)</td>
<td>0 (+++)</td>
<td>4 (--)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>4 (--)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 7. College Degree Attainment by Income Class
Figure 4a. Life Expectancy Comparison of Males at 50 Years Old In U.S. 1980 and 2010

Life Expectancy Comparison of Females at 50
Figure 9. Proportion of Families in Income Neighborhood, 1970-2009, 117 Metropolitan Areas with Population > 500,000
Intersectionality

- Capitalist Production and Distribution
- Economic (Class) Disparity
- Employment
- Health Education Crime Housing
Macro-Economics Trends and Historical Patterns

Think BIGGER!

Thomas Piketty
Capital in the Twenty-First Century
(2014)
Figure 12 Income Inequity, Top Inheritance Tax Rate, and Per Capita Output Growth 1910-2012
Which theoretical narrative is most valid?

Which gives us the best explanation and understanding of the conditions and “reality” we can observe today?

The totality of evidence supports Gordon’s contention of 40 years ago…..the “radical” narrative is the most valid…..and more relevant and necessary than ever.
Lift the fog!

Have the debate that has never occurred!

Take an academic stand! Actively advocate!
Thanks!