8 ON THE COMPATIBILITY OF SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION AND SELF-CONTROL

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Ostensibly, social disorganization and self-control theories are compatible perspectives, merely operating at different levels of explanation—disorganization at the group or neighborhood level and self-control at the individual level. This apparent fact is reinforced by the compatibility of social disorganization and control theorists, who tend to affiliate, cite each other's work, and speak highly of each other. In this chapter I argue that the compatibility between theories of disorganization and self-control is more apparent than real. When classical theories of social disorganization are viewed in their totality and in historical context, they violate the crucial assumption of control theories—that the motivation to deviate is constant across individuals—which, according to Hirschi (1969) and Kornhauser (1978), separates control perspectives from all other sociological theories of crime. Indeed, early social disorganization theorists conducted qualitative studies, using naturalistic inquiry, direct observation, life history narratives, and ethnographies, to identify the roots of motivation for behavior, including criminal behavior. Those motivations were found to be rooted in concepts, such as the four wishes, moral codes of gangs, and cultural transmission, that violate the assumption of control theories. If, however, disorganization theories are shorn of their motivational component and the qualitative studies from which they derive—a strategy pursued by Kornhauser—the remaining concept of disorganization is more easily integrated with self-control theory.

In this chapter I describe self-control theory, quickly summarize the history of social disorganization theory, and then briefly evaluate Kornhauser's attempt to extract what she terms a "pure control" model from social disorganization theory. I then show that Kornhauser's pure control version of disorganization can be viewed as a macrolevel counterpart to self-control theory but that social disorganization theories, when taken in totality, are incompatible with self-control theory. Finally I evaluate some relevant bodies of research and speculate on ways of explaining the research findings.

FROM SOCIAL CONTROL TO SELF-CONTROL

In a career spanning more than thirty-five years, Travis Hirschi has been the leading proponent of control theories, although his theory changed in important ways when he teamed up with Michael R. Gottfredson.

Hirschi's Social Control Theory

In 1969 Hirschi published *Causes of Delinquency*, a remarkable monograph that developed a social control theory of crime at a time when the broader perspectives underlying the theory—social disorganization theory and Freudian theory—had fallen out of favor in sociology. The book not only developed social control theory, a theory that would dominate criminology for at least a decade, but also operationalized the theory and tested it empirically using original survey data and statistical methods of the period. *Causes* was a landmark study and helped to spawn a minor revolution in the study of crime, as criminologists increasingly collected survey data, used statistical methods of analysis, and subjected traditional theories of crime—including most notably, social control theory—to empirical tests.

The hallmark of control theories, as articulated by Hirschi (1969), is the assumption that the motivation for crime is constant across individuals and therefore not a cause of crime. This assumption, which derives from the assumption of value consensus—"a single moral order"—separates control theories from all others. The assumption has a number of controversial implications or corollaries: Crime is not learned but is natural; criminal peers are not a cause of crime; subcultural theories, which specify subcultural motives for crime, are empirically bankrupt; criminologists need not study the cause of crime but rather the cause of conformity; and theories that posit special or unusual motivations for crime are suspect. Hirschi (1969) was agnostic about the precise justification of natural motivation; it could just as easily have been due to Hobbes's animal impulses, the Freudian id, Briar and Piliavin's (1965) situationally induced motives, or Matza's (1964) "drift" followed by "will" and "desperation." The important point is that crime, and its motivation, is taken for granted; what is problematic—to be explained—is conformity. For Hirschi (1969) conformity is explained by strong bonds to conventional society, and these bonds consist of four additive variables: attachment to parents, commitment to conventional lines of action, involvement in conventional activities, and belief in the moral order. Delinquency results when a person's bond is broken or weakened. Hirschi (1969) found empirical support for his theory (his measures of attachment, commitment, and belief had strong effects on self-reported delinquency), although one finding contradicted the theory (delinquent peers exerted the strongest effect on delinquency, even controlling for social bonds) and supported subcultural, learning, and differential association theories. *Causes* became a classic in criminology.

Twenty years after the publication of *Causes*, Hirschi teamed up with Gottfredson to specify a new version of control theory. They maintained allegiance to the control perspective, as articulated in *A General Theory of Crime*. Again, the motivation for crime was assumed constant across individuals, but now a different mechanism justified the assumption. Gottfredson and Hirschi argued that the most efficient way of satisfying needs

children and sanction that behavior informally—by frowning, shaming, disapproving—will inculcate high self-control in their children. Parents who fail to monitor their children or who fail to identify and sanction undesirable behavior will raise children with low self-control. By adolescence the trait of self-control has been set; it becomes a stable trait that will last a lifetime. Individuals low on self-control will always have low self-control and will always be at risk of crime and of other crimelike behaviors, such as smoking, drinking, gambling, lying, and engaging in premarital and extramarital sex. At this point nothing can alter the trait of low self-control; it is set in stone. People cannot change. It follows that conventional institutions—such as religion, education, and the labor market—are unable to alter low self-control and therefore will have no affect on a person's criminality beyond childhood.

Here Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) make another strong assertion: Life course transitions, including education, entrance into a delinquent gang, marriage, divorce, and work, all have no causal effect on crime. Any correlation with crime is spurious because of selectivity. Delinquent peers and gangs are correlated with crime because individuals with low self-control commit crimes and select into delinquent peer groups; good marriages are negatively correlated with crime because individuals with high self-control refrain from crime and select into good marriages; good jobs are inversely correlated with crime because individuals with high self-control refrain from crime and select into good jobs.

But how do the two concepts, self-control and criminal events, produce crime? Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) appear to discuss these effects as additive, with the relative magnitude of the components varying with the type of crime. Crimes that are more eventlike—that is, have more complex opportunity structures, such as burglary and robbery—will have a stronger component for criminal events, whereas crimes for which opportunity is ubiquitous, such as petty theft, will be dominated by low self-control. For this reason Gottfredson and Hirschi recommend using minor delinquent acts as a measure of self-control. But in their analysis of the structure of specific crimes, in which they reveal the relationship between self-control and criminal opportunities, they appear to suggest a complex set of relationships, including an interaction effect. Individuals low on self-control will be particularly vulnerable to crime when opportunities are plentiful and less so when opportunities are few. In contrast, individuals high on self-control will resist temptation even in the face of plentiful opportunities. Moreover, logically, self-control should be causally related to criminal events: Individuals low on self-control may self-select into criminal opportunities (e.g., staging areas for gang fights) or be selected by other individuals, groups, or institutions (e.g., schools segregating students with low self-control into a single classroom).

Finally, social structure or organization affects crime in two ways. First, it indirectly affects low self-control by affecting parents' ability to identify and discourage undesirable behaviors. For example, in close-knit neighborhoods with high social capital, parents assist other parents in supervising children. Such effects can transmit low self-control across generations, because impoverished neighborhoods impede parents' child-rearing practices, creating children with low self-control, whose reduced life chances impede their ability to raise their own children. Second, social structure directly affects criminal events by providing incentives and structuring criminal opportunities through its effects on routine

is through deviant or illegal behavior; therefore, if left to our own devices, we would all opt for such means. Merton (1957) argued an almost identical point earlier: Often, the most effective means to attain an individual goal entails the use of force or fraud, and hence institutional norms function to curtail such acts to ensure an orderly society. Moreover, the pleasures associated with crime, Gottfredson and Hirschi maintain, are obvious to all and require no special learning.

Self-Control Theory

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) begin with three empirical assertions: (1) The age-crime curve is invariant across all social groups, societies, and historical periods and therefore is beyond explanation by social theories; (2) criminals do not specialize in offenses but are versatile in their offending (and also engage in similar acts that are legal, such as having accidents, smoking, drinking, having premarital and extramarital sex, and gambling); and (3) crime is remarkably stable throughout the life course. They assert that most criminological theories imply that the age effect can be explained socially, that criminals tend to specialize, and that crime is unstable over time. Thus a new theory is needed to account for these facts.

Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) define crime as acts of force or fraud committed for self-interested gain. They then examine the distribution of the dependent variable, street crimes (and embezzlement), and argue that for each offense we can focus on the statistical modal category and safely ignore the variation around the mode. Finding a common thread in the modal burglary, robbery, larceny, homicide, motor vehicle theft, rape, and drug and alcohol consumption, they go on to infer a link with criminality. Criminal acts provide easy gratification, are exciting and risky, provide meager long-term benefits, require little skill or planning, and involve pain or discomfort for the victim. Therefore criminals tend to be impulsive and unable to delay gratification; they seek excitement and risk, tend to have unstable jobs, friendships, and marriages, have little academic or manual skill, and are indifferent to the suffering of others.

From the versatility of offending Gottfredson and Hirschi conclude that the common characteristics of criminal acts reflect a latent trait that they term low self-control. From the stability in offending over time they conclude that low self-control is a trait that remains stable throughout the life course. From the age distribution of crime they conclude that low self-control increases the probability of crime but does not require it and that age and other factors also affect the likelihood of crime. Those other factors fall under the rubric of criminal events. If criminality is the stable trait underlying a variety of offenses over time, then criminal events (crime) refer to the elements of the immediate situation of offending that affects the likelihood of crime. This includes the objective opportunity for crime—including the presence of suitable targets and the absence of capable guardians (to use the terms of routine activities theory)—the physical ability to commit the crime, including age, and the immediate costs and benefits associated with the crime.

But where does self-control come from? Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) are explicit about this: Self-control develops early in life (before the age of culpability) through socialization by parents. Parents who consistently identify undesirable behavior in their

activities of victims and offenders. This provides an avenue that links self-control theory to theories of social disorganization.

THE ROOTS OF SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION THEORY

It is instructive to review the history of the concept of social disorganization before assessing its compatibility with the general theory. I provide a brief synopsis here; for a more detailed presentation see Matsueda (2007). The concept of social disorganization can be traced to W. I. Thomas and Znaniecki (1958 [1927]), who define it as "a decrease of the influence of existing social rules of behavior upon the individual members of the group" and note that it refers "primarily to institutions and only secondarily to men" (p. 1128). Social disorganization is only loosely connected to "individual disorganization, which consists in a decrease of the individual's ability to organize his whole life for the efficient, progressive, and continuous realization of his fundamental interests" (p. 1128).

Social organization, then, consists of norms that govern the behavior of members of the group, and it is undermined by the introduction of new attitudes that give rise to new behaviors that are neither socially recognized nor socially sanctioned. If left unchecked, those behaviors, and the attitudes underlying them, produce social disorganization. But disorganization is not inevitable; social reorganization can create "new rules of personal conduct and new institutions" that correspond more closely to the new attitudes (W. I. Thomas and Znaniecki (1958 [1927], 1128). The new rules increase cohesion, cooperation, and organization. Thus societies are in constant flux, always undergoing some degree of disorganization, reconstruction, and organization.

But Thomas and Znaniecki were not merely attempting to explain macrolevel social change; they were also seeking a theory of motivation, social control, and the interplay between the individual and society. They posited the four wishes, which Thomas (1923, p. 4) later refined: the desire for new experience, security, response, and recognition. The problem of social control, for Thomas, is precisely how social institutions regulate the different means of fulfilling wishes. This is done through the definition of the situation: deliberating and examining a situation as calling for certain kinds of behavior. What is important is not the objective situation but rather the perceived definition of the situation: "If men define situations as real they are real in their consequences" (W. I. Thomas and Thomas, 1928). For Thomas (1923), "gradually a whole life-policy and the personality of the individual himself follow from a series of such definitions" (p. 42).

The organized society regulates conflict and competition by definitions of situations, which define a moral code—a "set of rules or behavior norms"—and compete with individual definitions of situations (Thomas, 1923, 43). Culture conflict is involved here: "One set of opinions would be rigoristic and hold that conformity with the existing code is advisable under all circumstances; another pragmatic, holding that the code may sometimes be violated" (p. 79). Thomas and Znaniecki used personal documents—life histories, diaries, and letters—to document the ways in which Polish peasants, underaged prostitutes, and wayward girls fulfilled their wishes using definitions of situations that sometimes conflicted with conventional definitions.

Park and Burgess showed how social disorganization was distributed spatially within urban areas. Park (1926) drew concepts of competition, dominance, invasion, segregation, and succession from plant biology to explain growth of cities. Influenced by Darwin's concept of the "struggle for survival," Park argued that competition among groups was the motor that led to segregation of areas into natural areas, which resulted from market forces rather than from conscious planning. At times, disequilibrium occurred, such as when groups invaded neighborhoods, inducing competition and possibly resulting in succession or accommodation.

Within this framework Ernest W. Burgess (1925b) developed his theory of residential patterns, in which the city was divided into a series of concentric zones. The inner zone, the central business district, has the highest land use values and is surrounded by the zone in transition, or "interstitial area," in which residential neighborhoods are under invasion from business and manufacturing. Encircling the interstitial area are three increasingly affluent residential zones. For Burgess urban growth occurs when industry invades contiguous residential areas, which become deteriorated and dilapidated. Rents and housing prices drop as stockyards, railroads, and factories are built. Those residents with sufficient resources flee the area, moving to the working man's zone, which in turn may result in more affluent working men migrating out to residential areas, and so on, creating a ripple effect until equilibrium returns. The ripple effect of geographic mobility creates a gradient in which socioeconomic status increases with increasing distance from the center of the city.

The zone in transition provides a residential neighborhood for newly arriving impoverished immigrant groups and a mechanism by which older immigrant groups are able to increase their affluence and move to better neighborhoods. The resulting population turnover, however, undermines incentives for residents to develop local community ties, commitments, and a sense of community. Consequently, "cultural controls over conduct disintegrate; impulses and wishes take random and wild expression"; and the "result is immorality and delinquency; in short, personal and social disorganization" (E. W. Burgess, 1925a, 150). This model set the stage for studies using natural histories and personal documents to examine how residents accommodated to their spatial situations.

Thrasher's (1927) landmark study of 1,313 gangs in Chicago was framed by Park and Burgess's human ecology approach. Using direct observation, interviews, and personal documents, Thrasher (1927) argued that gangs are rooted in the failure of local institutions to direct boys. Most gangs begin as spontaneous playgroups and develop an organization through conflict with the wider society, eliciting a group consciousness, leadership, rules, and an awareness of group history. The gang is an "interstitial group, a manifestation of the period of readjustment between childhood and maturity" (p. 492). Because of endemic conflict and competition, gangs tend to be unstable, adopting different forms ranging from diffuse, solidified, conventionalized, criminal, and secret society.

Thrasher uses Thomas's concept of "the wish for new experience" to show how society's inability to channel the energy of adolescent boys in socially desirable ways results in the boys being attracted to the gang, which provides a forum for spontaneous expression of natural impulses. He uses Thomas's concept of "the definition of the situation" to analyze social patterns, leadership, and control in the gang. Such patterns derive from the disorganized

neighborhood, resulting in isolation from conventional cultural patterns and development of patterns within the gang's own social world. More established gangs, often with older members, constitute a key part of the "moral region" and often get younger boys involved in stealing, robbing, and other delinquent acts. This is the "education of the street," which forms "tastes and habits, ambitions and ideals" as well as a "universe of discourse," consisting of a gang language or argot, symbols, and signs (Thrasher, 1927, 265–267). This learning entails not only learning skills for crime (e.g., buying guns, picking pockets, or fencing stolen goods), which can be as elaborate as "the gang is capable of deliberation, planning, and cooperation in a highly complex undertaking" (p. 284), but also definitions of situations calling for crime: "The gang boy sees lawlessness everywhere and in the absence of effective definitions to the contrary accepts it without criticism" (Thrasher, 1927, 260).

Thrasher gives a nuanced analysis of social control in the gang, which begins with the unity of the gang developed from consensus over "habits, sentiments, and attitudes," an "*esprit de corps*," and solidifies through conflict with external groups. Group control is further achieved through use of a code of conduct for gang members, which if violated, is met with severe sanction. A rudimentary organization emerges around a natural leader, an "inner circle" of intimates surrounding the leader, and fringe groups of hangers-on. Moreover, demoralization develops through a "series of stages," beginning with "playing hookey"—which can lead to a few days in a juvenile detention home and which gives "great prestige with other boys"—followed by entrance in a gang, minor delinquent acts, occasional crime, and, "if nothing intervenes," development into "a seasoned gangster or professional criminal"(Thrasher, 1927, 369). Thrasher (1927, 381, 393) concludes that gangs are an important causal factor in crime and can lead to participation in organized crime, which he describes as having a hierarchical organization.

At about this time Shaw and McKay began their studies of delinquency, mapping official juvenile court rates by neighborhood and also collecting voluminous case studies, life histories, and personal documents. In *Delinquency Areas* Shaw et al. (1929) begin by outlining a "cultural approach to the study of delinquency," drawing on Chicago school concepts, describing Burgess's concentric zones, and mapping rates of delinquency and crime over time. They conclude that rates of truancy, delinquency, recidivism, and adult crime covary spatially, tend to be highest in the center of the city, and vary inversely with distance from the center. Their "tentative interpretation" was that city growth—whereby business and industry invade residential communities—leads to disorganization, which is intensified by the influx of immigrant groups, whose "old cultural and social controls break down." As a result, "delinquent and criminal patterns arise and are transmitted socially just as any other cultural and social pattern is transmitted" and in time "may become dominant" (Shaw et al., 1929, 205–206).

In a later report Shaw and McKay (1931) examine demographic characteristics of neighborhoods, analyze case studies, personal documents, and life histories, and extend their quantitative analyses to other cities. They begin with an extensive case study to illustrate culture conflict, in which a boy's behavior is "in conformity with the socially approved standards of the play group and neighborhood" but is a "violation of the family tradition and expectations," and therefore it is through "conflict of values, attitudes, and interests that the boy's temper tantrums, stubbornness, and open defiance of authority occurred" (Shaw and

McKay, 1931, 19–20). They then present in great detail their statistical analyses, finding that delinquency rates are highest in the zone in transition, which is characterized by "physical deterioration, decreasing population, high rates of dependency, high percentages of foreign and negro population in the total population, and high rates of adult crime" (p. 386). They also find that, despite the complete turnover of the racial and nationality composition of the area, the delinquency rate remained high. Moreover, as older immigrant families moved to the periphery, the delinquency rates of their children decreased. Shaw and McKay (1931) conclude that high delinquency areas are associated with city growth, in which industry invades residential areas, causing out-migration of less impoverished groups, drops in housing values and rent of vacated dwellings, and in-migration of impoverished immigrant groups. The result is that the community "fails as an agency of social control" (p. 387).

Shaw and McKay also studied the group nature of delinquency, finding high rates of copresence of older offenders with younger delinquents in areas of high delinquency (a correlation of 0.90). Moreover, they conducted a remarkable analysis of interlocking playgroups and delinquent gangs using official records. From these analyses Shaw and McKay (1931) conclude that "the groups serve as an agency for the transmission of the traditions of delinquency in high rate areas of the city" (p. 390).

To identify the mechanisms by which delinquency rates remain stable in inner-city neighborhoods despite turnover of their ethnic composition, Shaw and McKay (1931) analyze life histories and personal documents, presenting representative cases for illustration (p. 116). They identify two mechanisms: social disorganization, in which "the dissolution of the neighborhood organization is accompanied by a breakdown of the restraints and safeguards which normally surround the child" (p. 117), and cultural transmission, in which "various forms of lawlessness have become more or less traditional aspects of the social life and are handed down year after year through the medium of social contacts" (p. 126). Here they show that "crime among the older offenders is often highly organized" and that "these older offenders, who are well known and have prestige in the neighborhood, tend to set the standards and patterns of behavior for the younger boys, who idolize and simulate them" (p. 127). Delinquent behavior "in many instances" is "encouraged by parents" and siblings, so that in some cases "criminal patterns of behavior are transmitted through personal contacts within the family group" (pp. 127–135).

Finally, Shaw and McKay (1931) examine the process of "acquiring the delinquent code," noting that the standards of the group "may represent a complete reversal of the standards and norms of conventional society," so that conduct that would bring "dishonor in a conventional group, serve to enhance and elevate the personal prestige and status of a member of the delinquent group" (pp. 240–241). Echoing Thrasher, they argue that the delinquent group, "like all social groups," controls the behavior of its members with a code of conduct, eliciting punishment for violators and rewards for conformists. The function of the code is documented repeatedly in their case histories.

Drawing on Thomas's four wishes, Shaw and McKay (1931) show how the delinquent group, like other groups, satisfies universal desires of recognition, esteem of fellows, excitement and thrills, companionship, and security. The difference is in the "cultural traditions and social values" (p. 250). The delinquent group provides stimulation and thrills in illicit

activities, security and protection from the police, and feelings of pride and superiority. Shaw and McKay (1931) conclude carefully that, although their data cannot "determine the extent to which membership in delinquent gangs produces delinquency," membership is probably "a contributing factor" to delinquency, given that often "the delinquent group marks the beginning of his career in delinquency and that his initial delinquencies are often identical with the traditions and practices of his group" (p. 256). Their cautious conclusion reflects a concern with selectivity into the gang. Although Shaw and McKay find little evidence that broken homes affect delinquency, their life histories suggest that "emotional tensions and conflicts within the family may be significant for delinquent behavior," especially "personality problems and offenses against the home" (p. 343).

In their final volume Shaw and McKay (1942) provide a more nuanced explication of social disorganization and cultural transmission. They use the term "differential social organization" to underscore how delinquency rates are the result of broader economic and demographic forces that undermine conventional local institutions of control, which allows divergent values (often from immigrants) a foothold, which in turn spawns a tradition of organized delinquency transmitted through interlocking peer groups on the street (as well as within families). Here, the crucial institution of the family is weakened by competition from peer groups, which undermines parental influence; new problems, such as delays in entering the labor force or more leisure time; and a family member or friend earning money illegally, which neutralizes the family's opposition to crime. Because of the divergent values present in the neighborhood, resulting in part from immigration and geographic mobility, the community is unable to identify problems of common interest, reach a consensus on how to address the problem, and carry out a collective solution. The result is differential social organization, in which the dominant system of values is conventional but in which a "powerful competing system of delinquency values exists" in some communities (Shaw and McKay, 1942, 317). In this context a delinquent tradition—consisting of "conduct, speech, gesture, and attitudes"—arises and is passed on through "intimate association with predatory gangs or other forms of delinquent and criminal organization" (p. 316). With respect to group delinquency, the delinquent is not disorganized but rather, "within the limits of his social world and in terms of its norms and expectations, he may be a highly organized and well-adjusted person" (p. 316).

A PURE CONTROL VERSION OF SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION

Social disorganization theory fell out of favor in the 1950s and 1960s, in part because it became associated with theories of social pathology, which were criticized for blaming the victim, and in part because the findings and concepts were subsumed under theories of differential association and differential opportunity. The theory, however, made a comeback in part because of the publication of Ruth Kornhauser's (1978) *Social Sources of Delinquency*, a brilliant essay in which she analyzes the assumptions of criminological theories, creates a typology within which to categorize the theories, and concludes that a "pure" control theory is logically and empirically superior to the others. Elsewhere, I have critiqued Kornhauser's (1978) interpretation of social disorganization theories (Matsueda, 2007); here, I briefly summarize those arguments.

To understand Kornhauser's treatment of social disorganization theories, we need to understand her typology of theories. For present purposes the relevant contrast is between what she terms "cultural deviance" theories and "pure control" theories. Earlier, I argued that her portrait of cultural deviance theories, of which Sutherland's (1947) differential association is the "pure" form, is a "caricature" of differential association theory (see Matsueda, 1988; see also Akers, 1996). Such theories, Kornhauser maintains, assume that human beings are entirely plastic, having no human nature, and that crime is entirely relative. They assume no consensus in society and therefore portray society as a set of warring subcultures; therefore, she argues, laws cannot reflect consensus but must reflect the subcultural values of the powerful. Furthermore, cultural deviance theories assume that socialization to subcultures is always perfect (not variable), that all subcultures (and conventional culture) are equally strong, and therefore that crime is solely the result of differences in the *content*, not *strength*, of competing subcultural norms. Because behaviors are always perfect expressions of subcultural values, there can be no deviant *behavior*, only deviant *cultures*. Hence the term *cultural deviance theory* (Matsueda, 1988, 290–291). Finally, because *subcultural* differentiation perfectly mirrors *structural* differentiation and because behavior is a perfect reflection of subcultural values, Kornhauser concludes that subculture is indistinguishable from social structure, which is a structure of values that perfectly mirror behavior. Because structure and culture do not vary, they are constants—present everywhere and therefore nowhere—and consequently are incapable of explaining behavior.

Kornhauser (1978) has created a caricature of theories of differential association and cultural transmission. In fact, processes of cultural transmission and differential association allow for variation in the strength of competing norms, acknowledge that conventional culture is generally stronger than any given subculture, and distinguish social structure from culture (see Matsueda, 1988, 2007). Indeed, the concept of differential social organization suggests that delinquency rates are high in areas where youth are relatively isolated from the controls of conventional institutions, which, in the context of conflicting values (also generated by weak conventional institutions), may lead to a tradition of delinquency (including availability of delinquent techniques, attitudes, and values). Thus delinquency is the result of the strength of contacts with the two kinds of values or behavior patterns (e.g., Shaw and McKay, 1942, 317–318).

