
Peer Influence, Co-Offending, & Gangs

CRJ 523

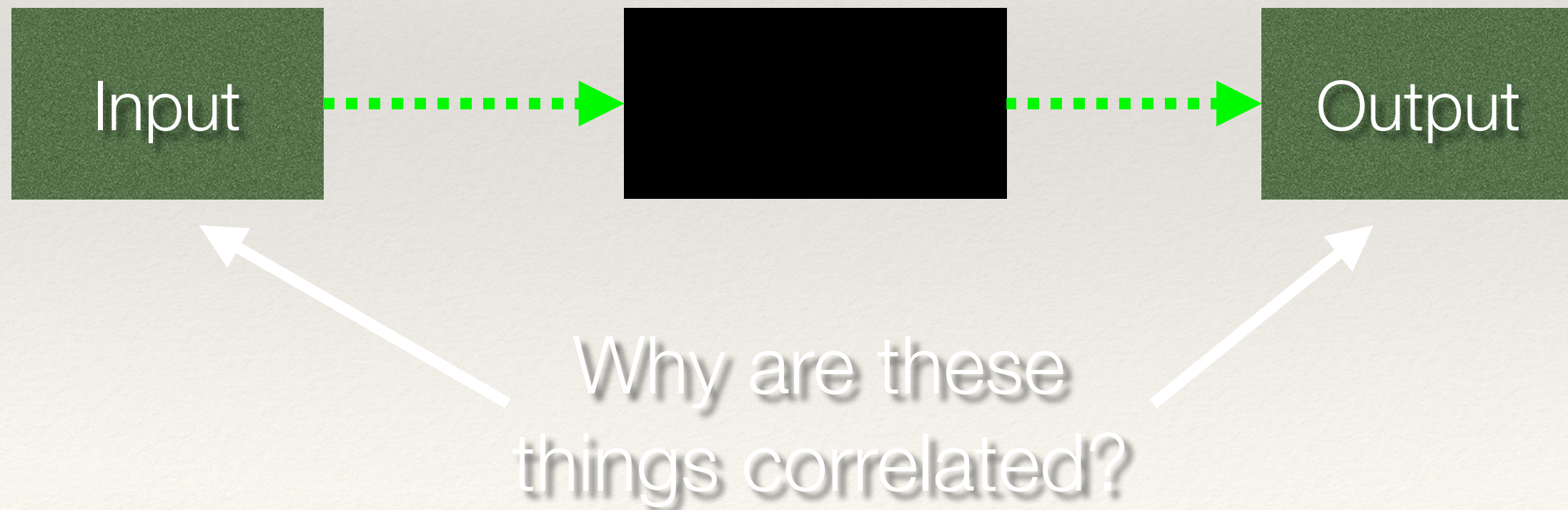
Network Criminology

Learning Goals

- ❖ Introduce **causal mechanisms** and **micro-macro** models.
- ❖ Review causal mechanisms for social learning and group process models.
- ❖ These are the “baseline” that we want to build from in thinking about *network criminology*.

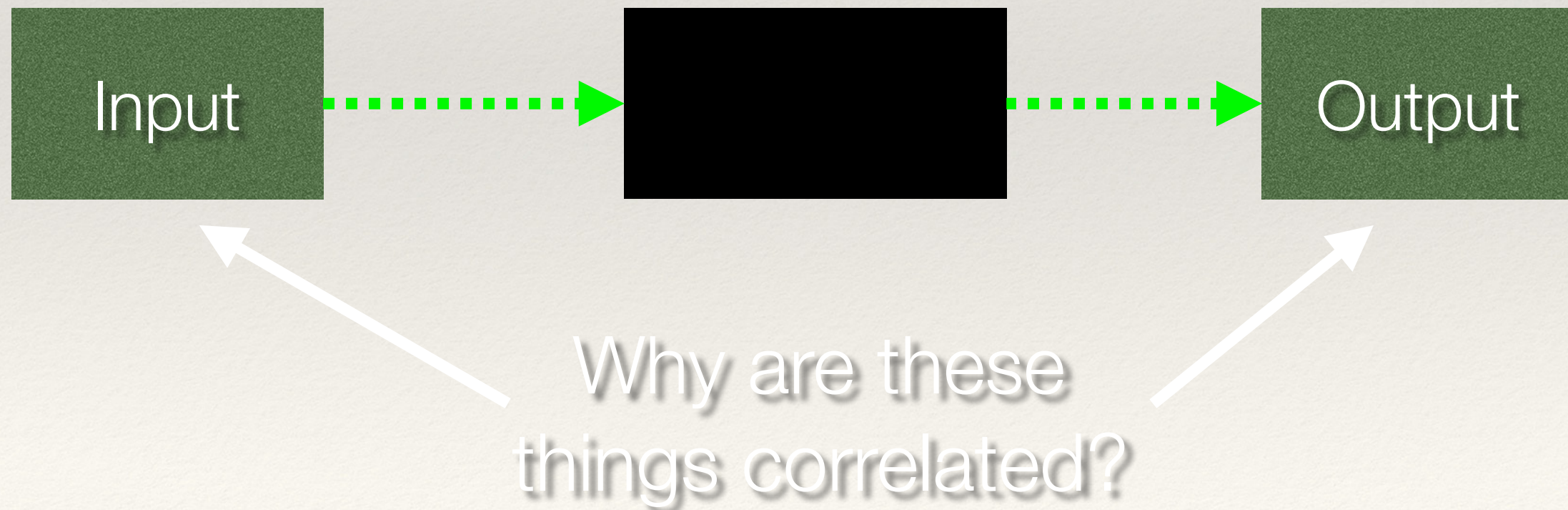
Causal Mechanisms

- ❖ What is a causal “mechanism”?

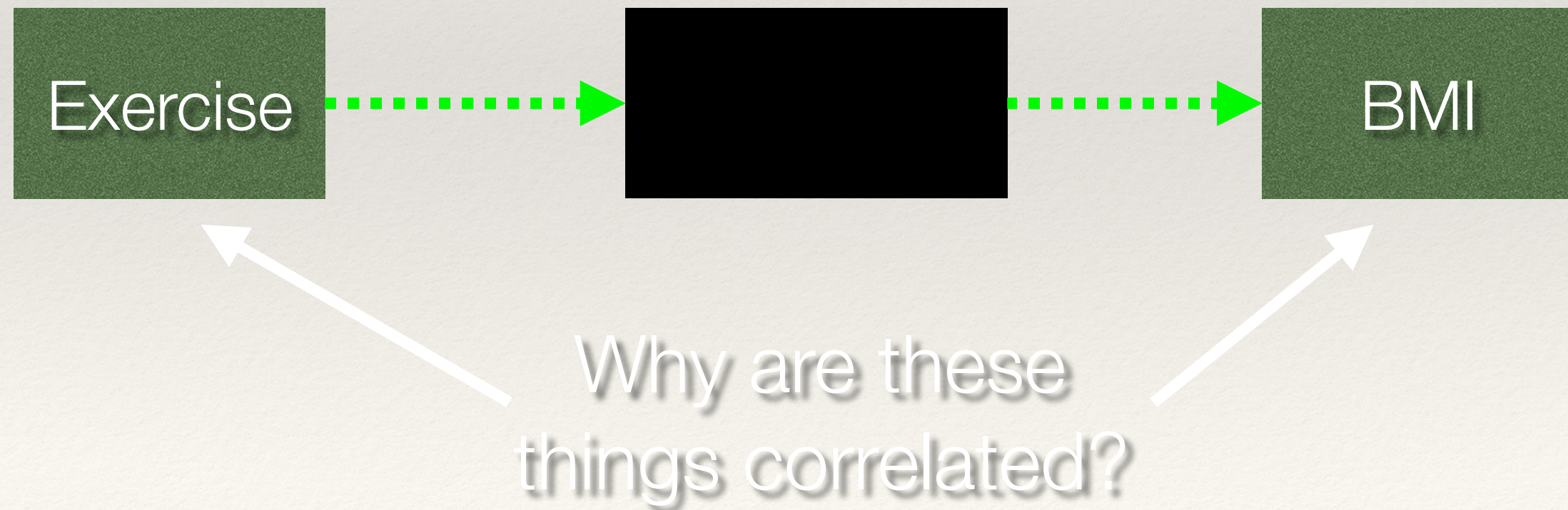


Causal Mechanisms

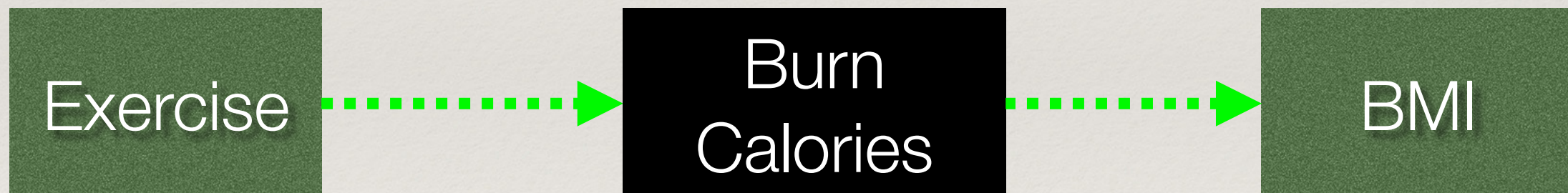
- ❖ Causal mechanisms make the black-box transparent and have an irreducible causal structure.



