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Title: GERONTOLOGICAL CONTROL THEORY: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE  
ELDERLY'S PARTICIPATION IN INDEX OFFENSES FROM 1940 THROUGH 1980

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Over the past few decades, the elderly population in the United States has increased in both absolute number and percentage of the total population. During this period of time, there has also been a dramatic increase in the number of Index crimes committed (homicide, forcible rape, aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, larceny-theft, and auto theft). This study investigates the possible relationships between these two concurrent phenomena in order to detect if the elderly's participation in Index crimes has substantially increased throughout the period from 1940 to 1980.

This exploratory study draws upon and attempts to integrate two major sociological theories: from the field of gerontology, the theory

of social disengagement; and from the field of criminology, the theory of social control. Although these two theories pertain to two different social phenomena they have many common elements. When combined, these commonalities form the Gerontological Control Theory. Gerontological control theory has been formulated in an attempt to give insight into the elderly's increased participation in Index offenses.

Available data from the Uniform Crime Reports tend to support the gerontological control theory when it is applied to Index offenses in general, and especially in regard to Index property offenses (burglary, larceny-theft, and auto theft). This support diminishes when it is applied to the violent Index offenses (homicide, forcible rape, aggravated assault, and robbery).

GERONTOLOGICAL CONTROL THEORY: AN EXPLORATORY  
STUDY OF THE ELDERLY'S PARTICIPATION IN INDEX  
OFFENSES FROM 1940 THROUGH 1980

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economic status), and 2. the social environment within which the elderly are located (kinship patterns, industrial society, and orientation toward youth).

Atchley (1972:15) gives an example of Uhlenber's (1977) statement by pointing out:

in the early part of the century, American society was primarily oriented around bringing people into the social system. Childhood was a preparatory period for adulthood. The family, the church, and the school were to instill certain traits, such as a competitive spirit and a motivation to achieve success in our economic and social systems. Adulthood was a period characterized by increasing involvement in the social system. However, as society became more complex, policies were developed to disqualify people from economic participation once they reach a given retirement age. This brings about a severing of much of the elderly's involvement in society.

In other words, America's orientation toward the youth in society may be traced to modernization, industrialization, and age composition.

Although the population was increasing at a steady rate, the percentage of the elderly had not increased substantially until after 1940. By 1940, although their numbers had tripled, they still only made up a small percentage (6%) of the population (Bureau of the Census, 1980).

As can be seen in Table 1, between the years 1940 and 1980, the 65 and over age group increased more rapidly than younger cohort groups. There has been a steady increase of elderly from 6 percent of the population in 1940 to 11 percent in 1980 (see Table 1).

With the growing number and proportion of the aged, the median age of the population can be expected to increase. This trend can be seen when observing the median ages in 1900, 1940, and 1980 where the median ages were 23, 29, and 30 respectively (Bureau of the Census,



Table 1  
 TOTAL NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE OF THOSE  
 65 AND OVER IN THE POPULATION FOR  
 THE DECADES 1940 THROUGH 1980

Year	Numbers (in millions)	Percentage
1940	9.0	6
1950	12.2	8
1960	16.2	9
1970	20.0	10
1980	25.5	11

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census. General Population Characteristics, 1980.

1980). According to Imbleau (1977), it is projected that this trend will continue into the future. For instance, by the year 2000, the median age will be 35, and by the year 2030, the median age will be 40 (assuming no alteration in trends).

#### The Growing Crime Problem

During the last five decades, 1940 to 1980, crime has increased substantially (see Table 2). For instance, in 1940 there were about 170,000 Index offenses committed, while in 1980, there were over 2 million (see Appendix for lists and definitions of Index offenses). This is an increase in total volume of 1181 percent. In the 50 and over age group, which is the age cohort with which this study is most

concerned, there was an increase of 71,105 (827 percent). This study also examines the 65 and over age group. However, crime data for this age group are only available for the decades 1970 and 1980. During this time, the 65 and over age group's participation in Index crime increased by 10,379 (170 percent).

Table 2

ESTIMATED TOTAL NUMBER OF INDEX OFFENSES  
FOR THE DECADES 1940 THROUGH 1980

Year	Number of Index Offenses	Percent Change By Decade
1940	170,145	
1950	213,713	26 percent increase
1960	539,199	150 percent increase
1970	1,270,763	136 percent increase
1980	2,179,618	72 percent increase

Source: Uniform Crime Report: 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980.

#### Purpose and Objectives

This exploratory study will draw upon particular aspects from gerontology and criminology literature to formulate a theoretical framework in order to give insight and offer possible explanations for the elderly's participation in Index offenses, for the decades

1940 through 1980. In order to fulfill the purpose of this study, the following research objectives have been developed:

1. Draw upon existing literature in the fields of gerontology and criminology, in order to develop a theoretical framework which integrates two dominant theories from the fields: social disengagement and social control.
2. Compare the extent of the elderly's participation in Index offenses, decade by decade, from 1940 through 1980.
3. Identify any patterns or trends that emerge during the decades from 1940 to 1980, in the elderly's participation in Index offenses.
4. Describe and analyze the trends and patterns that emerge within the theoretical framework which integrates major elements from social disengagement and social control theories.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study draws upon and attempts to integrate two major sociological theories: from the field of gerontology, the theory of social disengagement; and from the field of criminology, the theory of social control. There are a variety of different theories in the fields of gerontology and criminology. However, the theories of social disengagement and social control were chosen because, although dealing with different phenomena, they share a number of common assumptions.

#### Social Disengagement

Cumming and Henry (1961:14-15) contend in their theory of social disengagement:

there is a mutual withdrawal or disengagement which takes place between the aging person and others in society. The older person may withdraw more from some groups of people and remain relatively close to others. The process of withdrawal begins when the aging person emotionally withdraws from the environment. From the beginning, there is an increased preoccupation with one's self. The inner process is an ego change in which one's energy is withdrawn from the outer world and is directed inwardly, creating the appearance of self-centeredness. When the disengagement process is complete, the equilibrium which existed in middle life between the individual and society has shifted to a new equilibrium characterized by greater distance and an altered type of relationship.