Kornhauser (1978) rejects her straw man theory of cultural deviance and embraces a version of social disorganization as an alternative, in part because of the empirical and theoretical work of Hirschi (1969) in *Causes* (Hirschi, 1996). But the preeminent disorganization theorists of delinquency, Shaw and McKay as well as Thrasher, had emphasized the role of gang codes, delinquent attitudes, and cultural transmission, which Kornhauser categorizes under the rejected cultural deviance theory. To reconcile this contradiction, she extracts what she terms "a pure control theory" from the work of Thrasher and Shaw and McKay, which she argues is superior to cultural deviance theory. With respect to Thrasher, she emphasizes the role of community disorganization and conflict with the community in explaining the origin and persistence of the gang but discounts the role of gang moral codes in motivating delinquency. Rather than a casual mechanism, the gang provides group processes that reinforce what has already been caused by weak controls.

With respect to Shaw and McKay, Kornhauser identifies the macroprocesses of urban growth that give rise to social disorganization in inner cities, which in turn lead to loss of social control over youth. Such loss of control, she maintains, leads directly to delinquency, according to her pure control model. She rejects the role of cultural transmission, interlocking peer groups, and the learning of delinquent techniques and attitudes, because for her they fall under the rubric of cultural deviance theory. She concludes that the slum contains not only disorganized structure but disorganized culture as well (which is too weak to account for delinquency), and therefore we can dispense with the contradictory process of cultural transmission. Youth with weak controls "become delinquent *with or without* the influence of delinquent companions," but delinquent groups "explain additional variance in delinquency because of collective behavior processes and primary group processes that reinforce preexisting tendencies" (Kornhauser, 1978, 69).

Kornhauser's interpretation and transformation of Shaw and McKay's theory suffers from use of her cultural deviance type to characterize the process of cultural transmission. A delinquent tradition may exist on the street, but it need not be an autonomous subculture perfectly socializing its members in delinquent gangs organized solely for the purpose of crime. Rather than being autonomous subcultures, delinquent traditions are often interwoven in the very strands of conventional culture, for example, as situational exceptions to norms (Matsueda, 2007). To reject the role of criminal values, prestige hierarchies, and group control, Kornhauser must reject the voluminous qualitative data of Thrasher and Shaw and McKay that document these processes. Kornhauser (1978) concludes that "their own case-history data, and other data, do not provide convincing evidence of the existence of delinquent values" (p. 70). But rather than providing her own case history data to demonstrate that delinquent values are irrelevant, Kornhauser merely reinterprets the evidence they present. Kornhauser's arguments are strongest when they *explain* delinquency using Shaw and McKay's explanatory concepts and weakest when they try to *explain away* their theoretical mechanisms (cultural transmission) and the empirical findings on which they are based.

Thus a more convincing assessment of Shaw and McKay would not suggest that they misinterpreted their data or failed to realize that they combined incompatible models of delinquency. Rather, it would instead embrace their empirical research and theoretical interpretations by assessing cultural deviance theory as a caricature of cultural transmission, differential social organization, and differential association.

Kornhauser's (1978) interpretation of social disorganization theory has had an enduring effect on the subsequent treatment of the theory, perhaps reinvigorating research on the "pure control theory" aspects of the theory. An influential paper by Sampson and Groves (1989), which cited Kornhauser's (1978) writings on disorganization and cultural deviance, found empirical support for the causal structure of demographic characteristics of high-delinquency areas and the intervening mechanisms of loss of control and formation of spontaneous peer groups. Before that, Bursik and Webb (1982) and Heitgerd and Bursik (1987) had tied disorganization to the systemic approach to urban ecology and, using previously unanalyzed data from Shaw and McKay, had found support for the general theoretical approach, with some extensions.

The most ambitious and important advance on social disorganization theory is Sampson and colleagues' specification of "collective efficacy" as a mechanism of social disorganization. Collective efficacy is a neighborhood-level concept defined as "willingness of local residents to intervene for the common good," which is largely dependent on "conditions of mutual trust and solidarity among neighbors" (Sampson et al., 1997, 919). It is a collective counterpart to self-efficacy, and like self-efficacy is "relative to specific tasks such as maintaining public order" (Sampson, 2004, 108). Moreover, Sampson et al. (1999) link collective efficacy to the concept of social capital, arguing that intergenerational closure (ties between the parents of different children in the neighborhood) and reciprocated exchange (exchange of advice, favors, goods among neighbors) provides the "resource potential of personal and organizational networks" for children, which is realized in collective efficacy. They further link collective efficacy and social capital to the spatial structure of neighborhoods. Here they find that that high collective efficacy in one neighborhood can spill over and provide advantages in social control of a contiguous neighborhood (particularly for predominantly white neighborhoods). Conversely, low collective efficacy can disadvantage contiguous neighborhoods (particularly for predominantly black neighborhoods). In general, Sampson et al. (1999) find support for their theory, which integrates social disorganization and social capital: Neighborhood ties are associated with greater collective efficacy, which in turn is associated with lower rates of violence.

PURE CONTROL VERSION OF SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION AS A MACROLEVEL COUNTERPART TO LOW SELF-CONTROL

Having discussed the early classical work on social disorganization theory, we are in position to discuss its compatibility with Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) self-control theory. I first discuss the compatibility of self-control theory with Kornhauser's pure control version of social disorganization theory and then discuss the compatibility with the original formulation of the social disorganization perspective.

If we assume, as does Kornhauser, that crime is not learned or transmitted across individuals, that the motivation for crime is constant across individuals, that values or definitions of situations conducive to crime are impotent or nonexistent, and that peer networks affect crime only by increasing criminal opportunities, then the macrolevel concept of social disorganization can be shown to be compatible with the microlevel mechanisms of self-control theory. Indeed, Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990, 82) speak approvingly of this version of social disorganization.

But even if we grant consistency in assumptions, it remains to be seen whether the causal mechanisms presented in the two perspectives are compatible. The key is the link between the family and delinquency and the link between family and community. After noting that the family is the most important factor in developing attitudes and personality, Shaw and McKay (1931) state eloquently the important role of the family in delinquency:

> During the more plastic and impressionable years of his life, the child's vital contacts with other persons are largely limited to the members of his own family group. This group situation, with its different personalities and with its complex attitudes, relationships, and

social values, is not a matter of the child's own choosing; it is part of the order of things into which he is born and to which he must make some kind of adjustment. It exists prior to him, has certain expectations with reference to him, and seeks to regulate and control his activities according to its preexisting standards, values, and ideals. The family as an institution serves both as an agency for the transmission of cultural heritages and for the development of the attitudes and personality of the child. (p. 261)

Shaw and McKay (1931, 292–343) present two case studies showing that tension and conflict in the home are related to delinquency, conclusions consistent with Gottfredson and Hirschi. In an interview with a delinquent's father, they find that the father was isolated in childhood, never learned to participate in social groups, and was self-centered, critical of others, resistant to advice, and argumentative. From a second case study they conclude that "there is little question but that their failure to develop a stable life organization was due in part to the constant discord between the parents and the absence of consistent parental discipline and control" (p. 342). Such family processes have been supported by subsequent empirical evidence (Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986).

Recall that for Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), the source of high self-control—the stable individual trait that restrains individuals from crime throughout the life course—is early child socialization, in which they suggest that the "minimum conditions" are the following: "In order to teach the child self-control, someone must (1) monitor the child's behavior; (2) recognize deviant behavior when it occurs; and (3) punish such behavior" (p. 97). Caring parents who invest in their child in this way produce a child capable of delaying gratification, being sensitive to the interests of others, and being willing to accept restraints on behavior (p. 97). Unlike Shaw and McKay, Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) rule out the possibility that parents can transmit delinquency to their children because "parents do not prefer their children to be unsocialized in the terms described" (p. 98). Punishment, they argue, "usually entails nothing more than explicit disapproval of unwanted behavior," and "rewarding good behavior cannot compensate for failure to correct deviant behavior" (p. 100).

Given that this form of informal sanctioning by parents is the key cause of all crimes, it is disappointing that Gottfredson and Hirschi do not provide us with more details about how this process works, except to say that punishment can be too lenient or too harsh. But parenting entails more than merely identifying and disapproving of unwanted behavior in a rigid or mechanistic way. In a complex society moral reasoning often requires making nuanced and difficult moral judgments. For example, Baumrind (1991) has developed a typology of more complex parenting styles, including the following: (1) Authoritative parenting is characterized by warmth, use of rules and inductive reasoning, consistency of words and actions, and use of nonphysical punishment; (2) authoritarian parenting is characterized by coldness, rigid adherence to rules, use of physical punishment, and power differentials; (3) permissive parenting lacks consistency, entails a lack of monitoring and permissiveness, and approximates a peer relationship rather than an authority relationship. The permissive parenting style can be decomposed into indulgent versus neglectful parenting (Maccoby and Martin, 1983). Baumrind suggests that authoritative child rearing leads to well-adjusted children, a prediction supported by research. For example, Lamborn et al. (1991) found that children with authoritative parents were better adjusted

and had fewer behavior problems than other children; children with indulgent parents had high self-confidence but had substance and behavioral problems in school; and children with authoritarian parents were obedient but had low self-confidence. Thus a more nuanced theory of child rearing may help refine the mechanism by which children adjust to life exigencies.

