

AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION IS WORTH A POUND OF CURE:

A TEST OF SELF CONTROL THEORY

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
LIST OF DIAGRAMS.....	viii
CHAPTER I        INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Tenets of Self Control Theory	
The Current Study	
Organization of the Current Research	
CHAPTER II        FAMILY BASED THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS OF CRIME.....	8
Strain Theory	
Differential Association and Social Learning	
Social Disorganization	
Cultural Deviance and Subcultural Theories	
Labeling Theories	
Social Control Theory	
Is Self Control Theory a Better Family Based Explanation?	
CHAPTER III       SELF CONTROL THEORY.....	26
Self Control Theory and the Family	
Existing Tests and Measures of Self Control	
Criticisms of Self Control	
CHAPTER IV        RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	43
Data	
Variables	
Research Hypotheses	
CHAPTER V        RESULTS .....	64
Analysis Strategy	
Logistic Regression	
OLS Regressions	

CHAPTER VI	DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION.....	77
Limitations of the Current Study		
Some Final Thoughts		
REFERENCES.....		84

## List of Tables

Table 4.1	Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Independent Variables.....	45
Table 4.2	Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Porteus Maze Scores.....	52
Table 4.3	Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Dependent Variables.....	53
Table 4.4	Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Control Variables.....	57
Table 5.1	Logistic Regression: Acting out Models Predicting Juvenile and Adult Convictions.....	67
Table 5.2	Logistic Regression: Taking Risk Models Predicting Juvenile and Adult Convictions.....	69
Table 5.3	OLS Coefficients for the Porteus Maze Models Predicting Juvenile and Adult Convictions.....	72
Table 5.4	OLS Coefficients Predicting Self-Reported Juvenile Delinquency .....	74
Table 5.5	OLS Coefficients Predicting Self-Reported Adult Violence.....	76

### **List of Diagrams**

Diagram 4.1	Theoretical Relationships Predicting Convictions.....	63
Diagram 4.2	Theoretical Relationships Predicting Self-Reported Criminality.....	63

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Children were viewed as non-persons until the 1700's throughout the world. Discipline to the generation during that time is now called child abuse. Parents before the 1700's did not create an emotional bond with children (Rice, 1995). The infant and child mortality rates were high and there was a high probability that most children would not survive until adulthood. "Throughout all time there has been delinquency. It may not have had the delinquency label, but it still existed. In ancient Britain, children at the age of seven were tried, convicted, and punished as adults. There was no special treatment for them, a hanging was a hanging" (1995, para. 5).

At the end of the 18th century, Americans began to see children in a new light. These new views led to the invention of the childhood. Love and nurturing replaced beatings. Children had finally begun to emerge as a distinct group (Rice, 1995) and, within criminology today, have been studied and speculated about extensively.

According to the Uniform Crime Reports (2004), the arrest total for juveniles in 2004 decreased 1.7 percent. Arrests of juveniles for violent crimes declined 1.0 percent and 2.9 percent for property crimes. Overall, crime has been steadily declining, along with juvenile delinquency. According to many of the theoretical explanations of juvenile delinquency, the family has the most pronounced and lasting impact on the lives of



juveniles. Travis Hirschi (2002)<sup>1</sup> argues that several criminological theories including strain, control, and cultural deviance have been the most widely believed explanations of juvenile delinquency. However, each of the main theories of juvenile delinquency fails to adequately assess Hirschi's role of the family in shaping children's development through early childhood. Thus, Hirschi collaborated with Gottfredson in their book, *The General Theory of Crime* (1990). This research assesses Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) theory of self control as it pertains to the influence of the family on juvenile delinquency and adult criminality.

According to Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), the problem delinquents and criminals are facing is possessing low self control. Self control is the application of one's own wills on his/her personal self through behaviors, actions, or thought processes. This theory comes from the idea that the self and the ability to set up limitations for that self are crucial to prevent crime. If individuals possess high self control, they will be less likely to become delinquent and commit crimes. Low self control, according to this theory, is established early in life by poor family processes. Low self control may have negative effects on the development of social bonds later in life.

In the past criminality was thought to be genetic or inherited, but not all members of a family commit crime. Through the centuries, self control has been discussed by theorists and philosophers. "All men are tempted. There is no man that lives that can't be broken down, provided it is the right temptation, put in the right spot," stated Henry Ward Beecher in 1887 (2006, para. 5) in "Proverbs from Plymouth Pulpit." Buddha's teachings also discussed being responsible for one's self: "It is a man's own mind, not his

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<sup>1</sup> Travis Hirschi revised his 1969 book *Causes of Delinquency* in 2002. Throughout this paper, I will be referring to the latter edition.

enemy or foe, that lures him to evil ways” (2006, para. 8). With these intellectual thoughts in mind, the current research seeks to test Gottfredson and Hirschi’s (1990) self control theory.

### **The Tenets of Self Control Theory**

Self control theory is an inclusive theory, according to Hirschi and Gottfredson, (1990) that attempts to explain all criminal and deviant behaviors. Self control theory does not claim to predict the seriousness of crimes, rather the two basic requirements for a crime to occur. First, an individual must have low self control. Second, an opportunity for a crime to occur must be present. Both of these requirements must be present; neither is a sufficient precursor to crime alone. While criminal opportunity is explained well by routine activities theory (see Cohen and Felson, 1979), according to Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), self control is a more difficult concept to operationalize. The current research focuses entirely on this concept of self control.

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) also state that individuals with low self control will engage in analogous behaviors that are not necessarily criminal. For example, those that seek immediate gratification or take many risks also use tobacco, engage in sex without courtship, have more accidents (auto or other types), and have employee absenteeism. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) explain the basics of self control; however, no concise definition of self control has been provided. The general idea is that criminal acts are usually instantly gratifying and carry a large amount of risk. Accordingly, individuals who commit crimes must be drawn to these two factors. Instant gratification and risk-taking are two key variables that define self control. Individuals with high levels

of self control will determine that criminal acts have long term negative effects including the possibility of getting caught and bodily injury.

Individuals are not born with self control, but instead must learn and develop these traits, typically from their parents and predominantly in early childhood. Children develop self control primarily as a function of their parents' socializing skills.

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990, 97) borrow the popular idea that, "The general public (and those who deal with offenders in the criminal justice systems) believe that defective upbringing, or neglect in the home is the primary cause of crime." Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) agree and claim the major cause of low self control appears to be ineffective child-rearing. When a child's parents fail to set proper boundaries to her or his actions, that child will develop low self control. These children, who do not have clear limits on their behaviors, often become risk-takers and adventurous during childhood and are susceptible to becoming delinquent. Evidence presented by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) show that self control measures can be predictors of convictions as juveniles and as adults.

Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) theory suggests, once low self control is established in juveniles, there is no easy solution or a way to reverse low self control. Once a juvenile possesses low self control, Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) claim there is also no way to remedy subsequent deviant behaviors. If parents properly socialize their children from the beginning of their childhood, low self control can be avoided. This theory also suggests that parents must properly socialize their children if they want to prevent delinquency by age 8. The likelihood odds ratio is simply stronger that a solution to juvenile delinquency and lifelong criminal offending is prevention of low self control

from ever developing by this particular age. Thus, this theory follows the old proverb, “an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure” (2006, para. 1).

### **The Current Study**

Existing research on self control theory has focused on measuring self control cross-sectionally rather than identifying the origins of low self control and preventing it. There has been little published research focused on examining the correlates of self control in early childhood. The current study is innovative because it reviews early childhood measures of self control and how they are correlated with adult convictions through longitudinal data. Moreover, the dataset used in this study gives the opportunity to test how family variables influence the development of low self control in early childhood.

There has been little criminological research focused on the 8 year old age limit for children to learn self control. Most researchers, including Gottfredson and Hirschi, surmise that this assumption of self control theory lacks face validity, in that nobody’s fate is sealed by the age of eight. Moreover, this age cut off is seemingly counter-intuitive to western notions of self determination. Yet, these assumptions and criticisms of self control theory have not been tested in criminological research. The current test accounts for the self control measures at age 8 and examine their life-long correlations with criminal outcomes. In addition, the study examines the family influences on developing self control during childhood and if the juveniles will become delinquent, accounting for other family variables. The data used in the current study, The Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development, afford this much needed longitudinal analysis. Other

data available to test self control theory do not have these early childhood measures available. The current research seeks to rectify some of the gaps in the existing self control literature by using longitudinal data and addressing the issue of self control being static by age 8.

One of the biggest challenges to the current study is the issue of operationalizing key variables. There is still no agreement among academics on how to measure self control adequately. Existing measures account for risk-taking, impulsivity, instant gratification, and acting-out behaviors (see Marcus, 2004). Even if children do possess low self control indicators such as risk-taking, the children's fate should not be automatically sealed as criminal. Many individuals do possess these traits; yet, lead very successful and accomplished lives. There have been tests and scales to measure self control but nothing concise and relating to criminality. The findings in this paper will reveal a more concise view of self control measures, including family and control variables. Ultimately, the longitudinal tests will reveal how self control indicators of boys' ages 8-9 predict for juvenile and adult convictions throughout their lives.

The research questions tested in this study are: what causes juveniles to have low-self control and become delinquent? What is the role of family in creating self control? Is self control's impact static over time in regards to criminality? This paper will address the family influence on delinquency and crime as well as discuss and test, key family variables. Notably, broken homes or broken families, parental affectional ties, discipline and legitimacy (to their own parents) will all be major focal variables.

### **Organization of the Current Research**

The remainder of this research is organized as follows: Chapter 2 discusses how other theoretical perspectives use family variables to predict delinquency and adult criminal behaviors. The short-comings of these theoretical explanations of delinquency are reviewed with a particular focus on the lack of a strong understanding of family influences. Chapter 3 presents more detail on the specifics of self control theory and a literature review of recently published research. The existing body of scholarship testing self control theory is presented. Chapter 4 presents the research strategies employed in the current study. The hypotheses are discussed as well as the variables which are used to test self control theory. Key results are presented in Chapter 5. The findings from both logistic regression and ordinary least squares (OLS) regression models are discussed. Finally, this study concludes in Chapter 6. The implications of the present findings are discussed and self control theory is reassessed and recommendations about future research are offered.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **FAMILY BASED THEORETICAL EXPLANATIONS OF CRIME**

There are many theories that describe the correlations between family influences, and juvenile delinquency and crime. These theories basically use the same variables but have different explanations and causal ordering as to why juveniles become delinquent. Hirschi (2002) argues that strain, control, and cultural deviance have been used to explain juvenile delinquency. Other theories, however, also merit discussion including differential association and social disorganization as they include family factors in their explanations of delinquency. These theories provide possible answers to the question why young people commit crimes.

This chapter presents an overview of each of these perspectives through existing research, and evaluates each theory's predictive accuracy using family variables. The shortcomings of these theories in regard to their failure to adequately account for the influence of family on delinquency are highlighted.

#### **Strain Theory**

Traditional strain theories state that social structures within American society may encourage citizens to commit crime. This theory states that if there is an imbalance between cultural aspirations of success and the means to achieve that success, individuals

may resort to criminal means to achieve conventional goals (Merton, 1968). Strain is the pressure on disadvantaged groups and the lower urban populous to take advantage of any effective available means to income and success that they can find even if these means are illegal. Strain was founded after anomie, (Durkheim, 1984) which is reaction against, or a retreat from, the regulatory social controls of society. Contemporary strain theory focuses less on blocked opportunities and more on endemic cultural mores and emotional responses to pressures (Agnew, 1992) that lead individuals to adapt to the strain they feel through their participating in criminal enterprise.

### **Strain Perspectives and the Family**

Strain theory has a number of family influences contributing to it. Rebellon (2002) reported that broken homes actively motivate delinquency by preventing individuals from achieving or maintaining positively esteemed goals or by imposing negative motivation. The definition of broken homes regarding this research is when a family is dysfunctional, such as a parent being an alcoholic, or there has been a divorce or separation in the family. Classical or original strain theory, which Merton introduced in 1938, suggests that broken homes promote delinquency by exerting financial pressure on the children who inhabit them, particularly given the value that American culture places on monetary outcomes. Merton based his theory on monetary goals but later Robert Agnew picked up the theory researching other variables such as social class and associations with other criminals. Hoffmann (2002) assumes that opportunity structures vary by community; it is reasonable to speculate that the effects of strains caused by the disjunction between goals and means on deviant behavior will vary by community. "One might theorize, that strained youths in disorganized communities have a more realistic



picture of their plight, so deviant adaptations become more likely” (Hoffmann, 2002, 756).

Agnew (1992) discusses recent general strain theory, which broadens the theory by conceptualizing it as coming from a variety of sources, including families, schools, and cognitive skills. Agnew (1992) has also proposed an elaboration of general strain theory to include community effects. Agnew suggests that “deprived” communities are more likely to be populated by “strained” individuals and that these communities will suffer from more blocked opportunity structures. These communities tend to create an atmosphere contributing to anger and frustration, key qualifications to delinquent behavior according to Agnew (1992). Community characteristics produce environments that condition the effect of strain on crime (Hoffmann, 2002).

Agnew’s (1992) description of a deprived community includes many of the same characteristics that outline disorganized communities (such as economic deprivation, higher percent of minority). It seems clear that Agnew is proposing that community disorganization either indirectly or conditionally affects deviant behavior through straining mechanisms. Hoffmann (2002) also discusses how recent studies suggest that stressful life events, an important straining mechanism under Agnew’s scheme, vary by communities. General strain theory also provides a more reasonable means of linking broken homes and delinquency. Agnew (1992) explained that psychological strain can follow after the failure to achieve economic goals. Agnew lists psychological strain as a failure to achieve goals ranging from fair treatment to respect, the loss of previously attained outcomes ranging from financial resources to romantic relationships and the imposition of noxious stimuli ranging from physical abuse to poor family relations

(Rebellon, 2002, 109). In the end, general strain theory suggests that negative family relations rather than family structure, promote negative emotions and that children may cope with these emotions by engaging in delinquency (Agnew, 1992).

### **Criticisms of the Strain Perspective**

According to Hirschi, failure and frustration have no place in strain theory (Hirschi, 2002). It may seem that the pressure (to gain success in the form of money or prestige) is mostly on disadvantaged minority groups and the lower urban populous to take advantage of any effective means to income and success that they can find even if those means are illegal. However, Hirschi (2002, 7) believes that “delinquency is not confined to the lower classes.” While this class-criticism is true, strain theory is now used to explain all different types of crimes in all different classes. Hirschi (2002) classifies strain theory as the historical result of good answers to a bad question which was the same as Hobbes’s (1957) question, why do men obey the rules of society?

“The fact that most delinquent boys eventually become law-abiding adults is also a cause of embarrassment to the strain theorists” (Hirschi, 2002, 6). Hirschi (2002) tentatively rejects the general strain theory because it suggests that delinquency is a relatively permanent attribute of the person and/or a regularly occurring event.

Traditional strain theory proposes that delinquency is largely restricted to a single social class and it suggests that persons accepting legitimate goals are, as a result of this acceptance, more likely to commit delinquent acts (Hirschi, 2002). Again, Hirschi believed that these characteristics were misleading and inadequate.

### **Differential Association and Social Learning**

“A person simply learns to become a “criminal” in much the same way he learns to play a violin or develops a taste for peanut butter” (Hirschi, 2002, 11). Differential association theory, developed by Edwin Sutherland (1947), suggests that through interaction with others, individuals learn the values, attitudes, techniques, and motives for criminal behavior. Sutherland believed that criminal behavior is learned through the interaction and communication with other intimate groups. Sutherland’s theory concluded that delinquent behavior is learned in the process of social interaction involving techniques of committing crimes and attitudes favorable to the violation of law.

Social learning theory explains deviance by combining variables which encourage delinquency with variables that discourage delinquency. This theory was born out of Sutherland’s differential association theory. Reinforcements are added to this theory to outweigh the penalty to the crime. Akers (1998) discusses having elaborated his social learning theory to expressly link macro level processes with individual-level learning structures. The concern for this explanation is describing the sources of pro-deviant definitions and effectiveness of differential reinforcements across different social groups (Hoffmann, 2002).

### **Differential Association and the Family**

Many criminologists examine where the roots of crime develop like family problems such as instability, lack of affection, and poor discipline. Poverty and racism were rejected as causes of crime while it was concluded that social class was a cause of crime (Quinsey, Skilling, Lalumiere & Craig, 2004). Akers’ (1998) study reveals the less solidarity, cohesion, or integration within a group, the higher the rate of crime and

deviance. Akers proposes that social structural influences on delinquency and other deviant behaviors are mediated fully by social learning processes (Hoffmann, 1975).

Both differential association and social learning offer paths linked to community characteristics and individual-level behavior. Social learning variables, such as deviant peer relations and differential reinforcement, may intervene in community influences on deviant behavior. However, some studies show little differences in the effect of social learning on delinquency (Hoffman, 2002).

Parental criminality goes back to the theory of differential association, or social learning, in which a child will learn and attempt to model his parental figure. Parents have an impact on juvenile delinquency and whether or not their children will commit offenses. Baker and Mednick (1984) based their study on Farrington's (1989) work which found that boys who had a parent arrested before their tenth birthday were 2.2 times more likely to commit violent crimes than those with non-criminal parents. Baker and Mednick (1984) found that men ages 18-23 with criminal fathers were 3.8 times more likely to have a committed violent criminal act than those with non-criminal fathers.

### **Criticisms of Differential Association**

Residential mobility is an area which needs more research to adequately use as a predictor of youth violence or delinquency. Of course, it is one of the life course theories which may lead up to juvenile delinquency but studies have not thoroughly examined this. Data that has been gathered have been conflicting and may indicate that residential moves have short-term effects on behavior, but more research is needed to understand the relationship (Hawkins et al., 2000). High rates of residential mobility disrupt the ability to establish and maintain social ties.

### **Social Disorganization**

Social disorganization theory has also been used to describe how behavior is affected at the individual level. Developed out of the Chicago school in the 1930's, crime was seen as a product of uneven development in society in which change and conflict affects the behavior of those within it. Social disorganization theory may be described as a lack of family, neighborhood, and services to fit the needs of the community, such as banks, trash pick-up and emergency services like ambulances and fire trucks.

Studies indicate that characteristics of social or community disorganization, (a macro level construct) either influences individual behavior indirectly through micro relations or condition the impact of individual-level factors on delinquent and criminal behavior. A key theoretical proposal is that socially disorganized communities are less able to control the general behavior of residents, thus affecting delinquent and criminal behavior by weakening social control processes (Shaw and McKay, 1969).

Today social disorganization theory attempts to link macro to micro in order to explain delinquency. Macro-micro linkages elaborate theories of delinquency such as linking social disorganization at the contextual level and social control at the individual level. Linking social disorganization and individual level bonds may be elaborated to include macro-micro connections for future research. There are four common measures of social disorganization: high residential mobility, high unemployment, high poverty rate, and high number of female headed households. Social disorganization may also produce crime by isolating communities from the mainstream culture. Close-knit communities may be able to identify strangers, inform parents about their children, and pass around crime behaviors.

### **Social Disorganization and the Family**

Schools, after school programs, churches, and police may act as substitutes for family and friends in many communities, but unstable or even poor communities often lack the organization to obtain resources for offering juveniles a choice against deviant behavior. However, other delinquency theories may be elaborated to include macro and micro connections offer an outstanding opportunity for more promising research (Hoffmann, 2002).

Gorman-Smith et al., (2000) agree that community and neighborhoods influence family. A community that is similar in regard to structural dimensions, such as socio-economic status and single-parenthood, have significant differences in neighborhood social organization and networks. These differences relate to ways families function and how parents manage their children. Other research had pointed to the importance of “precision parenting” in poor, urban neighborhoods because of the different neighborhood social organizations (Gorman-Smith et al., 2000, 173). That is, in some inner-city neighborhoods the relation between parental monitoring and involvement is such that both too little and too much is associated with increased behavior problems among youth.

### **Criticisms of Social Disorganization**

Gorman-Smith et al., (2000) explain the relationship is not found in studies of families residing in other types or neighborhoods. This revelation is totally dependent on neighborhood type rather than any other variable and may reflect a variation by neighborhood in the configuration of family relationship and parenting characteristics relating to predicting delinquency. Shaw and McKay (1969) argued that youth living in

high-crime areas had a greater chance of being exposed to procriminal attitudes than those living in low-crime areas and that their families, being impoverished, were less effective agents of socialization and control.

### **Cultural Deviance and Subcultural Theories**

Cultural deviance as described by Hirschi (2002) is deviant behavior conformity to a set of standards not accepted by a larger society. The theory argues that certain groups or subcultures in society have values and attitudes that are conducive to crime and violence. Theorists believe that if this pattern of offending can be understood and controlled, it will break the transition from teenage offender into habitual criminal. Some of the theories are functionalist assuming that criminal activity is motivated by economic needs, while others posit a social class rationale for deviance.

Hirschi's theory coincides with Sutherland's (1947) theory of differential association theory. Also, cultural deviance revisits Cohen's (1955) social learning theory in which peers and parents have an enormous impact on delinquency. However, a cultural deviance theorist rejects a fundamental assumption of strain theory. Strain theorists believe that men's values are common to all men and do not explain the criminal actions of all. The values common among men are very significant within this theory. It proves that all men are not equally capable of realizing them and are irrelevant to the cultural deviance theorists because there is no way of describing failure to attain them.

### **Cultural Deviance and the Family**

Cultural deviance attempts to categorize crime as scientific explanation rather than the nature of man. Hirschi (2002) reaches the conclusion that a concrete condition

can not be a cause of crime and that the only way to get a causal explanation of criminal behavior is by selecting from the varying conditions which are universally associated with crime. If a child is to become delinquent, the criminal influences must intervene because, according to cultural deviance theory, criminality is not the invention of the individual (Hirschi, 2002). The theory assumes that cultures, not people, are deviant.

The delinquency world is the law-abiding world turned upside down and its norms constitute a countervailing force directed against the confirming social order. Albert K. Cohen's (1955) subculture theory is when a subculture is a distinctive part of a culture, so its norms and values differ from the majority culture but do not necessarily represent a culture particularly deemed deviant by the majority. Cohen was a student of Sutherland and Merton, and his theory was similar to their differential association and strain theories.

### **Criticisms of Cultural Deviance**

Hirschi (2002) discusses that children with an attachment to lower-class parents, theoretically, should be involved in more cases of delinquency. However, as long as the attachment is strong, it is actually less likely the child will be delinquent even if the child's attachment is delinquent. The conventional beliefs and values that feed delinquency are not peculiar to any social class or (nondelinquent) segment of the population (Hirschi, 2002).

### **Labeling Theories**

Labeling theory is described as giving criminal offenders specific names usually given by law enforcement or those in political power. The theory is concerned with the



nature, application, and consequence of labels. Labels amplified delinquency by pushing labeled youths down an unconventional path and by transforming their self-image (Liu, 2000). Other theorists thought that labeling did not necessarily increase juvenile delinquency. Today informal labels entail reactions of social agents such as parents, peers, and neighbors that stigmatize the person as a “specific” individual whether it is delinquent or not. Formal labeling involves sanctions by the criminal justice system on individual offenders. Labeling theory assumes that it is possible to prevent social deviance by means of a limited social shaming reaction using "labels" and replacing moral offense with tolerance. Emphasis is placed on the rehabilitation of offenders through a modification of their labels. Advocates believe that informal labels may be more detrimental than formal ones because they most often happen in the individual's immediate environments and are central to one's self identity and behavior (Liu, 2000).

### **Labeling and the Family**

Liu (2000) also discusses the shaming aspects that come out of the labeling assumption: reiterative shaming, where the community invites offenders back to conventional community; and disintegrative shaming, which creates a social class of outcasts and is stigmatizing. Those who are pushed away will more likely participate in crime and delinquency. Liu (2000) describes parental labeling as never communicating the labels with their youths and just changing their reactions towards the juvenile such as withdrawing their love or acceptance or alienating the youth which may lead to delinquency involvement.

### **Criticisms of Labeling Theory**

Liu (2000) explains that parental opinions are an important source of negative informal reactions for adolescents. However, actual judgments of parents have been shown to exert independent effects on youth delinquency by the use of youth perceived or reflected appraisal (Liu, 2000). Liu (2000) attempted two lines of research examining labels and labeling processes and informal labels which parents, neighbors and peers give a person as a “specific type of person”. This theory is hard to distinguish as labels or stereotypes linking the person to the area they live in, friends or family members they associate with or even social class. Depending on what their parents bring in as income may level the family incorrectly.

### **Social Control Theory**

Social control theory suggests that individuals engage in delinquency as a result from the freedom afforded by the weakening of the person's bonds to conventional society. Social control refers to Hirschi's (2002) lack of four social bonds which promote socialization and conformity. These include attachment, commitment, involvement and belief. He claimed that the stronger these four bonds, the less likely one would become delinquent. Hirschi (2002) first assumes that everyone has the potential to become delinquent and criminal but if any of these four social bonds is strong, not merely moral values, a child will refrain from being delinquent and maintain law and order. To explain the four social bonds in detail we must examine what is intended by each bond.

The first bond Hirschi (2002) explains is the strong affective attachment to their parents or caregivers. Longshore et al. (2005) refer to the complexities in attachment and

parents and peer influences which Hirschi neglected to thoroughly explore. Akers summarized attachment was the most crucial and not necessarily the character of the people to whom one is attached that determines adherence to or violation of conventional rules (Longshore et al., 2005). Of course, there needs to be a visible difference between bonds to conventional peers or relatives and bonds to deviant peers or relatives.

The second social bond is commitment which is described as developing a stake in conformity that promotes rational commitment to conventional norms. Hirschi (2002) gives examples, if an adolescent who has a commitment to education or a high-status occupation this person is less likely to commit a deviant act. Hirschi (2002) holds that people who build an investment in life, property, and reputation are less likely to engage in criminal acts which will jeopardize their social position whether it is an occupation or education or any other community position.