"Social disengagement is manifested as a decrease in the number of active roles played and in the density of interactions" (Atchley,

1972:225; Bengston cited in Langer and Rodin, 1976). Atchley (1972) indicates that the relationship between the individual desire for disengagement and societal disengagement is complex. It appears that the certainty of disengagement arises more as a result of limited roles available to the elderly in society than from the motives of the individual (Atchley, 1972). Barrett (1972) found that in most instances the relationship between age and engagement was accounted for by the relationship between two variables: age and various stress situations. He concluded that there appears to be substantial evidence that disengagement among the aged can be predicted to occur as a concomitant of physical and social stresses, such as the loss of a youthful appearance and pressure to retire at a given age. This may affect the manner in which one's life pattern is redirected. It seems that it is not age that produces disengagement but the impact of physical and social stresses which may be expected to increase with age. As one enters into later life disengagement is bound to grow to a certain extent (Atchley, 1972). It is the correlates of old age that appear to produce social disengagement. The point made by Atchley (1972) is that the external aspects of aging and the socially structured situations can have more influence than personal desires to withdraw from society.

Barrett (1972) contends that the two major factors that contribute to social withdrawal are the feelings of inferiority and reduced social motivation. Barrett (1972) suggests that there are many factors that tend to cause the feeling of inferiority among the aged; they all seem

to be related in some way to retirement. The process of withdrawal tends to follow retirement, regardless of age at the time of retirement (Barrett, 1972).

Rosow (1967), in agreement with Barrett (1972), contends that if the aged person is relatively inactive a change in his/her self-concept develops and the individual tends to develop a feeling of inferiority, as well as a reduction in social motivation, which may bring about withdrawal from social contacts. Miller (1979) describes retirement as a time which may lower a person's self-esteem and self-respect, inhibit activities and social participation, and may weaken a person's performance and loosen commitment to other roles. This change at retirement may also affect the older person's well-being.

At the point of compulsory retirement the opportunity for carrying out one's social role(s) contracts; he/she is then excluded from his/her coworkers, thus unable to perform his/her former role(s). The elderly often, also, see themselves evaluated differently by others because of their new social role (Barrett, 1972).

Those who cannot find other productive activities may become part of the aged subculture. A subculture "shares in the overall culture of the society but also has its own distinctive values, norms, and life-style" (Robertson, 1981:70). In the case of the elderly, there may be some ambiguity as to the values, norms, and life-style that may be accepted, which further complicates the elderly's situation. Langer and Rodin (1976) point out that feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, which may result from environmental influences, may contribute to psychological and social withdrawal.

In our society, the person who is self-supporting has a higher status than one who is dependent on pensions or other forms of assistance (Vedder, 1971). Retirement may be a time when one's self-image may change from the feeling of productive to unproductive, from self-supporting to reliant on others, and from competent to the feeling of worthlessness (Barrett, 1972). The older person may come to see themselves in a subordinate position, as an object that is manipulated by the environment (Neugarten and Gutman, 1958).

### Changing Roles

"Role loss entails a sharp reduction of responsibility and a limitation of functions, which may result in role ambiguity" (Rosow, 1967:31). There tends to be little prescribed activity that attends old age (Aiken, 1982). The role tends to be open, flexible, and relatively unstructured (Rosow, 1967). As a result, behavior relies to a large extent upon one's inner resources in the absence of definite role expectations (Rosow, 1967).

Retirement may be considered a time of role transition or role change (Cumming and Henry, 1961). As a result of industrialism, retirement has been added to the stages of life (Streib and Schneider, 1971; Robertson, 1981). The elderly have been limited in their access to resources, such as material possessions and money (McGee and Baker, 1982). Participation in the labor market is in most cases the way people earn their incomes. The aged are limited as a result of their denied activity within the labor market. This problem has come about, in part, as a result of the World War II "baby boom"

generation entering the labor market. Our economy has not grown sufficiently to support the increase in number in the labor force. Thus, the older workers are facing more obstacles in their retention or in their location of jobs (Rosenblum, 1976).

The United States is a work-oriented society. To many, work is the most significant and meaningful experience in one's life. In fact, many people find their most important identity in their careers (Streib, et. al., 1971). A person's job often becomes a master status and has much influence on one's social life. Master status refers to the most important status or position that an individual holds in society (Robertson, 1981).

Industrialization has brought about the shift from predominantly extended family patterns to the isolated nuclear family structure as the norm (Robertson, 1981). This has dramatically changed the family unit and the elderly's role in it (Robertson, 1981). In most pre-industrial societies, the aged were respected because of their knowledge, experiences, and wisdom. Many looked to the old for guidance. On the other hand, in industrial societies, the status of the aged is different. With rapidly changing societies and high technology, past knowledge becomes less important (Robertson, 1981). Therefore, there are limitations on the significant familial functions that the aged can perform (Robertson, 1981) and the ties that they may wish to keep strong (Rosow, 1967).

Rosow (1967:9) points out that the older person's relative position in society tends to be determined by several institutional factors:



1. Property ownership and control of opportunities for the young.
2. Their knowledge of modern phenomena.
3. A traditional society.
4. A gemeinschaft type of organization.
5. High mutual dependence.
6. Reciprocal aid among the members of the society.

Rosow (1967) continues by pointing out that these variables tend to preserve the functions that make the aged important in society. On the other hand, if the variables do not exist, the position of the elderly in society is lower in stature (Rosow, 1967).

The basis for power and prestige for the elderly person in society is steadily deteriorating (McGee and Baker, 1982). They are progressively being excluded from the mainstream of social activity and the central functions of society (Rosow, 1967). The aged have the greatest loss of being functional in society and the least claim to prestige producing roles in society (McGee and Baker, 1982).

Often, as one becomes older, there is a decline or loss of power resources such as material goods (McGee and Baker, 1982), and socially respected and valued roles (Hendricks and Hendricks, 1981). Hendricks and Hendricks (1981) continued by contending that when this occurs, the person's bargaining position in social relations weakens. This may lead the older person to limit his/her social contacts (McGee and Baker, 1982). The weakening of one's social power results from age-linked declines in power resources that are drawn upon in

social interaction (Dowd, 1975; Dowd, 1980; and McGee and Baker, 1982). The loss of some power resources are more relevant than others. The more obvious being material goods; formal positions held, as a result of retirement; and a transition to a fixed income (McGee and Baker, 1982).

### The Aged as a Minority Group

The label of "old person" as a master status leads in many cases to prejudice and discrimination. Discrimination against older workers might justify considering the aged as a minority group. Wagley and Harris (1964:10) define a minority group as having the following characteristics:

1. A minority group suffers disadvantages because of another group's will.
2. A minority group is easily identifiable because of physical or regional characteristics.
3. A minority group is homogeneous.
4. A minority group's members usually do not join, they are born into it.
5. A minority group's members are usually endogamous.

Comparing the minority characteristics, given by Wagley and Harris (1964), to the characteristics of the aged, several similarities emerge. As with other minority groups:

1. The aged suffer from disadvantages placed upon them by society. For example, in many cases the aged are forced

into retirement, and because of retirement, the elderly face economic hardships.

2. The aged are easily identified by their physical characteristics (gray hair, wrinkles, etc.).
3. Although the aged have not necessarily been a functioning homogeneous body in the past, this trend may be changing as the elderly begin to unite socially, economically, and especially politically (e.g., the Gray Panthers).
4. The aged certainly do not voluntarily join the minority group of the aged, they progressively become part of the group by simply continuing to live.
5. The aged are becoming endogamous. In fact, remarriage for those 65 and over, from 1949 to 1959 increased by one-third (Nye and Berardo, 1973:108).

Discrimination against older workers, in hiring and retirement, involves the same process of stereotyping which is involved against other minority groups. Additionally, stereotypic images of the aged are not believed to be true only by the younger cohort groups; often, older people share the same beliefs.

#### Social Control

According to social control theory, human behavior is not conforming by nature (Atchley, 1969). Rather, people are viewed as being somewhat predisposed toward criminal acts (Hirschi, 1969). Since criminal acts are considered "natural" by Hirschi (1969), it is explaining conformity that is the concern of control theory (Cohen,

1959). As viewed by Hirschi (1969), conformity is achieved through socialization, the formation of a bond between the individual and society, comprised of four major elements:

1. Attachment: The affective ties with significant others (such as friends, family, and formal institutions) (Hirschi, 1969:18).
2. Commitment: An orientation toward future goals (such as work) (Hirschi, 1969:21).
3. Involvement: The participation in activities which lead toward socially valued success and status objectives (Hirschi, 1969:22). Hirschi (1969:22) points out that the quality of activities and the reaction to future goals and objectives are important in preventing criminal acts.
4. Belief: The acceptance of the moral validity of the central social-value system (Hirschi, 1969:26). Hirschi (1969), argues that the acceptance of social rules is central to the social control theory, because the less rule-bound people feel, the more likely they are to break rules.

The stronger each element of the social bond, the less likely criminal behavior (Hirschi, 1969).

In Reckless's (1967) containment theory, outer and inner containment are proposed as elements in insulating an individual from deviance. Outer containment refers to the society's ability to hold a person within the boundaries of accepted norms and expectations (Reckless, 1967). It is assumed that in most cases there are norms and expectations

for different age groups. They contain guidelines for appropriate behavior (Reckless, 1967). The counterpart of outer containment is inner containment. When there is sufficient inner containment, the person tends to abide by the norms of society (Reckless, 1967). In addition, as social relations become more impersonal, Reckless (1967) contends that the self becomes more important as a controlling agent. In this theory, more weight is given to inner containment than outer containment.

Containment theory places one's self-concept in the center of importance. The components of the self that give strength in resisting criminal acts, and guidance toward accepted behavior, are those ingredients that make self-containment possible in a modern, mobile society (Reckless, 1967). These components may include a favorable "self-image, self-concept, and self-perception" (Reckless, 1967:475). A favorable self-concept helps the person abide by socially approved standards of behavior (Reckless, 1967). Behavior, whether it is conforming or deviant, is the result of social pressures, social pulls, or inner pushes (Reckless, 1967). Social pressures may include poverty, lack of opportunity, and social inequality (Reckless, 1967). Social pulls may include stereotypes or individual prestige (Reckless, 1967). Inner pushes may include feelings of discontent, hostility, inadequacy, and inferiority (Reckless, 1967).

Reckless (1967) contends that it is these three elements (favorable self-image, self-concept, and self-perception) that may serve as a buffer against criminal activity. The buffer contains

institutional reinforcements, reasonable norms and expectations, and a well developed super ego (Reckless, 1967). Some of the pressures, pulls, and pushes that test the strength of the buffer are "discontent, hostility, aggressiveness, rebellion against authority, feelings of inadequacy, and feelings of inferiority" (Reckless, 1967:479). The dominant factor in determining whether a person commits a crime is how strong one's buffer is, or how strong one's moral front is, as it is sometimes called (Reckless, 1967).

According to Taft's "theory of crime in American Culture", crimes are prevalent in societies "where there is growing impersonality, individualism, and importance of status" (Taft cited in Schafer, 1969: 242). Changes or shifts in one's social status, which could be a result of retirement, may be a factor that brings about actions that may be defined as criminal.

There tends to be a multitude of factors that interact and shape our behavior and attitudes. For example, according to Reckless' (1967) containment theory, inner and outer containment both contribute to shaping one's behavior and attitudes. These two elements (inner and outer containment) are proposed as insulation for the individual against criminal acts (Reckless, 1967). Outer containment is the boundaries set up by society to define appropriate behavior (Reckless, 1967). Inner containment is the internalization of norms in a society (Reckless, 1967).

Control theorists sometimes suggest that attachment to any outside object, besides one's self, promotes behavior that is

considered conforming to his/her society (Durkheim, 1961). Internalization of the norms and one's conscience or inner containment, tend to be important in interaction between individuals (Reckless, 1967).

Malinowski (1959) suggests that criminal tendencies are reduced by the fear of losing social relations. He contends that since everyone is engaged in social relations, most everyone is an agent of social control. With mutual withdrawal of relations being the main idea of social disengagement (Cumming and Henry, 1961), Malinowski's theory may give insight into why some elderly commit crime. In other words, by virtue of the process of mutual withdrawal and the severing of social relationships and ties, some of the control forces are greatly reduced for the elderly.

Other means of social control that are mentioned to curtail criminal activity tend to either not apply or be reduced for the aged. For instance, evidence indicates that certainty of punishment is more important than severity of punishment in deterring crime (Geerken and Gove, 1977). But legal sanctions seem to have little influence in deterring expressive crimes, such as many of those that are considered Index crimes (Geerken and Gove, 1977). It is these types of crimes that tend to be committed by the aged.

