

Examining Criminology via Diverse Philosophical Paradigms: Considering the Nomological-Deductive Model of Science versus the Humanistic Tradition

Authors : William R. Crawley

Abstract : The current paper provides an examination of the primary conceptual and historical foundations leading to contemporary perspectives in criminological theory. This subject area involves the examination of theory that is vast and highly interdisciplinary but must, at its core, consider several postulates. The following areas of consideration will be the focus of this examination: presentation of various definitions of criminology as a discipline and attention to a dialogue which inquires as to whether criminological modes of explanation can be regarded as scientific with respect to focus, methods, and findings - e.g., conceptualization, operationalization, measurement strategies, analytical techniques, etc. Specifically, two opposing philosophical frameworks—naturalistic and anti-naturalistic philosophy—are examined by means of conceptual analysis for their necessary and sufficient conditions. Like all academic disciplines, for practitioners and students of criminology to understand and effectively use insights and discoveries, it is imperative that disciplinary axioms and methodologies are critically scrutinized. This paper provides a primer to this critique.

Keywords : anti-naturalistic philosophy, humanistic tradition, is criminology a science, naturalistic philosophy, nomological-deductive model

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