The third social bond of involvement is described as seeking behavioral involvement in conventional activities. Hirschi describes conventional activities as “keeping youth busy” whether it is time-consuming work, sports, recreation or hobbies. Involvement in school does more than prepare students for the future; it may stimulate students to be involved in activities that are irrelevant to their occupations in their futures (Hirschi, 2002). Hirschi (2002) also believes that involvement in school, family, recreation, and other activities shield a juvenile from potential delinquent behavior that may be a result of boredom.

The fourth and final bond is belief “by adopting a strong belief that conventional norms merit respect” (Rebellon, 2002, 106). The belief juveniles have in law and norms is measured by the general respect he/she has for police or law. The more strongly the

child is tied to the conventional order, the less likely he is to be able to invent and use techniques of neutralization (Hirschi, 2002). The lack of concern for the reactions of intimate groups such as parents', juveniles generalize a lack of concern for the approval of persons in positions of impersonal authority (Hirschi, 2002). Are there differences in the belief system between lower class and middle class? Hirschi (2002) discusses how no matter which class that a juvenile falls under as long as they have a profound belief in high educational and occupational aspirations, high achievement orientation, and so on, are all predictive of nondelinquency.

### **Social Control Theory and the Family**

Social bonding theory serves as a viable explanation of the broken homes/delinquency relationship for the reason that broken homes inhibit the four social bonds. Broken homes may hinder parent/child attachment, which in turn promotes delinquency (Rebellon, 2002). Youths reporting strong attachment to two parents may be less delinquent than those reporting strong attachment to only one. Even after controlling for social bonding, if the broken home is "conflict-ridden in which single-parent households are hampered by a parent's ability to set appropriate rules, monitor children, recognizes rule violation, and sanction inappropriate behavior," there is still a link to delinquency (Hirschi, 2002). Ultimately, parental attachment is not directly associated with delinquency but, instead, is associated with parental supervision, which seems associated with both simultaneous and subsequent delinquency.

From a social structure standpoint, control theory links culture with the behavior of individuals. Social control is present in all societies' and has social mechanisms that regulate individual and group behavior, in terms of greater sanctions and rewards. Social

control has been to the forefront of predicting juvenile delinquency. This research has already outlined the four social bonds by Travis Hirschi. Control theory merely assumes variation in morality; considerations of morality are important to some and not to others. Hirschi's (2002) perspective allows him to free some men from moral sensitivities; the control theorist is likely to shift to a second link of social control- to the rational, calculational component in conformity and deviation, which evolves into self control theory.

Demuth and Brown (2004) reveal that parents influence their child's delinquency through three different controls: direct control of behavior through restriction, supervision, and punishment; internalized control through the creation of a child's conscience; and indirect control through the amount of affectional recognition the child has with their parents. A direct control, such as the amount of time a child spends with a parent, is insignificant as an attachment that will predict delinquency (Demuth and Brown, 2004). Strong ties to at least one parent (at least among children living in married couple families) are sufficient to protect against delinquency; however, delinquency is lowest among adolescents reporting strong attachments to both parents (Demuth and Brown, 2004). Finally, Hirschi (2002) concludes that control theory remains as it always has been, a theory in which deviation is not problematic. "The question "Why do they do it?" is simply not the question the theory is designed to answer. The question is "Why don't we do it" (Hirschi, 2002, 34).

Farrington also wrote a bulletin with Hawkins, Herrenkohl, Brewer, Catalano, Harachi, & Cothorn (2000) in which they believe they created predictors of youth violence. The family factors that they present in their Juvenile Justice Bulletin for the US

Department Justice include: parental criminality, child maltreatment, poor family management practices, and low levels of parental involvement, poor family bonding/conflict, and parental attitudes favorable to substance use and violence, residential mobility, and parent-child separation (Hawkins et al., 2000).

Parent-child separation has influenced juvenile delinquency and according to this study predicts later violent behavior in children especially if parent-child separation happens before age 10 (Hawkins et al. 2000). A link has also been found between leaving home at an early age and high levels of violence in both men and women (Hawkins et al. 4). The Hawkins et al (2000) study concluded that more studies need to be done pertaining to youth violence that deals with violent offenders and nonviolent offenders/nonoffenders. Studies on predictors of violent behavior, will also lead to predictors of other problems that pertain to juveniles such as substance abuse, delinquency, school drop out, and teen pregnancy (Hawkins et al., 2000). The Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development (Farrington, 1997), which this research will also be using, found that the percentage of youth convicted for violent crimes increased from only 3 percent for those with no risk factors to 31 percent for those with four risk factors (low family income, large family size, low nonverbal IQ at ages 8-19, and poor parental childrearing behavior) (Hawkins et al., 2000, 7).

### **Criticisms of Social Control**

Low levels of parental involvement may be connected to social control or social bonding theory. The lack of parental involvement and interaction may increase children's future risk for committing violence. Farrington (1989) established that sons whose fathers did not engage in leisure activities with them more often exhibited violent behavior as

teenagers and adults and were more likely to be convicted for a violent offense later in life. This leads into the next family factor of poor family bonding and conflict. As already discussed poor family bonds and conflict lead to higher rates of juvenile delinquency but as far as violent crime there is no immediate relationship. Here may be the only exception between predicting youth violence and predicting juvenile delinquency.

Gorman-Smith, Tolan, and Henry (2000) discuss recognizing the importance of parenting practices, and other aspects of family functioning are important in understanding delinquency risk. The article study found low levels of emotional warmth and cohesion, lack of organization structure as evidenced by clear family roles, responsibilities and boundaries, and low beliefs about the importance of family have been associated with delinquent behavior. Gorman-Smith et al., (2000) study examined if aspects of family are related differentially to specific patterns of delinquent involvement by measuring parenting practices: discipline and monitoring and family relationship characteristics: cohesion, beliefs, and organizational structure.

### **Is Self Control Theory a Better Family Based Explanation?**

While all of these theories are useful in discussing family influences on juvenile delinquency, the current research focuses on testing two theories where family influence is the independent central variable. Self control theory is the best theory to use when examining the role of the family to thoroughly examine the causes of delinquency. Self control may be the predictor to curb future juvenile delinquency. Researching self control may lead us to prevent juveniles from committing any more crimes or any crimes at all. The methods used will compare family variables with self control variables and test if

self control variables can predict future juvenile and adult crimes using David Farrington's dataset, The Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development [Great Britain], 1961-1981.



## **CHAPTER III**

### **SELF CONTROL THEORY**

By 1990 Hirschi started to move away from his bonding theory, and in collaboration with Gottfredson, developed self control theory. A major weakness declared by other theorists of this new theory was that Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) did not define self control and the inclination toward criminal behavior separately. Their vague definition is a “degree to which a person is vulnerable to the temptation of the moment” (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990, 87). By not deliberately defining self control traits and criminal behavior or criminal acts individually, it suggests that the perceptions of low self control and the tendency for criminal behavior are the same.

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) suggest the theory is internally consistent by conceptualizing crime and deriving from that a concept of the offender's traits. The research community remains divided on whether self control theory is sustainable but the theory is still widely tested today and may be able to predict some of the criminal actions individuals commit. Self control theory contrasts with Hirschi's earlier work in which crime was viewed as an outcome of weak social bonds and it is still not clear if these two control perspectives can be reconciled (Longshore et al., 2005).

People who lack self control desire very similar things such as instant gratification and have minimum tolerance for frustration and little ability to respond to conflict through verbal rather than physical means. These character traits reveal that people who

lack self control tend to be impulsive, insensitive, physical (as opposed to mental), risk-taking, short-sighted, and non-verbal, and they will tend therefore to engage in criminal and analogous acts. The many manifestations of low self control as discussed by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) are not only crimes committed by low self control but noncriminal acts parallel to crime, for example, smoking, accidents and alcohol use manifest off of low self control. Some theories suggest that offenders specialize in one or a few criminal acts but low self control suggests that there is versatility among the offenders criminal activity (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990).

“The causes of low self control are negative rather than positive; self control is unlikely in the absence of effort, intended or unintended, to create it” (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990, 95). The characteristics, such as impulsiveness, intelligence, risk-taking and the like, may direct potential offenders and lead them unavoidably to the commission of criminal acts. The dimensions of self control are factors affecting calculation of the consequences of one’s acts such as impulsive or short-sighted person fails to consider the negative or painful consequences of his acts. Lastly, characteristics of low self control are not favorable to the achievement of long-term individual goals. It impedes education and occupational achievement, destroys interpersonal relations, and undermines physical health and economic well-being. Those that care for individuals that have these traits try to help them by introducing alternate routes towards goals obtainable through legitimate paths (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990).

### **Self Control Theory and the Family**

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990, 97) claimed the “major cause of low self control appears to be ineffective child rearing.” Supervision presumably prevents criminal or analogous acts and at the same time trains the child to avoid them on his own.

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) simplify child rearing to teach self control into three steps: monitor the child’s behavior, recognize deviant behavior when it occurs and punish such behavior. The steps sound ideal for rearing successful children but parenthood and children are not that simplified. Of course, parents can not be their children’s shadow and must let them socialize and become independent, so this is where these steps become complicated. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) discuss the four places the steps may go wrong for parents: may not care for the child may not have the time or energy to monitor the child’s behavior may not see anything wrong with the child’s behavior and parents may not have the inclination or the means to punish the child. Overall parental supervision is the major predictor of delinquency. By preventing criminal or similar acts it also trains the child to avoid them on their own but parents must perceive a deviant act when it occurs (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990).

There are various elements that can affect the child-rearing model. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) discuss the attachment of parent to child may be weak if raised by step-parents who do not have affection towards each other. That is not to say that step-parents are the key to low-self control but the likelihood that children are attached to a step-parent is slim. Parental supervision, recognition of deviant acts and punishment of deviant acts are requiring parents to be attentive to their children. As both parents are likely to work outside the home these are increasingly difficult to do for many parents.

Although, many parents work they may attempt to stay involved in their child's life and friends, they can not be there for every move that the child makes and recognize and punish deviant behavior all the time. Parental criminality focuses on self control of both the child and the parent (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990). According to Donald West and David Farrington (1977) delinquency is transmitted from one generation to the next but Gottfredson and Hirschi believe that delinquency is not transmitted or a genetic disposition. The lack of socializing children is based on the parents' own inadequate socializing. West and Farrington's study found fewer than 5 percent of the families accounted for almost half of the criminal convictions in the entire sample which links the parents and child socializations (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990).

Family size, according to Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), can affect delinquency by being too large, because the larger the family, the greater the likelihood that each child will become delinquent. The larger the family is, the less likely time and energy may be spent on each child and in turn the child will turn to other children to spend time with. Other children may not be effective trainers and tolerant of delinquent behavior (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990). This is a very complicated child-rearing model because broken homes can also be reconstituted families but they will never be at a lower crime rates as intact families with both biological parents. However, those children with reconstituted homes are also having higher crime rates than those with a single biological parent family. Also, if a family is broken by a death, "the children are less likely to become delinquency than those children whose parents were involved in the decision to divorce or separate" (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990, 103). These intricate details of the

many different kinds of broken homes is still damaging to families and a predictor of delinquency.

A mother who works outside the house reveals no real impact other than the more likely the mother is away from the children she is not able to monitor them and any deviant behavior. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) discussed that if the mother provided adequate supervision while she was at work this decreased the likelihood of the children to become delinquent. However other studies suggest delinquency is less common among the children of regularly employed mothers (Vander Ven et al., 2001). In some families mothers are the ones that bring the family together and if they are at work they are not at home being available for the family.

Maternal employment can raise the family income and provide better living conditions for their children or adequate supervision. Vander Ven et al. (2001) also argued that maternal work was related to delinquency in urban settings but not in rural areas. Their findings show that maternal supervision was the lone reason rather than maternal employment on several known pathways to delinquency (Vander Ven et al., 2001). Also the possibility of adolescents meeting at a house where there is no parental supervision may attribute to juvenile delinquency but with adequate supervision it may be avoided.

Longshore et al. (2005) report that association with deviant peers may mediate the influence of their social bonds on crime; for example, juveniles whose peers expose them to and reinforce criminal conduct and values are more likely both to engage in crime themselves and to have weak bonds to conventional peers. Also mere association or attachment with deviant peers may be a characteristic of low self control. Low self

control is described as a behavior pattern from ineffective socialization early in life, which once established is stable and viewed as the primary individual level factor explaining crime, delinquency, drug/alcohol abuse, and other numerous forms of deviance.

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) advanced the argument that the link between weak social bonding and deviance may be false as both are products of the same causal factor, namely low self control. Weak social bonds are to some large degree products of low self control. A child with low self control may find it difficult to form and maintain stable friendships, may be more likely to associate with others who lack self control and who are similarly deviant. This child may also do less than well in school and may devalue conventional goals and conduct norms. Longshore, et al. (2005) claim that others may be unwilling to attach to a person with low self control because the person may be less stable and reliable as a friend, employee, or spouse and may neglect the reciprocity expected in conventional relationships. This may imply that self control and social bonding perceptions in which the relationship between low self control and deviance is mediated at least partially by one or more social bonds.