Morton and Anderson (1982) report that while data on criminal activity among the aged is limited, a study done in New York state indicated that of those convicted who were 60 and over, 45 percent were convicted of homicide, in 1981. They found that in South Carolina, 61 percent of those convicted who were 60 and over, were convicted of

homicide; and of those convicted who were over 50, 74 percent were convicted of serious crimes against others, in 1982 (Morton and Anderson, 1982).

Adult activity in serious crimes has far exceeded the participation of juveniles. Also, the aged arrest rate has increased at a faster rate than the juvenile arrest rate, from 1970 to 1979 (Justice Assistance News, 1982a). Although arrest rates have risen with the increase in activity by the older cohort, the conviction rate is not rising concomitantly. Data indicate that the juvenile court system is far more likely to take action than the criminal justice system (Justice Assistance News, 1982b). Thus, fear of punishment may be diminished as a control variable for the elderly.

Shichor and Kobrin (1978) mention that often the sympathy of the police, judges and juries make it unlikely that the older offender will be arrested or convicted. In the case of more serious crimes, the older person's sentences are often suspended, the offender placed on parole, or the sentence may not be as harsh because of the age of the offender (Barlow, 1982). This tends to suggest that extra-legal characteristics play an important role in the treatment of certain groups.

In early studies there was an attempt to save the respectability of the aged by explaining criminality as a mental sickness (Pollak, 1941). Lombroso felt that even if an older person was convicted, prison custody was not required because of their progressive physical weakness (Lombroso cited in Pollak, 1941).



Many studies have indicated that the reduction of control in one's environment (a situation that many elderly encounter), increases psychological distress and anxiety (Geer, Davidson, and Gatchel, 1970). This may be caused by isolation from social groups. The aged may also face social, economic, and psychological frustration. To complicate matters, the elderly's inability to enhance their situation may further affect their self-esteem. Any one of the factors cited above may lead the elderly into crime.

Defronzo (1983) suggests that the increase in economic inequality, poverty, and relative decline in economic assistance to the poor due to the failure of government aid to keep pace with inflation, may be causes for the rise in serious crimes (as reported by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, 1981). Additionally, according to Malley (1981:32), "frustration and emotional tension are central factors that may lead to criminal activity". To elaborate on this further, it becomes necessary to mention the frustration-aggression theory. This explanation for criminal behavior suggests that frustration causes aggression toward society and those within society (Dollard, et. al., 1939). This frustration may arise from, in the case of the elderly, the loss of roles and status, or needs or desires that are not met. They continue by contending that the amount of frustration is determined by how strong the needs, impulses, or wishes are that are not achieved. The amount of aggression is related to the amount of frustration (Dollard, et. al., 1939).

It may be because of these facts that Long (1982:24) states that "the elderly, for a variety of reasons are increasingly turning to serious crimes". In fact, "experts believe that criminal activity will continue to increase, if only because of the rising numbers of the elderly in the population" (Long, 1982:24).

#### Theoretical Framework: The Gerontological Control Theory

While the theory of social disengagement, in gerontology, and the theory of social control, in criminology, pertain to very different phenomena they have several common elements. These commonalities, if combined, may give possible insight into the elderly's increasing participation in Index offenses.

As society takes away what is essential to wellbeing, the bonds between society and the individual are weakened or are disintegrated. Atchley (1969) states that by nature man is not a conforming animal and thus capable of criminal acts. Conformity is achieved through socialization, the formation of bonds between the individual and society (Hirschi, 1969). This bond is comprised of four major elements: attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief (Hirschi, 1969). The stronger each of these bonds, the less likely a person is to engage in criminal behavior (Hirschi, 1969).

Cumming and Henry (1961) contend that as the individual becomes older, involvement in activities usually lessens and a mutual disengagement often occurs between the individual and society. A

distance is created between the individual and society and there is an intensified preoccupation with one's self (Cumming and Henry, 1961).

Using the four major elements of Hirschi's (1969) social control theory (attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief), this study will integrate these major elements with the major elements of the social disengagement theory (Cumming and Henry, 1961). The resulting theoretical framework is an attempt to give possible explanation and further insight into the elderly's participation in Index crimes. This theoretical framework presents each element and its relation to the criminal activity of the elderly.

#### Attachment

Attachment refers to "affective relationships with significant others" (Hirschi, 1969:18). This social bond may lessen as the individual withdraws from society. The older person may keep some intimate contacts but the number of them decreases (Cumming and Henry, 1961). Retirement disengages a person from his/her workplace, which encompasses more than just a loss of economic security (Cumming and Henry, 1961). Self-esteem is lowered to a level that is below what it used to be before retirement (Aiken, 1982). The prestige that once went with his/her occupation is with time usually lost (Tallmer and Kutner, 1969). Barrett (1972) contends that a change in self-concept may cause the aged person to have feelings of inferiority which may produce social withdrawal.

### Commitment

Commitment refers to an "orientation toward future goals" (Hirschi, 1969:21). Those who wish to remain in their work place and are forced to retire are exiled to an unsatisfactory environment during the period so often referred to as the "golden years" (Barrett, 1972). After being removed from participation in society, disengagement may result and the future may become of little importance (Cumming and Henry, 1961). Energy that was once focused on many areas in the environment is now focused on one's inner-life (Cumming and Henry, 1961). As a result of the separation, many problems are generated for those who resist retirement. Oftentimes, Barrett (1972) contends, "an individual will develop neuroses and psychoses when his/her self-concept of him/herself is a social reject".

### Involvement

Involvement refers to the "participation in activities which lead toward socially valued success and status objects" (Hirschi, 1969:22). With retirement, the older persons who are unable to find new productive activities may become members of the subculture of the aged (Barrett, 1972). As the older person begins to accept this new affiliation, the feeling of inferiority increases and he/she accepts the reality of his/her new social position (Barrett, 1972).

Societal disengagement is the process of "thinning out of the members of the social structure surrounding the individual, a diminishing of interaction with these members, and a restructuring of the goals of the system" (Atchley, 1972:219). In societal disengagement,

the older person is no longer sought after to be a leader in an organization. His/her employer may wish to fire him/her to hire a younger worker, and his/her children may no longer value his/her opinion (Miller, 1979).