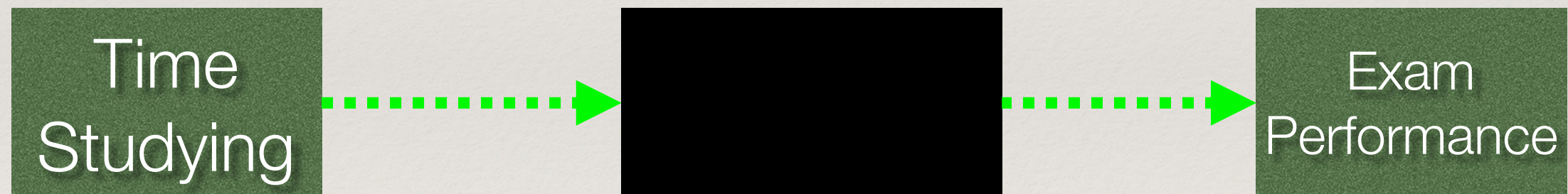
Example



Example



Example



Example



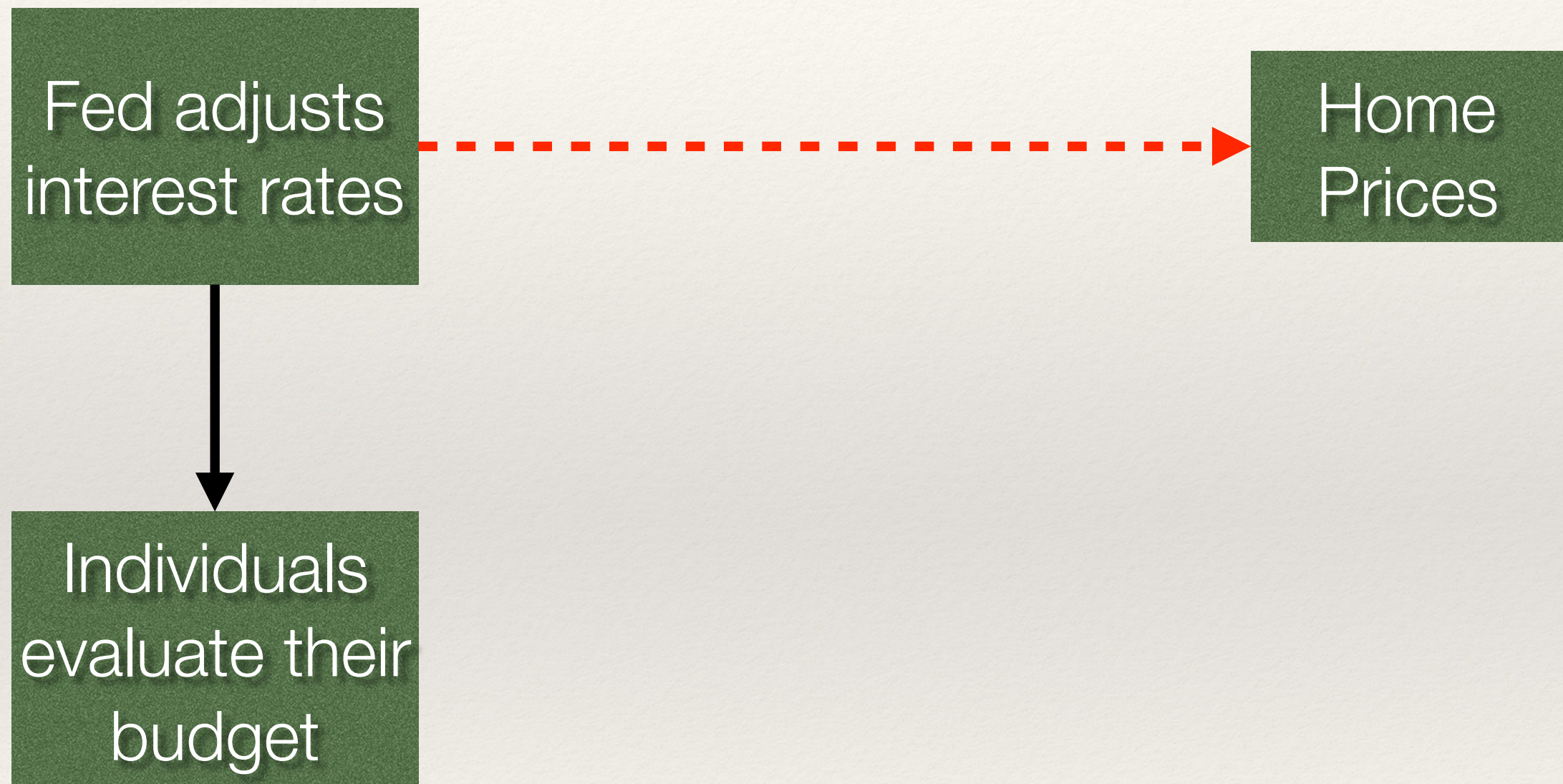
Micro-Macro models

- ❖ Mechanisms link different levels of analysis.
- ❖ Macro level variables have to be explained with causal mechanisms that link them.