### **Existing Tests and Measures of Self Control**

Pratt and Cullen (2000) measured self control by examining prior reviews of criminological literatures for tests of the theory. These tests included measures of low self control in their statistical models. Only studies yielding effect size estimates from a single measure of self control were incorporated in the sample. A dummy variable was used to reflect whether low self control was being used to predict crime or some form of

analogous behavior. The test measured if Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) were correct in their “assertion that low self control is the only true cause of crime, and that once low self control has been controlled, variables from social learning theory should not contribute significantly to the proportion of variation in crime by the studies full statistical models” (Pratt and Cullen, 2000, 944).

Their sample consisted of 21 empirical studies that contained 126 effect size estimates, representing 49,727 individual cases. There were 17 independent data sets in which this test was derived which exceed the number of data sets because more than one study can be published from a given data set. The findings were that self control was strong predictors of crime but Gottfredson and Hirschi’s assertion that self control was the sole cause of crime was a huge overstatement. Self control appears to have “general” effects more consistent with the general theory. Regardless of whether samples are comprised of offenders and community members, are racially integrated or homogenous, and are limited to juveniles or adults the variable, self control, has a meaningful effect size. However, all of these studies were brought together the totals should be taken into consideration that all the data sets were not looking at self control theory variables at the same level.

Paternoster and Brame (1998) measure self control by also using the same data set as this paper will use, the Cambridge Study in Delinquency Development 1961-1981. The variables that are chosen to be used to measure self control in Paternoster and Brame’s (1998) study are different and some are similar. The five variables they have chosen are acting out, risk-taking, teacher ratings on laziness, concentration skills, and disciplinary difficulty. The sample was also 411 boys from a working class section of

South London. The sample was studied from ages 8 which reflect early differences in self control. “Self control measures consists of behavioral indicators that are logically independent of the anticipated manifestation of self control during adolescence and adulthood” (Paternoster and Brame, 1998, 642).

The findings from the study are that low self control does not predict criminal activity but is associated with involvement in serious criminal activity and behaviors that share conceptual common ground with crime. Paternoster and Brame (1998) agree that Gottfredson and Hirschi’s (1990) one dimension of their self control theory has positive evidence. The study examined serious criminal acts such as aggravated assault, motor vehicle theft, burglary, and larceny. It also examined analogous behaviors such as: motor vehicle accidents, frequent loitering, heavy gambling, heavy drinking, and having multiple sexual partners. With the study only examining these serious offenses and not the actual predictors of low self control we can only look at the crimes that those studied have committed.

Another test of Gottfredson and Hirschi’s general theory of crime is from Grasmick, Tittle, Bursik, and Arneklev (1993). The variables that were used to measure low self control were 24 items derived from the self control subscale (Sc) of the California Psychology Inventory. The Sc subscale contained 38 items measuring similar themes in Gottfredson and Hirschi’s definition of low self control but also included other items that lacked face validity so it had to be refined for the data set. There were various combinations of items that were first tested on college students then were narrowed to 24 items. The 24 items rate impulsivity, simple tasks, risk seeking, physical activities, self-centeredness, and temper.



A simple random sample of 395 adults was selected from the R.L. Polk Directory for the city as part of the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Oklahoma City Survey conducted by the Department of Sociology, University of Oklahoma during the spring of 1991. There were 395 face-to-face interviews. If an original chosen member refused to participate they were replaced by another random person in the R.L. Directory. The study found that Gottfredson and Hirschi's general theory of crime is supported; however, low self control must be combined with crime opportunity to predict crime. The opportunity variable is not discussed as more research should be examined in the future. The study restricts the data by the size, area, and ages (18 and older). It was also collected at one point in time as a cross-sectional sample unlike the longitudinal sample used in this research.

Nagin, Farrington, and Moffitt (1995) measured self control by representative variables from the following categories then were contrasted across the four offender categories: the never-convicted (NCs), the adolescence-limiteds (ALs), the high-level chronics (HLCs), and the low-level chronics (LLCs). The data set that was used was the Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development by David Farrington and Donald West (1961-1981). As previously discussed the data was a longitudinal survey of 411 males from a working-class area of London.

A small portion of the population constitutes what Moffitt (1995, 112) calls life-course persistent deviants. The variables measured are delinquent, criminal, and imprudent behaviors, intelligence and attainment, hyperactivity, impulsivity, and attention deficit (HIA), relationship with family and friends, antisocial family and parenting factors, and finally, socioeconomic deprivation during early adolescence. The group is comprised of individuals who have collective interactions between family

adversity and neuropsychological deficits predispose them to chronic deviance throughout their lives. These deficits are believed to be brought on as a result from factors such as maternal drug abuse, poor prenatal nutrition, or pre- or post-natal exposure to toxic agents and are manifested early in life in such behaviors as attention deficit disorder, impulsivity, hyperactivity, and learning disorders. Those juveniles who are heavily involved in crime and delinquency during their youth mimic the antisocial life-style of the life-course persistent youth. However, unlike offending by the life-course persistent, offending within the adolescence-limited subpopulation declines sharply after about age 18. This study is covering a broad area and testing for too many variables that are not necessarily all tests for low self control using the same data set, Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development by David Farrington and Donald West (1961-1981). The study is still testing for family variables and comes to conclude that the variables are used to fit the four offending categories.

Hirschi and Gottfredson (1993) commented on their own theory as they measured self control theory based on other studies including their general crime theory. They discussed behavioral measures of self-control that were related to self-reports. The level of self control itself affects survey responses. The variables used in this article to discuss measures of self control vary from two different articles. One from Grasmick et al., (1993) asks respondents to characterize themselves along a variety of dimensions derived from our discussion of the characteristics of criminal acts said to be relevant to self control. "Keane et al. (1993) measures self control through direct observation of behavior (failure to wear a seat belt) and through self-report of behavior suggesting low self control (drinking), measuring of crime is blood alcohol concentration, a measure

independent of self-reports” (Hirschi and Gottfredson, 1993, 48). Both samples used in the different studies as mentioned before. Grasmick et al, (1993) study was comprised from a simple random sample of 395 adults, selected from the R.L. Polk Directory for the city, as part of the 13<sup>th</sup> annual Oklahoma City Survey conducted by the Department of Sociology, University of Oklahoma during the spring of 1991. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1993) agreed with Keane et al. study sampling self-report measures using the 1986 Ontario Survey of Nighttime drivers. The unwillingness to participate in a survey such as the Ontario Survey of Nighttime drivers reflects low self control as well. Both studies found that Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) general theory of crime was worth examining and refining. Hirschi and Gottfredson (1993) explore the idea that people are differentially controlled by the long-term consequences of their acts. Hirschi and Gottfredson conclude by disagreeing with using longitudinal studies for four different reasons. First, they claim it distracts attention from alternative methods of solving a problem. Second, it rarely solves the problems it was allegedly designed to solve. Third, the method consistently magnifies apparent change at the expense of stability or continuity and lastly, the procedural costs of the design continue to be ignored by those using and advocating it (Hirschi and Gottfredson, 1993, 49)

Keane, Maxim, and Teevan (1993) measure their self control dependent measures as driving under the influence and by survey respondents’ of their level of blood alcohol concentration. Their independent variables were based on the respondent’s not wearing seat belts and also their responses to risk-taking and impulsiveness to driving while impaired. Also respondents were asked about how many alcoholic drinks they have consumed in the last 7 days. Smoking, drinking, and using drugs tend to assume the lack

self control but yet these actions are not criminal. The data were gathered from secondary analysis taken from a 1986 Ontario Survey of Nighttime Drivers during May 28 through July 18, 1986 which was a Wednesday through a Saturday between 9:00pm and 3:00am. The days were chosen on purpose to gather the most data from drinking drivers from a stratified random sampling scheme. The investigators chose 298 sites throughout Ontario. Not all drivers stopped took the breathalyzer test or answered all the questions to the questionnaire.

The findings from the study show that most drivers who were examined were different between male and female; however, those drivers who are middle-aged or slightly younger were less likely to wear a seat belt, were asked by others not to drive, had consumed drinks in the past week, and were over the legal limit of impairment. The risk-taking variables are used to explain both male and female drinking and driving. These findings support the Gottfredson and Hirschi model's claim to generality explained by Keane et al. (1993). Overall, the study is a cross-sectional one that does not capture predictors of self control but rather a point in time of low self control. The data they gathered is not reflective of the respondents but rather a point in time for the respondent when they did not wear a seat belt or had too many drinks in one night does not reflect if they have low self control.

Sellers (1999) studies measuring self control by the frequency with which respondents have used physical aggression in their current dating relationship which varied from throwing something at their partner to using a knife or gun against their partner. She used a number of independent variables on a 24 item scale that was similar to Grasmick et al. (1993). The scale consists of six components of impulsivity, simple

tasks, risk seeking, physical activities, self-centeredness, and temper. Another independent variable was measured in response to the degree to which an individual had the opportunity to use violence against a partner. Opportunity is a major component of low self control. Opportunity must be present for low self control individuals to take advantage of crime. A third independent variable was perceived rewards which also add to the opportunity of low self control. If an individual has a good view of apparent goods and they have low self control they may be much more likely to engage in criminal activity. The data was gathered from a self-administered survey of 1,826 students attending a large urban university in Florida (Sellers, 1999). They surveyed undergraduate and graduate students randomly from course offerings in five different colleges within the university. The sampling strategy targeted a total of 2,500 students.

Sellers (1999) findings were based on low self control, opportunity, and the interaction of low self control and opportunity. "Both low self control and opportunity are significant predictors, controlling for age and gender, and the model does a somewhat better job of predicting the probability of courtship violence than the low self control element alone" (Sellers, 1999, 391). For this particular study the effects of self control and opportunity operate independently according to the use of physical aggression. Sellers (1993) admits that the analysis supports Gottfredson and Hirschi's self control theory that incorporates self control, opportunity, and perceived rewards. The study is failing to address non courtship relationships and also predictors of low self control. This is significant in understanding low self control as a predictor of crime. The study also examines only college students from one particular university so this sample is not a representation of the whole population

Evans, Cullen, Burton, Dunaway, and Benson (1997) test the general theory of crime by measuring self control by 11 items each having 6 response categories ranging on a Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. There were other items that represented other areas that also included self control such as general crime, analogous behaviors, social bonds, and perceived neighborhood disorder. The 11 items addressed and concentrated on the need for immediate gratification, lack of diligence, tenacity, or persistence, a preference and insensitivity to the pains of others and a low tolerance for frustration with a tendency to settle disputes physically rather than verbally. The sample was gathered through a self-report survey of the general population, aged 18 and older. The random sample came from questionnaires sent to 1,500 persons who resided in a Midwestern, urban area. The questionnaires included a deadline and those individuals were sent a reminder letter shortly after the date of the initial questionnaire mailing. Of the 1,197 surveys delivered only 555 completed surveys were returned. Looking at the respondents there is an overwhelming response from whites, above 60%.

The findings were that a self control measure, the relationship between self control and social consequences, is consistently in the expected direction of low self control. Low self control diminishes the quality of interpersonal relationship with family and friends. Low self control is also related to reduce involvement in church, low levels of educational and occupational attainment, and possibly poor marriage prospects. The study also explains not only all forms of crime and analogous behaviors, but also a wide range of social outcomes. The findings show self control is related to the general crime scale but the causal order can not be definitely established by Sellers (1993) analyses.

However, “self control is an important variable and the relationship between self control and the crime scale remains even when a range of competing sociological variables are incorporated into the analysis” (Sellers, 1993, 493). In the end the study suggests that some of the general theory’s claims are overstated, especially the idea that social learning is uninvolved in crime causation. This study is another cross-sectional study that does not cover the respondents over a range of years; therefore, the self control measures are limited. The study does not address the causes of low self control just on whether or not the person already has low self control and the likelihood of them to commit crimes.

Burt, Simons and Simons (2006) measured self control by four social relationships of improvements in parenting, attachment to teachers, association with pro-social peers, and association with deviant peers. These measures will explain the changes in self control. Their sample consisted of a longitudinal data of about 750 African American children and their primary caregivers. The study found that low self control is positively associated with involvement in delinquency. The study also found self control partially satisfies the negative effect of parental effectiveness on delinquency. Across two waves of the study the researchers found substantial instability in self control and begin to explore whether social factors can explicate these changes in self control. The study is failing to address other races that are not African American.

### **Criticisms of Self Control**

Despite these limitations, self control still merits theoretical testing because of the significance it has on individuals committing crime. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) identify the role of parents as the most essential source of socialization for children. Hirschi (2002) has given information regarding the dynamics of the family's important role in reducing delinquency. He also believes that some aspects of family structure and practice appear to have an impact on delinquency, over and above their influence on the child's level of self control or socialization. Of course, the lack of self control and the family's role failed development does not mean that juveniles will become deviant; it will provide opportunities that will make conditions favorable for delinquency.

However, self control needs to be taught early because the manifestations will present themselves before adolescence. Self control becomes an enduring personal characteristic which starts early and remains stable. Finally, children whose parents take adequate care for them and provide supervision and punishment for their misconduct will develop the self controls needed to resist any temptations offered by crime. The early socialization will offer assistance to children throughout their lives as they attend school, begin in the workforce and ultimately have a successful family of their own. "Self – control explains not only all forms of crime and analogous behaviors but also the wide range of social outcomes" (Evans et al., 1997, 492). Validity of self control is shown to be empirically related to criminal and deviant behavior and to negative experiences in other domains of life. Evans et al. (1997) also agree with Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) theoretical perspective even though they perceive the general theory as



controversial. Nonetheless, the general theory remains a vital model that deserves to be investigated in the future (Evans et al., 1997).

