

4/9 Gottfredson and Hirschi

Characteristics of crime

- Easy
- Immediate gratification
 - o Cash, even coins, are taken more often than checks/cards/TVs
 - o Very often not planned (because they act on impulsive desire for immediate gratification)
- Few or meager long-term benefits
 - o Thus often due to criminal activities the criminals are not able to retain long-term goals
 - o There can't really be professional criminals then
- Exciting and risky
 - o Teenagers steal cars for joy-riding
 - o Very rarely cars are stolen for parts → no market for that (junkyards); and too hard/too much effort → crime is supposed to be easy
- Pain or discomfort for the victim
 - o Many offenders are quite insensitive of the feelings of their victim
- Minimal tolerance for frustration or conflict

They thus **define crime**: "Acts of force or fraud undertaken in pursuit of **self-interest**"

- These characteristics of crime indicate something about the **traits** of those who commit crime
- **Criminality** is reflected in crime
- **Analogue activities**: behaviors that have similar characteristics as criminal behaviors

Murders: remove some obstacles to immediate goals. Robbery: he cannot control the victim, offender use the gun not just threaten the victim, but to kill the victim.

Burglary: immediate problem, economic problem, burglary can be the solution.

A lot of stuff was taken, a lot of stuff was not. Why scoop up coins but leave other valuables: because those goods are too heavy to carry. Coins: give them immediate gratification, buy some cokes!

Few or meager long-term benefits:

break friends, no family ties, no long term career

same true to embezzlement: stealing some cash by cashier: not a lot

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Exciting and risky: virtually impossible to sell a stolen car: if the thief want to sell, he will take parts, which is complicated.

Cars are stolen by teenagers: when the stolen car was out of gas, just leave it on the street.

Pain or Discomfort for the victim:

what the crime suggests of the criminal themselves.

People who would commit crime: the traits of people reflected in their acts.

This type of person: have traits.

We are locating the reason of crime in the person themselves. Other things:

Other behaviors: deviant, not necessarily illegal.

Smoking

Drinking

Using Drugs

Illicit Sex

Illicit Children

Accidents

A tendency to take risks.

Accidents: people's tendency to take risks.

These behaviors are not necessarily criminal

Underlying the traits of criminal. Self-control

G and H: central point: self-control

Def: the diff tendency of people to avoid criminal acts whatever the circumstances in which they find themselves.

Contrary to routine activities theory: in certain circumstances a person is more likely to crime.

No matter what they are, they have low self-control, and they are more likely to crime.

This theory disregard social ecology, place, time.

If low self-control explained everything, then every and any kind of crime is caused by self-control

This theory explains the relationships between different factors.

The relations between crime and drugs: spurious, stores do not bring babies. Same with drugs and crime.

Drugs and crime through offenders' low self-control: leads to criminal activity.

Porn and rape: study: spuriously associated. Both of them are reflection of self control, immediate gratification.

Why people have low self control?

Connection between social control and self control are not clear.

Social control theory: s

self control is developed within families, parents.

Parent: foster self control in a person.

If the mother don't attach to the child, the child is more likely to delinquent.

Parent Supervision: as parents control the child, the child is trained to control himself. Indirect control: the child learnt to control himself.

Parents must recognize deviant behavior: Identifies behavior that exhibit low self control.
If children don't develop self control through regular lives, they are less likely to self control against crime.

Crime is fun, punishment made the fun out of it.

Rather than punishing the child for doing something bad, the parents rewards. That's negative! Don't say no to children: negative.

People react more to costs than rewards. So punishment is necessary.

Parents in criminal activity: cannot do these things.

Criminal parents cannot recognize deviant behaviors.

Criminal parents: oppose authorities, like the teachers. Not allowed their children to be controlled by outside behaviors. The parent is not disciplining the child and take self-control out of the child.

Punish: those parents physically abusive, when punishing. Parent: low self-control. The parent is looking for an easy solution to the problem. This explains why we often see crime running in families.

Crime continues from one generation to the next.

Criminal parent-criminal children. A parent lack of self control cannot foster the self control of the child, which lead to the criminal behavior. That's why crime often run in families.

G and H: they don't think a person's level of self-control could be changed, established around 10, remain relatively stable throughout the person's life. No institution could increase that.

A person's relative level of self control could stay through time.

That person will always have a lower level of self control than the rest of the population.

G and H: men in prison make tremendous in the self control. Some of them became vegetarians. That change is brought by the institution of prisons. G and H is missing this point. Self-control theory:

two general schools of criminal: classical, positivist.

G and H fits in both schools. They show that crime is chosen. (classical)

Positivist: low self-control: more likely to choose crime. Explain why some people have lower self control than others, they are more likely to be involved in criminal activity.

2. What are the similarities and differences between Akers' differential reinforcement theory, Hirschi's social control theory, and Gottfredson and Hirschi's self control theory?

Similarities:

All of them involve in parents' role

Likelihood of people commit crime is a big part of all the theories.

They don't focus on motivation, they just focus on a condition.

Differences: