For the CLPM paper, did you give any thoughts? I thought we could pick a couple of substantive examples that suggest reciprocal relationships and use them as theoretical motivations. We can brainstorm them, but on the top of my head I would say policing and crime (policing  crime via deterrence [+] and/or cynicism [-], crime  policing because hot spots policing and police resource allocation based on crime concentration), maybe something perception of disorder and fear of crime? IDK… given it’s JDLCC, it would be good to some an individual life-course type of motivating example too… then we could discuss theoretical issues, reverse causality, DAGs, causal mechanisms, etc… and demonstrate how different approaches handle all that (e.g., naïve CLPM, RI-CLPM, ML-SEM, … think that’s it?)

Reciprocal causal relationships are a common feature of criminological theories. When multiple observations over time are available, cross-lagged panel models are commonly used to estimate these reciprocal effects. This is often done without careful attention to the assumptions that must be satisfied to produce valid estimates, such as correctly specified temporal lags, sufficient inter-temporal variation, and proper accounting for unobserved heterogeneity. Failure to satisfy these assumptions can produce severe issues including spurious associations and parameter estimates that are biased or even reversed in direction. We provide guidance on how to align theory, model specification, and choice of estimator and illustrate this using [I do not have a life-course example].

Piza & Connealy (2022) use a microsynthetic control approach to estimate the effect of a 24-day withdrawal of Seattle Police Department (SPD) from a section of the city following extended protests and clashes with law enforcement. They conclude this withdrawal resulted in a significant increase in crime and interpret this as strong evidence that police abolition would compromise public safety. Using counterfactuals and a graphical causal model, we demonstrate that their study does not answer the stated key question: whether levels of crime would have been lower had SPD. Rather, Piza & Connealy instead estimated how much crime increased due to a compound treatment consisting of both the large-scale protest against police and the resultant withdrawal of law enforcement that was conducted with the intent to de-escalate protest-related conflict. The resulting estimates thus do not provide an estimate of the effect of a police withdrawal on local crime rates. We discuss the implications of this analysis for researching the effect of police deployments on crime rates.