But how are families linked to communities, and more generally, how is low self-control linked to the dynamics of urban growth and social disorganization, which leaves a spatial gradient of delinquency rates centered in the zone in transition? Given that delinquency rates are highest in the inner city and, according to Gottfredson and Hirschi, that delinquency is highly correlated with low self-control, it follows that the inner city must have high rates of individuals with low self-control. How did this happen? I can think of two overlapping mechanisms, one entailing social causation and the other, social selection.

First the causal mechanism. High rates of in-migration of immigrants and disadvantaged families coupled with out-migration of families with resources to move to more desirable neighborhoods leave the inner city with high rates of poverty, deterioration, residential instability, and ultimately social disorganization. With weak and unlinked institutions, residents are unable to achieve consensus, solve common local problems, and achieve shared values—in short, positive organization, or collective efficacy, is missing in the neighborhood. Property values remain low, the base for property taxes remains low, and poverty remains high. Low family income impedes families' ability to rear their children. To make ends meet, parents likely work longer hours, late shifts, and two jobs. Difficult work schedules, frequent layoffs, and the complications of being unable to pay bills on time induce stress and tension in the family. Such processes undermine child rearing, the formation of warm attachments to children, the ability to monitor the child's undesirable behavior, and the capacity to sanction that behavior using authoritative, rather than authoritarian, styles of parenting.

Such handicaps may be further compounded by the context of disorganized neighborhoods. High rates of transience, immigration, and ethnic heterogeneity undermine formation of social relationships and hence community social capital. For James S. Coleman (1990) lack of closure in social relationships can directly undermine social capital and thus the monitoring and socialization of children. For example, in organized, well-functioning neighborhoods the parents of children who form friendships form their own social ties; therefore, when a child misbehaves, not only the child's parents but also the parents of the child's friends have the capacity to identify the unwanted behavior. This process gives rise to a multiplier effect for monitoring in the neighborhood. This is a neighborhood with high collective efficacy. Sampson et al. (1999) find intergenerational closure (structural ties between parents and children) and child-centered social control strongly interrelated. They also find each to be undercut by high rates of neighborhood residential instability, concentrated immigration, and concentrated disadvantage—the structural processes associated with social disorganization. Thus, social disorganization, which is a product of neighborhood structure, produces high crime rates, and the mechanism is low collective efficacy. As Shaw and McKay emphasized, in examining family functioning and child rearing, it is important to examine how families are embedded in communities.

The second mechanism by which spatial location in disorganized neighborhoods is associated with high rates of low self-control is one of selection. This is partly a process of self-selection but mainly a process of selection by other groups, organizations, and institutions (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990, 159–168). As Gottfredson and Hirschi argue, individuals low on self-control suffer from impulsivity, indifference to the suffering of others, inability to delay gratification, attraction to risk, and lack of manual and academic skills, and consequently they will have difficulty sitting still in school, doing their homework, and learning the material. Their lack of human capital will hamper their labor market chances, as will their inability to meet deadlines, show up for work on time, and get along with coworkers. If they do get a job, they will have difficulty keeping it. Their negative traits will also interfere with personal friendships and handicap them in the marriage market. They are less likely to attract a quality spouse and are more likely to have marriages that are rife with conflict and end in divorce. Caspi et al. (1987) provide evidence of such selection: Early child temper tantrums can lead to later problems in life, including downward occupational mobility, erratic work lives, and divorce. They posit two distinct selection mechanisms. First is cumulative continuity, whereby the maladaptive behavior selects for negative environments (dropping out of school, getting fired from a job, divorce) that perpetuate the behavior. Second is interactional continuity, in which negative reciprocal interactions with others (acting out in class, fighting with classmates, arguing with a spouse) sustain the maladaptive behavior.

Such selectivity leaves the person with low self-control relatively isolated and without resources, which leads to secondary selection effects. Lacking resources, they are ill-equipped to compete in the housing market and are relegated to precisely those low-rent, high-crime, disorganized neighborhoods studied by Shaw and McKay. Given their own lack of self-control and their lack of resources, they will have difficulty inculcating self-control in their children. Surrounded by other families who are, on average, low on self-control, they cannot benefit from community social capital. But even if they were surrounded by capable parents, their own deficits in social skills and ability to develop trust would make it difficult. The result is children low on self-control and high on crime, which creates at the aggregate level high rates of delinquency in inner-city neighborhoods across generations. Conversely, parents high on self-control will enjoy good jobs and marriages, have resources to afford to live in affluent neighborhoods with high average self-control, create flexible work schedules (or have a spouse stay at home), and benefit from community social capital—all of which allows them to use authoritative parenting and build high self-control in their children.

But can this explain Shaw and McKay's findings about race, nativity, and immigration? Recall that they found, first, that rates of delinquency in interstitial areas remained high despite a complete turnover of ethnic and immigrant groups and, second, that the delinquency rates of children of immigrant groups declined as they moved up the socioeconomic ladder and out to the city's periphery. It is possible that selection plays a role here: Many immigrants may be motivated to leave their country of origin because they have not found success in adjusting to their homelands. Thus, on average, newly arriving populations, such as Irish, Scandinavian, Italian, and Jewish immigrants, may have lower self-control than their homeland contemporaries and possibly slightly lower self-control than their American-born counterparts. But it seems unlikely that such selection effects could explain much of the elevated delinquency rates of their children. Instead, causal processes may be involved. Thomas and Znaniecki (1927) identified problems of adjustment for new immigrant groups, including language barriers, unfamiliar events, habits and attitudes no longer being appropriate, group support no longer present, and children being exposed to a variety of perspectives and values, all of which may hamper attempts at rearing children (see also Shaw and McKay, 1931, 99–106). Such processes will persist across generations, as new immigrants or impoverished groups continue to settle in the inner city. But what about the finding that rates of immigrant groups decline as they move to the periphery? Here, Shaw and McKay invoked the process of cultural transmission: Immigrant groups moving to the periphery have fewer problems of delinquency because a tradition of delinquent values and attitudes is absent. Such processes, of course, are inadmissible for control theories. Nevertheless, we can draw on the concepts of social organization, social capital, and collective efficacy to explain this finding. Immigrant families who move to the periphery still suffer from higher rates of parents with low self-control but benefit somewhat from the collective efficacy of their new community, which consists of a critical mass of parents with high self-control. Their children will benefit, have a greater chance of learning control, and have a higher probability of an upward life trajectory, including earning a high income and residing in a low-crime neighborhood.

Finally, net of the effects of individual self-control on individual delinquency and of the effects of aggregate self-control (aggregated to the neighborhood level) on delinquency rates, community social disorganization will exert a contextual effect on delinquency. The mechanism is one of opportunity and rational choice. Recall that Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) draw on lifestyle, opportunity, and routine activities theories to specify criminal opportunities as a necessary but insufficient condition for crime. A person low on self-control and thus free from conventional constraints will deviate, given the opportunity, if short-term benefits outweigh the short-term costs of crime (costs with a long time horizon are discounted). Consequently, the presence of suitable targets and the absence of capable guardians will play an important role in crime. Moreover, because individuals low on self-control are incapable of planning or delaying gratification, their crimes tend to be situationally induced spur-of-the-moment acts committed during their routine activities. Therefore their criminal opportunities will lie primarily near their own places of residence (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990, 13). Criminal opportunities will be greater in socially disorganized inner-city neighborhoods. Again, social capital and collective efficacy will be lower in disorganized areas marked by high rates of mobility, renters, poverty, and ethnic and immigrant groups. Neighbors are unlikely to know one another, have a sense of community pride, and monitor the streets—and if they do see problems, they are unlikely to intervene. Distrustful of conventional institutions, which are unresponsive to their individual needs, they are less likely to call the police in the event of a crime. Although the poverty of the neighborhood means that average targets are not very attractive, the relative absence of external controls (capable guardians) makes crime relatively attractive to local youth. The result, then, is a contextual effect of social disorganization on crime rates.