### Belief

Belief refers to the "acceptance of the moral validity of the central social-value system" (Hirschi, 1969:26). Hirschi (1969:26) argues that "the acceptance of social rules is central to the social control theory, because the less rule-bound people feel, the more likely they are to break rules." This may suggest that with the advancement of societal disengagement, the older person withdraws emotional investment from his/her environment (Cumming and Henry, 1961) and is less accepting of the central social-value system. Barrett (1972) suggests that this may be accompanied by an ego change that brings about less concern for mutual obligation.

Barrett (1972) says that when a person reaches the postretirement years, he/she will often find certain pressures exerted on him/her to reduce commitments and activities, with which he/she has been involved. The pressures may come from family and friends who want him/her to "enjoy the golden years" and from those who wish to replace him/her in those activities that produce status (Barrett, 1972).

Although the theories of social disengagement and social control come from different disciplines and attempt to explain different phenomena, as can be seen, they share many common assumptions. Because

of these commonalities, the theories of social disengagement and social control have been utilized to develop a theoretical framework that may give possible explanations as to why some elderly participate in Index crimes.

(1979).  
(assault):

## CHAPTER III

### RESEARCH METHODS

The age structure of the United States population has changed dramatically in the past five decades, 1940 through 1980 (Census Bureau, 1940 and 1980). There was an increase in the absolute number and percentage of the elderly cohort in the population (Census Bureau, 1940 and 1980). This study concentrates on an age group that is not usually thought of when one speaks of criminal activity--the elderly cohort.

In the past, the study of the elderly's participation in crime usually dealt with crimes such as drunkenness, embezzlement, and fraud (Moberg, 1953). The crime data presented in this study deal with more serious crimes committed by the elderly. Index offenses, sometimes called Part I offenses, are the crimes that are of concern. The Uniform Crime Report (1980) divides its reported offenses into two groupings designated as Part I and Part II offenses. Part I crimes, the crimes that are under study in this analysis, include: homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, and auto theft (Uniform Crime Report, 1980) (see Appendix for definitions of Part I offenses). Arson is also considered a Part I crime; however, this study does not take arson into consideration in the statistical analysis, because arson has only recently been

added to the Part I or Index crimes list (1979). Part II offenses include all crimes except Part I offenses (excluding traffic violations) Uniform Crime Report, 1980).

The crime data for each offense are compared decade by decade 1940 through 1980, for those persons under the age of 50 to those 50 years of age and over. Also, for the decades 1970 and 1980, crime data are compared for those under age 65 to those 65 years of age and over. The reason for the two methods of presentation is a result of the Uniform Crime Report's presentation of crime data throughout the five decades. The elderly are defined in two ways. From 1940 through the middle of the 1960's the data on the elderly were presented in one category which included everyone 50 years of age and older. In the middle 1960's this over 50 category was divided into four separate categories: 50 to 54 years of age, 55 to 59 years of age, 60 to 64 years of age, and those who were 65 years old and over. This new division reflects the fact that life expectancy has increased and those over 50 years of age are not necessarily considered elderly. Rather, today we tend to use the age of 65 (probably because of retirement) as our chronological dividing line which represents elderly.

The format used to present the data is a cross tabulation procedure with simple descriptive statistics. The statistical comparisons include both percent differences and crime rate differences in Index crimes, decade by decade 1940 through 1980, for those under 50 to those 50 and over. Also, in addition, both percent differences



and crime rate differences will be compared for those under 65 to those 65 years of age and over, for the decades 1970 and 1980.

This exploratory study used existing data. Census data, as reported by the U. S. Bureau of the Census, were used to obtain information and statistical data pertaining to the aged cohort's size compared to the rest of the population. The Uniform Crime Report compiled by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, was used to obtain data on the elderly cohort's participation and the rest of the population's participation in Index offenses for the decades 1940 through 1980. Finally, sociological journals and various other literature applicable to the subject were utilized when relevant to compare and contrast the elderly's participation in crime to the general population's.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

As mentioned in Chapter III, the Uniform Crime Reports' data collection methods changed during the decades under study. For the decades 1940 through 1960, the crime statistics for the elderly were presented for those persons 50 years of age and over. In the middle 1960's, the crime data for the elderly were changed to include only the 65 and over age group.

In this exploratory study, data are compared for those individuals 50 and over with those under 50, for the decades 1940 through 1980. Also, data are compared for those persons 65 years of age and over with those under 65, for the decades 1970 and 1980.

Table 3 presents a comparison of data on Index offenses committed by those persons under the age of 50 with those 50 and over. Index offenses are considered to be homicide, forcible rape, aggravated assault, robbery, burglary, larceny-theft, and auto theft.

As can be seen in Table 3, there is not a major difference reflected in the years comparing 1940 to 1950, 1960 to 1970, and 1970 to 1980. However, there is great difference indicated in the years comparing 1950 to 1960. The under 50 age group increased 77 percent more than the 50 and over age group's percent increase.

Table 3

CHANGE IN INDEX OFFENSES COMMITTED  
BY THOSE UNDER 50 AND BY THOSE 50  
AND OVER: DECADE BY DECADE,  
1940 THROUGH 1980

Age Group	Percent Change			
	1940-1950	1950-1960	1960-1970	1970-1980
Under 50 Years of Age	+ 31	+146	+ 97	+105
50 Years of Age and Over	+ 41	+ 69	+ 89	+106

Table 4 compares Index offenses committed by those persons under 65 years of age with those 65 years of age and over, for the decades 1970 and 1980.

Table 4

CHANGE IN INDEX OFFENSES COMMITTED  
BY THOSE UNDER 65 AND BY THOSE 65  
AND OVER: 1970 TO 1980

Age Group	Percent Change
	1970-1980
Under 65 Years of Age	+112
65 Years of Age and Over	+170

Comparing 1970's to 1980's Index offenses committed by those under 65 with those 65 and over, the 65 and over age group increased

58 percent more than the under 65 age group's percent increase (an increase of 170 percent as compared to an increase of 112 percent). Thus, the data show a much more dramatic increase in participation in Index crimes (as reflected by arrest rates for Index offenses) on the part of the elderly (65 years of age and over) as compared to the rest of the population.

In order to further clarify differences in participation in crime, the data were divided in order to separate the Index offenses into their two major categories: property offenses and violent offenses. Table 5 compares data on Index property offenses committed by those under age 50 with those 50 years old and over. Index property offenses are non-violent crimes and include burglary, larceny-theft, and auto theft.

