

CALL FOR PAPERS

Desistance and the Age Crime Curve

The relationship between age and crime is a well-established fact in the field of criminology. Since the early 1800s, many theorists have proposed models attempting to explain this relationship. Hirschi & Gottfredson (1983) showed that crime rates tended to peak during late adolescence and would steadily decline thereafter. The relationship may be established, but scholars are still in disagreement about how the decline in crime after late adolescence can best be explained.

Stolzenberg & D'Alessio (2008) stated that crime causation does not relate to a particular circumstance in the individual's life but, rather, to a single trait the individual possesses. This has since been labelled 'self-control' and, as evidenced by Gottfredson and Hirschi (1990), relates to the tendency to not commit acts that will, in effect, provide long-term ramifications that outweigh the momentary advantages.

Since the 1990s, theorists have further expanded how crime causation can be explained. Moffitt famously developed her life-course-persistent and adolescence-limited typologies of anti-social behaviour. The former pertains to neuropsychological damage suffered at an early age, combined with failed social interactions and early age anti-social behaviour. The latter relates, of course, to the maturity gap evident between biological and social maturity. Individuals who desist from crime, Moffitt argues, do not experience this maturity gap through the start of puberty and the onset of adulthood, thus excluding them from contact with peer networks.

Sampson and Laub have expanded on classical control theory with their "age graded theory of social control". This theory provided for an expansive understanding of what may determine an individual's engagement in, or disengagement from, criminal activity. This theory looks at an individual's bond to conventional society, with the weakening of that bond increasing the likelihood of criminal engagement. This provided a more concrete explanation for the desistance of crime as it relates to one's social bonds with society, rather than the idea that we simply grow out of crime. Changes in a person's criminal activities transpire through "Turning Points" as the individual develops and grows from childhood to adulthood, being exposed to a range of different experiences with life-altering effects. Examples of these experiences are military service, full-time employment, parenthood, marriage and university-level education. These "Turning Points" serve as a catalyst, helping to sustain shifts in one's life and decreasing the likelihood of criminal activity.

As the causes of desistance from crime in relation to the age crime curve are still contested, the editors at KrimOJ are seeking paper submissions to add and further develop this debate by providing for a greater understanding of this relationship. Understanding the underlying processes of desistance more thoroughly can allow a more comprehensive insight into the relationship between age and crime, and the causes behind it.

This is an open call with no geographical restrictions, the aim being to better understand how desistance and age crime compare around the world. KrimOJ welcomes contributions from

different disciplines, such as criminology, political science, anthropology, geography and sociology. Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- understanding crime and desistance in South America using age crime explanation models,
- desistance and the age crime curve in explaining crime in African nations,
- understanding indigenous offending through age crime theories, and
- what the theories of age crime and desistance can tell us about Central American criminality.

As part of the submission process, authors are required to check off their submission's compliance with all the following items, and submissions may be returned to authors that do not adhere to these guidelines.

- The manuscript and all its content have not already been published and have not been submitted for publication in another journal.
- The manuscript is submitted as a .doc, .docx or .rtf file.
- The manuscript is written and formatted according to the journal's author guidelines, which can be accessed here:
<https://www.kriminologie.de/index.php/krimoj/about/submissions>

Submissions are due by 30 June 2021 and are intended for publication in the December 2021 issue. Manuscripts should be submitted via the website under the following address:

<https://www.kriminologie.de/index.php/krimoj/about/submissions>

For questions or further clarification, please contact the assistant editor directly at: info@kriminologie.de

References

- Gottfredson, M. R., & Hirschi, T. (1990). *A General Theory of Crime*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Hirschi, T., & Gottfredson, M.R. (1983). Age and the Explanation of Crime. *American Journal of Sociology*, 89(3), 552–584.
- Stolzenberg, L., & D'Alessio, S. J. (2008). Co-Offending and the Age-Crime Curve. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 45(1), 65-86.