ORIGINAL VERSION OF SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION AS A MACROLEVEL COUNTERPART TO LOW SELF-CONTROL

Peers, Gangs, and Subcultures

If we consider social disorganization theory in its totality and the way that it was developed by Thomas and Znaniecki and applied to delinquency by Thrasher and Shaw and McKay, then social disorganization theory is inconsistent with the major tenets of self-control theory. The concepts of gang codes, delinquent values and attitudes, and cultural transmission of delinquent traditions from youth group to youth group violate the assumptions of control theories, as defined by Hirschi (1969) and Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990). Let me briefly review some research that examines these questions. On the role of delinquent peers in delinquency, Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) argue that the correlation between peers and delinquency could be spurious because of selection or reverse causality (i.e., delinquency causes delinquent peers) or measurement artifacts (i.e., the reports of delinquency of one's peers reflects one's own delinquency). Matsueda and Anderson (1998) examined this assumption using longitudinal data and found strong selection effects and correlated measurement errors in reports of delinquency and delinquency of one's peers, but they still found a significant effect of delinquent peers on future delinquency controlling for prior delinquency (which captures self-control). Using a stronger research design, in which delinquent peer groups were identified using network data and self-reports from the peers, Haynie (2001) found that, net of attachment to schools and parents, delinquent peers significantly affect delinquency, and this effect is larger for cohesive peer networks (see also Kreager, 2004).

With respect to the effects of gangs, research based on both quantitative and qualitative designs shows complicated results. Statistical analyses of longitudinal self-reported survey data suggest that stable gang members have higher rates of delinquency than non–gang members, particularly while they are in the gang (Thornberry et al., 1993, 2003; Esbensen and Huizinga, 1993). Moreover, the individual characteristics of gang members do not fully explain their crimes, implying that gang processes may be important. Although Yablonsky's (1962) classic study of gangs suggests that gang members are impulsive, unable to distinguish right from wrong, aggressive, and lacking in empathy, other studies suggest that street gang members are "socially disabled" but not pathological (Short and Strodtbeck, 1965). Klein (1995) argues that pathological types would be selected out of the gang if they showed unreliability, conflict with other members, or actions bringing attention of police.

Although some research, such as Yablonsky (1962), finds gangs to be relatively disorganized near-groups, others find some semblance of organization depending on the type of gang, with drug gangs more organized than violent gangs. Perhaps the strongest case for gang organization is found in Venkatesh's (1997) analyses of gangs associated with housing projects in Chicago. Venkatesh uses Taylor's concept of corporatization of gangs—the shift to entrepreneurial activities usually involving drug sales—to analyze the embeddedness of gangs in the local community. The gang's success in drug sales provided it with resources with which to become a part of the community, including funneling some money to tenant leaders and resident organizations and offering services in kind, such as security escorts and recreational programming. Venkatesh (1997) traces the dynamics of corporatism and infiltration into the politics of the housing project by presenting precipitating events, coalition formations, and interactions between residents, leadership, and gang members. Furthermore, Levitt and Venkatesh (2000) provide a fascinating economic analysis of a drug-selling gang, using the gang's financial books. They characterize the gang's organization in terms of a hierarchical structure resembling Cressey's (1969) analysis of the Mafia; they describe the gang structure as "a franchised company," whereas Cressey used the term "loosely organized federation." At the top of the gang are 100 gang leaders, each of whom has three officers, an enforcer, a treasurer, and a runner. At the bottom are foot soldiers, ages 16–22, and at the periphery are the "rank and file," who pay to consume drugs, for protection, and for status. Levitt and Venkatesh (2000, 781) describe how the organization functions to reduce risk, note that gang wars are costly, and explain how—in the context of norms such as "if a gang member is assaulted or shot, the gang must retaliate"—gang leaders try to avoid escalation into a gang war.

In general, research does not find that gangs are part of an autonomous subculture containing a value system completely at odds with conventional culture. Nevertheless, studies do find, over and over again, that gang members are preoccupied with status, honor, and respect, which they define in ways they can attain. For example, Short and Strodtbeck (1965) find that gangs value being cool and having high status, which can lead to "satisficing" decisions to engage in violence when status is threatened (see also Klein, 1995). Horowitz (1983) examines culture and identity in a Latino neighborhood and posits two cultural codes that structure an inner-city neighborhood. The instrumental code of the American Dream, organized around economic success, is espoused by community members but conflicts with the realities of poor experiences in lower-class schools and in available jobs, which each fail to link residents to the broader culture. The code of honor among men, organized around respect, manhood, and deference, is espoused by young men on the streets. Violations of the code of honor can lead to violence, particularly among Latino men. Street identities of young men are shaped by their responses to insult, negotiations of threats to manhood, and ability to maintain honor. For Horowitz (1983) Latino youth must balance the instrumental code of the American Dream (which requires being "decent" from the standpoint of the larger community) against the honor code of the streets (which entails gaining status in ways that are often violent and illegal).

Notions of honor and respect are key to crime and violence on the streets of inner-city neighborhoods. Anderson (1999) identifies a "code of the street" operating on the streets of Philadelphia, which he argues is rooted in the local circumstances of ghetto poverty as described by W. J. Wilson's (1987) underclass thesis. Cut off from gaining success in mainstream institutions, alienated African American youth come to distrust the legal system for resolving their disputes and turn to violence and an emphasis on "manhood" to resolve disputes and gain status. Status is derived from developing a reputation as a "badass" or "man," which is based on showing toughness, nerve, and physical prowess, and by adhering to the code of the street: never backing down from a fight, always coming to the defense of one's crew, and exacting revenge or "payback" when one or one's loved one is disrespected. Indeed, street youth manipulate the status system by "campaigning for respect" to increase their "juice" or status, that is, by challenging, assaulting, or disrespecting others by stealing their

material possessions or girlfriends. Katz (1988, p. 81) argues that "badasses" demonstrate a "superiority of their being" by dominating and forcing their will on others and by showing that they "mean it." Anderson (1999) finds that even youth from "decent" as opposed to "street" families must learn the code of the street to protect themselves from episodes in which they must fight or suffer loss of status on the street. Recent survey research finds that there is support for the existence of the code of the street in inner-city neighborhoods and that it is related to structural disadvantage and violent crime (Matsueda et al., 2006).

Immediate Pleasures of Crime

We can take another angle on the assumption that all individuals have the same motivation to deviate by examining the assumption that the "momentary benefits" provided by crime are "obvious," and therefore crime does not require specialized learning for motivation or execution (Hirschi and Gottfredson, 1994a, 9). It follows that because the pleasures from crime are "immediate consequences," they will "tend to be more pleasurable than those whose consequences are delayed" (Gottfredson and Hirschi, 1990, 12). But there is evidence that such benefits from crime are not obvious but require specialized learning, even tutelage, which results in motivation to deviate. We can illustrate this point with marijuana smoking, which to outsiders may appear to have obvious physiological benefits that require no learning. In his classic participant observation study on becoming a marijuana user, Becker (1963) shows that learning is indeed relevant.

Becker (1963) found that novice smokers must learn how to smoke marijuana, including how to inhale and hold the smoke in the lungs, how to recognize the effects of being high, and how to define the effects as pleasurable. In this way an inherently ambiguous physiological experience—dizziness, nausea, euphoria, or comicality—is transformed and redefined into a social object defined as being high and, more important, as being pleasurable. Such definitions are built up in interaction in groups, as other experienced members help demonstrate how to smoke properly, how to recognize the feeling of being high (including having the munchies), and how to interpret the high feeling as pleasurable and even euphoric. Thus "marihuana acquires meaning for the user as an object which can be used for pleasure," and with repeated experiences of this sort "there grows a stable set of categories for experiencing the drug's effects" (Becker, 1963, 56). In this way "deviant motives actually develop in the course of experience with the deviant activity" (p. 42).

Moreover, because marijuana is illegal, whether the beginner progresses to an occasional user and then to a regular user depends on how he or she adapts to social control attempts to limit supply of the drug, detect drug users, and define the behavior as immoral. Through interaction regular users develop contacts with drug dealers, learn verbalizations that neutralize definitions of the behavior as immoral, and deal with the possibility of being caught by segregating acquaintances into users versus nonusers, withdrawing into groups who condone marijuana, or concluding that detection would not be so bad. Through these processes regular users adopt a stable self-concept as a marijuana smoker. Becker's interpretations have been widely accepted, and his theoretical framework is consistent with the perspective of W. I. Thomas, and in particular, his concept of the definition of the situation. Here, if the novice user defines the situation of smoking marijuana as aversive rather than pleasurable, in the absence of group sentiment to the contrary, he or she will not become a smoker.

A Sociological Theory of Psychopathy

Finally, we might consider another interpretation of low self-control. In identifying the manifestations of low self-control, Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990, 93) cite a long passage from Harrison Gough (1948), who uses terms such as "impulsive," "inability to form attachments," "poor planning," "lack of anxiety and distress in maladjustment," "blame other for failures," "emotional poverty," and "unwilling to take responsibility." Gough was describing psychopathy, about which he was trying to develop a sociological, as opposed to psychiatric, explanation. Given the affinity between this concept and low self-control, it might be useful to compare the two. One of the leading experts on psychopathy is Robert Hare, who has conducted extensive research on psychopaths and who has developed an instrument for measuring psychopathy. Hare (1993) argues that symptoms of psychopathy appear in childhood, including chronic lying, cruelty to animals, aggression, and indifference to the pain of others. At the same time psychopaths often evidence intelligence, cunning, and ability to manipulate. Psychopathy is highly correlated with crime, especially violence, and has a prevalence rate of about 1 percent. Sibling correlations are low, suggesting that parenting and family background are not strong causes (Hare, 1993). Some evidence points to biological factors, because electroencephalograms of psychopaths differ from those of nonpsychopaths. If this research is correct, it suggests that a good deal of crime is committed by psychopaths (Hare estimates that nearly half of imprisoned violent offenders can be classified as psychopathic), but the majority of crimes are committed by nonpsychopaths. Could it be that a good deal of the typical crimes described by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), which correspond to characteristics of psychopathy, are crimes committed by psychopaths? And perhaps the nonmodal crimes are committed by nonpsychopaths through other social mechanisms?

The title of Gough's (1948) article is "A Sociological Theory of Psychopathy." His theory is quite provocative. He begins with Mead's (1934) theory of the self, noting that through taking the role of others, one is able to take the self as an object and see oneself as an object from the standpoint of others—which gives rise to a "me," a self-conception. In time the self-conception involves the "generalized other," which includes "abstract rules and standards" that appear in games and organizations. The self involves a dynamic between the "I" and the "me," which occurs through role taking, and entails self-criticism by the "me." Gough (1948) hypothesizes that "the psychopathic personality is pathologically deficient in role-playing abilities," which means "the capacity to look upon one's self as an object (Mead) or identify with another's point of view" (p. 363). He further states:

> The psychopath is unable to foresee the consequences of his own acts, especially their social implications, because he does not know how to judge his own behavior from another's standpoint. When confronted with disapproval, the psychopath often expresses surprise and resentment. He cannot understand the reasons for the observer's objection or disapprobation. The psychopath cannot grant the justice of punishment or deprivation, because this

involves an evaluation of his behavior from the standpoint of the "generalized other," or society. (Gough, 1948, 364)

Gough suggests using therapy to improve role-taking skills; however, more recent research suggests that psychopathy is rooted in neurological deficits, and such therapies are unsuccessful (Hare, 1993).

There is some evidence that the key feature of psychopathy is not inability to engage in role taking but the inability to inhibit impulses. For Mead (1934) role taking and cognition—the dialectical inner conversation of gestures between the "I" and the "me"—occur when habitual behavior no longer suffices because an impulse has been blocked, causing the situation to become problematic. It is here, with the inhibition of an impulse, that a self arises and cognitive processes are used to solve the problem. Specifically, one takes the role of others, considers a solution from their standpoint ("me"), and then reacts to that possible solution with the "I," which if inhibited, calls out another "me," and so on, until a solution is found that works. It follows that if a person is unable to inhibit an impulse and delay response, the person will be unable to engage in cognition. A series of intriguing experimental studies by Joseph Newman and his colleagues provides some support for this conception.

Newman et al. (1987) conducted an experiment to examine the effects of response inhibition in psychopaths. They hypothesized that psychopaths are unable to inhibit punished responses because of response perseveration, which could be neurologically rooted in septohippocampal functioning. The research design consisted of a card-playing video game in which subjects were allowed to play for money. They were given 100 cards, which they could play one at a time, and after each play they were given a chance to quit. The probability of losing was increased by increments of 0.10 for every ten cards. Therefore the rational response would be to quit sooner rather than later. Newman et al. (1987) took a sample of thirty-six psychopaths, assessed using the Hare psychopathy checklist, and a sample of thirty-six control subjects from a minimum security prison in Wisconsin and randomly assigned them to three conditions. One experimental condition provided a running visual feedback on wins and losses, which could help subjects realize that their losses were increasing. A second experimental condition forced the subjects to pause 5 seconds before deciding whether to continue playing. The control group received neither of these treatments. Newman's group found that, as expected, psychopaths played more cards and lost significantly more money than nonpsychopaths. Cumulative feedback by itself had no effect on this difference. However, when cumulative feedback was paired with a 5-second pause, the psychopaths performed nearly as well as the nonpsychopaths. In other words, psychopaths are unable to inhibit impulses and engage in cognition; but if forced to delay a decision, they are capable of engaging in cognitive processes (role taking) like nonpsychopaths and make more rational decisions.

This conceptualization of psychopathy is consistent with the finding that siblings show low correlations in psychopathy and the conclusion that parents are not entirely to blame for their children's life trajectories (Hare, 1993). Instead, neuropsychological deficits or other determinants of a colicky child may be in part responsible for the child's unresponsiveness to disapproval by parents. This underscores that parenting is a social interaction in

which the child is an important player (Bell and Harper, 1977). Or, as Scarr and McCartney (1983) argue with respect to genetic effects, genes affect outcomes in part by selecting their environments—as when a colicky child selects for parent behavior.

Psychopathy, or something similar to it (such as inability to inhibit responses), may help account for the high incidence of delinquency in disorganized inner-city neighborhoods. Faris and Dunham (1939) found high rates of a variety of mental disorders in disorganized neighborhoods and suggested a selection mechanism, in which the mentally ill "tend to fail in their economic activities and as a consequence drift into slum areas" (Faris, 1955, 337). Moreover, if correct, this sociological interpretation of psychopathy would help explain the characteristics of typical street crimes using the same framework—the Chicago school of Mead, Dewey, Thomas, Thrasher, and Shaw and McKay—that gave rise to theories of social disorganization and cultural transmission. Furthermore, psychopathy and other mental disorders, such as attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, probably account for a small percentage of criminals but perhaps a substantial number of crimes. Moreover, as Hare implies, they are probably more likely to be arrested and incarcerated for their crimes and thus are more visible. A key question is whether psychopathy is a discrete trait or whether it is a description of the tail of a continuous distribution.

An important puzzle, thus far unaddressed, is, What happens when such individuals are mixed in with the rest of the population? The result is likely to depend on context. For example, during adolescence, when youths are caught between the constraints of childhood and the impending transition to adulthood, popularity and peer status are often given to youths of the "fast crowd" who defy authority, take risks, and act like reckless adults—precisely the behaviors characteristic of those with attention-deficit disorder, psychopathy, and perhaps low self-control. In this context peer dynamics may exert pressure to affiliate, emulate, and acquire the culture of the fast crowd through cultural transmission. Conceivably what Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) are observing when they characterize the modal or typical crime is in part the activity of the 2 or 3 percent of the population afflicted with psychopathy and other mental disorders, plus their emulators, whose delinquency is acquired through group processes and cultural transmission.

DISCUSSION

Perhaps a judicious evaluation of Gottfredson and Hirschi's (1990) theory of self-control would state that it has effectively challenged the criminological community, contains important insights, arguments, and findings but also makes strong assumptions that are questionable in light of research results, and derives equally strong implications that are questionable given faulty assumptions. The assumptions are that there is constant motivation to deviate, that self-control is a stable trait and explains crime, and that the age-crime curve is invariant. Implications include that life course events have no effect, delinquent peer effects are an artifact, crime is never learned, and crime is not organized. These faulty assumptions notwithstanding, self-control theory is picking up an important empirical regularity. A number of research studies find some support for the basic hypothesis of low self-control affecting crime. Pratt and Cullen (2000) conducted a meta-analysis on studies of the theory and con-

cluded that "regardless of measurement differences, low self-control is an important predictor of crime" (p. 931). But they also noted that the effect is weaker in longitudinal designs and that, moreover, attitudes favorable to crime and delinquent peers also have strong effects, even net of self-control measures. Consequently, Pratt and Cullen (2000) conclude that "it is unlikely that Gottfredson and Hirschi's perspective can claim the exalted status of the general theory of crime" (p. 953).