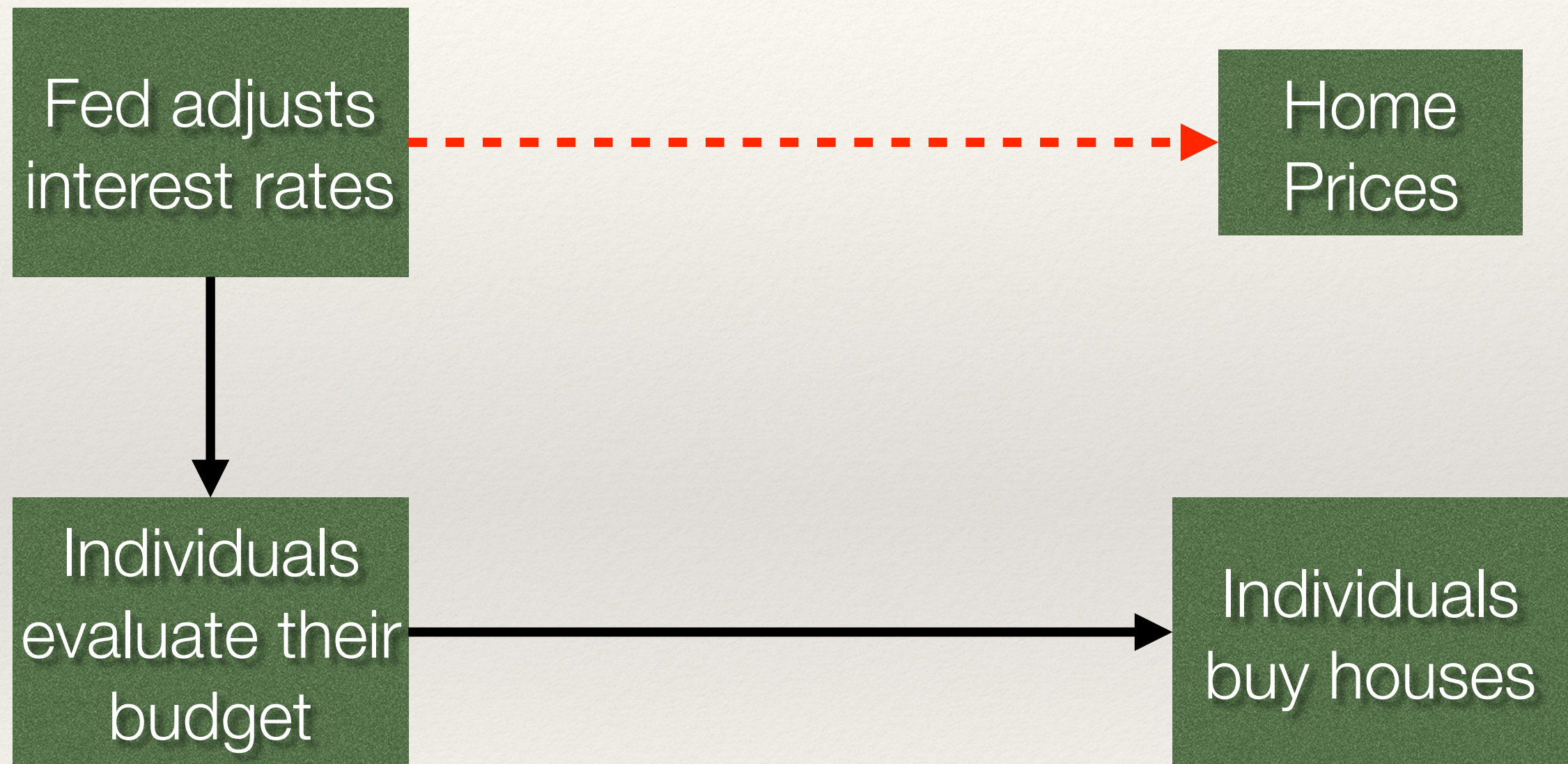
Micro-Macro models



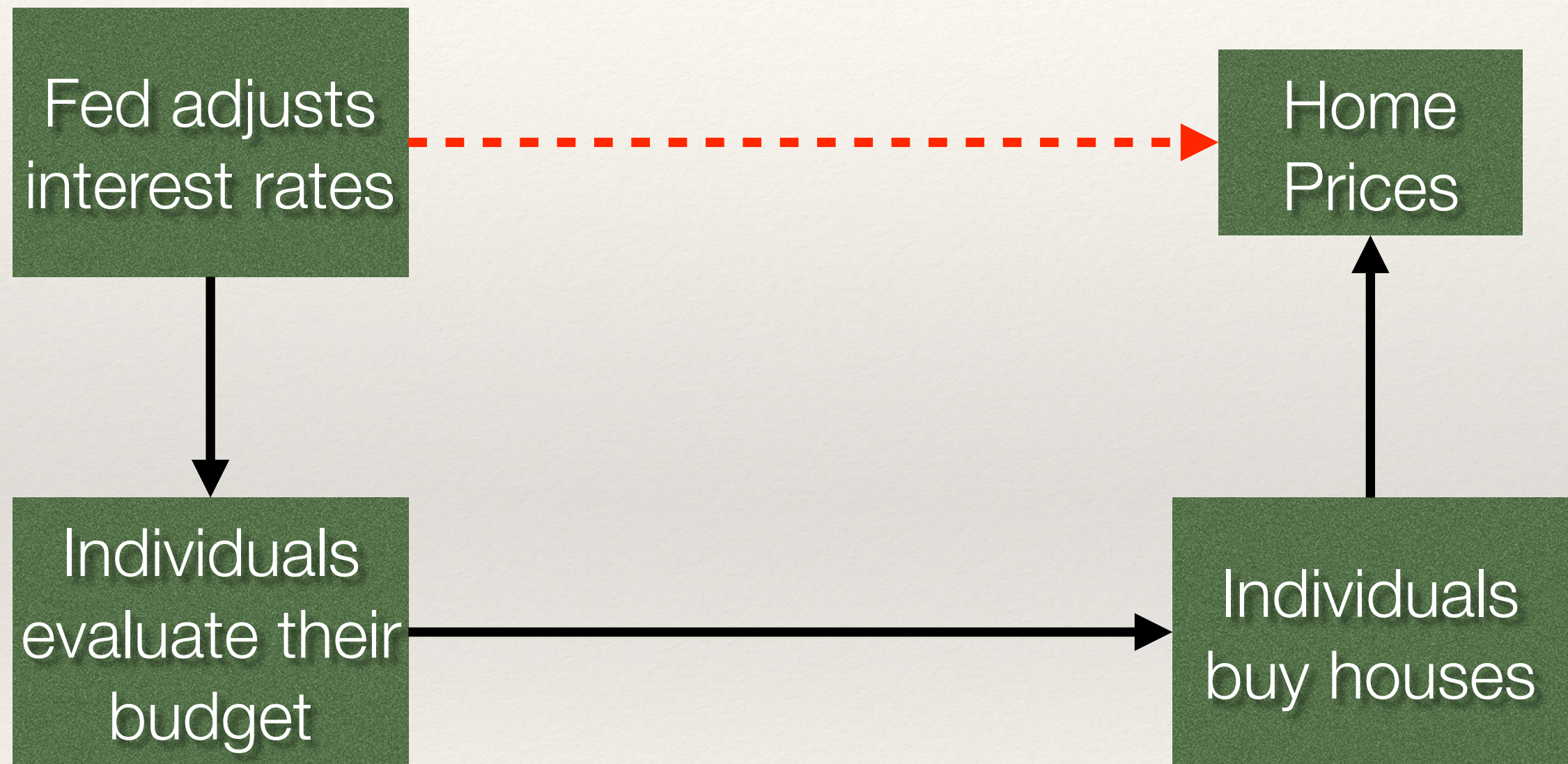
Micro-Macro models



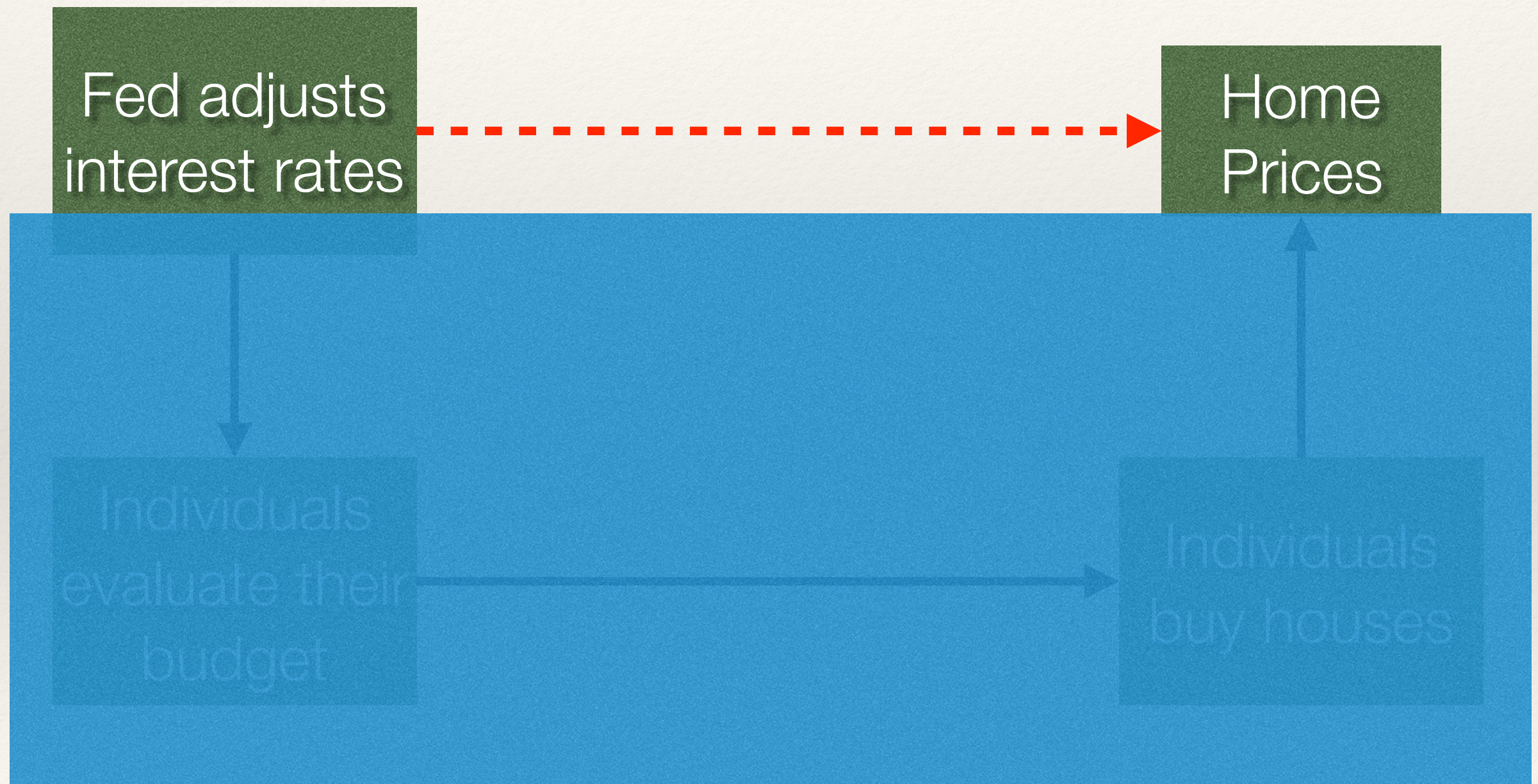
Micro-Macro models



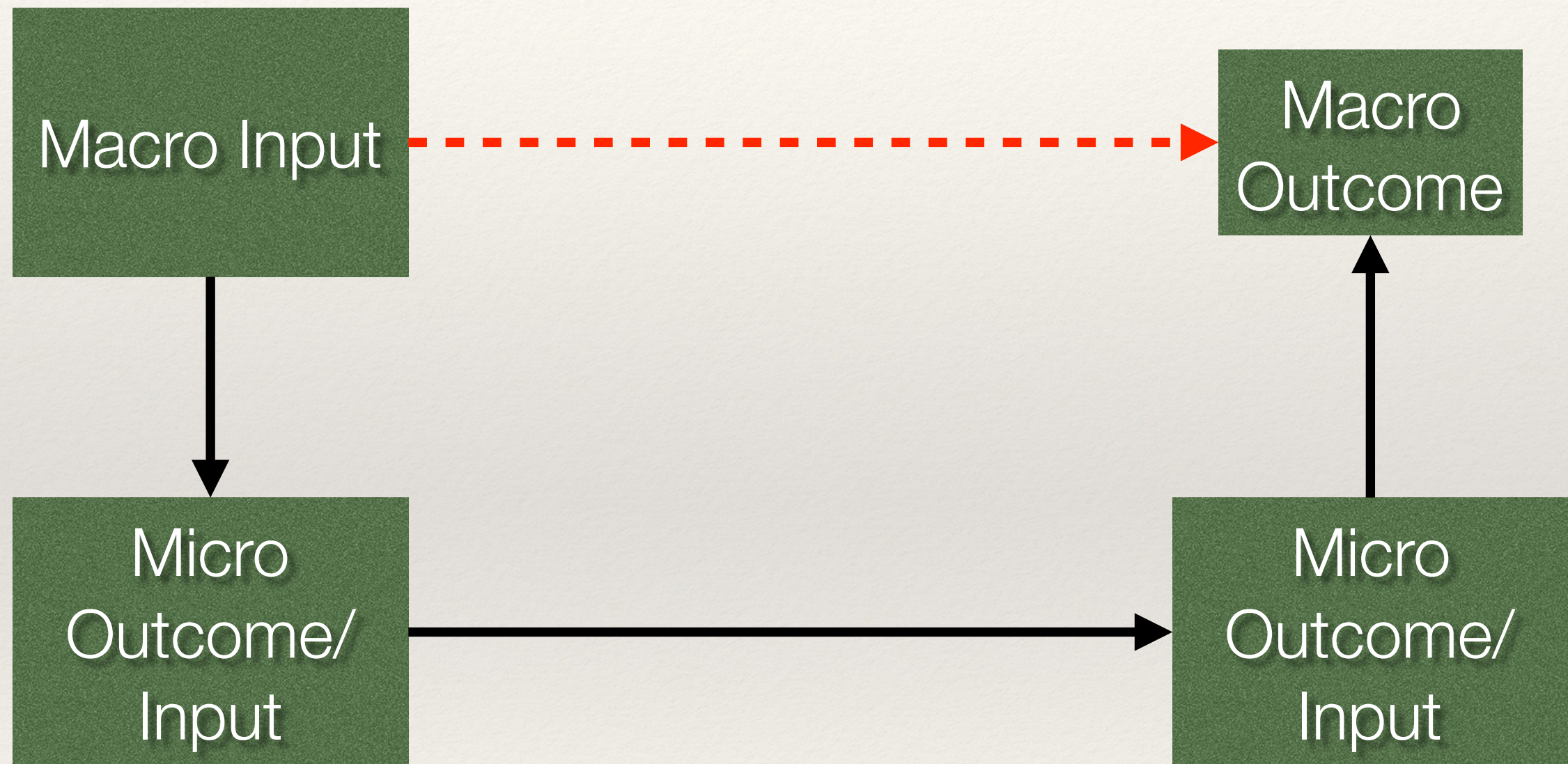
Micro-Macro models



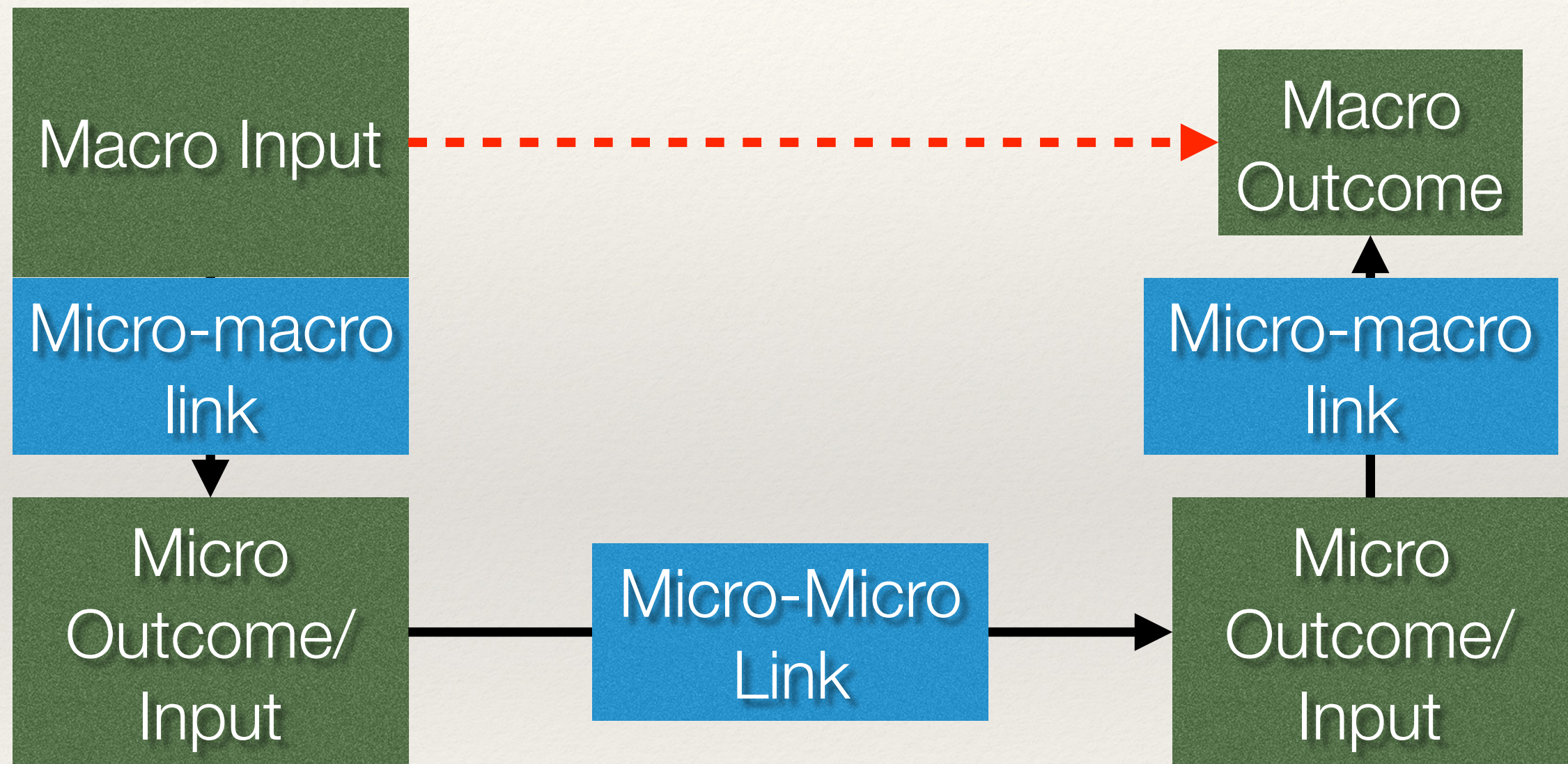
Micro-Macro models



Micro-Macro models



Micro-Macro models



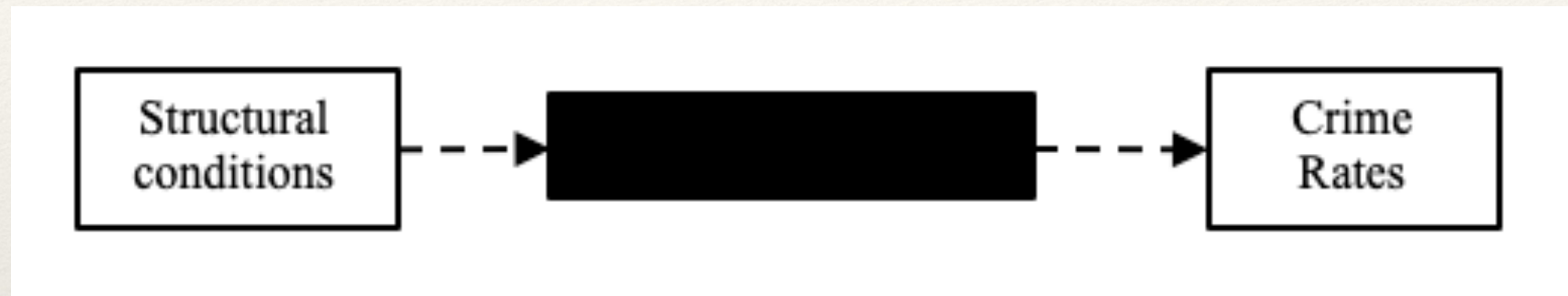
Social Learning and Group Processes

- ❖ Criminological theories do the same thing.
 - ❖ There are several causal models (w / mechanisms) that draw on the role of networks:
 - ❖ Differential Social Organization / Association Theory (Sutherland)
 - ❖ Social Learning Theory (Akers)
 - ❖ Group Process / “Peer Influence” (Warr)

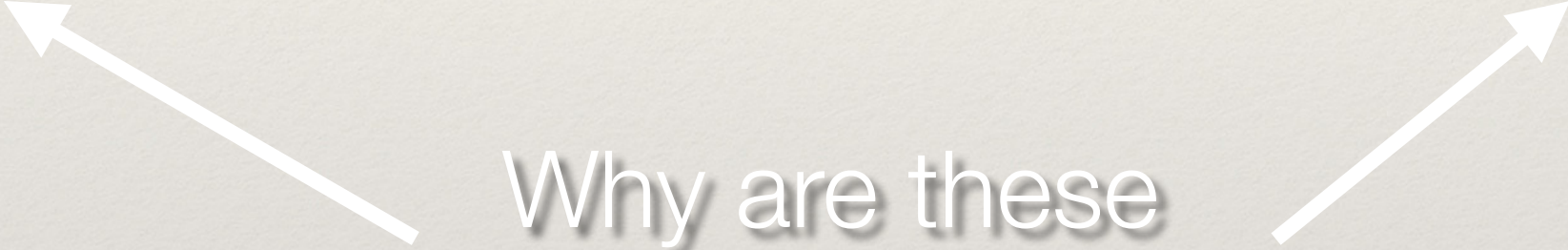
Micro-Macro models

- ❖ Questions to ask before building model:
 - ❖ What are they trying to explain?
 - ❖ What are the input(s) and output(s)
 - ❖ What are the levels?
 - ❖ Micro? Macro? Both?
 - ❖ What are the mechanism(s) that link everything?

Differential Social Organization/Association Theory



Why are these
things correlated?

