

GOTTFREDSON AND HIRSCHI'S LOW SELF-CONTROL THEORY: AN  
EMPIRICAL TEST USING HISPANIC UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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by

Claudia S. Rocha

2008

## **DEDICATION**

For my mom, whose strength and determination continues to serve as a source of motivation in all my endeavors.

PREVIEW

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by

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THESIS

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of  
The University of Texas at El Paso  
in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements  
for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Sociology and Anthropology  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

May 2008

UMI Number: 1453831

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who have helped me accomplish this great endeavor. To begin with, I am greatly indebted to Dr. Theodore R. Curry, my thesis advisor whose guidance and support have helped me immensely. I would like to thank Dr. Maria C. Morales for her contributions in this process and words of encouragement, and to Dr. Christian A. Meissner for his time and support with my thesis. I am also greatly appreciative of the support I have received from the Sociology and Anthropology Department.

I would also like to express my great appreciation to my family for all their love and support in any and every endeavor I have undertaken. I am greatly indebted to my parents for their patience and support throughout the years and for instilling in me the value of an education; and to my sister for always believing in me.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank those individuals who shared in this journey with me and who I am grateful to call my friends. Their unconditional friendship and support were invaluable to me throughout this process.

## ABSTRACT

Low self-control theory posits that those with low self-control are more likely to commit criminal or analogous acts than those with high self-control. The authors of the theory, Michael Gottfredson and Travis Hirschi, also claim great generality for low self-control theory, such that the theory can explain any type of crime by any type of person. This study tests Gottfredson and Hirschi's low self-control theory's basic prediction as well as its generality claim. To this end, the theory is tested with a Hispanic sample of undergraduate students. Based on recent research indicating their effectiveness, both cognitive and behavioral measures of self-control are employed. Furthermore, gender, age, GPA, citizenship, language, and income are all controlled for. Only until recently have a few cross-cultural studies been done to test its generality claim (see Tittle and Botchkovar 2005; Vazsonyi et al. 2001; Vazsonyi et al. 2004; Morris et al. 2007; Romero et al. 2003) and the present study follows this emerging research agenda. It then becomes interesting to see if this theory could be applicable to understanding deviance among Hispanics.

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