This then shifts the puzzle to the following question: How can low self-control, delinquent peers, and attitudes favorable to delinquency all have strong effects on crime? Of course, one can always quibble about measures, arguing that measures of low self-control are surrogates for the dependent variable, crime itself, which leads to circularity and tautology (see Akers, 1991). But a more challenging and stimulating question takes the research results at face value and tries to explain them. Here are three points that may help form the basis of such an explanation.

First, a substantial number of street crimes share the characteristics that Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990) describe. Some, but not all, of these crimes may be committed by individuals suffering from psychopathy, attention-deficit disorder, low self-control, and other disorders. This does not mean that they are born with the idea of crime but rather that their crimes are mainly a result of their inability to inhibit impulses, engage in cognitive imaginative rehearsals before acting, and thereby control their actions. Whether this personality is due to neuropsychological deficits, brain functioning, or parenting is a research question for clinical psychology. But this would explain none of the nonmodal crimes and only a fraction of the modal crimes described by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990). Why do so many street crimes not committed by psychopaths share these characteristics?

This leads to the second point, which is an institutional explanation for modal characteristics of crime. According to Gottfredson and Hirschi, such crimes entail few skills—manual, social, or academic—little delayed gratification, little planning, little respect for others, and little geographic distance from place of residence because of the institutional configuration of conventional society. Most industrial societies have erected elaborate social institutions—schools and the labor market—that handsomely reward those who have skills and other attributes (such as planning, delaying gratification, manipulating abstract concepts, and empathizing with others) of individuals with high self-control. Those who lack these skills and attributes will be selected out of school achievement, college, and good jobs. Part of their predicament can be explained by the lack of mobility that characterizes most capitalist economies. Their parents may suffer similar characteristics, which has left them in the secondary sector labor market and in inner-city neighborhoods, resulting in the child starting out disadvantaged. Unlike their skilled counterparts, they start out at greater risk of a negative future trajectory.

When a segment of the population shares attributes that are not rewarded by conventional institutions—and worse yet, share visible attributes such as racial minority, disadvantaged family, and immigrant status that are not legitimately associated with lack of opportunity—they will be at risk of crime. As Shaw and McKay show, because of residential patterns resulting from urban growth, they are likely to come into contact with each other on the street and learn more refined ways of committing crimes and getting away with it.

Shaw and McKay also show that the backdrop of adult organized crime in the community provides illicit opportunities for such individuals. Thus prohibition led to incentives for local gangs to coalesce over bootlegging and then, with legalization of alcohol, to diversify into other realms, such as loan sharking, gambling, and drugs. Levitt and Venkatesh (2000) show that some gangs are able to corporatize when presented with strong incentives. The gang leaders earn a handsome income, higher than they could earn in legitimate jobs. Here, then, illegal enterprises are able to compete with legitimate firms and attract some skilled individuals who can plan and delay gratification into illegal rackets. Moreover, as revenues come in, they are able to expand their organization into a hierarchical structure, with an authority structure and internal controls, which increases the safety of their illegal actions. Such structures include positions for nonskilled impulsive street hoodlums, such as rank and filers and some foot soldiers. But to move up in the ranks, one must be capable of controlling indiscriminant impulses to violence and yet be willing to resort to violence when the organizational occasion calls for it (Levitt and Venkatesh, 2000).

Such illegal enterprises, however, have a definite ceiling over which the organization cannot expand. When such enterprises develop elaborate structures to reduce risk and increase profits, including infiltrating the political and legal systems through donations, bribery, and kickbacks, their activities become increasingly visible, subject to negative publicity and media coverage. Citizens become enraged and political leaders see a campaign issue that always sells. As a consequence, the political system responds with a vengeance (Sutherland and Cressey, 1978). Thus, when organized crime became lucrative and threatening, RICO laws were passed; these laws undermined the individual rights of the accused but resulted in dismantling much of the syndicate's monopolization. The events of September 11 mobilized a nation against terrorism, again undermining the rights of the accused with domestic wiretapping, secret prisons, and denial of due process. The reason that contemporary terrorism is so frightening to the average citizen is not because there are a number of impulsive individuals carrying out unplanned acts of suicide bombing. Rather, it is because, I suspect, that Al Qaeda has shown extensive networks, organized cells, command of technology available to them, and extremely persuasive rhetorical devices—based on practical appeals to religious ideology and anti-Americanism—which may be succeeding in recruiting not just extremist fanatics but a broader cross-section of the Muslim world.

The key point here is that institutional processes that reward high self-control also ensure that illegal enterprises remain embryonic and at a severe competitive disadvantage. The result is a pool of potential criminals dominated by characteristics of low self-control. Furthermore, the crimes of the rank-and-file and isolated unskilled criminals will be visible and likely to be apprehended. In contrast, crimes that reflect organized enterprises will be difficult to detect, and the leaders, who depart from the description of modal crimes, will be difficult to find.

Third, a substantial proportion of crimes probably depart from characteristics of the typical crime. These crimes are committed by individuals with moderate to high self-control. It is a heterogeneous mix of offenses. It includes the crimes of leaders of criminal enterprises, crimes committed by confidence artists, and crimes committed by white-collar workers (Cressey's embezzlers) and politicians, such as presidential cabinet members seek-

ing a political edge or presidents having histories of drinking and driving and criminal fraternity pranks. Such crimes involve cultural transmission and vocabularies of motive that justify the behavior.

To conclude, Travis Hirschi and Michael Gottfredson are truly luminaries of the discipline of criminology. Hirschi's *Causes of Delinquency* was brilliant in constructing an innovative theory of crime—at a time when notions of control had gone out of style—and in bringing empirical data to bear on competing hypotheses derived from the theory. It also served as the exemplar for criminological research, inspiring other criminologists to follow suit, collecting data, finding ways of testing theories of crime, and specifying theories in falsifiable form. His *Measuring Delinquency*, with Hindelang and Weis (Hindelang et al., 1981), was a landmark study that justified the use of self-reports to a skeptical research community and thereby stimulated a massive body of important self-reported empirical research. Gottfredson's work on victimization surveys and development of an opportunity theory of crime was equally seminal (Hindelang et al., 1978), as was his elegant empirical test of Black's behavior of law (Gottfredson and Hindelang, 1979). Most scholars would rank *A General Theory of Crime* with the rest of this work, as it is beautifully written and brilliantly argued. Although these brilliant arguments are capable of convincing us that up is down or that "black is white," they have also "forced the authors into intellectual contortions" (Tittle 1991, 1610). Such brilliance, however, would be unnecessary if Hirschi and Gottfredson would free themselves from the restraints of control theory and concede important roles for longitudinal data, delinquent peers, criminal organization, life course events, and the learning of crime. In this way their individual-level theory would be fully compatible with the rich research tradition of social disorganization theory.

NOTE

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9 A FEMINIST CONSIDERATION OF GENDER AND CRIME

LeeAnn Iovanni and Susan L. Miller

Consider the following cases of women's criminal activity from a study based on interviews with incarcerated women: "Tanya's boyfriend started wanting to rob banks. She didn't want to, and he beat her up—said she was going to do it or he'd kill her. He had a drug habit now. So they ended up robbing banks, and that led up to Tanya serving time. . . . Laura started getting in trouble a lot after her mother's boyfriend had touched her. She began throwing stuff at cars, starting fires, tearing stuff up, and raising hell. Now that she thinks back on it, she thinks she was trying to make someone ask what was wrong" (DeHart, 2004, 19, 27). And consider this incident during Beth's sixteen-year violent marriage:

> Sam came in from work about midnight and started all over again. I asked him why he was doing this when he knew how tired and run down I was. He said, "because I caught you at your lowest point; I can beat, defeat you now." The hair pulling hurt me terribly because I had kept my hair long for him all the years of our marriage. . . . That night, when I thought he was finished, I went into the bathroom and started cutting my hair. . . . [He] saw what I was doing, grabbed me by the hair, and dragged me into the kitchen. He threw me on my back on the floor, straddled and pinned me, and continued to punch and slap me. (Sipe and Hall, 1996, 62)

What do these situations mean for self-control theory? Based on insights from feminist and gender-focused literature, in this essay we critically explore the general theory's essential neglect of gender. Here, we comment on empirical research as it relates to self-control and gender and examine self-control as an explanation of crime committed by women as well as crime committed by men, particularly those crimes that victimize women. We also examine the implications of Gottfredson and Hirschi's emphasis on parental supervision as the key element in crime prevention. We conclude that feminist perspectives call into question the utility of self-control theory for understanding the relationship between gender and crime.

Criminologists who examine gender traditionally have concerned themselves with two issues: the gender gap in crime (males commit more crime overall than do females) and generalizability (the ability of a theory to explain crime equally well for males and females).