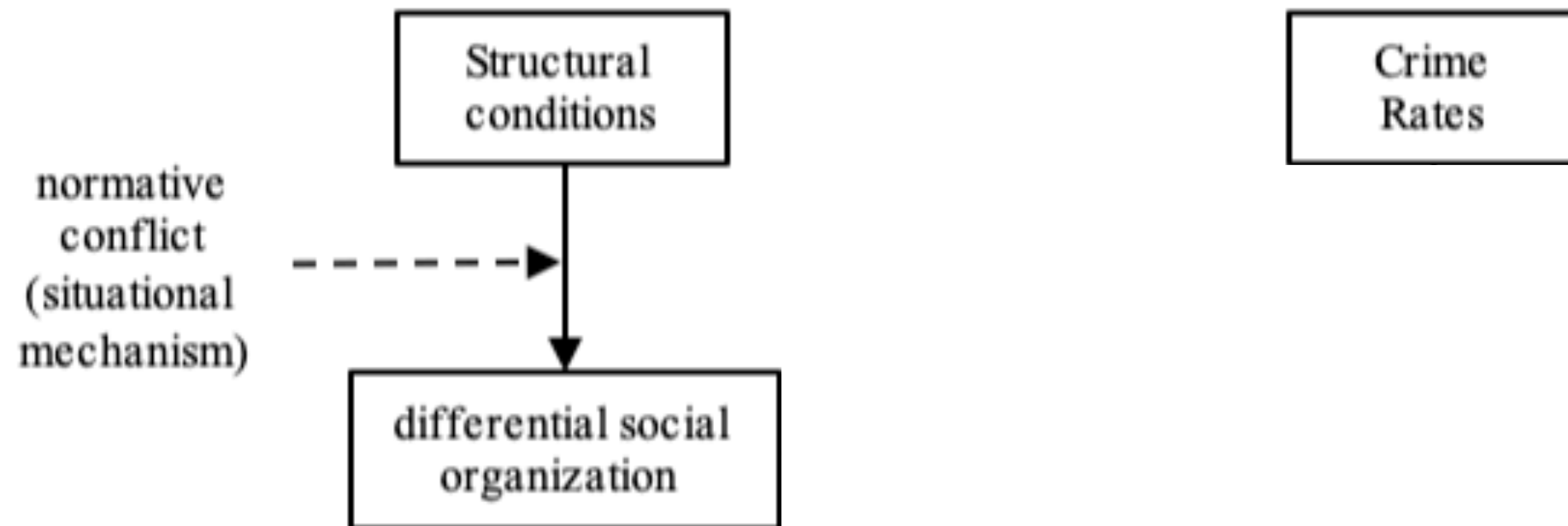


Differential Social Organization/Association Theory

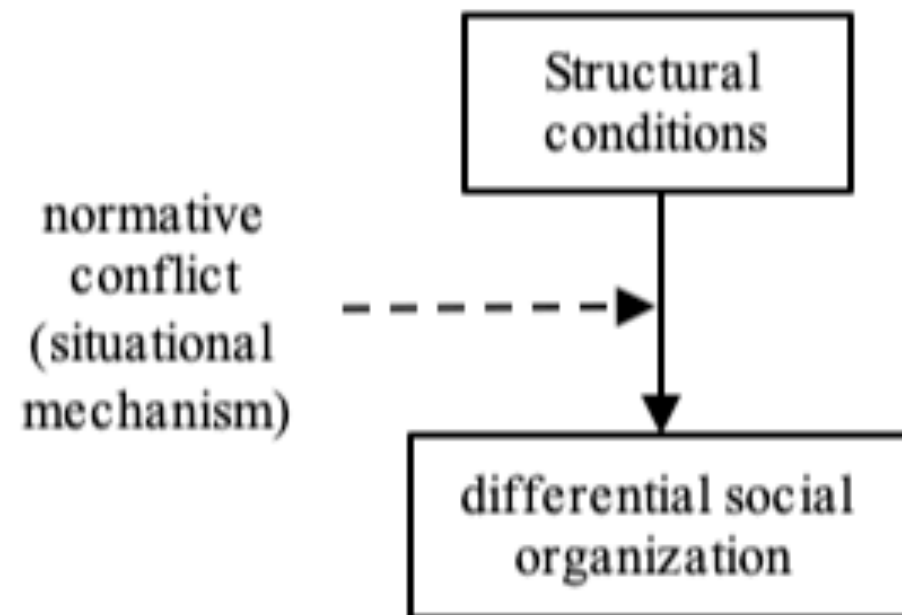
Structural
conditions

Crime
Rates

Differential Social Organization/Association Theory

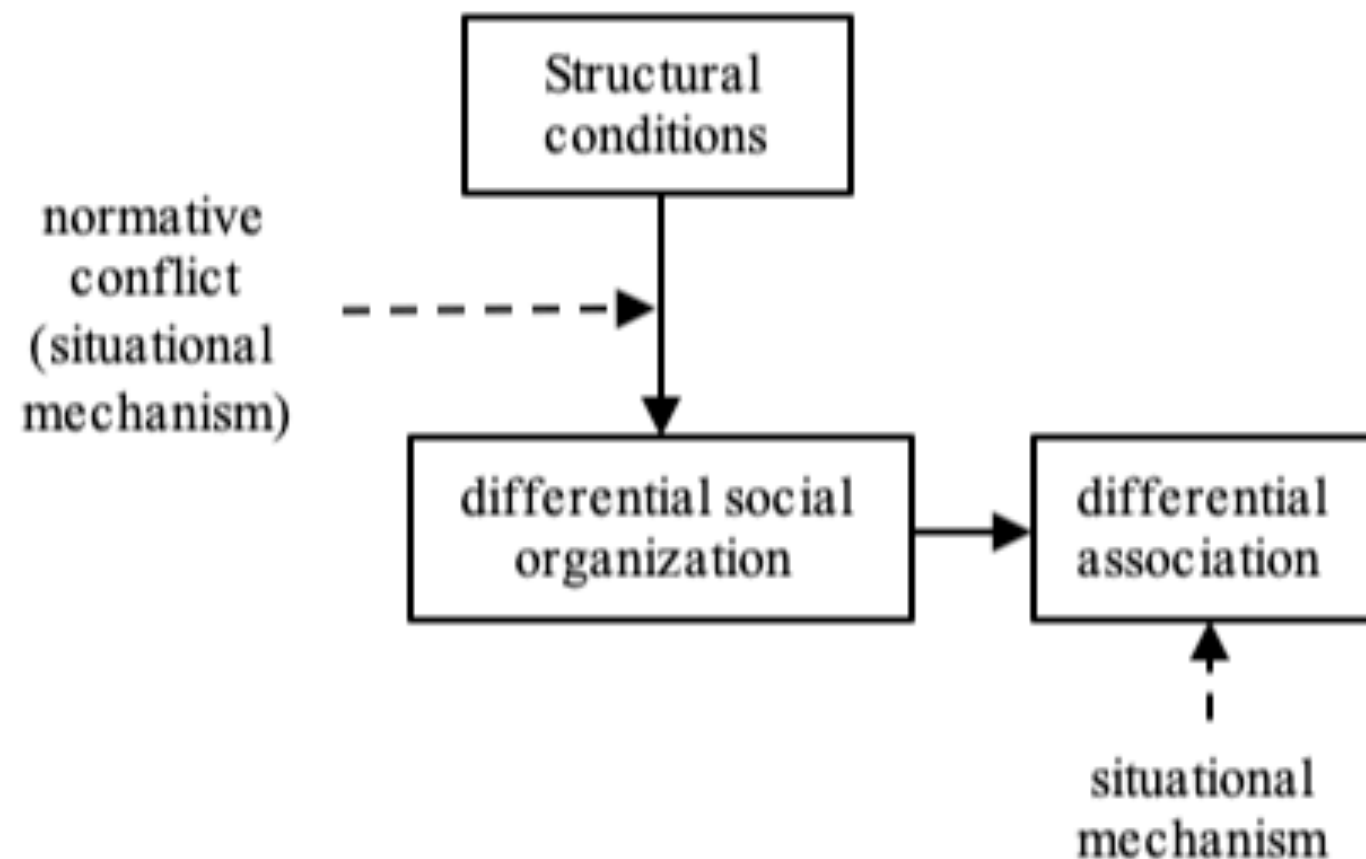


Differential Social Organization/Association Theory



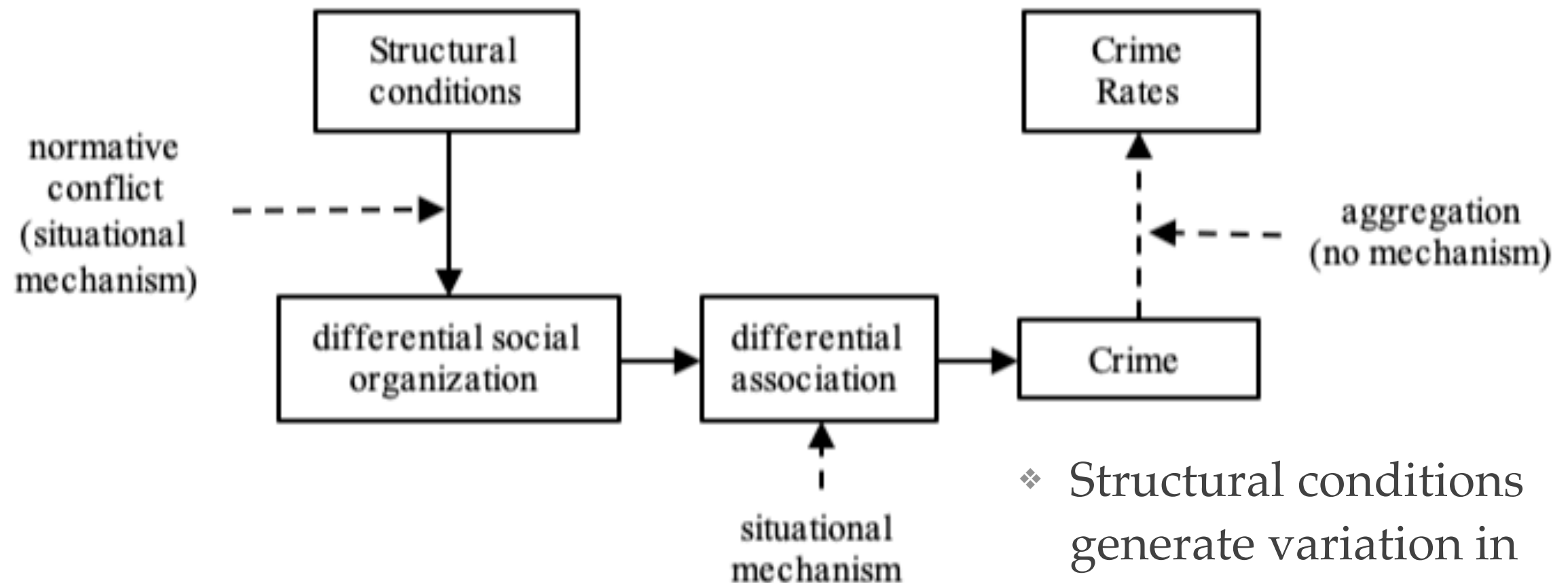
- ❖ “Normative Conflict” generates spatial variation in defining the application of law as appropriate/inappropriate.
- ❖ These are “definitions” of situations that exist in the environment.
- ❖ Example: someone staring... need to ask you are question, or dogging you?

Differential Social Organization/Association Theory



- ❖ Individuals are differentially exposed to these definitions through their relationships.
- ❖ When there is an excessive of definitions favorable...

Differential Social Organization/Association Theory



- ❖ Structural conditions generate variation in definitions of situations which then produces variation in crime across settings.

