

■ **TABLE 1.4** How to Evaluate the Quality of a Theory or Explanation

1. Is it (i.e., the theory or explanation) logical and coherent?
 2. Is it clear and parsimonious?
 3. Does it fit the available data?
 4. Does it provide testable claims?
 5. Have theory-based predictions been tested and supported?
 6. Has it survived numerous attempts by researchers to identify problems with it or to falsify it?
 7. Does it work better than competing or rival theories or explanations?
 8. Is it general enough to apply to more than one place, situation, or person?
 9. Can practitioners use it to control or influence things in the world (e.g., a good theory of teaching helps teachers to positively influence student learning; a good theory of counseling helps counselors to positively influence their clients' mental health)?
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