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **Data**

This research will be using the data set from The Cambridge Study in Delinquent Development [Great Britain], 1961-1981. Donald J. West began the data collection and it was continued by David P. Farrington. They used multivariate analyses to look at the relationships between family influence and status to criminal deviancies such as violent and property crimes. The data were collected by personal interviews of the boys, ages 8-9 and were chosen by registers of six state primary schools located within one-mile radius of a research office that had been established by West. The data were collected from a prospective longitudinal survey of 411 males, interviewed every year from the respondents' age of 8 years old until 24 years of age. Farrington (date) attempted to re-interview respondents at ages 31-32, but this data was not included in the dataset. All the boys at ages 8-9 were living in a working class area of London, England. Almost all boys were Caucasian (97%) and only 12 were black (3%).

In addition to interviews, psychological tests were performed to determine predictors of crime. Parental interviews were conducted during the initial years of the study and stopped when the boys reached ages 14-15. The boys' teachers were asked to complete a questionnaire about their behavior in school when they were ages 8, 10, 12, and 14. Although the data were collected in another country, it will be beneficial to

understanding juveniles and the probability of certain factors contributing to juvenile delinquency and adult criminality. The focus in the current study is the type of correlation between family variables and self control variables. Examining these data will allow me to answer my research questions: What, if any, are the correlates between family influences and frequency of juvenile delinquency and do the observed relationships support Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) self control theory? The next section of this paper discusses the variables which will be used to measure these concepts and research questions.

## **Variables**

### **Independent Variables**

The frequency and percentage distributions of the independent variables used in this study are presented in Table 4.1. These variables measure the legitimacy of the boys, paternal attitude towards the boys, whether the boys were praised by parents, if the boys were in a broken home by the age of 10, the vigilance of the boys' parents in disciplining their children, and Porteus Maze score total. These independent variables were chosen to test self control theory because they are related to family and parents' characteristics that, according to Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) General Theory of Crime predicts future delinquency. These variables pertain to the atmosphere a child was raised in and the lack of control over their upbringing but still shaped their outcomes in life of becoming delinquent or not.

**Table 4.1: Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Independent Variables**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
	<i>F</i>	%
Boy born to legitimate parents	386	(93.9%)
Paternalistic attitude is warm	286	(69.6%)
Boy was praised by parents	327	(79.6%)
Intact home before Age 10	363	(88.3%)
Over vigilant & vigilant parents	339	(82.5%)
Porteus Maze Total	407	(99.0%)

(N=411)

***Legitimacy***

Legitimacy of the boy was measured by obtaining birth certificates for all boys. Legitimacy was not recoded differently than the original data set used. The original code was legitimate (1) and known-illegit (2). The codebook does not give a specific question asked either parent. The response categories include legitimate and known to be illegitimate.

Here in lies the low self control theory predictor of whether or not the boy will become delinquent because of the family characteristics. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) stated that ineffective child rearing led to low self control. There is an assumption that if a child was illegitimate there would be a link to low self control because it is related to a broken home. "Lack of family organizational structure as evidenced by clear family roles

and low beliefs about the importance of family has been associated with delinquency behavior (Gorman-Smith et al., 2000).

The family is a significant impact on juvenile delinquency. The variable legitimacy describes the status of children who are born to parents that are legally married. Known-illegit is a child born to unmarried parents, or to a married woman but whose father was someone other than her husband. A child who is a known-illegit is born into a broken home from the start. The juvenile is born into a family where he is not biologically related to one of the parents. Family, delinquency and crime are associated with this variable by research indicating that parents' whose marriages are secure will produce children who are secure and independent (Howes and Markman, 1989). Those children who are born as known-illegit may be apart of a broken home that will not be or remain secure.

### ***Paternal Attitude***

Paternal attitude towards the boys was another family variable that correlates to self control theory and juvenile delinquency. The response categories for parents were warm, passive, cruel, neglectful, absent, dead, and not known or unascertainable. Paternal attitude is another family characteristic that will affect children and give them low self control. Gordon-Smith et al. (2000) continue to explain that low levels of emotional warmth and cohesion has been associated with delinquency behavior. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) also contribute to how important family involvement with a child is to avoid low self control.

Nye (1958) states that the "father's behavior is significantly more related to delinquency behaviors than is the behavior of mothers", but suggests this is a

consequence of greater differences in paternal behavior (156). It is possible that his research was mostly geared to the father's role and behavior more than the mother's. Nye's data shows for most items the variation for mothers is as great as that for fathers. However, the variable of paternal attitude is important to examine how crucial it may be to juvenile delinquency, according to the family concepts. There is pragmatic evidence that the father is more important than the mother in the causation of delinquency but is matched on the whole by evidence that he is less important (McCord and McCord, 1959). Attitudes from both parents are very different in determining their influences on juvenile delinquency. It may be easier to measure one parental attitude and not compare it to the other parent. McCord and McCord (1959) explain from their study "maternal passivity is similar in effect to maternal neglect and paternal passivity resembles paternal warmth in its relation to crime" (116).

Paternal attitude was originally measured as unknown, warm, passive, cruel and neglectful. The variable was recoded to not include the unknown and for the respondent either to be either passive, cruel, neglectful (0) or warm (1). The elimination of the unknown and grouping of the three responses makes the data more useful to the key analytic strategy, logistic regression. The unknown variable was not useful for the study. The study attempted to measure if there was paternal attitude towards the boys or not, the unknown variable did not give this information.

### ***Parental Praise***

The next independent variable measured if the boy was praised by parents. This was taken from the schedule of questions, which had a question separately for the mother and that father, "When he's good is he given praise, rewards, special privileges, or no

special recognition?” Those who marked “no special recognition” were counted as boy not praised. For this variable, response categories included, not known or unascertainable, boy praised and boy not praised. Praise by parents is a measure of self control. Longshore et al. (2005) discuss how children that lack self control may have received weak ties early in life. This may undermine the development of adequate self control and sensitivity to others later in life and predict criminal conduct.

According to family, delinquency and crime research directs the importance of whether the parent is psychologically present when temptation to commit a crime appears is crucial (Hirschi, 2002). Children who ask themselves “What will my parents think?” are more likely to receive direction from parents and will consider if they will be praised or not in the end of their choice to commit a crime. The importance of praise is crucial to the upbringing of children. However, rewarding good behavior cannot compensate for failure to correct deviant behavior (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990). Agnew (1984) proposes that no matter how strongly the family is in communicating norms and values, adolescence leads to an increased need for independence. Even though juveniles strive for independence it is the praise from parents that they will consider when they ponder a criminal act. If there is no thought of parental reaction in the situation of temptation the child feels free to commit the criminal act (Hirschi, 2002).

The variable measuring whether boy was praised by the parents was originally coded as unknown, praised my parents and not praised by parents. The unknown category would not reveal any data. In the recoding the unknown category was eliminated and not praised by parents (0) and praised by parents (1) was used instead. The unknown

category was not useful in the study because it did not give any information towards the variable parental praise.

### ***Broken Homes***

The variable broken home is measured with the question: “Defined as permanent separation from one of both natural parents” This measure is dichotomous (yes=1) or (no=0) and does not contain any information about what type of broken home was involved. This variable again contributed information on correlations on families, self control theory and juvenile delinquency. Broken homes is a variable that can contribute to low self control in all children whether it is through divorce, death, or separation. Juby and Farrington (2001) have broken down the relationship between broken homes and delinquency. “Broken homes and disrupted families are unacceptable terms, in that they include many different types of family experiences” (Juby and Farrington, 23). The real problem is the fact that the family structure variable most commonly employed rarely represents adequately the most relevant aspects of family functioning (Juby and Farrington, 2001). Juby and Farrington (2001) discovered three major explanations of delinquency caused by disrupted families: trauma theories, life course theories, and selection theories. Trauma theories propose the loss of a parent which affects the attachment the children has with a parent. Life course theories center on separation as a multiple stressor with a long drawn process rather than a discrete event. Finally, selection theories dispute that some disrupted families had pre-existing differences such as child rearing methods or family income (Juby and Farrington, 2001).



The most significant variety of trauma theory is discussed as three aspects of attachment to conventional parents acted to protect children from delinquency: identification, intimacy of communication, and supervision (Juby and Farrington, 2001). Using the three aspects of attachment meant higher rates of delinquency among children with disrupted family lives were primarily caused by the damaging effects of separation and divorce on attachment. Juby and Farrington (2001) concluded that children from broken homes were more likely to engage in delinquent behavior because resentment towards their separated parents made them less affectionate and communicative and because custodial parents would probably provide less supervision and have less control over the child's decisions on friends and other important areas in their lives.

The independent variable of boy was in a broken home by the age of 10 was originally coded as no broken home, broken home-death, and broken home-other. Other consisted of reconstituted families or single parents families. For research of broken homes the variable was recoded as no broken home (0) and broken home either death or other as one (1). The data was simplified to examine if boys were from broken homes or not.

### ***Parental Vigilance***

The last independent family variable used was the vigilance of the boys' parents. The survey asked the parents in an interview to measure their parental watchfulness and closeness of supervision. Many parents and researchers reveal the more involved a parent is with a child the less likely the child will engage in deviant behavior. Measuring these variables through the study will assist in correlating parental vigilance with juvenile delinquency.

Inadequate or inconsistent supervision can promote delinquency and youth who believe that their parents care little about their activities are more likely they are to engage in criminal acts (Broidy, 1995). Adolescents who spend long periods of time without adult supervision are much more likely to engage in risk-taking behavior such as precocious sex and drug taking (Siegel, Welsh, and Senna, 2006). Some researchers refer to this as parental discipline or parental control. Supervision by family presumably prevents criminal or analogous acts and at the same time trains the child to avoid them on his own (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990). The concern is with the connection between supervision and self-control, a connection established by the stronger tendency of those poorly supervised when young juveniles to commit crimes as adults (McCord, 1979).

The last independent variable that was recoded was vigilance of the boys' parents. The variable was originally coded as unknown, over vigilant, average, and under vigilant. For data collection purposes the variable was recoded as under vigilant (0) and over vigilant and average (1). The values were combined to simplify the data and capture the information as not vigilant and the being vigilant even though they are just average vigilance they are still categorized as being vigilant. Unknown data were again eliminated from the data collection.

### ***Porteus Maze***

The Porteus Maze (psychological test) is a predictor test of self control theory. The Porteus Maze test is a nonverbal test of performance intelligence. It is a graded set of paper forms on which the subject traces the way from a starting point to an exit; the subject must avoid blind alleys along the way and there are no time limits. The data correlate the Porteus Maze scores and the juvenile and adult convictions. All the variables

discussed so far have been taken when the boy's were between the ages eight through nine.

Table 4.2 shows the Porteus Maze as an independent variable that was originally recoded as unknown, 129 or above, 122-128, 107-121, and 106 or below. This variable was recoded to capture the respondents' answers to the psychological test Porteus Maze as 106 or below (1), 107-121 (2), 122-128 (3), and 129 or above (4). The recoding eliminated the unknown data and also simplifies the data for analyses.

<b>Table 4.2: Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Porteus Maze Scores</b>		
<b>Porteus Maze Scores</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
129 or above	106	(25.8%)
122-128	104	(25.3%)
107-121	89	(21.7%)
106 or below	108	(26.3%)

(N=411)

### **Dependent Variables**

The dependent variables are presented in Table 4.3. These variables measure acting out, risk taking, juvenile convictions, adult convictions; self reported delinquency and self-reported violence. Self-reported delinquency and violence should increase with acting out and risk-taking. According to other research recently discussed low self control traits should predict delinquency and violence rates. The same with juvenile and adult convictions; they should also increase when acting out and risk-taking increase in a boy. All variables are related to or predictors of self control theory.

**Table 4.3: Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Dependent Variables**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Acting Out	77	(18.7%)
Takes many Risks	75	(18.2%)
Juvenile Convictions	84	(20.4%)
Adult Convictions	107	(26.0%)
Self-reported delinquency 12 times and higher	97	(23.6%)
Self-reported violence boy considers high	79	(19.2%)

(N=411)

***Acting Out***

The dependent variable acting out was used to measure self control correlations to juvenile delinquency. The acting out variable examined if boys were more inclined to acting out and how this correlated with their delinquency scores. The survey question was complex and combined variables. According to the data the boy was said to “act out” if any two of the following applied: attendance at type a (educationally subnormal) school, badly behaved on teacher rating, unpopular on peer rating, and neurotic extravert on cards test. The exception was not counted as acting out if any of these two were paired together: attendance at type a (educationally subnormal) school and unpopular on peer rating or if attendance at type a (educationally subnormal) school and neurotic extravert on cards test. Acting out is another predictor of self control theory. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) attribute this impulse activity to be a sign of low self control. Although this is an analogous noncriminal act, it is a predictor to future delinquency.

The dependent variable originally measured the respondents answer of acting out on a scale of no acting out and acts out. The variable was recoded as 0= no acting out and 1= yes, acts out. This coding will simplify the measurements and keep them uniform to other responses of yes and no.