Social Learning Theory

Structural
conditions

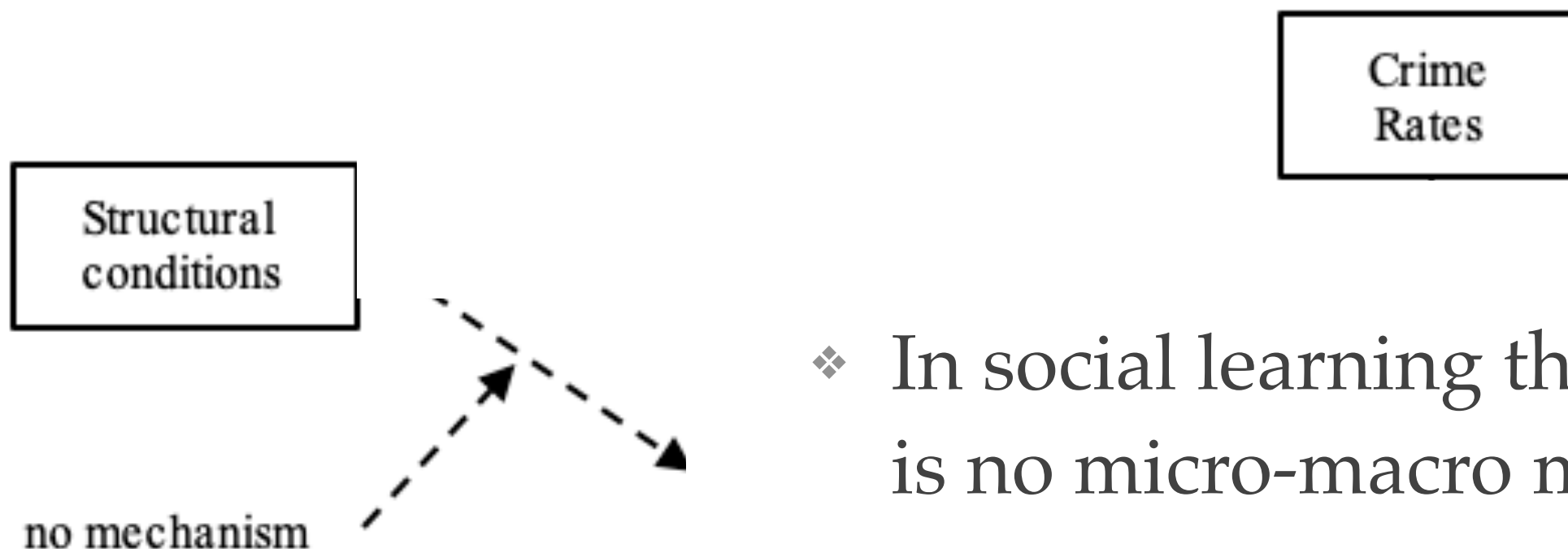
Crime
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Social Learning Theory

Structural
conditions

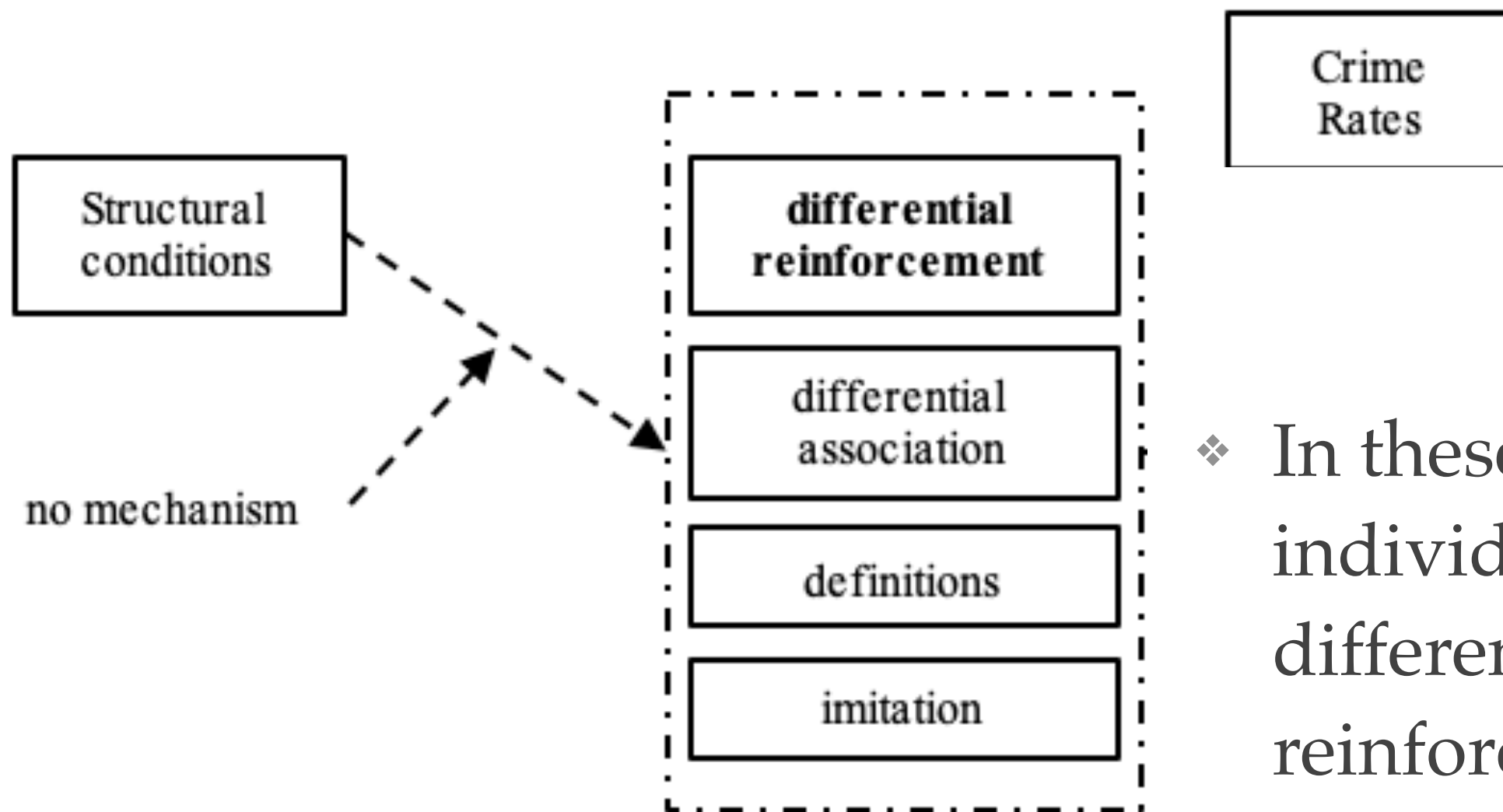
Crime
Rates

Social Learning Theory



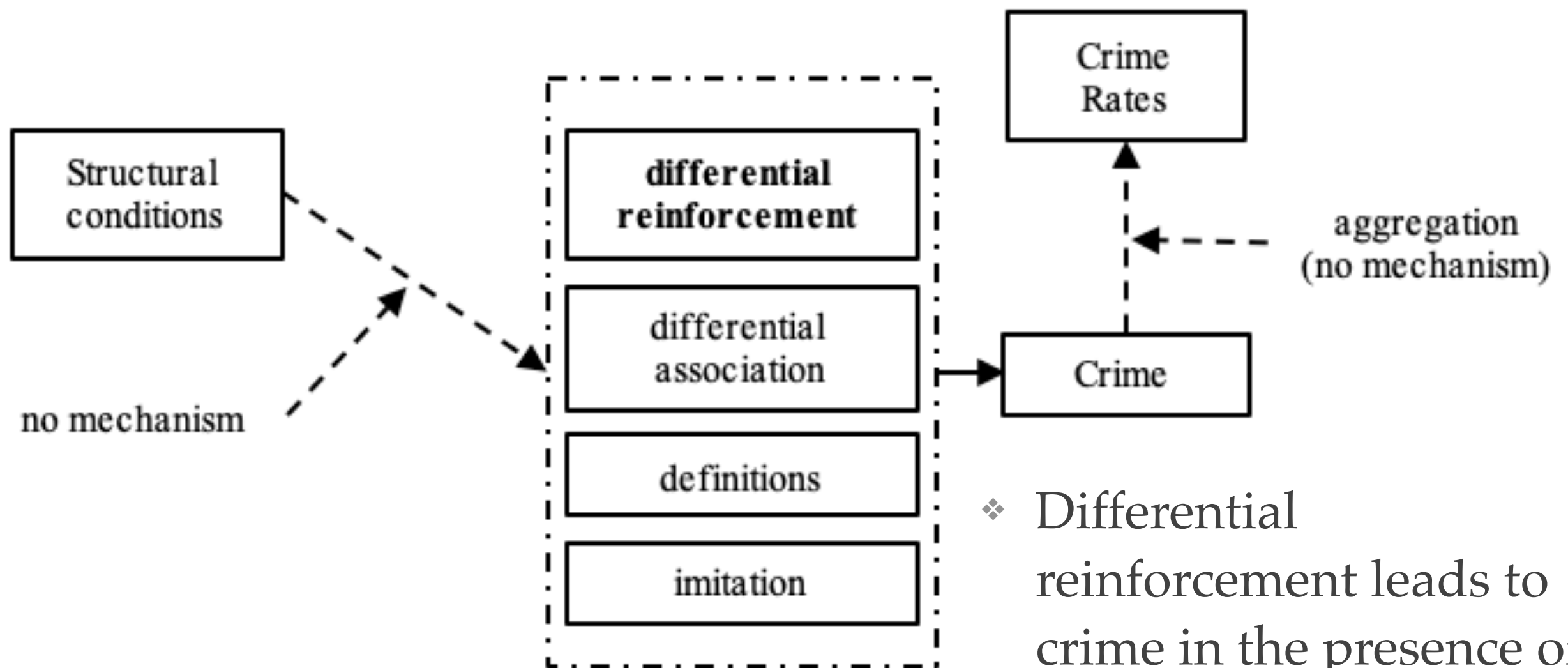
- ❖ In social learning theory, there is no micro-macro mechanism.
- ❖ Just variation in structural variables (like SES, and other demographic features).

