

GottfredsonFINAL

🕒 Wed, 11/01 00:28AM · 66mins

Jenn Tostlebe 00:13

Hi everyone, welcome to the Criminology Academy podcast where we are criminally academic. My name is Jenn Tostlebe.

Jose Sanchez 00:21

And I'm Jose Sanchez.

Jenn Tostlebe 00:23

And it's episode 84. And for today's podcast, we are hosting Professor Michael Gottfredson, who is speaking with us about his career as a criminologist, his work on self-control theory and age crime curve, and his thoughts and advice for newly minted assistant professors.

Jose Sanchez 00:43

Michael Gottfredson is Chancellor's Professor of Criminology, Law and Society, Sociology and Law at the University of California, Irvine. From 2012 to 2014, he was President of the University of Oregon. He has written about the causes of crime, delinquency and victimization, and about decision making in the criminal justice process. His work is focused on the implications of general theory about crime for research design and public policies in crime. He is a Fellow of the American Society of Criminology and the Western Society of Criminology. In this episode, we talked to Michael about a couple of his publications, including a general theory of crime, which was co-authored with Travis Hershey and published in Stanford University Press in 1990, as well as modern control theory and the limits of criminal justice, which was also co-authored with Travis Hershey and published in Oxford University Press in 2020.

Jenn Tostlebe 01:40

So with that being said, let's bring Michael in. Hi Michael, thank you so much for joining us today. We are delighted to have you on the podcast.

Michael Gottfredson 01:50

My pleasure, and I'm delighted to be here. Thanks for having me.

Jose Sanchez 01:53

All right, so we want to kick off and really start this podcast by going you know, hopping in our way back machine and going towards the beginning of your career as a criminologist. And we know that your family had a tradition of research scholarship, including your dad, Don Gottfredson, your brother, Gary Gottfredson, your sister-in-law, the niece Gottfredson, all the Gottfriedsons.

Michael Gottfredson 02:19

Not all of them.

Jenn Tostlebe 02:20

No, a lot of them, though. We were joking that it's the royal family of criminology.

Michael Gottfredson 02:27

Yeah, well, so where did we hide the royal jewels, if you could? Because I'd like to find them.

Jose Sanchez 02:34

Yeah, so, okay. Yeah. And, you know, but your dad, Don, he was the founding dean of this school from my justice at Rutgers University, and you began your academic trajectory at the University of California, Davis, where you received your bachelor's degree.

Jose Sanchez 02:51

During this time, you published your first academic publication and empirical analysis of pre-trial release decisions. which was on how judges make valid decisions. So given all that you accomplished while you were an undergraduate student, as you entered college, did you know early on that you wanted to be a criminologist and be an academic or was this something that sort of developed over time?

Michael Gottfredson 03:17

I didn't know it at all. In fact, my father, when I was growing up then, actually he passed out as an undergraduate, was not an academic. He was in research. He was the first in the Department of Corrections in California for quite a while.

Michael Gottfredson 03:31

And then for the National Counseling on Crime and Delinquency, which is still, but at that time he became the research director for the National Counseling on Crime and Delinquency, it was sort of in public policy.

Michael Gottfredson 03:46

But now I started as an undergraduate, probably I was a psychology major as an undergraduate and thinking that I would be a, but I worked in a biology laboratory. So I got a job, actually while I was still in high school because I lived in a town where the university was in Davis.

Michael Gottfredson 04:01

And I got a job working in a biology genetics laboratory. And it was a great group and they taught me a lot and it was a great salary position, which was unusual. And so I kind of went through undergraduate in a biology laboratory in genetics.

Michael Gottfredson 04:18

So I learned how to do starch -scale electrophoresis, which is not going to be a term for me too. I was a real skill in those days and I could do that. And so I thought I was going to be headed, I was going to be headed frankly, but as most people don't really, as a graduate, I like psychology, but I really studied statistics and methodology mostly.

Michael Gottfredson 04:40

And I learned how to work mainframe computers, which was unusual in those days. So I had a lot of statistics and computer skills. So as I was working in this biology lab, I enjoyed very much and enjoyed the people.

Michael Gottfredson 04:52

And it used to have, but we're actual bulletin boards in those days where people would post jobs. around the university. And I saw a posting for a person in law school with a considerably higher salary than I was making in the biology lab.

Michael Gottfredson 05:08

I mean like twice as high. So instead of the dollar 70 an hour, it was real money, right? So I said, well, I have this loyalty to these folks. It's great. But on the other hand, there was a law professor at the new law school at Davis.

Michael Gottfredson 05:23

It just started. His name was Floyd Feehani, prominent person in the criminal law that time. He had been a member of the President's Crime Commission. That is he said, President's Crime Commission. He had clerked for justice black, hero black, and he came to Davis.

Michael Gottfredson 05:40

And when he came, he came with a grant from the Ford Foundation, which had just decided that they should put research into studies of criminal justice. And he had one of those and he brought it to Davis and he started some projects.

Michael Gottfredson 05:55

I went on robbery in the city of Oakland and I worked on that project as a coder. So I took the job, have to say, and started working on that robbery project in Oakland. It was where we went down and we actually coded.

Michael Gottfredson 06:10

This is going to be foreign in a way, but we coded from police file. We transferred a robbery cases in the city of Oakland, and that was my job. Then transferring them to punch cards, IBM cards, so I had that skill too, which is not the most exciting job in the world, but I knew how to mount the tapes and stuff like that.

Michael Gottfredson 06:33

I knew that this is where I knew how to run mainframe computers. So I did that for Professor Fene, and then he started a project on judicial decision -making in Bale in Los Angeles, actually. He asked me to work on that project and I did.

Michael Gottfredson 06:48

So I read in my first academic paper, because I knew how to do multiple vert statistics, and so predicting judicial bail

decisions, and actually working on substitutes at that time for a cash bail. The Verifundition had developed a release on their own on reconnaissance criteria, community ties, it was called.

Michael Gottfredson 07:10

I did a study showing the community ties predicted failure to appear and so forth, better than cash bail, and the judges were mostly concerned with that. He was a terrific person to work for. He let me do everything, he introduced me to the judges and I learned an awful lot.

Michael Gottfredson 07:29

I thought, well, I'm going to go to law school because this is what you do. I like the criminal law and I like the fact that you can do this research. So I finished up my undergraduate work and just before I finished, I talked to Floyd and I said, I'm going to law school.

Michael Gottfredson 07:47

He said, fine, that'd be great, but you shouldn't. I said, what? He said, no, you should go get a research degree. that and there's three places you can go, Berkeley, University of Pennsylvania, or this new place called State University of New York at Albany.

Michael Gottfredson 08:03

But before you go, you should go take this class, undergraduate class. I always take a psychology, I didn't take much sociology. So there's a guy here called Travis Hershey. You should go take his undergraduate class.

Michael Gottfredson 08:13

So my last quarter as an undergraduate, I went and I sat in on, I took the class from Travis Hershey. I liked it because he used the self-report method, which I was very interested in as a psychology.

Michael Gottfredson 08:28

But anyway, Floyd said, go to graduate school. And frankly, so I said, okay, should I go to Berkeley or Pan or Albany? And he said, well, Berkeley, Pennsylvania, well, no, but the best faculty is at Albany.

