

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Criminological theorizing today	5
2.1 The state of criminological theory	5
2.2 The mutual relevance of criminology and criminal justice	16
2.2.1 Criminology and the criminal law	19
2.2.2 Criminology and corrections	21
2.3 The desirability of general theories of crime: exigencies	24
3. 'A General Theory of Crime' (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990)	27
3.1 Foundations.....	27
3.1.1 Aspirations	28
3.1.2 Assumptions	29
3.1.2.1 What is crime?	29
3.1.2.2 A modern version of the classical conception of crime	31
3.2 Theme, structure and propositions.....	34
3.2.1 Against positivism	35
3.2.2 Crime, free will, and choice.....	36
3.2.2.1 'Absent' a conception of the dependent variable (crime)	38
3.2.2.2 The agency of the offender	41
3.2.2.3 The notion of crime: acts of force and fraud	43
3.2.2.3.1 Force, fraud, and self-interest	43
3.2.2.4 Self-control	48
3.2.2.4.1 The theoretical function of self-control	49
3.2.2.4.2 The descriptive/predictive features of self-control.....	49
3.2.2.4.3 The formation of self-control.....	51
3.2.2.4.4 Self-control and criminality	52
3.2.2.5 Opportunity.....	53

4. Towards an analytical framework	54
4.1 Under focus: action, individuals, groups	54
4.2 The sociological model of explanation.....	56
4.2.1 The ‘basic’ model	59
4.2.2 Sociological versus psychological explanations.....	60
4.2.3 The definition of the situation and the selection of action	61
4.2.3.1 The definition of the situation.....	61
4.2.3.2 The logic of the selection (action theory)	64
4.3 The explicative range of self-control theory.....	65
4.3.1 The logic of the situation according to self-control theory	66
4.3.2 The logic of selection according to self-control theory	69
4.3.2.1 <i>Expectancy x value</i> : the initial (peripheral) conditions.....	71
4.3.2.2 <i>Expectancy x value</i> : self-control in operation.....	72
4.4 Limits to generality: What can self-control theory explain?	76
5. Theory construction.....	77
5.1 Deductive theories	77
5.2 Criteria for (methodological) critique.....	79
6. Self-control theory: a critical appraisal.....	81
6.1 Reception of self-control theory by other scholars.....	82
6.2 Methodological criteria (structure).....	88
6.2.1 Axiomatic foundations of ‘A General Theory of Crime’ .	88
6.2.2 Hypotheses (theorems)	90
6.3 Methodological criteria (content, logic and consistency).....	93
6.3.1 Self-control	93
6.3.2 Opportunity.....	99
6.3.3 Versatility	106
6.3.4 Stability – crime declines with age.....	120
6.3.4.1 The age critique of criminological theories	124
6.3.4.2 Situational explanations of maturational reform	126
6.3.4.3 Social theories of crime and the age effect	130
6.3.4.4 Age, crime, the definition of the situation and human development across the lifespan	131

6.3.4.5	The age effect and action (<i>expectancy x value</i>) theory	132
6.3.4.6	A lifespan approach to social motivation	135
7.	The empirical status of self-control theory	140
7.1	Testing self-control theory	141
7.2	Self-control theory through the studies: The core propositions	142
7.2.1	Self-control	159
7.2.2	Opportunity	159
7.2.3	Gender differences in delinquency	168
7.3	A meta-analysis of low self-control (Pratt and Cullen, 2000)	172
7.4	Empirical status: resume	174
8.	Self-control theory, public policy and ideology	177
8.1	Practical yields from self-control theory according to Gottfredson and Hirschi	178
8.1.1	'Family empowerment'	180
8.1.2	Incapacitation	181
8.2	Ideological issues in self-control theory	183
8.2.1	'Important reductions in crime'/' Theoretically derived wants'	184
8.2.2	Self-control, gender and power positions	185
9.	Summing up	191
9.1	The challenge of criminology	191
9.2	Self-control theory	193
9.2.1	Self-control theory in brief	193
9.2.2	Effects and operation of self-control	194
9.2.3	Genesis of self-control	195
9.3	Limits to generality	197
9.3.1	Prevalence and incidence of complex economic crimes	198
9.3.2	Complex crimes other than economic crimes	201
9.4	Performance of self-control theory in empirical studies	202
9.4.1	Measuring self-control in operation	202
9.4.2	The role of opportunity	203
9.4.3	Self-control: unidimensional or multidimensional?	205

9.4.4	Self-control theory: confirmed or falsified?	207
9.5	Methodological quality	213
9.6	No redemption: big noise about modest claims?	215
9.6.1	The interpretation of “generality”	215
9.6.2	Unexpected spin offs	216
9.6.3	Self-control theory and post-modernity	218
10.	Looking ahead: on the prospects of theoretical integration	220
10.1.	Theoretical integration in criminology	221
10.2.	(Back) towards an analytical framework	223
10.2.1.	What should be integrated?.....	223
10.2.2.	How to integrate?.....	224
10.3.	Levels of explanation.....	232
10.4.	Macro-, micro- and individual level theories.....	234
10.4.1	Macro-level analysis	235
10.4.1.1	Anomie theory (Robert K. Merton, 1938)	235
10.4.2	Micro-level analysis.....	239
10.4.2.1	Social learning (Ronald L. Akers, 1998)	239
10.4.2.2	‘Biosocial’ criminology	242
10.4.2.3	Control theory (Travis Hirschi, 1969).....	245
10.4.2.4	Self-control theory (Michael R. Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi, 1990)	248
10.5	Fears of reductionism.....	251
10.6	Partial criminological theories and limitation of scope	252
11.	Conclusion	255
	Epilogue: Beyond self-control.....	259
	Appendix 1 Grasmick et al.’s (1993) Self-control Scale Items	260
	Appendix 2 Pratt and Cullen (2000) Empirical Studies Sample.....	261
	List of Tables	XVII
	List of Figures.....	XVII
	List of Text-boxes.....	XVIII
	Bibliography.....	262