Chapter 3

Social Control Theories

The key question in the **social control theory** is not why people commit crime and delinquency, but rather why don't they? Why do people conform?

Chapter 3

social control theory

A view in which people are expected to commit crime and delinquency unless they are prevented from doing so.

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Social Control Theories

The most detailed elaboration of modern social control theory is attributed to Travis Hirschi who wrote the 1969 book, *Causes of Delinquency*.

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Social Control Theories

Hirschi argued that delinquency should be expected if a juvenile is not properly socialized by establishing a strong bond to society, consisting of:

1. Attachment to others

2. Commitment to conventional lines of action

3. Involvement in conventional activities

4. Belief in the moral order and law

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Social Control Theories

More recently, Hirschi wrote with Michael Gottfredson that the principal cause of deviant behaviors is ineffective child rearing, which produces people with low self-control.