### ***Risk Taking***

The dependent variable was measured by asking parents in an interview to rate the adventurousness of their boy on risks referring to physical activities (e.g. climbing and exploring). For this variable, response categories included: cautious, average, and takes many risks. The risk taking variable was also a self control variable that was thought to determine if the boy was more likely to take risks the more likely juvenile delinquency were to occur. Evans et al. (1997) state that offenders will tend to be impulsive, insensitive, physical, risk-takers, short sighted, and nonverbal. The predictor of crime is low self control and to have a broad inability to exercise personal restraint in the face of tempting gratification are stable individual differences. Risk-taking is impulsive and daring. It provides instant gratifications for individuals and may lead to delinquency for some children.

This dependent variable originally measured the adventurousness of the respondent on a scale of 1: cautious 2: average 3: takes many risks. This variable was recoded so that cautious and average boys (0) were compared with risk-taking boys (1).

### ***Convictions***

The juveniles and adult convictions variables were categorized to show if the boy had any or no convictions. These dependent variables were compared to the independent family and self control variables. This information was gained through official records.

Convictions are usually results of low self control variables such as acting out and risk-taking. Convictions of juveniles can also relate to family influences or lack thereof. Smith, Tolan, and Henry (2000) discuss how family structures, neighborhoods and communities can create a risk for delinquency. This in turn produces convictions once delinquent behavior is prominent.

The dependent variable originally measured the number of juvenile convictions of the respondent on a scale of none, one, two or three and four or more. This variable was recoded to capture if the respondents had 0=none or 1=any convictions. The simplification made the data more manageable and easier to read.

The dependent variable originally measuring the number of adult convictions of the respondent was on a scale of not at risk, none, one, two or three, and four or more. This variable was recoded as the respondent answer as No convictions = 0 and any convictions = 1.

### ***Self-Reported Criminality***

The National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence (1969, 18) call the gap between the amount of crime recorded by the police and the amount actually committed, the dark figure of crime. The information is self-reported and very important to any study to make up for the information that official data sets are missing. Studies indicate that at least 9 out of 10 delinquent acts either go undetected or are unacted upon by anyone in authority (Empey, Stafford, and Hay, 1999). Studies have had to take the information given from young people and compare it to official records.

The last two independent variables are self-reported delinquency and self-reported violence and are based on the respondents' answers as low, average and high number of

occurrences. These variables will assist in finding out if the boys were honest in their responses. The answers were taken at an older age of 18 through 19 so their outlook on life is much different than when they were 8 through 9 years old. This is important to reveal if low self-control variables early in childhood predicted the juvenile and adult crimes. Delinquency was measured on how the boys responded to a combination of seven items: damaging property, joy-riding, receiving, shoplifting, stealing from slot machines, breaking and entering, stealing from cars, all in the last 3 years.

The response categories were 7-low, 8-11 – average, and 12 or more – high. If the boys denied all acts they were placed in the low category. Self-reported violence was a combination of 4 items: number of fights involved in, number of fights started, number of days carried a weapon, and number of times used a weapon, in the last 3 years. The response categories were low, average, and high. The 79 “high” boys all scored 10 or more out of a maximum of 16.

The dependent variable of self reported juvenile delinquency was originally recoded as unknown, 7 - low, 8 – 11 average, and 12 – high. The variable was recoded as 7 – low (1), 8 – 11 average (2), and 12 – high (3). Again this simplified the data and eliminated the unknown data. The dependent variable of self reported violence by the boy was originally coded as unknown, low, average, and high. The variable was recoded as low (1), average (2), and high (3) removing the data from unknown. Both variables used reverse coding so the highest values correspond with the highest scores on the delinquency scale.

### Control Variables

The control variables (see Table 4.4) are the demographical variables: family income, father's highest level of education and mother's highest level of education. The family income will report if the child had an adequate or inadequate living condition and how it may correspond to self control and juvenile delinquency. The education of the father and mother of the boy will help identify if family influences a boy's home life and how he may view his education. The variables present descriptive statistics to give a point of comparison to predict outcomes of juveniles' delinquency.

**Table 4.4: Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Control Variables**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Family's income adequate	318	(77.4%)
Father's Education more than high school	43	(10.5%)
Mother's Education more than high school	95	(23.1%)

(N=411)

The families' income was measured by the interviewers on the basis of reported income, but taking into account the size of the family and style of living. Generally families with 1000 pounds (\$1785.33) per year net to spend would be classified as comfortable. Those with 15 pounds (\$26.78) or less per week for 2 adults and 4 children would be classified as inadequate. The responses were comfortable, adequate, and inadequate. The control variables family's income, father's highest level of education and mother's highest level of education were also recoded and examined. The income of family was originally coded as comfortable, adequate, and inadequate. To reveal



simplified data the variable was recoded as inadequate (0) and adequate or higher income (1).

Not having adequate income has many families living in poverty. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2004), the poverty rate has been declining but more than 10 percent of all Americans are now considered poor. Inadequate income can lead to inadequate standards of living such as, substandard housing. Substandard housing can have negative influence on children's' long-term psychological health (Siegel, Welsh, and Senna, 2006). "Adolescents living in deteriorated urban areas are prevented from having productive and happy lives" (Siegel, Welsh, and Senna, 2006, 7).

Fathers and mother education is based on parents' interviews as higher schooling: stayed in school beyond 14. This is a complicated variable because some fathers and mothers stayed in pursuit of higher education and some stayed in as a natural consequence of raising the compulsory education age to 15 in 1947. At any rate, high school for parents meant that children may aspire to higher schooling for themselves. Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) also relate this to attachment to parent. If parents and child were attached they will be more likely to follow in their parents paths if they felt a bond with them.

The control variables of father's and mother's higher level of education were both originally coded as unknown, no higher schooling, higher schooling and not applicable. The variables were recoded as less than high school (0) and more than high school (1).

## Research Hypotheses

Testing self control theory generated five hypotheses that are used in the current research.

### Hypothesis 1

*Acting out in early childhood (between the ages 8-9) is positively correlated with juvenile and adult convictions controlling for demographics.*

This hypothesis will predict acting out in early childhood is positively correlated with future juvenile and adult convictions. If a child acted out during the first data collection period, the more likely the child will later become delinquent and be involved with juvenile and adult convictions. The hypothesis should be supported by the findings because self control theory (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990) suggests that acting out is a trait of low self control and in turn predicts deviant behavior. The relationship between acting out and convictions are expected to be similar to the relationship between acting out and self reported criminal behavior.

Acting out was used in Paternoster and Brame (1998) measure self control by also using the same data set used, the Cambridge Study in Delinquency Development. One of their 5 variables was acting out and as discussed previously in Chapter 3 it concluded with positively agreeing with predicting criminal behavior but not necessarily serious crimes. Acting out is a vital component of low self control among juveniles that should be a reliable predictor of crimes in the future.

### Hypothesis 2

*Risk taking in early childhood (between ages 8-9) is positively correlated with juvenile and adult convictions controlling for demographics.*

Again this hypothesis mirrors the previous hypothesis in that the more a child takes risks the higher the likelihood of juvenile and adult convictions. The obvious assumption is that the more the child will engage in taking risks at a younger age of 8 and 9 this will predict his juvenile and adult convictions. These hypotheses will be supported because Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) claim criminal acts are exciting, risky or thrilling. The self control theory will support this hypothesis for those children who seek instant gratifications. People lacking self control tend to be adventurous, active and physical. This predictor variable (risk taking) is also expected to have a positive correlation with self-reported delinquent and criminal behavior.

Risk taking was used in the Paternoster and Brame (1998) study to measure self control by also using the same data set, the Cambridge Study in Delinquency Development. Keane, Maxim, and Teevan (1993) also measured self control dependent variables such as driving under the influence. Their independent variables were based on the respondent's not wearing seat belts and also their responses to risk-taking and impulsiveness to driving while impaired. Risk-taking is a variable that can be used to measure self control and then become a predictor for crime. Both studies that included risk-taking found that it was a contributor to crime but not the only factor and usually is correlated with crime opportunity.

### **Hypothesis 3**

*The psychological Porteus Maze tests will have a negative correlation to juvenile delinquency and adult convictions.*

Porteus Maze scores should predict juvenile delinquency and any convictions. The Porteus Maze test is used to determine performance intelligence and has been used in

numerous tests of self control theory as it is a measure of self control (See Marcus, 2004). This test predicts impulsivity and cheating behavior as the respondents complete progressively more complicated mazes.

#### **Hypothesis 4**

*The effects of family should decrease as psycho-social variables measuring self control explain away the variance originally attributed to family variables.*

As the statistical models account for the impact of psycho-social measures, these variables will mediate the relationships between the family attributes. Because of the temporal ordering of the variable being measured, (the family attributes occurred in space and time before the psycho-social variables), the data can assess any diminishing affect the family variables have on the outcomes.

In most cases families shape our lives, our beliefs and our views and their characteristics may determine if a juvenile will become delinquent. Family characteristics should determine if a child will be delinquent or later have adult convictions. If the boys parents were more vigilant, in an intact home and praised the boy the less likely the boy would have self control issues and less risk taking and acting out. Families' variables occurred first so this hypothesis should be supported by the findings because it is hard to undo low self control once it is a part of someone's personality. This assumption about the early, stagnate nature of self control is essential to Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) theory. Low self control becomes an enduring personal characteristic which starts early and remains stable (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990). As seen in diagram 3.1, family variables directly impact the measures for both juvenile and adult outcomes.

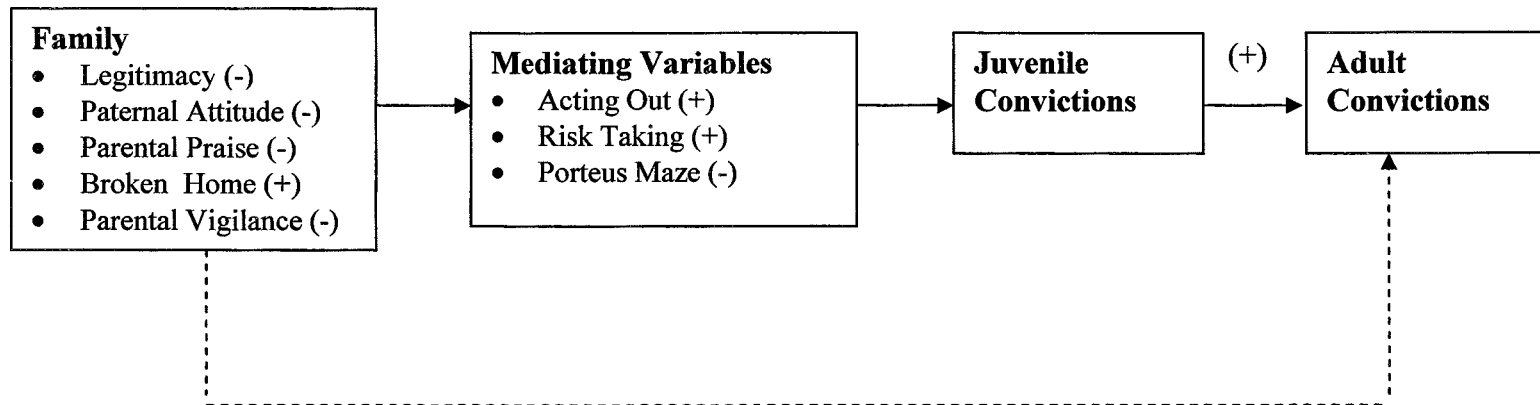
## **Hypothesis 5**

*The effects of the mediating variables will have similar directional relationship with self-reported behaviors as they do with convictions.*

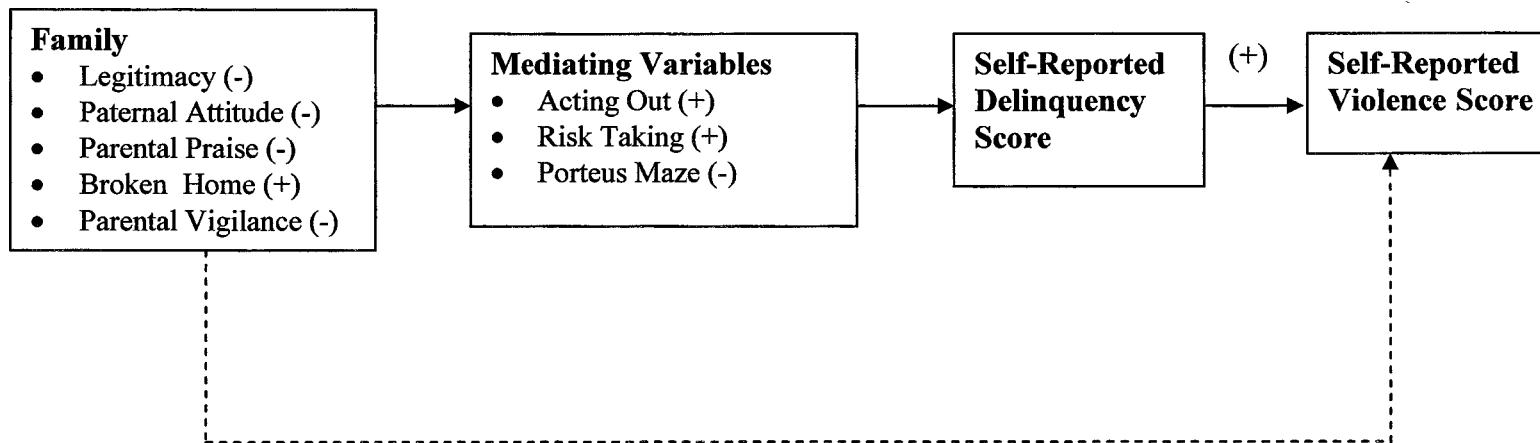
Overall, if the mediating variables are higher, self reported behaviors and convictions should be higher to be consistent with self control theory. Family variables will be shown as contributing factors to predict future juvenile delinquency. This hypothesis should prove to be true because the stronger the relationship, the larger the magnitude of results. Low self control predicts self-reported delinquency, measured as general delinquency and as specific offense types (property, violence, and drugs), controlling for opportunity and its interactions with low self control (LaGrange and Silverman, 1999).