Table 5

CHANGE IN INDEX PROPERTY OFFENSES COMMITTED  
BY THOSE UNDER 50 AND BY THOSE 50 AND  
OVER: DECADE BY DECADE,  
1940 THROUGH 1980

Age Group	Percent Change			
	1940-1950	1950-1960	1960-1970	1970-1980
Under 50 Years of Age	+ 36	+189	+135	+ 70
50 Years of Age and Over	+ 37	+138	+176	+ 60

As can be seen, there is not a major difference between the under 50 age group's participation and the 50 and over age group's participation

in property offenses in the data comparing the decades 1940 to 1950. The data for the decades 1970 to 1980 show more difference but both group's change in Index property offenses are still fairly similar (plus 70 for the under 50 group as compared to plus 60 for the 50 and over group). However, there are dramatic differences between the two age groups when comparing the years 1950 to 1960 and 1960 to 1970. Comparing 1950 to 1960, the under 50 age group increased 51 percent more than the 50 and over age group. Comparing 1960 to 1970, the reverse can be seen. The 50 and over age group increased 41 percent more than the under 50 age group. It probably should be noted that when comparing 1950 to 1960 and 1960 to 1970 data, the general make-up of the population is probably a complicating factor. The post World War II "baby boom provided a lot of adolescents in these two decades, which might account for the large increase in crimes committed by the under 50 age group.

Table 6 compares Index property offense data for those individuals under age 65 with those 65 years old and over.

As can be seen in Table 6, comparing 1970's to 1980's Index property offenses committed by those under 65 with those 65 and over, the 65 and over age group increased over 130 percent more than the under 65 age group's percent increase. This is a very dramatic increase in Index offenses committed by the elderly, and certainly cannot be explained away by the fact that there were more people over 65. For example, in 1970, there were 183 million people under 65 years of age, as compared to 20 million people 65 years of age and over (Bureau of

the Census, 1970). In 1980, there were 201 million people under the age of 65, and 25.5 million people 65 years of age and over (Bureau of the Census, 1980).

Table 6

CHANGE IN INDEX PROPERTY OFFENSES COMMITTED  
BY THOSE UNDER 65 AND BY THOSE 65 AND OVER:  
1970 TO 1980

Age Group	Percent Change 1970-1980
Under 65 Years of Age	+ 69
65 Years of Age and Over	+197

Table 7 compares data on violent Index offenses for those under 50 with those 50 years of age and over. Violent Index offenses are crimes committed directly against a human victim and include homicide, forcible rape, aggravated assault, and robbery.

As can be seen in Table 7, there is only a slight difference between the two age groups, when comparing 1950 to 1960. However, when comparing the years 1940 to 1950, 1960 to 1970, and 1970 to 1980 there are extreme differences in the percent increases between the two groups. Comparing 1940 to 1950, the 50 and over age group increased 31 percent more than the under 50 age group's percent increase. Similarly, when comparing 1960 to 1970, the 50 and over age group increased

nearly 30 percent more than the under 50 age group's percent increase. The pattern reversed itself, however, when comparing 1970 to 1980. The under 50 age group increased 86 percent more than the 50 and over age group.

Table 7

CHANGE IN VIOLENT INDEX OFFENSES COMMITTED BY  
THOSE UNDER 50 AND BY THOSE 50 AND OVER:  
DECADE BY DECADE, 1940 THROUGH 1980

Age Group	Percent Change			
	1940-1950	1950-1960	1960-1970	1970-1980
Under 50 Years of Age	+ 14	+ 13	+140	+ 92
50 Years of Age and Over	+ 45	+ 5	+167	+ 6

Table 8 compares percentage increase in arrest rates for violent Index offenses for those under age 65 with those 65 and over.

As shown in Table 8, the under 65 age group's percentage increase was larger than the 65 and over age group's percentage increase. However, the difference is not great. Tables 3 through 8 show a discernable pattern; the 50 and over age group's percentage increases occurred dramatically more often than the under 50 age group's percentage increases.

Table 8

CHANGE IN VIOLENT INDEX OFFENSES COMMITTED BY  
THOSE UNDER 65 AND BY THOSE 65 AND OVER:  
1970 TO 1980

Age Group	Percent Change 1970-1980
Under 65 Years of Age	+ 86
65 Years of Age and Over	+ 74

Tables 9, 10, and 11 present and compare Index offense crime rates, Index property offense crime rates, and violent Index offense crime rates, respectively. The crime rate is calculated by the Uniform Crime Report (1980) as the number of a particular crime per 100,000 population per year.

Table 9 compares decade by decade 1940 through 1980, Index offenses crime rates for those under age 50 with those 50 years of age and over. It also compares 1970's to 1980's Index offense crime rates for those under age 65 with those 65 years of age and over.

As can be seen in Table 9, Index crime rates for the under 50 age group are in all cases dramatically greater than the 50 and over age group's crime rates. The under 65 age group's crime rate is also much greater than the 65 and over age group's crime rate (1970 and 1980).



Table 9

INDEX OFFENSE CRIME RATES FOR THOSE UNDER AGE 50  
AND FOR THOSE 50 AND OVER: COMPARING AGE  
GROUPS BY DECADE, 1940 THROUGH 1980

Year	Age Group	Crime Rate*
1940	Under 50 Years of Age	154
	50 Years of Age and Over	32
1950	Under 50 Years of Age	181
	50 Years of Age and Over	36
1960	Under 50 Years of Age	377
	50 Years of Age and Over	49
1970	Under 50 Years of Age	672
	50 Years of Age and Over	76
1980	Under 50 Years of Age	1253
	50 Years of Age and Over	135
-----		
1970	Under 65 Years of Age	555
	65 Years of Age and Over	31
1980	Under 65 Years of Age	1072
	65 Years of Age and Over	66

\*Crime rate = the number of arrests for Index offenses for each age group per 100,000 population of that age group per year.

The under 50 age group's crime rate increased consistently throughout the five decades, 1940 through 1980. From 1940 to 1950, there was an increase of 27 crimes/100,000 population for this age group; from 1950 to 1960, the crime rate more than doubled for those under 50; from 1960 to 1970, and again from 1970 to 1980, the crime rate increased by roughly 80 percent for this group.