Michael Gottfredson 08:41

So go there. My father wouldn't advise me in any way, very non-degree kind of rosary. And if you know, psychologists could not say, well, yeah, you should go to grad school if you want to go to law school if you want to help, they're all good.

Michael Gottfredson 08:55

But he hadn't yet joined the university. Two of my older brothers were P.H.D.'s psychology, John Hopkins. So I thought maybe I'll do that, they're doing that. But Floyd is very influential to me. He said, there's these guys there, you can continue this kind of work.

Michael Gottfredson 09:11

Wilkins, it was, I'm not sure if you know that name, but he had a very prominent guy. Then they gave me a fellowship. I was married, my wife and I said, we're going to Berkeley, we know the Bay Area, but we should use this opportunity to go to somewhere else.

Michael Gottfredson 09:26

And we've kind of always had that idea. And so I thought, well, why not New York? Never been there, I've never been pretty much east of California much really. I thought, well, New York's great, all the skyscrapers and stuff.

Michael Gottfredson 09:38

And of course I missed that by about 150 miles because it actually, all of it is in upstate New York, which I didn't realize. So we drove to New York, and they had given me a fellowship, which was, so they paid for that.

Michael Gottfredson 09:52

But when I got to New York, it was a terrific place to be. One of the first conversations I had was with the person named Michael Hindalang, which is the name you probably do know. And Michael, I was in his class, I waved the statistics and research design courses by examination.

Michael Gottfredson 10:10

And now that caught Michael Hindalang's attention because those are the classes he taught and love of criminology. And he said, well, what are you interested in? I said, well, I don't know. But I took this class from this guy named Hershey.

Michael Gottfredson 10:21

And he was kind of looking at me and he became one of my best friends, Michael Hindalang. He's kind of looked at me with this kind of curious look. He said, oh, so you took a class from a guy named Hershey.

Michael Gottfredson 10:30

I said, yeah, so what about it? I said, well, I like this self-report method because it's got, I like the second metrics of it. And I like that. It looks to me like, and I've also worked with police records because I had.

Michael Gottfredson 10:44

As this police records, you know, for a bitch sketchy, frankly, I mean, you know, I remember one thing that caught my attention was in those days, putting all the robbery cases from offense reports and then we follow the cases too.

Michael Gottfredson 11:00

But what happened to them? And we're looking at clearance rates. And so I was doing this one time and one day I came across a followup report to a common kind of robbery in those days, today too, but more common than were called grab and flee personages.

Michael Gottfredson 11:18

And as a robbery, as you know, the deputy robber and there are a lot of them and they're all the same. I mean, a young guy ran up behind a woman, grabbed her purse and ran away. And so I've caught in these clearance reports and clearance statistics are kind of important.

Michael Gottfredson 11:33

And I came across this detective clear they had arrested one guy because he grabbed the purse, ran around the corner and ran right into a police office, which is about the only way they ever caught anybody.

Michael Gottfredson 11:45

And so the detective cleared 50 robberies by apprehension. of a similar modus operandi offender. And I thought, well, yeah, that's not right. And that's actually the clearance rates were a political measure.

Michael Gottfredson 12:03

They weren't really anything of an affidavit. So I liked to self-report it. It didn't rely on that. So Michael said, oh, he said, well, how's your job? I said, OK, I got this fellowship. He said, you can do your fellowship.

Michael Gottfredson 12:15

But then you'll work on my grants. And I'm working on self-reported victimization. I said, oh, yeah, that's something I'm actually. That's very hard. This is about the third day. And then I worked with him, did my dissertation on victimization.

Michael Gottfredson 12:29

He had a big project done. As you know, a lot, you know, Michael Hinelein was just a rock star, great person, more closer to us in age, and just had huge interests and projects. And if you were empirically oriented and kind of quantitatively oriented, he was the main guy there.

Michael Gottfredson 12:50

He hired me. So I worked on the studies of what became the National Crime Survey, but mostly the pilot studies. And we did methodological papers. And he and I were just a lot of stuff together. So he was just a terrific mentor to a lot of people.

Michael Gottfredson 13:08

And the fact of it there was just terrific. And he had a research center, which I later became director of. And he was just a terrific, a guide mentor. And then he and I became very close friends and we worked together for a number of years until he sadly died at a young death, but brain cancer, so.

Michael Gottfredson 13:28

So anyway, that's, you're gonna need to interrupt me actually.

Jenn Tostlebe 13:32

No, that was fantastic.

Michael Gottfredson 13:34

But anyway, Albany was, as you know, Albany still, but in those days was just, I mean, there were so many. So my office mate for a long time was Lawrence Cohen.

Michael Gottfredson 13:46

Who you probably know his routine activity, very good. For a long time. And I worked with James Grofflow. and John Goldkamp and he and I did a lot of bail research together. And of course, John and Rob were both graduate students here.

Michael Gottfredson 13:59

And it was just a good group of lots of folks. And Michael gave us a lot of, right, basically just said, here are some new datasets that nobody's looked at, learned how to use them, and we all had to do that, which was not easy in those days.

Michael Gottfredson 14:15

We had to use mainframe computers. And turn around time was, the shortest turn around time was overnight. And so you had to do a little more training programming to, you know, mount tapes and get into the, there wasn't advanced software.

Michael Gottfredson 14:29

SPSS was just being used and you had to, and program called Bob, and you had to write the front end programs to it. So it took a, and so you would ask the computer programmer, 11 o'clock at night, can I have a tape drive now?

Michael Gottfredson 14:41

And you had to bribe that person. Probably now we can say that because it's not to give you the tape drive access We're all friendly with that person, and now we can run these huge data tips. They were larger than the university used for its personelysis.

Michael Gottfredson 15:00

We also built the computer system at the same time we were running these data tips. Michael and I wrote a lot of papers to get into victimization. My first book is Victims of Personal Crime with Jim Garofalo.

Michael Gottfredson 15:15

And so it really launched my own work. So later Travis came and worked at Albany. I was finishing up my dissertation with Mike and Leslie Wilkins. And then Travis joined, and he and Michael Hindelang had a...

Michael Gottfredson 15:31

And Michael Hindelang brought Travis to Albany. And I mean Travis, of course, was a professor at the time, so to say, brought him. He really worked hard and to great effect. Travis moved from Davis to Albany, and we struck up a friendship and a collaboration.

Michael Gottfredson 15:47

And he and Michael and I worked together. And when we work, I say we work together, it's kind of unusual. And it's the way that Travis and I worked together for 30 years, basically. And later he wrote together.

Michael Gottfredson 15:59

So, and this was before computers. So Michael and I wrote together every day, yellow legal pads. And then Travis joined the group, and we literally sat in the same room and wrote together. And then when Michael passed, Travis and I went to different universities, but we continued that when I went to Arizona and joined him there.

Jenn Tostlebe 16:22

What a different time to be writing on actual notepads.

Michael Gottfredson 16:28

Yeah, well, yeah, that's where all these terms come from, cut and paste, right? So you would... And you were dependent on...

Michael Gottfredson 16:37

Typing turned out to be probably the most important class I ever took. It was in high school. Was as an elective, I took typing. And I really learned how to type really fast because the teacher was really...

Michael Gottfredson 16:49

hard and made us take tests every week. You had to improve on how many words and fewer errors and stuff. Well, of course, then the keyboard is, which is weird when I think about it now, but still the same keyboard.

Michael Gottfredson 17:03

So we wrote on legal pads because that was the right pace. But then you cut and paste, literally, cut out that section and move it around, and then you would have a scotch tape paper together. And type it up and stuff like that.

Michael Gottfredson 17:21

And that's how we began. But we enjoyed each other's company life because we're really very, very good friends. And so there's a lot of fun. And so Mike and I had a lot of fun. And he was also a very, very hard worker.

Michael Gottfredson 17:34

And so the other thing as was Travis, and I think one thing that they both taught me was, which everybody ends up learning, who is in any way successful in anything, but in academia. It's just a lot of hard work too.

Michael Gottfredson 17:52

And you, so we worked very hard, but it was enjoyable because we liked each other. Me and both Michael and Travis had a tremendous sense of humor. Then I would say they're tremendous because they're a lot like mine.

Michael Gottfredson 18:05

Kind of a little bit. We like irony and sarcasm. It's gotten us into trouble over the last so much. I mean, he's a little bit more. He would kind of be able to extract it from our work, but Travis and I are more undisciplined in that respect.

Michael Gottfredson 18:21

And so Travis more than me, I have to say, but. I was going to say there's some papers in book chapters that Travis Hershey wrote that were on my comps that I was like, this is pretty witty and, you know, very witty, but one thing is oftentimes it's great that you recognize that sometimes don't and that people don't.

Michael Gottfredson 18:39

So they take it literally, but rather than as actually the opposite of it. But yeah, both have tremendous senses of humor. We saw it anyway. Great partners and very important, obviously for me. John Goldkamp, I've had a lot of great partners.

Michael Gottfredson 18:54

And my dad and I wrote a book together and we had a lot of fun. Now we had this share when he moved to Rutgers and we had to kind of share chapters and stuff like that, a little more old fashioned. John Goldkamp and I wrote three books together actually.

Michael Gottfredson 19:06

And so we actually had to share drafts, but I've had some really great collaborators. And I think that's one of the reasons why I like to feel so much tight truth. Because academia can be kind of lonely and scholarship is at the end of the day.

Michael Gottfredson 19:22

It's you. And so it's nice to have somebody you can bounce things off of and it makes for me, it always made me more productive. Yeah, I think that's true of my colleagues too.

Jenn Tostlebe 19:33

You mentioned how you started off really in more of this criminal legal decision making frame for your research.

Michael Gottfredson 19:45

And then, you know, you moved into work around. theoretical ideas and crime and victimization. Was a lot of that transition having to do with the fact that you started working with Michael Hindlang or was there something else that really?

Michael Gottfredson 20:00

Absolutely, and I was just kind of naturally inclined to it because I think of my psychology background basically. The program I went through was very research oriented. As I mentioned, I mean, in those days, I had to take, I think four statistics classes as an undergraduate and they were actually not in the psychology department.

Michael Gottfredson 20:22

Lots of methods and I was kind of interested in that. But I've always had kind of also kind of interested in policy. Michael and Travis both less than, I would say, and I think Michael even more less than Travis, but both interested in theory and now I would say measurement.

Michael Gottfredson 20:40

So the two things that Michael and Travis, they're both thought of as in theory and probably me too and why but. But I would say methodology. They were both methodologists and very interested in connecting the methods to the substance.

Michael Gottfredson 20:58

Travis began that way as a graduate student in Berkeley, working with Hannah Selvin. His first book was actually, what became known as Principles of Survey Methods, causes of delinquency was his dissertation.

Jenn Tostlebe 21:10

Yeah.

Michael Gottfredson 21:12

But as you can tell, the methods and the theory, and our view is Michael's view, Travis's mind, they're ineluctably connected. So you can't really divorce the two. And so you have to be attentive.

Michael Gottfredson 21:25

And Michael, so Michael taught the statistics and methods sequence at Albany. I didn't learn them from him in the classroom as much, because I just waived them. But I learned them from him every day, and the work we did in the writing.

Michael Gottfredson 21:40

Travis, as you can see, never could separate the two, doesn't, can't. When I was a graduate student, Principles of Survey Analysis was a required method. His paper, False Criteria of Causality, and that book, it was classic paper, still critically important piece, that people sadly don't read as much anymore, but a very, very important set of ideas.

Michael Gottfredson 22:00

And so both methods and theory were Mikes, but working on the victim, so we worked on, we did a lot of methods work on victimizations, actually Michael and I did. We did papers on different biases in the method.

Michael Gottfredson 22:13

At the research center, Michael and Travis started, I was the director of the research center at the time, so I didn't work directly on the project, but was the director of the center on a project on self-reporting methods.

Michael Gottfredson 22:25

And it became the book Measure and Delinquency, which always, a graduate student with Michael at Berkeley. That book, I mean, that project, kind of dominated a lot of work around the center too. Lots of graduate students worked on that project.

Michael Gottfredson 22:39

I don't know if Rob worked on the victimization stuff. Rob was a kid who was a little bit later. He worked on the victimization part. I knew Rob more as a student than as a, I've joined the faculty, I probably mentioned that too.

Michael Gottfredson 22:50

But so I got my dissertation, finished my PhD in very brief time. Maybe not necessarily the best idea, but nevertheless did. And then joined the faculty. Also kind of, I don't know if it's kind of a questionable decision actually.

Jenn Tostlebe 23:03

Yeah you don't see that very often.

Michael Gottfredson 23:03

No, but it wasn't. I mean, it was good for me. And while I'm not going to travel, of course, still there and because we just work together every day, that was great. Yeah. But the methods piece.

Michael Gottfredson 23:17

The victimization. So Rob and John were both students there. John a little closer to me, but a few years behind me, a couple of years maybe. And I can't really quite remember because we then all became good friends and colleagues.

Michael Gottfredson 23:29

So I see them much more and did right away because we all started working. You know, not Rob as much, but John. John for sure did his dissertation on victimization. I think Rob did victimization work for his dissertation.

Michael Gottfredson 23:43

And I was pretty sure I was on his committee because women are always committed. But yeah. Then when he moved here to Illinois, I had worked on the British Crime Survey. He had a consultancy at the home office, which is very important to me too.

Michael Gottfredson 23:56

I went to work with Ron Clark, who you probably know the Ron Clark for Opportunity Theory. Rational Choice. Yeah, Rational Choice. Ron Clark is the head of the home office and he asked me to come and work at the home office with him.

Michael Gottfredson 24:11

They were starting the British Crime Survey and I was a consultant to them. I did. Pat Mayhew, a terrific scholar. They both influenced me a lot on the Opportunity Theory stuff, which I had written the lifestyle theory with Michael.

Michael Gottfredson 24:27

They knew that and they used that. We used it in the British Crime Survey. I did a monograph on the British Crime Survey and worked with them on that. Then Rob Gennison was there and I sent him the data when he was at Illinois on the British Crime Survey.

Michael Gottfredson 24:41

That's how that got connected. Yeah, just a powerful group of people. Oh, it's a tremendous group of people. And then, and I mentioned Larry Kahn was in our group at Albany. And he hadn't started working on routine activity, but he worked on the victimization project also and published some stuff.

Michael Gottfredson 24:59

He and I published some stuff together on victimization. And then he went to Illinois for his first job. He did his PhD with Michael at the University of Washington. Michael was his mentor. So he moved to Albany to work, finished his dissertation, and then work on the victimization.

Michael Gottfredson 25:15

That was kind of a post -doc, really, for Larry. And he and I became good friends and worked together. And then he's more in my cohort. And then he moved to Illinois, where Marcus was, in Kenland. He then went to Texas.

Michael Gottfredson 25:28

Michael, very sadly, passed away. I moved to the University of Illinois. And actually, the job that Larry had left to come to Texas. You took over. Yeah. And then Rob took my job when I left alone. But Marcus was there.

Michael Gottfredson 25:39

And I, of course, got to, he had the office next door in Ken Lang. And we were very much into the same stuff. I mean, lifestyle, theory, and routine activity. activity theory have a lot of common and so they're natural colleagues.

Michael Gottfredson 25:53

But we go back a little, actually to graduate school.

Jenn Tostlebe 25:56

Yeah. Very cool. This really ingrained network of really prominent criminologists now, especially within the theoretical field and you kind of all influenced each other.

Michael Gottfredson 26:08

Absolutely. And Ron and Pat were Ron Clark, he was very interested in kind of designing out crime and so forth. He's a psychologist, but he was not, he thought he didn't think that most sociology theory was, but he was the head of the research division, very young, a very young age.

Michael Gottfredson 26:26

I mean, gosh, I don't, but he was in his 30s, I would guess, when he became the head. And that's the major research division

in Great Britain. And so it's a great fortune that I got to, I still remember the conversation.

Michael Gottfredson 26:39

And maybe it was at the ASC meeting, and I was kind of just becoming an associate professor, maybe at Illinois, I think so. I was about to move to California, which because my wife and I wanted to move back west.

Michael Gottfredson 26:52

I love the inner city of Illinois, but we were always kind of looking for opportunities to get that promised land, you know, and so we were discovered. But anyway, he came up to me and said, hey, you know, we're interested in lifestyle and opportunity and stuff.

Michael Gottfredson 27:07

We call that exposure and it's kind of obviously an opportunity concept. He said, can you come to work at the office for us? I said, sure, if I could find a way to do this, I got a way you could do it.

Michael Gottfredson 27:19

And so that was great. And they were terrific and they are terrific people. And Pat Mayhew, who worked with Ron Clark, you know, was instrumental in the British Crime Survey, which then became European crime surveys.

Michael Gottfredson 27:34

And then at the end of the day, Ron working on the P.M. Rational Choice, but then also his, you know, his focus on situational crime prevention, which is a theory just look at the situation and how much can you get out of just looking at the situation.

Michael Gottfredson 27:50

Very, very important idea. And he was doing that there as were the colleagues, Tim Holt and Michael Huff. Michael Huff, very, very smart guy, very important criminologist and Brent worked on the opportunity theory and Bretton and I learned a lot from him and Pat and Ron.

Michael Gottfredson 28:07

And basically kind of the other, well, how far can you get just working on facts that don't require, so very anti theoretical in a way. And so I guess my kind of took that and said, you know, you guys think that's anti theory and it's a very important theory.

Michael Gottfredson 28:29

Let's connect it to control theory. The control theory is very prominent in Europe, still is, as our self report methods, if that it was me too, self report for victimization and offending. And we worked on those together.

Michael Gottfredson 28:44

And they're there so much in common. including lots of folks in common, you know, as people now think about victim offender overlaps and stuff like that.

Jenn Tostlebe 28:54

All right, so speaking of control theory, let's jump into, you know, your contributions surrounding control theory, in particular, a general theory of crime, which you co-authored with Travis Hirschi, and it's, you know, a classic in the field of criminology.

Michael Gottfredson 29:10

Well, I appreciate that, because it sort of dates me, I guess.

Jenn Tostlebe 29:14

Okay, but you also more recently came out with modern control theory.

Michael Gottfredson 29:19

Yes, I appreciate it. I thought about what I should have, you know, to most people they're books.

Jenn Tostlebe 29:29

Yeah, so we're really just kind of interested, you know, we know that a general theory of crime started to come out of your 1983 piece and your 1987 pieces. which were really surrounding like the criminal career paradigm and kind of debunking it, so to speak.

Michael Gottfredson 29:48

I like that term. Yeah. My friend AI would not like you to say that.

Jenn Tostlebe 29:48

Oh, no, I know. Can you just kind of give us a little rundown on what was the motivation behind self-control theory and writing this book?

Michael Gottfredson 30:03

Yeah, you know, under the condition that you realize that retrospective is a more like retrospective imagination and recollection. So that's so sure. So very interested in causes of delinquency, obviously, as was my kindling.

Michael Gottfredson 30:17

I mean, all I had to do was say causes of delinquency and he said, how would you like to have a job? You know, that sort of, right? And so, so I just didn't control through what Michael was and the self-report method.

Michael Gottfredson 30:27

And Travis and Michael in their collaboration started a project kind of looking at the facts about crime and to kind of saving the facts under the editor. We know a lot about crime and most sociology, frankly, is involved in debunking things and that is still true in my view a lot.

Michael Gottfredson 30:49

Instead of saying, look, we know a lot of stuff and there's a tradition in this field more so than in many fields of saying, we don't know anything. Let's start. And so we know a lot of stuff. What is it that we know?

Michael Gottfredson 31:00

So they started a series of and they ran a seminar and this title, the seminar was data destruction techniques. How do you destroy data? So that's kind of interesting in its own right. So I got a student at.

Michael Gottfredson 31:12

And so we said, Jim Garofalo and I and Larry Todd, because we are there was no difference kind of between our graduate group and our postgraduate group. We all kind of hung out together. And so they wrote a couple of papers on that and Michael had written papers and Michael and I had written papers on it.

Michael Gottfredson 31:28

And so the three of us, I had written a paper for that group on the age effect. So I picked age. I was always interested in it and as kind of a fact that the field didn't seem to understand. to say the least, right?

Michael Gottfredson 31:44

And so in the works then that were the classic, but they just come out where the Delinquency and a Birth Cohort, Marvin Wolfgang, Donald West and West and Farrington's book on, Donald West started the Cambridge Longitudinal Study and that come out McCord and McCord, which was there were kind of solid pieces of research.

Michael Gottfredson 32:04

I wrote a paper that summer and we talked a lot about it. And the three of us decided that we would write a paper on age and find out, and frankly, our kind of pocket hypothesis given the crowd, Mike and I and Travis was, what we're going to do is show how social control theory explains the age effect. And we kind of thought it was going to be like kind of falling down a hill. I mean, it's just obvious. And so we thought, well, we'll do that. And so first we'll get the facts together. And that's kind of my job originally was creating data sets. And we had to create them, I mean, about crime and age and we did that. We started writing that paper. It was set and the three of us had worked on it. Sadly, that's when Michael fell ill. You know, couldn't continue with that project. And Travis and I did it later after we left Albany. But we started working together on that. But what we concluded when we started doing that was actually, you know, control theory doesn't really do much better than anybody else than explaining the age effect, which is kind of a big admission lost on the field with Travis especially saying, it's problematic and we ought to say it's problematic. And so we kind of adopted that. And then Travis and I later decided that actually age it, we should leave age alone. It's a direct effect and stop pretending like we can. We still, I still have that view, didn't this? He didn't take that way. There's facts and one of the biggest data destruction techniques in criminology is ignoring the fact. And that's not what science does. Science says this is something that exists, understand its

own terms. And then that's also liberating that when you say none of our theories explain it. So let's treat it as a direct effect. And that's what we do. Still do. And say, well, okay, that's one of the things we know. Crime will decline with age and it does. And it resists its still does. It's a big, robust fact. So we call it a brute fact. Stipulating. And now, well, that's a real liberating thing. You can say that's a direct effect. What are the other causes? That's how most theories and most sciences work outside of criminology. He doesn't try to explain everything. He tries to say, here's the things that are given. Here's the things that we should explain. But if you want to predict crime, what's your best variable to predict crime? Well, it's still, it's beyond this view. It's age. And so if somebody just asked you, and I'd say it's the best, this'll happen to you throughout your career, by the way, you have to be careful who you announce your criminologist to. You've probably already learned that. Then that's all you're going to be talking about.

Jose Sanchez 34:50

Oh, yeah. I never work on my ASC presentation on planes because the people sitting next to me will look at it and then start telling me everything that they think is wrong.

Michael Gottfredson 35:01

That will happen to you for the rest of your life.

Jenn Tostlebe 35:04

Yeah.

Michael Gottfredson 35:05

You know, your relatives, you go to a party, say that you're a sociologist, say that you're a social scientist, but only with that kind of judicious caution, should you say, I study crime.

Michael Gottfredson 35:19

Anyway, so then Travis and I, we spent a lot of time. We spent more time on that paper and its derivatives than anything we ever did. Still, they did modern control theory, came back to it.

Michael Gottfredson 35:32

Still come to the same conclusion. People in criminology that talk about stability and change, you know. So, forget that stability is kind of an important construct for science, too. It's something that you can hang your hat on.

Michael Gottfredson 35:45

So, actually, the age effect, but then we said, well, okay, we're going to need more than one concept, just the truth of it. And we wrote the Detection Between Crime. That really was the beginning of our revisiting social control theory to say, well, let's add age in a different way.

Michael Gottfredson 36:04

You could see that if you now wanted to go back and look at causative... People struggle with age. They stipulated it. They said it's a measure of time. And of course, the psychology doesn't do any better.

Michael Gottfredson 36:14

So, psychology says it's maturation of reform. And you say, okay, what's maturation of reform? And they say, age. You say, well, okay, why don't we call it age? Or they'll say something like that. And most contemporary theories do the same things. I happen to have the view that, you likely don't share, and a lot of people don't, is that developmental criminology is just that. It's kind of a misspecification of the causes of crime. And it's making up things to explain what is, can you find variability in the age distribution? Of course. But that is an obvious...the fact that if you just want to guess, and actually, even in the here and in the Glueck data, and in every other... In the West and Farrington data, the crime declines with age in every group. High rate group, lower rate group. So, people often... When trajectory modeling came in, they misspecified the high rate group, because they didn't follow them. But you see in every group, crime declines with age. You can call it level over some period if you want to. But that's just because you're not letting the natural course take its effect. As you know, and we do a lot of this in modern control theory, because we're...Half the book is on policy. And it's...So, criminology is systematically mislead policymakers. And I think that's a lot of what... That's what we thought the criminal model did, and does, and did. I have the view that...It was one of the most damaging thing that ever happened to public policy. It was selective incapacitation and emphasis on deterrence. Neither one of them worked. So criminologists still lay around. They think as economists do and the Carney group, negative colleagues, deterrence must work. Well, you know what? People have been, you know, in crime. Well, when are you going to show it, folks? It's been long enough. No, it doesn't. The police must have an

effect. Well, they do. I mean, if you put a policeman and everybody's elbow, they won't commit crime. And that's what kind of the modern police, the police have a crime effect. Well, you do. But look at all the negative collateral consequences of that. So our big, I think, contribution to that was it didn't catch on for a long time. Still having trouble catching on. The career criminal model is the opposite of sensible public policy. It's unfair. There is no selective air -capacitation effect. People who commit crime and delinquency don't think about the criminal justice system.

Michael Gottfredson 38:43

For deterrence to work, you have to think about the criminal justice system. So yeah, you can surround people by law enforcement, arrest them whenever you see them, go into so -called hotspot areas, put a policeman at every corner, arrest everybody for every trivial offense, and then you'll get the negative consequences of the criminal justice system that they always ignore.

Michael Gottfredson 39:05

And they'll claim a crime reduction if it. So good science, good theory, says, no, it's at the margin, no, it's at the core. And so people still say, well, we can explain the age effect. And when you look at what they do, they usually end up putting the dependent variable in the independent variable category and explain crime with crime.

Michael Gottfredson 39:25

And so they say, well, of course, prior record, you know, predict subsequent offending or lots of different ways to use crime on the independent variable side. But look at the consequences, long prison terms, mandatory minimum, people still using incapacitation as a justification.

Michael Gottfredson 39:43

There's an incapacitation effect. I think it's particularly important in white color, I'll tell you the truth. I think Trump should be incapacitated. I read a little piece about that, not too long. I don't mean to get into politics, but frankly, it's an opportunity effect.

Michael Gottfredson 39:58

That's what a incapacitation is. Our theories explain opportunity effects. And so selecting a incapacitation to a queer criminal matter, and everything associated with it, is the wrong place for science to go.

Michael Gottfredson 40:11

I teach my undergraduates, I'm interested in corrections, I'd say, do you want a program to work? Yeah, well, wait.

Jenn Tostlebe 40:17

Yeah.

Michael Gottfredson 40:18

And then it will work for lots of the correctional research, not modern stuff.

Michael Gottfredson 40:21

But that's what people did. And so they, they said, well, people go with this program, recidivate less. You say, well, yeah, when you put them in the prison, the first place, they were 19. And now they're 30.

Michael Gottfredson 40:34

And everybody, you want to call it a treatment? Go ahead. But the treatment is age. So take that into account first order, criminal justice system is expensive, that has negative collateral consequences, and a big problem with it, for my money, for policy, and we spent a lot of time in modern control.

Michael Gottfredson 40:53

We said it in General Theory of Crime, we said it in his papers. People never, they're so interested in the career model that they ignored all of the consequences to it. But the fact of the matter is, it focuses attention on the criminal justice system, and the criminal justice system doesn't cause crime, except in negative way. At the margin, in both instances, people have adverse consequences for being involved in, in many ways, and the reduction in crime you get out of massive police presence and massive incarceration is relatively trivial. And we should stop saying it is. The police don't cause crime, the criminal justice system doesn't. But what does is paying attention to early development. So. The evidence on preteen development is just overwhelming.

Michael Gottfredson 41:43

Most of it, sadly, to my mind, outside of criminology. So if you look at the research we cite and say modern control, even in the General Theory of Crime, had to be from psychology, economics, fields apart from crime.

Michael Gottfredson 41:58

The best work now done on the effect of early child is by economists. If you've ever read the work of James Heckman, I really highly recommend it to you, who has kind of proven that beyond question. And so there's this big, big policy effect out there that we know about, that is a fact, that we can tell policy makers, you want to reduce crime?

Michael Gottfredson 42:21

Here's the thing, you have to get over your low self-control. It's going to take a little time, but invest in children. And if you invest in children, you'll lower their crime rate. But it's going to be 12 years from now, 15 years from now, and you just got to get over it because that's what we know.

Michael Gottfredson 42:37

And we also know that investing in the criminal justice system, like I say, how many more studies do we have to have of how deterrence doesn't work? Severity of sanction doesn't work. The certainty, only when it's real certain, right?

Michael Gottfredson 42:52

So, and then you have all these problems associated, you know? But whatever the sanction mechanism is, schools, you want to lower the crime rate, stop throwing people out of school. I mean, we've known for, since people started doing educational studies that continuation in school and education is a key to mobility.

Michael Gottfredson 43:13

It was in the 50s, it is now. So when you remove people from school, or when you put impediments into going to school, you take them out of the labor force, or you make it so that they can't work, you know, by saying you got a criminal register for it, it's all adverse.

Michael Gottfredson 43:28

Stop doing it. Now, people, you know, if you get, Russia to call a place, of course, did the police have an effect? Yes, they do. Basically, their effect is much more. more important in the procedural justice matters than it is in the reduction of crime.

Michael Gottfredson 43:44

But we see all that in monitor theory. Good book. Well, thanks. I appreciate it. It's available for every Amazon prime. If I had a copy here, it's nice. I'll do it. Oh, great. Thank you very much. There we go.

Michael Gottfredson 44:00

Oh, by the way, so you see, I has kind of a bland cover.

Jenn Tostlebe 44:00

Yeah.

Michael Gottfredson 44:00

So Travis and I have had this thing for our whole careers is because, you know, we don't actually like to think the criminal justice system or policing in your court really has much effect.

Michael Gottfredson 44:17

But every time you're at a book and you go to the publisher, they like to put criminal justice images on the cover. Yeah, they do. So they're bars, cop cars, handcuffs, mean looking guys, you know, delinquent, whatever, right?

Michael Gottfredson 44:30

And so we've always tried to not get and so the general so we spent a lot of time on your theory of crime. We had a deal with the publisher. We won't have criminal justice images. So I see you have a copy of General Theory of Crime.

Michael Gottfredson 44:46

And so it's a, it still is the guy behind bars, right? But it's like, so this time around, I just lay down the law and I said, you will not have, you know, so you can see it now. Right. It's the guy behind bars, right?

Jose Sanchez 44:59

Yeah.

Michael Gottfredson 44:59

At least we got him to make it kind of symbolic and not, but you should see, I mean, the first copies, it's always of cop car with flashing lights.

Jenn Tostlebe 45:08

Of course.

Michael Gottfredson 45:09

And they always say the same thing is, well, it's better for selling books.

Michael Gottfredson 45:14

And I would say the same thing. You're not going to sell any books. It's an academic book. This is not for money, you know.

Jenn Tostlebe 45:21

Yeah. That's interesting. I actually hadn't put together that this was someone behind bars.

Michael Gottfredson 45:28

Yeah. I mean, I shouldn't say it. It was the colors. It was interesting. Yeah. Travis reissued causes a delinquency and years after it was published, the original copy is pretty blane. But he forgot about that.

Michael Gottfredson 45:46

I think it was transaction. It was the university press. It's right. That's record. It's the time Rutgers University press and they put up a picture of a kind of criminal on the cover of the reissue.

Michael Gottfredson 45:57

And so he sends me this copy. This shows his humor and he inscribed it saying, I know we've done a lot of work together, but the most important contribution you ever made is to keep these things off the cover.

Michael Gottfredson 46:08

And I forgot to ask you what the cover should be about this. You got that reissue, of Causes?

Jenn Tostlebe 46:13

I do. I don't have. Yeah.

Michael Gottfredson 46:17

Yeah, they put like a delinquent or something on the cover.

Jenn Tostlebe 46:20

Yeah. It's a little bit better. He didn't ask you.

Jose Sanchez 46:26

Yeah, he should have asked. Well, we're starting to run a little bit out of time.

Michael Gottfredson 46:31

We haven't covered any of the topics you wanted to ask.

Jenn Tostlebe 46:33

You've covered a lot of them actually.

Jose Sanchez 46:37

You actually did cover a lot of them, but there's one question that I've always kind of wanted to ask. And it's about this book chapter that Travis wrote in 2004, in which he basically says, we kind of need to redefine self -control and self -control and social control are essentially the same thing.

Jose Sanchez 46:57

And so I noticed that Travis was the solo author on it. And so I always kind of wondered what your thoughts or like what input you had on that chapter, where it kind of really starts to kind of bring back social control, which Ron Aker's dubbed social bonding theory.

Michael Gottfredson 47:14

Well, that chapter is spot on. So that was always my view. And you can see in some papers I wrote too, if you look at them and now do that line. But it was so when we wrote A General Theory of Crime, we never even gave it a second thought.

Michael Gottfredson 47:29

Our theory is control theory. And so what that's the theory that underlies causes a delinquency and a crime. So we always thought it was a different explication of control theory. And we were surprised when the field didn't see it that way.

Michael Gottfredson 47:43

Some people didn't see it that way, especially Ron. And so earlier with you, they thought, oh, wow, that's interesting. They don't see the connection. But the first connection is, so the short answer is, it was important for Travis to write that paper, not me.

Jenn Tostlebe 47:59

But you feel the same way, though.

Michael Gottfredson 48:01

Oh, absolutely, of course. And well, you can see it in modern control theory, right? So and I think you could see it in subsequent in other papers. But when you look through those eyes, yeah, the problem is for intersectional theories, and this kind of brings you to methodology.

Michael Gottfredson 48:17

The indicators are the same. They're difficult to disentangle. I write about that in a paper called the empirical status of control. There's about that time somewhere. But so attachment. So in the general theory of crime, we spent a lot of time talking about the family model.

Michael Gottfredson 48:33

And the first element of the family model, and a lot of people in our field missed that, they call it a three variable model, which of course, it's not. The very first thing we say is attachment is what matters.

Michael Gottfredson 48:46

So you start with attachment, and that's the predicate. Well, so self-control gets created that way because of the relationship between caregivers and their child. So and that's Piaget, if you're a psychologist.

Michael Gottfredson 49:03

That's Piaget's model. We become the people that we are influenced by, and that's our caregivers. So there's no way to disentangle them. And so we kind of, it's also why we didn't write about morality or she already had.

Michael Gottfredson 49:20

There's a, it's not so that, so if you look at, that's a very careful paper that Travis wrote, or our read is subtle and address, and not a subtle address, it's Stockholm address, same thing. He's is restating that again.

Michael Gottfredson 49:32

It's like you guys are not getting it for him. That's as close as you're going to get for them. So it's like, yeah, the control theory, that's the theory, and there are different expressions. So I teach control theory to undergraduate students from Bentham.