All the relationships discussed in the hypotheses are presented in Diagrams 4.1 and 4.2. The first diagram shows how the different theoretical concepts predict official outcomes (juvenile and adult convictions). The second diagram is virtually identical to the first, except that the outcome variables are self reported behaviors (juvenile delinquency and adult violence). The effects of the mediating variables are discussed in Hypotheses 1 through 3. The fourth hypothesis suggests that the mediating variables will diminish the impact of the family variables, although the family variables may directly impact the outcome measures. Finally, the similarity of the two models is what is predicted in Hypothesis 5. The next chapter will present the analyses conducted for the research.

**Diagram 4.1: Theoretical Relationships Predicting Convictions**



**Diagram 4.2: Theoretical Relationships Predicting Self-Reported Criminality**



## **CHAPTER V**

### **RESULTS**

#### **Analysis Strategy**

The research is examining the data by using SPSS linear regression and binary logistic regressions. The data were run using the recoded variables in SPSS. Ordinary least squares and logistic regression were used throughout the data and measured the effects of family characteristics on juvenile delinquency. Although there were few selected family characteristics, the amount of data was enough to predict outcomes.

In this analysis two statistical techniques were used: logistic regressions and ordinary least squares regressions. Logistic regressions are used primarily to predict convictions and OLS models are used to predict self-reported criminality. In all the models the net impact of family variables, demographic control variables, indicators of self control, and official convictions on varying outcomes were evaluated.

#### **Logistic Regression**

Logistic regression allows me to analyze whether the presence of dichotomous, categorical independent variables increase or decrease the likelihood of categorical dependent variables. The results (the odds ratios) of these logistic models are interpreted as the change in the odds associated with a one-unit change in the independent variable.

In other words, as the odds ratio associated with an independent variable increases, so does the likelihood of juvenile and adult convictions. Two separate logistic regressions were conducted: one for the predictor variable acting out and one for the predictor variable risk-taking.

### **Acting Out**

Table 5.1 shows the findings for the logistic regression models predicting the relationships between acting out, juvenile convictions and adult convictions. Models 1-3 are predicting juvenile convictions. In Model 4, juvenile convictions becomes a predictor variable predicting the outcome adult convictions.

Of the family variables tested, the only factor reaching statistical significance is vigilance of parents influencing if the boy had received a juvenile conviction. See Models 1 and 2 in Table 5.1. This finding suggests that the more vigilant the parents are the less likely the child is to have adult convictions in the anticipated directional. However, once the variable acting out is added to the model (Model 3) the odds ratio are no longer significant.

Acting out in Table 5.1 Model 3 does predict juvenile convictions. If the boy acted out at age 8 or 9 he is 132% more likely to receive convictions as a juvenile. This finding clearly supports Hypothesis 1: Acting out in early childhood (between the ages 8-9) is positively correlated with juvenile and adult convictions controlling for demographics. Yet, this relationship does not hold for adult convictions. Once juvenile convictions are removed as the dependent variable and entered as a covariate to predict adult convictions, the relationship is no longer statistically significant. See Model 4 in Table 5.1. The acting out model does predict juvenile convictions but not adult



convictions. For adults, the largest predictor is juvenile convictions. Boys who were convicted as juveniles are 812% more likely to be convicted as adults than non-convicted youths.

One other noteworthy control variable is the income of family. This finding shown in Models 1 through 4 in Table 5.1 suggests families that have adequate or above average income level are less likely to produce children with juveniles and/or adult convictions. An important caveat about this finding is that the outcome is conviction, not criminality. Thus, further analyses in the OLS models may provide better insight as to the effect of income on actual behavior rather than merely official reactions that may or may not have a class bias.

**Table 5.1: Logistic Regression: Acting out Models Predicting Juvenile and Adult Convictions**

	Juvenile	Juvenile	Juvenile	Adult
Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio
<b>Family Variables</b>				
Legitimacy of boy	0.527	0.736	0.773	1.423
Paternal attitude	0.996	1.292	1.357	2.029
Praise by parents	1.554	1.417	1.315	0.985
Broken home before age 10	0.635	0.510	0.471	0.616
Vigilance of parents	0.276 **	0.366 *	0.494	0.677
<b>Control Variables</b>				
Income of family		0.355 **	0.390 **	0.397 *
Father's education		1.424	1.427	1.422
Mother's education		0.948	0.955	1.134
<b>Self control Measures</b>				
Acting Out			2.318 *	1.892
<b>Official Record Co-variate</b>				
Juvenile Convictions				9.117 ***

Notes: N=411. The significance levels are: \*=p<.05, \*\*=p<.01, and \*\*\*=p<.001 (two-tailed tests).

## **Risk-taking**

As with the previous table Models 1 through 3 are predicting juvenile convictions and Model 4 juvenile convictions becomes a predictor for adult convictions. As shown in Table 5.2 risk-taking is not a significant predictor of juvenile or adult convictions.

Hypothesis 2 states that risk taking in early childhood (between ages 8-9) is positively correlated with juvenile and adult convictions controlling for demographics. However this hypothesis is not supported by the data in Table 5.2. Risk-taking is not a predictor of juvenile and adult convictions.

Similarly to the acting out models the vigilance of parents has a statistically significant relationship in Models 1 and 2, and then disappears in Model 3. The key measure of self control in this model (risk-taking) has no statistically significant impact on juvenile or adult convictions. The largest predictor in all four models is once again juvenile convictions. Boys with convictions are 872% more likely than boys without convictions to be convicted as an adult.

In summary, both the logistic analyses show partial support for Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) theory of self control. Boys who act out are more likely to be convicted as juveniles than adventurous, risk-taking boys. Family variables have limited influence in both models as both the vigilance of parents and the income level of the family do have statistically significant relationships. However, the most proximal relationship predicted is between juvenile and adult conviction. In both tables, the odds ratios of over 9 show the enormous impact juvenile convictions have on adult convictions. One more indicator of self control remains, but is analyzed using OLS as it is a quasi-continuous variable.

**Table 5.2: Logistic Regression: Taking Risk Models Predicting Juvenile and Adult Convictions**

	Juvenile	Juvenile	Juvenile	Adult
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Variable	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio	Odds Ratio
<b>Family Variables</b>				
Legitimacy of boy	0.478	0.666	0.681	1.173
Paternal attitude	0.979	1.265	1.279	1.866
Praise by parents	1.710	1.575	1.447	1.221
Broken home before age 10	0.718	0.588	0.597	0.827
Vigilance of parents	0.289 **	0.386 *	0.467	0.668
<b>Control Variables</b>				
Income of family		0.353 **	0.364 *	0.369 **
Father's education		1.487	1.539	1.502
Mother's education		0.976	0.976	1.171
<b>Self control Measures</b>				
Taking Risks			1.548	1.260
<b>Official Record Co-variate</b>				
Juvenile Convictions				9.717 ***

Notes: N=411. The significance levels are: \*=p<.05, \*\*=p<.01, and \*\*\*=p<.001 (two-tailed tests).

### OLS Regressions

In the second major type of analysis, ordinary least-squares regressions (OLS) is used to model the prediction of convictions and of self-reported criminality are used. Table 5.3 shows the results from the OLS regression analyses to predict Hypothesis 3 which states that the psychological Porteus Maze tests have a negative correlation to juvenile and adult convictions. Models 1-3 are predicting for juveniles convictions and Model 4 juvenile's convictions become the predictor for adult convictions.

Of the family variables, the legitimacy of the child does have a significant relationship with predicting juvenile convictions. Legitimacy of the boy, however, is not statistically significant as a predictor of adult convictions. For reasons that lack theoretical explanation, legitimacy of the boy decreases in magnitude and the relationship becomes negative once the Porteus Maze is added to the model. See Model 3.

The only other two family variables that are significant are contained in Model 3. Praise by parents has a positive relationship with predicting juveniles' convictions. Vigilance of parents is a negative relationship in Model 3. Praise by parents is positively associated with an increase of juvenile convictions and the vigilance of parents is associated with a decrease in juvenile convictions. Income predicts adult criminality and income is correlated with juvenile and adult convictions; however that relationship is not consistent throughout the models. For example, Model 2 shows a positive coefficient while Model 4 shows a negative coefficient. Model 2 is predicting juvenile convictions. Model 4 is predicting adult convictions thus the relationship is not consistent over time.

The Porteus Maze has a negative associate with juvenile convictions and is not significant with adult convictions. For juvenile convictions, the magnitude of the

coefficient is the strongest in Model 4 suggesting juveniles' convictions have strong impact on adult convictions.

**Table 5.3: OLS Coefficients for the Porteus Maze Models Predicting Juvenile and Adult Convictions**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Juvenile Model 1</b>	<b>Juvenile Model 2</b>	<b>Juvenile Model 3</b>	<b>Adult Model 4</b>
<b>Family Variables</b>				
Legitimacy of boy	0.790 * (0.305)	0.734 * (0.317)	-0.228 * (0.103)	.005 (0.114)
Paternal attitude	-0.152 (0.166)	-0.295 (0.171)	-0.094 (0.056)	0.095 (0.061)
Praise by parents	0.304 (0.218)	0.311 (0.222)	0.163 * (0.072)	0.010 (0.082)
Broken home before age 10	-0.120 (0.249)	0.037 (0.263)	-0.124 (0.085)	-0.070 (0.095)
Vigilance of parents	0.100 (0.213)	-0.135 (0.221)	-0.258 *** (0.071)	-0.106 (0.082)
<b>Control Variables</b>				
Income of family		0.512 ** (0.171)	-0.075 (0.056)	-0.165 ** (0.061)
Father's education		0.013 (0.194)	0.005 (0.063)	0.053 (0.070)
Mother's education		-0.046 (0.147)	-0.068 (0.047)	0.017 (0.052)
<b>Self control Measures</b>				
Porteus Maze			-0.051 ** (0.018)	-0.004 (0.020)
<b>Official Record Co-variate</b>				
Juvenile Convictions				0.474 *** (0.062)

R<sup>2</sup>=.039R<sup>2</sup>=.067R<sup>2</sup>=.144R<sup>2</sup>=.235

Notes: N=411. The significance levels are: \*= $p < .05$ , \*\*= $p < .01$ , and \*\*\*= $p < .001$  (two-tailed tests). Unstandardized Coefficients Are Shown and Standard Errors are in Parentheses.

## **Self-Reported Behaviors**

While convictions are an important outcome variable that measure criminality, self-reported outcomes are perhaps better indicators of behaviors as they account for all criminal behaviors instead of only the behaviors for which the boys have been caught and convicted. Conviction variables may have inherent class bias, which is a particular concern given the significance of income level as a dichotomous predictor of juvenile and adult convictions. Hypotheses 4 states that the effects of family should decrease as psycho-social variables measuring self control explain away the variance originally attributed to family variables.

Tables 5.4 and 5.5 show the findings on self-reported juvenile delinquency and self-reported adult violence. As stated in Hypotheses 5 the findings measuring convictions should be similar to self-reported data outcomes. Model 1 shows family predictor variables. Model 2 factors in control variables. Model 3, 4, and 5 add in the measures of self control. The family variable, vigilance of parents, has a negative correlation to self-reported juvenile delinquency and has the largest magnitude. Vigilance of parents is significant in Models 1, 2, and 3 however in Models 4 and 5 when self control measures are added it becomes not significant to predicting self-reported juvenile delinquency. This supports that parents who are vigilant are less likely to have children who experience self-reported delinquency. The control variable, mother's education, positively a correlate is associated with the more education the mother has the more likely their boys will report self-reported delinquency. The implications of this finding will be further discussed in the conclusion.



**Table 5.4: OLS Coefficients Predicting Self-Reported Juvenile Delinquency**

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
<b>Family Variables</b>					
Legitimacy of boy	-0.231 (0.186)	-0.204 (0.194)	-0.202 (0.194)	-0.177 (0.194)	-0.192 (0.196)
Paternal attitude	0.072 (0.102)	0.075 (0.105)	0.077 (0.105)	0.090 (0.105)	0.097 (0.105)
Praise by parents	0.079 (0.136)	-0.004 (0.139)	-0.008 (0.140)	-0.049 (0.141)	-0.058 (0.142)
Broken home <10	-0.139 (0.153)	-0.084 (0.163)	-0.086 (0.164)	-0.085 (0.166)	-0.085 (0.167)
Vigilance of parents	-0.344 * (0.133)	-0.343 * (0.140)	-0.328 * (0.147)	-0.260 (0.152)	-0.254 (0.152)
<b>Control Variables</b>					
Income of family		-0.043 (0.104)	-0.039 (0.105)	-0.022 (0.105)	-0.031 (0.106)
Father's education		0.079 (0.123)	0.079 (0.123)	0.120 (0.124)	0.120 (0.124)
Mother's education		0.185 * (0.090)	0.185 * (0.090)	0.190 * (0.090)	0.191 * (0.090)
<b>Self control Measures</b>					
Acting Out			0.035 (0.105)	-0.009 (0.110)	0.006 (0.113)
Risk Taking				0.193 (0.106)	0.195 (0.108)
Porteus Maze					0.024 (0.035)
	R <sup>2</sup> =.036	R <sup>2</sup> =.054	R <sup>2</sup> =.054	R <sup>2</sup> =.067	R <sup>2</sup> =.069

(Notes N=411 Shown are the metric coefficients with standard errors in parentheses The significance levels are \*= $p < .05$ , \*\*= $p < .01$ , and \*\*\*= $p < .001$  (two-tailed tests))

Table 5.5 presents the findings on self-reported adult violence. As in the previous Table 5.4, Model 1 shows family predictor variables; Model 2 factors in control variables. Model 3, 4, and 5 add in the measures of self control. The family variable, boys from broken homes before age 10, is negatively correlated and has strong significance throughout all the models. Vigilance of parents is significant in model 1; however it becomes non significant across the remaining models. The control variable, income of family, is significant throughout all models; this finding is solely a function of official response which may have class bias. Convictions may be a result of not having an adequate attorney or money for an attorney. However, income of family becomes less significant as self control measures, risk-taking and Porteus Maze, are added to the models 4 and 5. Risk-taking is a positively correlated self control variable associated with self-reported adult violence.

**Table 5.5: OLS Coefficients Predicting Self-Reported Adult Violence**

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
<b>Family Variables</b>					
Legitimacy of boy	-0.124 (0.195)	-0.041 (0.202)	-0.032 (0.202)	-0.003 (0.200)	0.023 (0.201)
Paternal attitude	0.021 (0.107)	0.096 (0.110)	0.108 (0.110)	0.119 (0.108)	0.105 (0.108)
Praise by parents	-0.027 (0.142)	-0.107 (0.145)	-0.125 (0.145)	-0.197 (0.145)	-0.181 (0.146)
Broken home <10	-0.406 * (0.161)	-0.368 * (0.170)	-0.380 * (0.170)	-0.380 * (0.171)	-0.382 * (0.171)
Vigilance of parents	-0.317 * (0.140)	-0.227 (0.146)	-0.155 (0.152)	-0.027 (0.156)	-0.042 (0.156)
<b>Control Variables</b>					
Income of family		-0.328 ** (0.109)	-0.305 ** (0.109)	-0.278 * (0.108)	-0.267 * (0.109)
Father's education		0.053 (0.128)	0.053 (0.128)	0.069 (0.128)	0.071 (0.127)
Mother's education		0.117 (0.094)	0.119 (0.094)	0.109 (0.093)	0.112 (0.092)
<b>Self control Measures</b>					
Acting Out			0.177 (0.109)	0.080 (0.114)	0.063 (0.116)
Risk Taking				0.376 ** (0.110)	0.355 ** (0.110)
Porteus Maze					-0.041 (0.036)
	R <sup>2</sup> =.052	R <sup>2</sup> =.077	R <sup>2</sup> =.085	R <sup>2</sup> =.120	R <sup>2</sup> =.123
(Notes: N=411 Shown are the metric coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. The significance levels are *=p< .05, **=p<.01, and ***=p< .001 (two-tailed tests))					

## **Chapter VI**

### **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

In review, family and control variables have shown significant levels of predictors of crime, throughout the presented results, in regards to self control measures. While controlling for demographics, the findings show that low self control has some predictive influence on juveniles and adult convictions. The tests were important to view how much support there is for self control measures and family variables predicting juvenile and adult convictions.

Acting out, as a self control measure, was a good predictor for juveniles and adult convictions although risk-taking was not as significant a predictor. Family variable, vigilance of family and control variable, income of family, were very significant in the first two models and remain just as significant when acting out and juvenile convictions were added. Porteus Maze has a negative association with juvenile convictions and non-significant with adult convictions. Self-reported behaviors are predicted to be outcomes of self control measures and are met with mixed results.

The family variables support the Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) hypothesis that parental vigilance is a “major predictor of delinquency” (99). Hay (2001) also claimed that parents who provide structure that integrates children into families, while giving them the ability to assert their individuality and regulate their own behavior, will aid in the decrease of delinquency. According to Siegel, Welsh, and Senna (2006), even

children from wealthy families who are raised in a household characterized by abuse and conflict, or whose parents are absent or separated, will be at risk for delinquency.

The findings support the idea that family variables are contributing factors, along with control variables, for future delinquency continuing on to adulthood. On the other hand, though the majority of them were positively correlated, not all were consistent. Throughout each of the models analyzed, few of the results are statistically significant. The findings do support the idea that family is a big contributing factor to low self control and that low self control predicts convictions. There is no ultimate answer to why all juveniles will be convicted if they possess low self control but the majority of the findings do lean towards that idea, which should not be ruled out.

Logistic regression of acting out and risk-taking predicting juveniles and adult convictions has rejected the notion of risk-taking as a predictor. What separates acting out from risk-taking? Risk-taking has been addressed by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) as a predictor of low self control and, if this is the case, shouldn't low self control also predict criminality? This gap in predicting is a result of low self control not being a reliable predictor of convictions but possibly still is a reliable predictor of criminality. Not being convicted does not mean that an individual did not commit the crime; it may be because of variations in legal representations or processes.

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) believe that ineffective childrearing by family is responsible for low self-control, which in turn is the cause of crime. This theory is associated with the results in this study, especially for family variables. The self-control variables of acting out and risk-taking were not consistent as well. Risk-taking as in

Paternoster and Brame's (1998) study revealed that risk-taking was a measure that predicted not serious crime but crime in general. However, in this study risk-taking was measured as not significant with juvenile and adult convictions.

Ordinary least squares regression (OLS) was used to predict Porteus Maze and self-reported behaviors using self control measures along with family and control variables. Porteus Maze was not a reliable predictor but family variables and the control variable, income of family, were very significant. The family variable, vigilance of parents, and the control variables, mother's education, was significant to self-reported juvenile delinquency. This variable should be revisited to be tested again to examine if the control variables are significant to self-reported juvenile delinquency.

Broken homes are a vital correlation in the study of juvenile delinquency. It is unusual that it was negatively correlated for self-reported adult violence in the study but was a good indicator of juvenile convictions. Even with data from Hirschi (2002) that give little associations between broken home and self-reported delinquency it can not be expected to seriously weaken the hypothesis as it does in this study. "The broken-homes-cause-delinquency hypothesis is so firmly ingrained in common sense that data presented here can not weaken it" (Hirschi, 2002, 243).

Broken homes, income of family, and risk-taking were very significant throughout the self-reported adult violence model. Broken homes and income of family were negatively correlated with self-reported adult violence. A broken home was predicted to affect adult convictions as expected. The last statement supports Hypothesis 4; *the effects of family should decrease as psycho-social variables measuring self control explain away the variance originally attributed to family variables.*

### **Limitations of the Current Study**

There are significant limitations for the test that is used in this research. The data set was gathered in Great Britain which is significantly different than the United States. There are many differences between juveniles from Great Britain and the United States. Both countries are run politically different and their cultures are different. There should be a study similar to the one in this paper conducted in the United States and compare the results. There may be similar findings and results but studies may reveal other areas that are more significant than others because the different cultures.

Future studies should focus on mother's education to see how relevant the variable is regarding self-reported delinquency. Mother's education should be revisited and researched to find if the higher a mother's education is the more likely a child will become delinquent. Mother's working or higher education does not lead children to delinquency but poor supervision or lack of supervision does (Vander Ven et al., 2001). Today and in the future women are becoming a more permanent structure in the work force and achieve higher positions and higher education these variable should be revisited in future studies pertaining to juvenile delinquency. A higher education in parents should often give the child access to receive a higher education as well greater self control.

Researchers need to constantly test these ideas of low self control theories and how they will support or reject the idea of predictors of criminal or deviant acts. Childhood has been found to have a significant impact on crime but no research on how to prevent bad parenting or alternative parenting for those children who do not have parents. Once a child is deemed delinquent the child is usually plagued with convictions.

There needs to be alternate routes for a child who becomes delinquent to be able to receive aid to make up for parents who do not contribute to socialize their children.

The many different institutions such as schools, churches, and after school programs should be investigated as alternatives to having bad parenting at home for all juveniles. These institutions should be tested to show how children view them and how to keep them active outside of their families if they are getting inadequate socializing at home. "Good" parenting should be tested to review if Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990, 97) were correct in claiming that low self control was developed through ineffective or incomplete socialization. The best way to test this is to examine preventive parenting styles and how effective they really are in correlation to juveniles and adult convictions.

This data set was based solely on boys but future research should be based on girls and boys in a study together. Hirschi's (2002) original theory excluded girls in parenting models. Girls have been studied to reveal that family variables have different impacts on delinquency in girls rather than in boys. Future research should also be able to test boys and girls self control co-variates. Girls' delinquency research has been tested separately from boys and not at all in previous studies done by Hirschi. In understanding juveniles as an entire group, girls must be included in studies measuring self control. Even using different measures may help to see the differences in impact of family characteristics.

Throughout this study gender and race were controlled and in future studies they should be taken into account for what differences both would convey and reveal about juvenile delinquency. There was plenty of information regarding the boys in the data set. At times there was too much data to examine and correlate, but it did accomplish its task



of finding some predictors of self control theory. For future studies it should still be a longitudinal study to see all the effects of childhood. It was a very beneficial to follow these boys throughout their lives a span of 20 years. This was a complex data set to gather and time was a key factor on gathering all the significant data.

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) isolate the role of parents as the most essential source of socialization for children. Not properly socializing children may cause them to have low self control and then this may lead to criminality. This vicious circle is predicted to not be irreversible and be acquired by the age of 8 if predicting for juveniles delinquency. There is plenty of room for more testing and new questions asked as far as parental roles such as gay and lesbian households raising children with the likelihood of them becoming delinquent. There are many more exciting questions and research to encounter with family influence and self control theory.

### **Some Final Thoughts**

As a parent myself, I want to learn more about how to raise a child with enough knowledge to steer them away from the likelihood of leading a life of delinquency. My desire to choose this topic was to find an easy solution to preventing delinquency from the start. As my research shows, there is no easy or clear cut solution. Every parent would like to steer their children in the right direction and keep them on the right path to success. As a parent, I wanted a handbook to come along with my child because you don't want to miss a chance to make their life even better than your own. As a student, I want to change the outcome for juveniles who do not have the chance to have parents or to have parents who will socialize them properly. I don't want to believe that low self

control is irreversible and stays with an individual throughout their lives. I somehow believe that people are unique in that they can overcome anything as long as they have a chance.

Juveniles must be given the cure to delinquency, which gives the answer to properly socializing juveniles outside of an inadequate family. I understand there may not be enough resources to extend to all juveniles nor could we man enough offices to look out for inadequate families as social services is out numbered in just trying to find orphans a place to live. Programs such as the Office of Justice Programs' (OJP's), the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) should spend more amounts of time on finding the preventive factors to curb future delinquency. This is not to say that they are not doing an adequate job providing assistance to those juveniles who are in need of an alternate route to their current delinquency life. However, if we understand how parents can raise their children adequately and if we may be able to teach parents preventive parenting skills, there may be less of a need for programs to try and lure kids away from their delinquent lives. Many parents just need the assistance of resources to learn to become adequate parents.

In many families that suffer broken homes, parents need to be open with their children and make attachments to them stronger than ever before to avoid delinquency among their children. At times, the separation in a family might be beneficial to the children such as getting away from a parent who already has low self control, is a criminal, or is suffering from alcoholism. Broken homes may be inevitable for the future but with research there may be a way to present children and their families with the resources they need to maneuver away from juvenile delinquency.

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## **VITA**

Veronica J. Casey was born in Brownsville, Texas, on May 20, 1978, the daughter of Jose Jesus Jimenez Sr. and Martha A. Jimenez. After completing her work at Homer Hanna High School, Brownsville, Texas, in 1996, she entered The University of Texas at Austin. During the summers of 1997 and 1998, she attended the University of Texas at Brownsville in Brownsville, Texas. She received her degree of Bachelor of Science in Radio-Television-Film from the University of Texas at Austin in December 2000. During the following years she worked as a transportation assistant on the film Miss Congeniality and is currently employed as an administrative associate with the University of Texas at Austin in Austin, Texas. In September 2004, she entered the Graduate College of Texas State University-San Marcos.

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