Social Learning Theory



- ❖ In these settings, individuals are differentially reinforced.

Social Learning Theory



- ❖ Differential reinforcement leads to crime in the presence of “discriminative stimuli”.

Cognitivist/Cognitivism vs. Behavioral /Behaviorism

- ❖ These two models deal with why individuals come to engage in crime.
- ❖ Key difference: what is learned.
 - ❖ *Cognitivist/Cognitivism*-association of ideas with behavior.
 - ❖ *Behavioral/Behaviorism*-association stimuli with a response (backward-looking rationality)
 - ❖ **Definition of a situation vs. Learning objective features of a setting as internal discriminative stimuli**

Example: Tax Fraud

- ❖ Suppose a child is watching a parent file their taxes. The parent decides to claim more deductions than they actually have. The parent tells the child that this is acceptable because the majority of people don't accurately report their deductions and the federal government wants so much money anyway that they don't deserve to have all of what is supposedly "owed".
- ❖ *What has happened here?*

Example: Tax Fraud

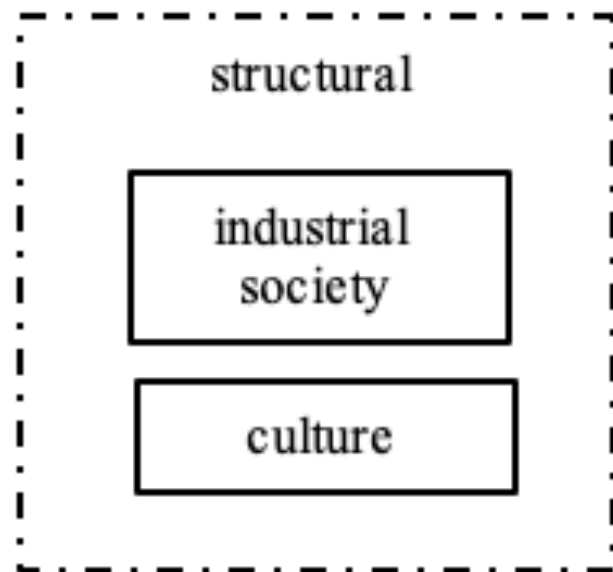
- ❖ *What has happened here?*
- ❖ Parent has taught a technique for committing a crime.
- ❖ Parent has provided verbalizations of why the behavior is acceptable.
- ❖ **Different** from being rewarded for engaging in the behavior or recognizing the opportunity and saying: “I have done this in the past and not gotten caught” (backward-looking rationality).

Group Processes

Structural
conditions

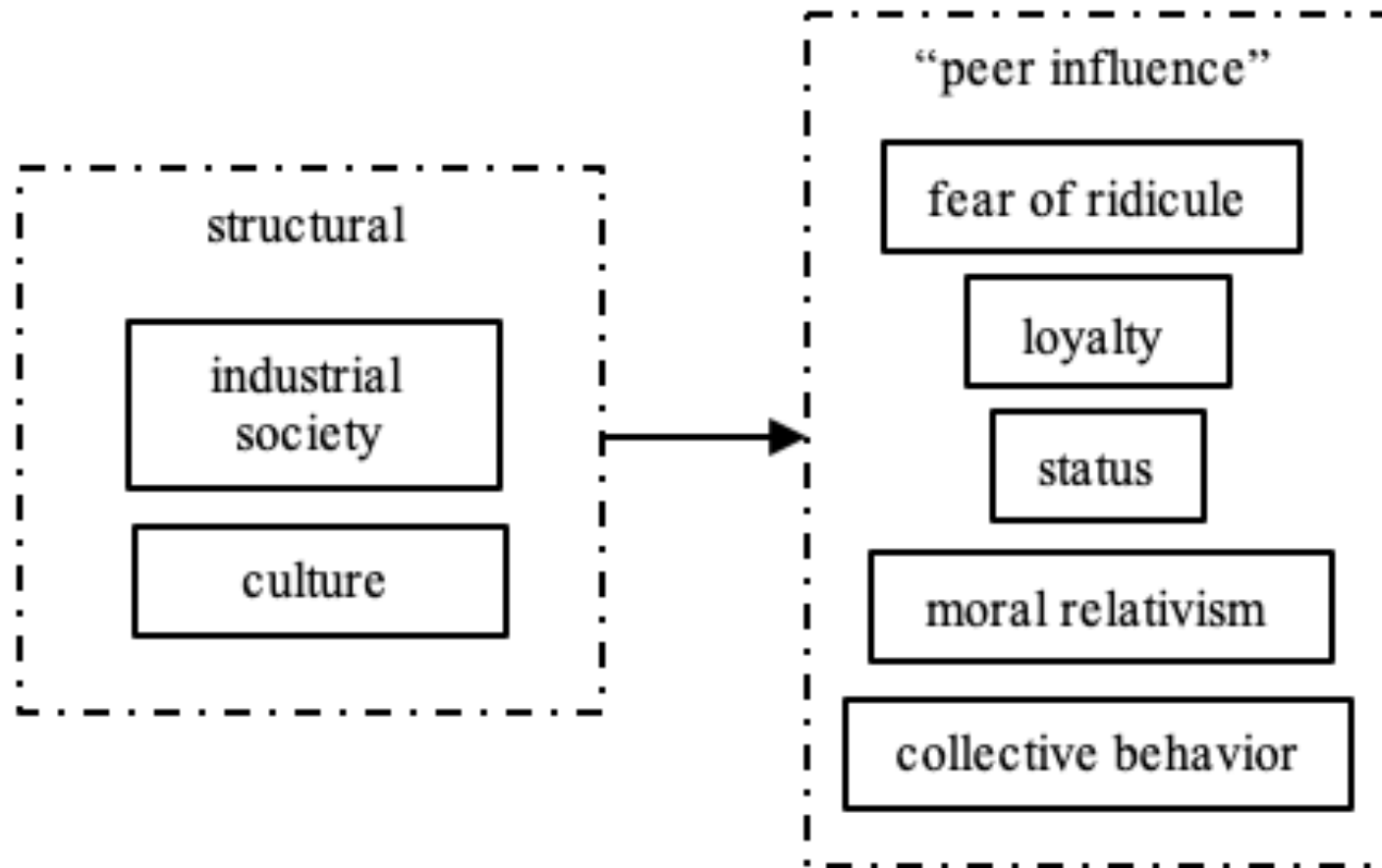
Crime
Rates

Group Processes

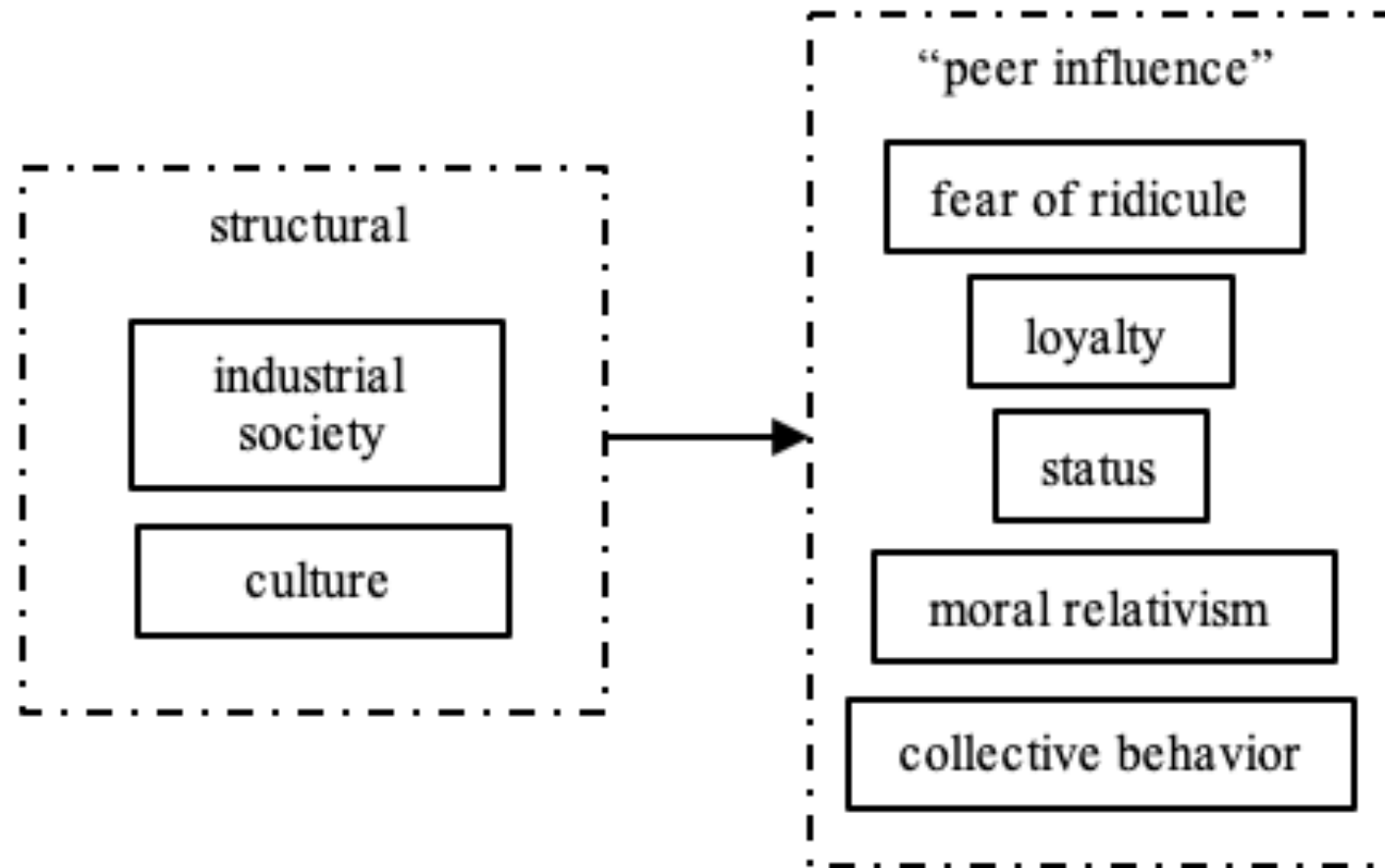


- ❖ Industrial society creates a conduciveness to peer interaction.
- ❖ In the U.S., there is a “culture” focused on unsupervised play among youth.

Group Processes

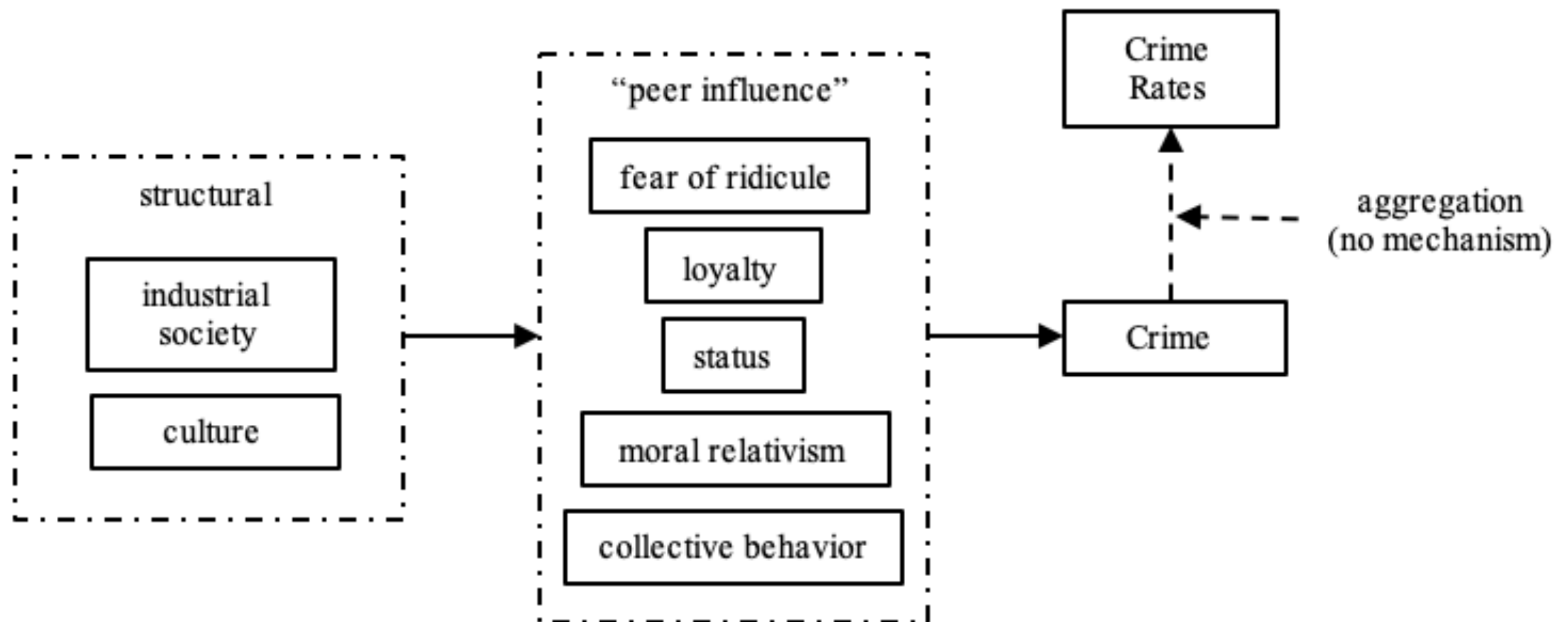


Group Processes

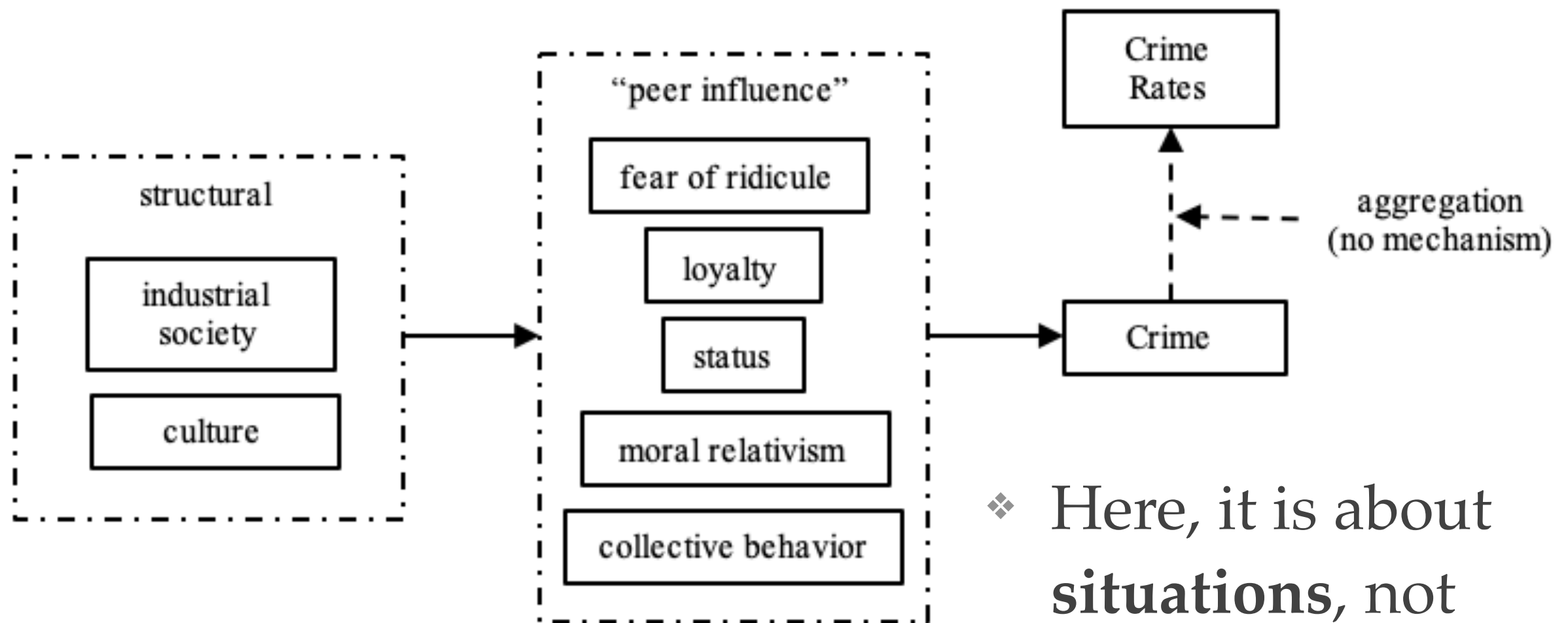


- ❖ Produces a particular setting in which youth interaction.

Group Processes



Group Processes



- ❖ Here, it is about **situations**, not **internal characteristics**!

Questions?

Break

Discussion

CRJ 523: Network Criminology.

Discussion Questions for Peer Influence, Co-Offending, and Gangs

Questions:

1. What is the problem the author's are trying to solve? What are they trying to understand about peer influence/co-offending/gangs? What are the empirical facts they are seeking to understand?
2. How does the network matter? How are they using network ideas or methods to try and address their problem?
3. Is there a causal model? If so, what is it? If not, is the study primarily focused on a single variable?
4. Would the article be described as "network theory" or a "theory of networks" approach? If "network theory," what is the mechanism (i.e. contagion, convergence, capitalization, or cooperation)?
5. What are the dependent and independent variables and how are they operationalized? And/or, what are the data?

Network Concepts Covered

- ❖ Network Redundancy
- ❖ Homophily
- ❖ Status
- ❖ Social Closeness
- ❖ Cohesion
- ❖ Network data for measurement

Network Theories and Theories of Networks*

NETWORK THEORIES ("networks as <i>cause</i> ")			THEORIES OF NETWORKS ("networks as <i>effects</i> ")
<i>Explanatory Goal</i>			<i>Explanatory Goal</i>
<i>Explanatory Model</i>	Social Capital/ Performance ("why are the benefits?")	Homogeneity ("why are nodes similar?")	Network Structure ("why is the network this way?")
Network Flow (ties as pipes)	<u>Capitalization</u> Definition: Acquisition to resources through ties and this influences human capital which contributes to performance. Examples: Access to unique information via bridging ties. Information control benefits of structural holes. Solving problems through access to diverse knowledge.	<u>Contagion</u> Definition: Nodes become similar through a process of "infection" where various "bits" are passed from one node to the other. Examples: Diffusion of innovations. Peer influence. Disease transmission.	Examples: Homophilous Selection ("why do people with the same attitudes cluster together? They sort into these groups")
	<u>Cooperation</u> Definition: Networks provide benefits that can coordinate multiple nodes in order to bring all their resources to bear on a problem. Examples: Unionization. Collective efficacy in neighborhoods.	<u>Convergence</u> Definition: Nodes adapt to their environments, and as a result nodes with similar structural environments will demonstrate similarities. Examples: Administrative assistants have higher levels of communication in organizations.	Examples: Popularity ("why do some individuals receive more ties than others?")

*Adapted From Borgatti and Halgin (2011) and adams (2020).