Michael Gottfredson 49:47

They are the rational choice theories, basically. Commitment is obviously the economic part of the model and so forth. And so, belief is the moral component. As Bentham said, it's the most important component.

Michael Gottfredson 50:01

And we say that in the, I think maybe, I've always thought the most important chapter, you know, through crime is the second chapter, not the fifth. Everybody always thinks the fifth is self-control.

Michael Gottfredson 50:11

But that's what self-control, okay. So I don't think Travis ever wrote a word that I don't agree with. He probably did before I started working with him. I don't know. I'd have to look back.

Jenn Tostlebe 50:20

Before your influence took a toll on him.

Michael Gottfredson 50:23

Well, you know, I did a kick out of a lot of things. You can call it a discretion in a way. In a more subtle way. But people say, oh, you know, I see where you are in Travis's. And I say, that's kind of interesting.

Michael Gottfredson 50:36

We were sitting side by side when we wrote it, and you don't actually. And you don't know what you can't for that. But so, yeah. So that's a good piece. I think, but it's the general theory of crime.

Michael Gottfredson 50:49

And so it never occurred to us that people would think of them as anything other than control theory. And so I kind of surprised us in a way of the people had that view, or the that was Travis's view, because he was saying, why are they saying I abandoned?

Jenn Tostlebe 51:05

I'm fairly certain that's how we learned about Travis's book chapter, almost that exact language, which is why we were interested to ask you about it.

Michael Gottfredson 51:15

You learned about his book chapter, by how? By him...?

Jenn Tostlebe 51:18

That he abandoned.

Jose Sanchez 51:20

Yeah, that abandoned social control.

Michael Gottfredson 51:22

I'll tell you, there's not a single. So we were. So the other thing about general theory of crime, why did we write that? So there's the age thing.

Michael Gottfredson 51:30

But when we looked at cause of the illiquidcy, anyway, it was sort of said, well, the theory is great. The operationalization of it is pretty good. The problem is, of course, people take these measures and reify.

Michael Gottfredson 51:42

They do that in criminology, kind of all over the place, with self -control.

Jenn Tostlebe 51:49

Attitudinal measures.

Michael Gottfredson 51:50

The measure and reify. But look at what psychologists do with self -regulation. So economists use self -reported delinquency scales as a measure of self -control when they look at education.

Michael Gottfredson 52:03

They don't use this and they say it's a self -control measure. So we're looking at cause of delinquency and we're thinking about control theory. We say, well, there's a little too much. The independent and dependent variables are too connected.

Michael Gottfredson 52:15

So actually things like smoking and general deviance things are not independent variables. They're dependent. We've got to make a correction to that. And general theory of crime does because we say the generality effect was not appreciated.

Michael Gottfredson 52:31

Also, we didn't like the fact that because it time had moved on, in part because of Wayne Osgood's work, actually, the generality effect became known. And in psychology, in general, we said, well, then you can't have a legal definition of your

field, which Camel just still do.

Michael Gottfredson 52:48

So the definition shouldn't be due to a delinquency as a violation of the law. And so we wanted to correct that. And so we do that a lot in terms of crime and age. So we have to acknowledge that age.

Michael Gottfredson 53:03

The other thing is that caused a delinquency because it was just a teenage sample and wasn't attending to the rest of the field, didn't realize in the continuity effect, the stability effect. So people mischaracterize, as we say about the stability effect all the time, that the other way you were at eight years old is the way you'll always be.

Michael Gottfredson 53:23

Well, that's crazy. We didn't say it, never did. People mischaracterized, especially Ron and early reviewers and early people who talk about stability. where they mistake the unreliability of their measures for lack of stability.

Michael Gottfredson 53:39

So a couple of the early papers on stability, which are just not very good research in our opinion, they don't realize that their measures, and this is why methodology and substance has to go together, their measures of self-control have unreliability.

Michael Gottfredson 53:54

And some of them, a huge amount of unreliability. You can see that we critique that in modern control theory pretty explicitly. So their measures are manifestly unreliable. So they say, well, we gave this to people when they're eight, and we gave it to them when they're 12.

Michael Gottfredson 54:09

First of all, that's kind of ridiculous, period. But okay. And their self-control measures change. Well, of course they do, because eight-year-olds and 12-year-olds don't answer your questionnaire the same way.

Michael Gottfredson 54:21

It's what psychologists call a lack of a criminologist who use other people's data tend to internal consistency measures as reliability. Psychologists know there are lots of measures of reliability. One's test retest.

Michael Gottfredson 54:34

And if you can't show your measure as test retest reliability, it doesn't belong in the science. Well, a lot of that instability, not that there's not very much, but actually there's four or five papers, their measures obviously lack reliability.

Michael Gottfredson 54:49

They say, well, there's not stability. Gottfredson and Hirschi are wrong. Well, first of all, we didn't say it was, it's a correlation. And the correlations at that time in the regression literature were, they probably hovered around 0.5 to 0.7%, decent, but not over at some point age.

Michael Gottfredson 55:06

And so that's stability. And when you have correlations of that size, you can't ignore it because it means there's continuity in a person characteristic. And so that's our main view. Stability is not, people say it's set in stone.

Michael Gottfredson 55:21

Well, you won't find that in the general theory of crime. You won't find that anywhere. It's made up by people who wanted to critique it for other purposes. So I kind of, that's probably a longer answer than, oh, we're back on Travis's paper.

Michael Gottfredson 55:33

That's a great paper, important paper, important for Travis, not me.

Jenn Tostlebe 55:33

Yeah, that paper is really interesting. I've read it multiple times, just like all of your work. I mean, if you ask Jose, he'll tell you I'm a control theorist. So I'm very much in your opinion.

Michael Gottfredson 55:49

Jose is she a Control theorist?

Jose Sanchez 55:50

I would argue that she very much is.

Michael Gottfredson 55:52

Great. Congratulations.

Jenn Tostlebe 55:54

Thank you.

Michael Gottfredson 55:55

You're so well headed. You know, I try. Yeah, that's great. Jose, by the way, Jose is going to come around.

Jenn Tostlebe 56:04

I know, I keep trying.

Michael Gottfredson 56:07

He likes methods.

Jose Sanchez 56:08

So every now and then I'll find myself thinking like, am I a control theorist in denial? I'm not sure anymore.

Jenn Tostlebe 56:15

You are.

Michael Gottfredson 56:16

That's a first step. There are these support groups I can, you know, put you in.

Michael Gottfredson 56:23

Yeah. I you appreciate you're doing this. I think this is a great thing you're doing by the, not me, but it's really important to give people a glimpse, because theorists are real people too, sort of, I may not be completely but it's great that you're doing this. I appreciate it very much.

Jenn Tostlebe 56:42

Yeah, we love having some of, you know, the more well -known theorists on to kind of break down the theory and talk more about it than what people might just read, you know, in the book, which is also important, but breaking it down, I think is cool.

Michael Gottfredson 56:57

Yeah, it's great. Well, if you have any more questions, I'm happy, but I know I've used a lot of your time.

Jenn Tostlebe 57:01

So I have one more and it's a quick one if you have time.

Michael Gottfredson 57:05

Yeah, I do. Yeah.

Jenn Tostlebe 57:06

What advice would you give to a newly hired assistant professor, Michael Gottfredson?

Michael Gottfredson 57:13

Well, part of the problem is that was one really stubborn guy. Got kicked on my, but, you know, but stubbornness is a virtue in scholarship, not a, you know, overweening stubbornness, you're not a, but consistency is a virtue too. And don't take every crit, you know, not every criticism is right. And a lot of people, they sort of get into field by that way. So it's not very hard. It's also a lot of fun. And it's also the intellectual challenge of anything. And so the intellectual challenges of theory are some of the most interesting. I just wrestle with them. I mean, half that book is, and some of the, and you know, along comes P .O. Wikstrom and he writes his situational action theory, which I think is just great. You know, the second best theory really, you know, in the field, it's really challenging. It's really some of my best friends are theorists. We'll get together. Marcus Felson, routine activity theory, by the way, general theory, and all of the criticisms that you could launch against in each of that you can launch against, I think routine activity theory is extremely important. It is a ground for public

policy. We use it a lot. And I think lifestyle theory is real important. And it's true. And time has shown it to be. The empirical evidence on general theory of crime and routine activity theory would convince most fields. We better get behind this stuff because there's a lot of, there's truth there and we can really build on that. So that's one thing. But it's don't get discouraged, send things out. Don't believe, take reviews seriously, but not all reviews are right. And they're full of all the kinds of biases and strange things that occur in any aspect of human existence. The only way not to get criticized is to not do anything. So if you've got a thin skin, do something else. If you don't want criticism, don't write anything. But then you're not going to. So, so let's see, one of the reviews on, so my most cited paper is the H. There it might have been, I think that's probably still true. And it's like, you know, cited a lot, I would say. But I can remember one of the reviews said this paper shouldn't be published anywhere. That's the review. That was it. That's how you got it. It's so wrong.

Michael Gottfredson 59:33

It shouldn't be published anymore. And how do we get a good and high? And so I don't think I've ever written a paper that didn't get good. So roll with it. And so what I tell people is read the criticisms, set them down a little bit and then say, which one should I, you know, take seriously? And if there's statistical things, there's so much that it did differently. If there or whatever address them, but you don't have to believe them all. Mike Hindelang had a, he taught me a lesson, some other people.

Michael Gottfredson 01:00:00

So he and I wrote a lot together. And one of the things that we did early on, we'd write a paper together. And he said to me, OK, prepare three envelopes. And I said, what, what do you mean? He said, well, the first place we're going to send it.

Michael Gottfredson 01:00:12

And then the second place we're going to send it. And then the third place we're going to send it. Address them now. I said, what? He said, yeah. He said, well, he explained to me just what I said. We'll give reviews.

Michael Gottfredson 01:00:23

If they take it great. If not, we'll take what they said seriously. Do whatever we think is right and send it somewhere else. Or we'll just throw it. And, you know, not all the papers you write do you ever publish?

Michael Gottfredson 01:00:34

Sometimes you say, well, yeah, they were right. You know, I should have used the Durbin -Kolotsky t -test instead of the Asmerinoff, Merinoff, Corle, whatever it is. Wow, we better show that. We better do it differently.

Michael Gottfredson 01:00:50

So accept criticism, but don't be stubborn. Trust yourself. Have confidence in yourself. You know what you know better than other people do. You just do. And you will. So trust yourself. Treat them seriously.

Michael Gottfredson 01:01:04

And then move on. When your assistant professor, other advice, of course, is don't get swept up in the service stuff. People will, and frankly, wherever they are, your colleagues will take advantage of you in that way.

Michael Gottfredson 01:01:17

Don't let them. Do your share, you know, but whatever, you know, increasingly pay attention to your teaching. It's important. And that's, it's important every job at every university you have. So it used to be, that was not true.

Michael Gottfredson 01:01:30

I'm from the University of Illinois, Great University, Great Research University. I said to the Dean the same question you're gonna ask him, what would I do to get promoted around here? The Dean said, you know, the big three, teaching service and research, and first they don't count, just pay attention to your research.

Michael Gottfredson 01:01:44

Nobody would say that today. And then they shouldn't have said it then. Teaching matters a lot. A lot of the enjoyment of your career is in the teaching. Everybody will say that, it's true. It's the most important thing that you do.

Michael Gottfredson 01:01:58

Don't neglect that. Academia is a great career. One of the things it gives you is a lot of chances for mobility. So if you, I think I've worked at six different research universities, maybe seven, I kind of lost track.

Jenn Tostlebe 01:02:11

I think six, I think you're right.

Michael Gottfredson 01:02:13

Is it six? Yeah. And you can move around, but it's great. You find the one that you like, you know, or the place that you like. You get to travel a lot, do that. I know I've got a lot of time on comparative criminology.

Michael Gottfredson 01:02:25

I think it's real important methodologically. We don't think about that as much as we should. It also, if you have this fact approach that I learned from Michael and still have, which is what are the facts?

Michael Gottfredson 01:02:39

One of the big ways you can look at facts is comparatively. And there's a lot, there's a consistency of a lot of stuff wherever you look. So I like comparative work that you can travel if you like to travel.

Michael Gottfredson 01:02:51

It's also a good career to have for that reason. And so I said, what would I do? Well, Michael Gottfredson, What I want to tell him is you're one lucky guy. And that's absolutely true. You're avaticious.

Michael Gottfredson 01:03:07

This guy sent you to upstate New York. You didn't even know where it was, which is true. There was no field of criminal justice. You know, that's why he said you can go to Pennsylvania. And that would be another place to go.

Michael Gottfredson 01:03:19

Or Berkeley, he said, but go there because there's a lot of good people. People matter. And it's working with good people, who help you out, that matters. And so then, but I would have said you're lucky to be where you are and to be surrounded by the people that you're surrounded by.

Michael Gottfredson 01:03:35

And I've been fortunate in my whole life. Very supportive family. It's always been your fortunate. That's the advice that I give him. He wouldn't have listened, but you know. You're stubborn. Stubbornness, consistency.

Michael Gottfredson 01:03:51

To use those, great. People use expression a lot. Consistency is the hobgoblin of a little mind. You've heard that?

Jose Sanchez 01:03:57

Yeah.

Michael Gottfredson 01:03:57

That's not actually close. That's not the real quote. A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of a little mind.

Michael Gottfredson 01:04:04

Sensible consistency is how you do great theory. So keep after it.

Jose Sanchez 01:04:09

Yeah. Well, on that, I think that's the perfect note to end on. And thank you so much for your-

Michael Gottfredson 01:04:15

My pleasure. Thank you. It's a pleasure talking to you guys.

Jenn Tostlebe 01:04:17

Yeah. Thank you so much.

Michael Gottfredson 01:04:19

Keep at it. I'm following you guys.

Jenn Tostlebe 01:04:22

The Criminology Academy is available wherever you listen to podcasts. Make sure to follow us on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram at the- the Criminology Academy.



Jenn Tostlebe 01:04:29

If you're on Apple Podcasts, please rate, review, and subscribe. Alternatively, let us know what you think of the episode by leaving us a comment on our website, [thecriminologyacademy .com](https://thecriminologyacademy.com). And lastly, share the Criminology Academy episodes with your friends and family.