The 50 and over age group's crime rate also increased consistently, however, not as dramatically as did the under 50 age group. From 1940 to 1950, the crime rate for the 50 and over age group increased by 4 crimes/100,000 population; from 1950 to 1960, their crime rate increased by 13 crimes/100,000 population; from 1960 to 1970, their crime rate increased by 27 crimes/100,000 population; and from 1970 to 1980, their crime rate increased by 77 percent. Significant increases can be seen for both age groups when comparing the crime rates for 1940 to those of 1980. The under 50 age group increased by over 700 percent during those five decades, and the 50 and over age group increased by over 320 percent. Comparing 1970 to 1980, for those under 65 years of age with those 65 and over, the crime rate for both age groups roughly doubled.

As shown in Table 10, both the under 50 age group and the 50 and over age group's participation in Index property crime increased consistently throughout the decades 1940 to 1980. The same is true for the under 65 age group and the 65 and over age group, for the decades 1970 and 1980. However, the crime rates for the non-elderly are much greater than the crime rates for the elderly.

shown in Table 10, Table 10 for the

INDEX PROPERTY OFFENSES FOR THOSE  
UNDER AGE 50 AND FOR THOSE  
50 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER

From 1960 to 1980 there was an

Year	Age Group	Crime Rate*
1940	Under 50 Years of Age	101
	50 Years of Age and Over	16
1950	Under 50 Years of Age	124
	50 Years of Age and Over	17
1960	Under 50 Years of Age	305
	50 Years of Age and Over	33
1970	Under 50 Years of Age	642
	50 Years of Age and Over	77
1980	Under 50 Years of Age	998
	50 Years of Age and Over	104
-----		
1970	Under 65 Years of Age	557
	65 Years of Age and Over	22
1980	Under 65 Years of Age	856
	65 Years of Age and Over	51

\*Crime rate = the number of arrests for Index property offenses for each age group per 100,000 population of that age group per year.

As shown in Table 10, the crime rate for the under 50 age group increased by 23 crimes/100,000 population, from 1940 to 1950; from 1950 to 1960, the crime rate increased by almost 150 percent; the same is true from 1960 to 1970, where there was an increase of about 110 percent; and from 1970 to 1980, the crime rate increased by more than 50 percent.

The 50 and over age group also increased dramatically over the span of five decades. From 1940 to 1950, there was only an increase of 1 crime/100,000 population, in the crime rate. However, in the next four decades, 1950 to 1980, there were dramatic increases. From 1950 to 1960, the crime rate for this age group increased by almost 100 percent; from 1960 to 1970, their crime rate more than doubled; and from 1970 to 1980, their crime rate increased by about 35 percent. The overall increase in crime rates for the over 50 age group rose from 16 in 1940 to 104 in 1980, and increase of 550 percent. The under 50 age group had an overall increase of over 880 percent.

Comparing the decades 1970 to 1980, for the under 65 age group with the 65 and over age group, there was a significant difference between the two groups. There was an increase of over 50 percent, for the under 65 age group. In the 65 and over age group there was an increase of over 100 percent.

In Table 11, the violent Index offense crime rates for both the under 50 age group and the 50 and over age group are shown.

Table 11 - data present

VIOLENT INDEX OFFENSES FOR THOSE  
 UNDER AGE 50 AND FOR THOSE  
 50 YEARS OF AGE AND OVER

Year	Age Group	Crime Rate*
1940	Under 50 Years of Age	74
	50 Years of Age and Over	16
1950	Under 50 Years of Age	76
	50 Years of Age and Over	19
1960	Under 50 Years of Age	73
	50 Years of Age and Over	16
1970	Under 50 Years of Age	157
	50 Years of Age and Over	36
1980	Under 50 Years of Age	261
	50 Years of Age and Over	32
-----		
1970	Under 65 Years of Age	130
	65 Years of Age and Over	8
1980	Under 65 Years of Age	221
	65 Years of Age and Over	11

\*Crime rate = the number of arrests for violent Index offenses for each age group per 100,000 population of that age group per year.

No consistent pattern emerges in the data presented in Table 11. For instance, the under 50 age group increased by 2 crimes/100,000 population, from 1940 to 1950; from 1950 to 1960, there was a decrease of 3 crimes/100,000 population; from 1960 to 1970, the crime rate for the under 50 age group more than doubled; and from 1970 to 1980, there was an increase of over 65 percent. The 50 and over age group increased by 3 crimes/100,000 population, from 1940 to 1950; from 1950 to 1960, there was a decrease of 3 crimes/100,000 population; from 1960 to 1970, the crime rate for this age group more than doubled; and from 1970 to 1980, their crime rate fell by 4 crimes/100,000 population. However, the overall trend was a general increase for both groups with the 50 and over age group increasing by more than 100 percent, and the under 50 age group increasing by over 250 percent.

The under 65 age group's crime rate increased more than the rate of the 65 and over age group. The under 65 age group increased by 70 percent, from 1970 to 1980. The 65 and over age group increased by only 3 crimes/100,000 population, for the same time period.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### Summary

"Exploratory studies provide general information that may be used for more rigorous studies" (Lin, 1976:137). Hopefully, in later studies the phenomena in question may eventually be explained.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the population growth of the elderly during the last five decades, 1940 through 1980, and to investigate their involvement in the commission of Index crimes for the same time period. The concern of this study has been to explore and attempt to discover any relationship which might exist between these two phenomena.

Aging is a biological, psychological, and sociological process that often brings about a reduction in one's social roles, changes in self-concept and self-esteem, economic hardships, retirement, and social disengagement. To complicate the aging process further, the elderly face an ambiguous and unstructured socialization process (Atchley, 1972; Barrett, 1972; and Rosow, 1967). Rosow (1974) points out that the aged have to live in a society where there is little or no indication as to how they are supposed to guide their behavior.

Many of the elderly's problems can be traced to enforced retirement (Barrett, 1972). During this stage, their health needs tend to increase, while at the same time, in many instances, their

incomes decrease substantially (Aiken, 1982). Failure to recognize the elderly's problems in the past has been hampered by virtue of their small numbers in society and the strong orientation toward youth in American culture. A possible effect this may have had on the elderly from 1940 through 1980 might be identified through the use of Index crime statistics, where there was an increase of 827 percent during the time period.

In an attempt to give insight and possible explanation to the elderly's increased participation in Index offenses, a theoretical framework has been formulated--the gerontological control theory. This theoretical framework was developed by utilizing two theories from two different areas of sociology: from the field of criminology, the social control theory; and from gerontology, the social disengagement theory. These two theories were chosen because of their marked similarities and common assumptions about the social processes connected with aging and the commission of crime.

As discussed in Chapter II, according to the social control theory, human behavior is not conforming by nature (Atchley, 1969). Hirschi (1969) contends that through socialization conformity can be achieved. If the individual establishes bonds to outside objects in society it promotes behavior that is considered conforming by the other members of society (Durkheim, 1961). This bond may be comprised of four major elements: attachment, which is the "affective ties with others" (Hirschi, 1969:18); commitment, which is "an orientation toward future goals" (Hirschi, 1969:21); involvement, which is "the participation in activities



which lead toward socially valued success and status objectives" (Hirschi, 1969:22); and belief, which is "the acceptance of social rules" (Hirschi, 1969:26).

The social disengagement theory as posed by Cumming and Henry (1961), contends that there is mutual withdrawal or a decrease in the number of roles played by the elderly as well as a decrease in the number of interactions in which they participate. The process involves emotional withdrawal from one's environment. When the process of disengagement is complete, relationships with others are altered from relationships at an earlier age (Cumming and Henry, 1961). If the elderly indeed withdraw from society, then it is logical to assume that their level of attachment or "social bond" is weakened. This would lead to lower stakes in conformity, and hence, increased participation in crime.

Data analyzed for the elderly's participation in Index crimes indicate that the 50 and over age group's percentage increases, throughout the five decades, 1940 through 1980, were more dramatic than the percentage increases for the under 50 age group. Additionally, comparing the 65 and over age group to the under 65 age group shows that the percentage increases were dramatically different for the Index offenses and for the Index property offenses. However, the violent Index offenses do not show dramatic difference between the 65 and over age group and the under 65 age group, in that the under 65 age group increased only 12 percent more than the 65 and over age group.

Data analyzed on the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Index crime rates for the 50 years old and over and the under 50 age groups indicate that both had relatively consistent increases. However, the under 50 age group showed dramatic increases more often than the 50 and over age group. The 65 and over age group's crime rate increased more dramatically than the under 65 age group's crime rate for the Index offenses in general and the Index property offenses. The violent Index offense crime rate for the 65 and over age group, however was not nearly as high as the under 65 age group's.

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, since a theoretical framework has been formulated (the gerontological control theory), it becomes necessary to analyze and compare the theory to empirical data presented for the Index offenses committed by the elderly. According to Robertson (1981:16), a theory will "correctly predict that identical relationships will occur in the future if the conditions are identical". A theory also "organizes events into a general framework that enables explanation and cause and effect to be determined" (Robertson, 1981:16).

As indicated in Chapter I (Table 1), the elderly population increased steadily over the past five decades, and the future predictions show increases will probably continue. A definite trend has emerged in crime data from 1940 to 1980; dramatic percentage increases occurred more often for the elderly age group than for the non-elderly age group. Overall crime rate increases also occurred among the elderly age group. However, there were not as many dramatic

increases in the overall crime rate for the elderly age group. Inconsistency (upward and/or downward movement) can be seen in the data presented, especially in the crime rate data for the violent Index offenses. This inconsistency can be seen for both groups, however, there was more of an upward trend in the violent Index offenses for the under 50 age group.

Data supporting the gerontological control theory are evident in the crime data. Percent changes and crime rate changes represent a definite upward trend in the commission of Index crimes by the elderly. However, in Table 11, there are some inconsistencies in the data that do not totally support the theoretical framework. Various social factors might help explain these inconsistencies, such as the social environment at the time, war, or depression. However, this study did not attempt to deal with these intervening environmental circumstances. Perhaps future studies should attempt to analyze crime data for the elderly in a broader context which looks at general economic, political, and social conditions as they changed from decade to decade.

The data presented tend to support the gerontological control theory when it pertained to Index offenses in general, and especially in regard to Index property offenses. This support decreased when it was applied to violent Index offenses. Because of these inconsistencies in the data, this theory does not hold up as a complete explanation for the elderly's participation in Index offenses. The process of disengagement or the loosening of social ties, which is central to the

gerontological control theory, may give possible insight to the trends that emerged in much of the crime data. While it would be extremely premature to imply "cause and effect" or make long range predictions about the elderly's participation in Index offenses in the future, this study would suggest that as the number of elderly people in this society continues to increase, and if there continues to be a tendency for the elderly to withdraw from society, it is quite likely that the proportion of the elderly who commit Index offenses will increase in the future.

This study is not without its weaknesses. The data collection methods used by both the Census Bureau and the Uniform Crime Report were not as thorough in the past as they are today. Reporting methods used by the Uniform Crime Report changed during the five decades under study, which created difficulty when attempting to compare data from one decade to the next. The same was true for the Bureau of the Census, whose data collection procedures changed throughout the period under study (1940 through 1980). Up until 1960 the data presented included only 48 states. This caused problems when attempting to compare data which later included 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Another weakness may be found in the theoretical framework presented in this study. The two theories chosen do not have unanimous support within the discipline of sociology. There are those who oppose both the social control theory and the social disengagement theory and an ample case could be made for a variety of

other specific theories for each of these phenomena (e.g. for opposition to the social control theory see Buckley (1967) and for opposition to the social disengagement theory see Hochschild (1975)). However, the gerontological control theory proposed in this thesis has provided some insight into the elderly's participation in Index offenses and with further development and refinement might provide a meaningful theoretical framework for other studies exploring the involvement of the elderly in crime.

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APPENDIX

The following are Index entries and notes  
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APPENDIX

## APPENDIX

The following are Index Offenses and their definitions, according to the Uniform Crime Report, 1980.

- Homicide: the willful killing of one human being by another.
- Forcible rape: the carnal knowledge of a female forcibly against her will.
- Robbery: the taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force or violence and/or by putting the victim in fear.
- Aggravated assault: the unlawful attack by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury. (this type of assault is usually accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm.)
- Burglary: the unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or theft.
- Larceny-theft: the unlawful taking, carrying, or riding away of property from the possession of another.
- Auto theft: the theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle.