“Crime Strikes Again…”
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Summary

The researcher’s interest regarding criminality has increased and there were many studies focusing on what may influence an individual to commit crime. There were even articles stating that family bonds have the strongest impact in influencing a child when it comes to developing future criminal behavior. In this qualitative study the stories are told by real individuals who have shared their experiences from childhood and adolescence to help identify the insecurities that made them commit a crime. Setting existing theories aside, the study showed that it was not the structural background that mostly impacted future criminal behavior but the individual background factors weighted the most. Individuals seemed to be more impacted by factors such as thrill seeking or bad economy. This study reflects the individual’s real stories and all included information is believed to be genuine.

Keywords: future criminal behavior, childhood, family structure, school structure, peers/schoolmate and individuals background.
1. Introduction

Once when I was at the airport awaiting my luggage, I noticed a yellow line marked with text that read, “STOP”. This then lead me to think that we are constantly surrounded by a certain amount of control and interestingly people seem to find it safe and comforting. What happens when a person breaks these rules? Does that make you a criminal? Does it amount to criminal behavior? In order for society to function it needs a certain amount of control and regulations over the individual, to be a good citizen, and to contribute towards a stronger society. Through social institutions such as parenthood and schooling an individual is taught throughout childhood how to follow these rules in order to become a good citizen. As a sociologist you tend to think and see society from a different perspective. There is acknowledging the basis of its existence but also becoming aware of the deeply centered ideologies that enable its function.

There are numerous studies and discussions about the affects of crime on society. There are discussions over the risk zone, crime prevention, victim versus perpetrator age groups, the background of a criminal and much more. The questions: when does an individual commit their first crime? What are the circumstances? Who is the person behind the criminal? Is something that is interesting to investigate. An organization called BRÅ, which stands for Brottsförebyggande Rådet, is The Swedish Crime Prevention Council, have published many articles among criminality along that affect and has many statistics. Articles discuss social bonds and explore whether children that have weak social bonds with their parents and in school, are in risk of a criminal future. The conclusion was that youths are drawn towards bad company, if they have weak social bonds to parents and school. So if a child shows any intensions of committing crime, this would be initially noticed through the family structure. Does this then mean that family structure has the strongest impact? In a crime prevention study, it is stated that a safe home and good environment forms the basis of a functional social life. If there is a weak bond between family members and a lack of communication, then there is a higher risk that the child develops social difficulties.

There is further research that states that if a child can communicate and express oneself with the parents about his/her social life outside the home area, then it is more likely to function in

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1 What’s the meaning of social bond for juvenile crimes? - "Vad betyder sociala band för ungdomars brott?”, Stockholm.
2 Support to parents in theory and in practical - "Föraldrastöd i teori och praktik”, Stockholm.
a healthy manner also at the school environment. Good communication gives a child better self-confidence in forming social bonds. This is argued to lower the risk of a child engaging in criminal behavior when compared with children who have lack of communication within their family.

Another such organization is called room of crimes - brottsummet.se which is a staking of The Swedish Crime Prevention Council (BRÅ), this organization researches criminality and the changes over time. This organization has researched who becomes a criminal, in an article called – Vilka barn och ungdomar blir kriminella? In English it stands for: - Which children and juveniles become criminals? This states that parents can impact the child in developing criminal behavior and children who are aggressive have more difficulties in making friends, which can also lead to criminal behavior. Furthermore, there are a lot of discussions on how different programs can educate parents and help them to raise their child in an appropriate and healthy way. These methods are believed to make it easier for the parents to communicate better with their child and therefore attain a better understanding of the child's behavior.

Although there are many studies focusing on influences and deficiencies that lead to criminal behavior, I decided to examine it deeper. The positive element is, despite there being plenty of articles on this issue all of the research is based on a quantitative method, where in this study it is a qualitative manner. A qualitative usage of method will enable the opportunity to develop deeper explanations on structural background and a better understanding of how strong the affect as parents can be. The remaining question would be: Do the same factors impact every child? Do any of the selected factors, as family structure, school structure, peers/schoolmates and individual background, influence future criminal behavior? If so to what extent?

1.1 Aim and Research questions

The purpose of this study is to examine to what level childhood factors impact on future criminal behavior and this conclusion will be based on the outcome of the interviews. In order to achieve this I will examine each participant’s childhood and eventually they will be invited to share their point of view on what they believe had an impact on their criminal behavior.
have narrowed the factors down to four categories: family structure, school structure, peers/schoolmates and individual’s background.

The following research questions are added:

- Which main childhood factors, have the greatest impact on future criminal behavior based on the informant's shared experience of their childhood?
- To what level do the selected factors have an impact on the informant's upbringing?

1.2 Disposition of study

The following section describes the selected theories, how it relates to the selected topic and through its advantage and disadvantages. The next section presents the qualitative method and material. There will be explanations covering the proceedings, the selected material etc. The paper will end with a discussion between the results and the chosen theories, and any relation between the two will be considered. Finally, it is hoped that an answer will be provided for the research questions that will literally be based on the results and theories. There will be discussed on the four categories and compare the differences between the individuals stories.

2. Theories

Rational choice, is a theory based on individual’s rational actions and therefore choices. It provides an explanation for the individual's actions, why they act in a specific way, and if they are acting in a rational or irrational manner. John Scott writes about Parsons (1937) idea, how he deemed rational action to be a sort of instrumental action. Parson considered it as an expressive action, an idea that suggests individuals express themselves through their actions. Parson assumed that instrumental action and expressive action were the two principal forms of actions (Scott 1995 p.73). John Scott even writes about Homaus (1961), another rational choice theorist, who developed Parson's idea of rational choice and he suggested that people have specific wants or needs that drive them to act in a specific way (Scott 1995 p.75).

Rationality can be seen as a learnt response, a natural act. For example, if there I am near a hot plate, I know that if I choose to put my hand on it I will burn my hand. Therefore I would avoid touching the hot plate and this is considered to be a rational act. Individual human action is driven by needs, goals and values, that individuals seek to achieve and these are understood as factors of rational choice (Scott 1995 p.76). Rational choice can be seen as a self-interest action (Scott 1995 p.76). However, there does not have to be an egotistical motivation but it can be based on actions that give pleasure to another. Actions are explained
through the interdependence of opportunities, that is to say - What people can do: their opportunities and preferences, also - What people want to do: their desires (Scott 1995 p.76).

Rational choice is also applied when a person has desires, wants and needs that the individual feels cannot be achieved through, for example, labor work, they can then commit a crime, assuming this is the easiest and fastest way to achieve their goal. The rational person realizes that there are consequences to committing a crime and is aware of the risks, however still chooses to commit the crime. Criminality is seen as a non-rationality act, if you do not commit a crime it is rational otherwise it is a non-rational act. In this study it is used as a rational choice/action theory, to explain the informant's experience of why they chose to commit crimes. The category of an individual's background is based on personal reasons for committing a crime and relates to the question why, which is a primary theme to analyze, and what are the causes for committing a crime? This theory is considered to be the most appropriate for considering the individual's subjective circumstances.

Pierre Bourdieu (1990) has criticized the rational choice theory and contributed with new thoughts and ideas, which has offered a different perspective to the theory. He claims:

That is to make a rational action, it basis of the rational perform of a rational actor and the constancy and coherence of his preferences over time (Bourdieu 1990 p. 47)

This implicates that a rational action changes over time through the rational actor’s preferences. If the actor performs a rational action it is dependent on the actor’s limitations. Variation changes over time, so the logical and orderly view changes. As all of these terms are variable from the rational actor’s point of view, this means that the rational actions are also variable and therefore often unpredictable (Bourdieu 1990 p. 47).

All of the decisions that are made depend on previous choices of the person who has made the decision to act. However, it also depends on the conditions on which the person’s choices have been made and that includes the choices that others have made for the person (Bourdieu 1990 p.49). The practice has to be seen in the relationship with the outward restraints, which leaves a limited amount of choices and the outline of the economic and social process (Bourdieu 1990 p.50). The theory has not considered the possibility that actions can have other doctrines apart from economical interests or consciousness (Bourdieu 1990 p.50). The theory simply anticipates that a person commits an act for his own interest or of his own
awareness. There are other meanings behind a rational action from a rational actor and this may depend on the actor’s life course. The person may act in a certain way under specific circumstances, however act in a different way soon after, which may depend on previous choices and limitations.

The second theory I have chosen for this study is differential associations by Sutherland (1947). Sutherland explains that differential association is based on who the individual associate with, basically depending on whether they are criminal or non-criminal. Through the interaction between two individuals an exchange of new habits and actions can occur. Therefore criminality is a form of learnt behavior (Sutherland 1947 p.6). There are nine statements that refer to the process by which a person engages in criminal behavior (Sutherland 1947 p.6-7).

The first statement is that criminal behavior is a learnt process. The person has the ability to learn criminality and behaves accordingly. The second statement is that criminal behavior is learnt through interactions, the person interacts with others through direct involvement or even just by observing the acts of others. It can also be a case of a person behaving in a particular way when amongst certain company. The third statement is that interaction of criminal behavior happens often with close groups, that have personal relations between them and these are primary in the interaction. The fourth statement claims that the learning of criminal behavior also includes techniques of committing crime, which can be both complicated and simple techniques. It also includes specific motivation, drives, rationalizations and attitudes. The fifth statement is about the motives and drives, which are learned from definitions of the law as favorable or unfavorable (Sutherland 1947 p.6). The sixth statement argues that a person can become criminal through the close contact with criminal patterns and due to being isolated from anti criminal patterns. The person develops delinquent behavior because of an excess of definitions favorable to violation of law over definitions that are unfavorable to violations of law (Sutherland 1947 p.6). The seventh statement depends on the individuals' associations to other individuals’, this can vary their definitions of crime. The differential association varies in frequency, duration, priority and intensity (Sutherland 1947 p.7). The eighth statement is learning criminal behavior through association with criminal patterns and non-criminal patterns, this involves the same mechanisms that are involved in any other type of learning. The last statement, the ninth, is the explanation of criminal behavior based on needs and values that can not be explained as with those general needs and values, as the same explanation applies to both criminal and
non-criminal behavior. Presenting criminal behavior as happiness, a strive for social status, money motivated or as being materialistically motivated, is similar to explaining achievements that can be obtained through non-criminal behavior. It argues that through these different associations, people can learn criminal behavior through others in their environment and view it as acceptable behavior. The learning of the techniques to commit a crime and even other elements are related to learning of criminal behavior. This theory has a pattern to this study, through the material and results, I will discuss whether the individuals were taught criminal behavior through having associated with criminal patterns or interacted with close groups such as family, friends or siblings, who commit crime. The negative part of this theory is that it justifies this type of behavior if the individual lives in a socially deprived area, where there is a high rate of crime etc., it doesn’t describes why, how neither when, has the individual associated with criminals and developed a criminal pattern.

Hirschi´s (1969) theory is another form of control theory, where the question: - What makes people not commit any crime? is asked. Hirschi argues that if people have strong social bonds then they will not commit crime (Hirschi 1969 p.16). The theory is defined through four different fundamentals of a social bond, these are: attachment, commitment, involvement and belief (Hirschi 1969 p.16-26). A lack of any of these elements of social bonds can lead to criminal behavior. The first element, attachment refers to whether a person has any relation to other persons for example; parents, school, schoolmates, peers etc. If the individual has a strong attachment then he/she grants the others’ wishes and expectations like, for example: when a parent punishes their child and the child understands his/hers mistake. The child would theoretically not repeat the action in order to please the parent (Hirschi 1969 p.18). The second element, commitment, is when a bond exists with society such as work, pursuing a good education etc. The third element, involvement is when you participate in social activities such as the student council, volunteering for a charity or joining a football league in free time. The last element, belief, is when the person has faith in that acts such as taking drugs, committing a crime etc., are wrong and that legislation, laws, courts etc., are constructive and essential to society (Hirschi 1969 p.23). These four elements are linked to each other as it is common for individuals who make an effort during their education with the intention of getting a good job in the future, to have a strong attachment to these four elements.

Within this study Hirschi´s theory can provide an understanding to whether the participants have a strong social or weak social bond to the society. The participants will be asked
questions regarding attachments, commitments, involvements and belief. If there is a lack of any of these four elements then it can be concluded that this is the reason for their involvement in criminal activity. However, it is possible that these are not the only factors that have an impact on later criminal behavior, which is a negative part. As this theory is narrowed down to an attachment for society, it is hard to consider any other impacting factors, which do not involve an attachment. The theory is reserved, so it is difficult to use it and explain the very meaning of why they committed a crime and what the causes are. It is simplistic to state that if you have strong social bonds then you will not commit any crime. As Hirschi says the bond to what, that it is hard to suggest some objects and the attachment to it, there are different objects to control and that some objects are more important than others as for example the school is more important than family (Hirschi 1969 p.30).

Hirschi focuses on attachment to family, school and peers, which he uses Durkheim’s description for the three main groups: attachment to family, the nation and humanity (Hirschi 1969 p.30).

2.1 Previous studies
Jonas Ring has researched the affects of home-life, school, schoolmates and crime, in his book called Hem och skola, kamrater och brott. The study is based on self-reported material and questions regarding crime amongst students from the 9th grade. The research question to this particular study is: to which level is criminal behavior connected with an individual's situation, regarding attachments to family, school and schoolmates (Ring 1999 p.7). The base of the study’s theory is social bonds by Hirschi, and Ring uses the classifications of attachment, commitment, involvement and belief. In the results, amongst family and school, Ring found out that low records are related to good attachment with family, parents that are aware of the juvenile’s company and where he/she stays, to be given curfews on weekends, to engage in some activities with their parents, parents who react to absenteeism, having a good attachment to school, to feel that good grades are important and to achieve good grades. The strongest link was over parent supervision, where the parents are aware of their children’s company and where they hang out (Ring 1999 p.190). Further research where background factors such as separated families, low economical status and immigrant backgrounds were considered, the results showed a strong connection with criminal records especially with separated families for both genders (Ring 1999 p.191). The correlation between criminal records and immigrant background and low economical status was weak (Ring 1999 p.191).
Another book that seemed appropriated to this study is “Crime in the making” by Sampson & Laub (1995). This study is focused on the structural background factors: such as family size, family disruption, parents’ deviance, foreign born etc., and at individual differences such as: temperament, tantrums and disorder. These factors can have an effect on the individual when it comes to having a weak attachment to school. With family’s social control, for example lack of supervision, harsh discipline can affect the delinquent, the person then may attach to peer delinquent and sibling delinquent (Sampson & Laub 1995 p.244). The study uses informal control and due to this the study relies on a longitude data over a life course. This led to the development of an age graded theory of informal control in order to answer the research question (Sampson & Laub 1995 p.243). The most significant part of this study is the results and how they can relate to this work. Sampson & Laubs’ view is that childhood pathways to crime and conformity over the life process are both influenced by adult social bonds (Sampson & Laub 1995 p.243). So at adulthood if the social bonds get stronger, for example one gets married or finds a good job etc., than it could have an effect to not committing further crimes. They came to a result that lack of supervision, unpredictability, threatening behavior, weak attachments and harsh discipline can relate to delinquency (Sampson & Laub 1995 p.247). They also state that if a child expresses rage towards parents and teachers it can lead to further antisocial behavior (Sampson & Laub 1995 p.124). This can lead to negative consequences such as arrest, incarceration etc., and that may result in school failure, unemployment etc. (Sampson & Laub 1995 p.124). These types of consequences are known as “closed” opportunities that can derive from a child’s temper or anger management issues. This book offers many different issues that can relate to later criminal behavior and continuity throughout adulthood.

Articles are found on a database called Ebsco where international articles are held, can be found when typing in the keywords: crime, develop delinquency and childhood. There were plenty of articles to read concerning the subject, that this study is focused on. There where titles such as: ...at childhood develops delinquency and what impacts. While browsing through all the articles, some interesting topics were found that have been summarized below.

On such article called “Childhood Predictors of Adult Criminality” by Alan Leschied, Debbie Chiodo, Elizabeth Nowicki and Susan Rodger. This study focuses on different factors that can affect adult criminal behavior.

4 http://www04.sub.su.se:2070/ehost/detail?vid=1&hid=104&sid=f80199e7-f83f-4ed8-acca-57e5dc1d0f6f%40sessionmgr104&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbGl2ZQ%3d%3d#db=aph&AN=35531806
This study uses a variety of childhood factors up to 12 years old and family factors that could have an impact on future adult criminality. The identifiable characteristics that were used were: aggression, alienation, irritation, attention seeking etc. The family factors are: lack of child supervision, witnessing violence, poor communication etc.

The study is based on a Canadian journal of criminology and is a longitudinal study, which is used in most meta-analyses. When it comes to theory, the study chose risk predication by Andrews and Bonta (2007), this is a differential understanding of disorders that can have an effect at childhood and therefore adulthood. The results argue that these factors show that childhood factors have a later impact on adult behavior. In other words, it showed children experiencing the discussed factors have a higher risk of potential involvement in criminality during adulthood.

Another article that relates to this study is a research of early childhood behaviors, called “The use of prediction data in understanding delinquency” by Magda Loeber and Rolf Loeber. This study has summarized the results of collected studies and material of child behavior as well as the circumstances in the child’s surrounding. The researcher use variables of early problem behavior such as aggression, lying, drug use, stealing, low IQ etc. At the results it showed that boys, that express aggression, steal and use drugs, are the strongest predictors and that the child’s family or peers may also impact later delinquency. The research also stated that aggressiveness is a problem behavior, which can lead to conflicts with adults and alienation by groups of peers.

“Parental imprisonment: effects on boys’ antisocial behavior and delinquency through the life course” by Joseph Murray and David P. Farrington (2005), is another interesting article. The study uses longitudinal data and focuses on four control groups: a boy who did not experience separation, boys who have been separated by hospital or death, boys that have been separated for other reasons and boys whose parents were imprisoned before their birth. These risk

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5 Ibid p. 436-437
6 Ibid p. 438
7 Ibid p. 438
8 Ibid p. 442
11 Ibid p. 348
12 http://www04.sub.su.se:2095/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&hid=105&sid=9c88a172-b87c-4359-9a87-08fb3250beda-40sessionmgr110 p. 1269
factors for delinquency were measured when boys were 8-11 years old. Delinquent development and antisocial behavior were measured at 14-40 years old. The study’s results showed that parents’ imprisonment during their childhood had a strong link to later antisocial and delinquent outcomes. If the child was separated from its family because of the parents being imprisoned there was a higher risk for developing antisocial behavior and delinquency, when compared to children whose parents were imprisonment before the child's birth.

The study “Staying in school protects boys with poor self-regulation in childhood from later crime” by Bill Henry, Avshalom Caspi, Terrie E. Moffitt, Honalee Harrington and Phil A. Silva (1999) examines whether school attendance throughout adolescence is a relevant factor when considering individuals at risk. In other words, does regular attendance lead to decreased risk of criminal behavior amongst children that have already demonstrated a lack of self control? This is a longitudinal study based on the method of self-reported surveys. The results concluded that if the child with a lack of self control attends school it reduces the risk of committing crimes when compared to youths that dropped out of school at an early age. Also, if there was less supervision by adults, then there is a greater risk for children to associate with delinquent peers and start using drugs and/or alcohol. The school may have a certain amount of control of the child during school time. After school time then parents/adults should resume the control, so there will be less of a risk for the child to involve itself with wrong actions; this can deter the child from involving itself in criminal activity.

3. Method

This study is based on a qualitative method. There are some central steps in a qualitative research and the first is to outline the research question, which has to be decided on before commencing the study (Bryman 2002 p.370). The second outline is to select relevant subjects and states, where there should be relevant participants involved. The next step is to collect relevant data and to transcript an interview. Following that, it is the interpretation of data. In qualitative research, even small details that are usually ignored can prove to be important to the study as something exceptional may come to light through the work. It is also vital to try and relate the chosen theory to the data and summarize a concept. At this stage there is a stage where detailed specification of the research question and collection of further data is possible.

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13 Ibid p. 1272
14 http://www04.sub.su.se:2095/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&hid=105&sid=2022e18-3d40-4aa3-9763-e9b6fedc29f7%40sessionmgr113 p. 1049
15 Ibid p.1068
however this is not imperative if you have already collected all the information needed. A researcher could collect further data or decide not to and there is even a possibility to re-interview certain individuals. The final step in qualitative research is the conclusion, a summary of all the data and its result (Bryman 2002 p.370-372).

As I have chosen to complete a qualitative study, I decided to interview four individuals who have committed crime and who are over 24 years old. This is because I believe that they will speak more explicitly, that they have more experiences and can therefore give more information, and also they are stereotypically less likely to exaggerate in order to impress. The study had been narrowed down to the crimes of robbery, assault and murder. The reason behind choosing these crime types is because they are more applicable for finding an answer on whether it is a structural background impact or not, than when focusing on less serious offenses such as shoplifting or bike theft etc. It will provide a comparison within different types of crime. According to The Swedish Crime Prevention Council (BRÅ2010) robbery, murder and assault are common types of crimes. From approximately 100 people who die every year under criminal circumstances, 90% of these deaths involve men who have committed a murder\(^\text{16}\). Regarding robbery there were around 9 600 cases in 2009 according to The Swedish Crime Prevention Council (BRÅ 2009)\(^\text{17}\), for assault there were 85 900 cases recorded in 2009 and 87% involve men who commit these crimes (BRÅ 2010)\(^\text{18}\).

A positive aspect of a qualitative study is that it gives a greater interest in the informant’s answers. It focuses on the subjective experience of the informant and what they consider to be important and relevant. The interview is based on a semi-structured interview, which is relevant to this study. The positive thing is that the researcher does not need to follow the questions in a particular order when using semi-structured interviews. One has the opportunity to ask further questions and to follow up answers with new questions (Bryman 2008 p.438). The researcher can start and end the interview as she/he likes with consideration to the individual situation (Bryman 2008 p .438).

In addition to the above, the result is also more flexible, it gives more detailed information and it is also possible to interview an informant more than once. Unfortunately, these can also

\(^{16}\) ”Murder” (Dödligt våld), Stockholm The Swedish Crime Prevention Council (BRÅ)

\(^{17}\) ”Robbery” (Rån), Stockholm The Swedish Crime Prevention Council (BRÅ)

\(^{18}\) ”Assault” (Misshandel), Stockholm The Swedish Crime Prevention Council (BRÅ)
lead into an issue over the measurement of validity and reliability of the results (Bryman 2008 p.437). I have decided to have an interview guide where the researcher writes down the questions before the interview and prepares the questions and the information to which s/he should inform the informants (Bryman 2008 p.196). The negative side of a qualitative study is that the research is quite subjective (Bryman 2008 p.391) and therefore limited. It makes the study to depend too much on the researchers views about what is important and significant and also on the relationship formed with the participants. Further negative factors are that it is hard to replicate, there are problems with generalizations and there is a lack of transparency (Bryman 2008 p.391-392). The interview is based on the individual’s childhood, their personal opinions are important to this study because they may give more of an edge to the study. In order to reach an answer for the research questions, the chosen categories are about family structure, school structure, peers/schoolmates and individual background. Under every main category there will be different subcategories, which will be more explained under the title Coding. During the interview the conversation will be recorded, after receiving the informant’s approval, it will then be easier for me as a researcher to transcript the material.

3.1 Material
The first issue to tackle was finding relevant individuals to interview. I spoke acquaintances about to find interesting participants. I explained the purpose of the study to the contact person and it will be anonymous. Before the interview I will explain the purpose of the study and explain the ethical principles to the informants in Swedish (Bryman 2002 440-441). I will summarize the research questions, what I will use this information for and how personal information will be handled. After the transcript I will code the material and analyze the work (Aspers 2006 p.159). By coding the material it will summarize all the information and decided to have a coding scheme, which is an overall table where I will write down the chosen subcategories and write the informant’s name under a matched subcategory. To code the information I will use different colors for each subcategory, which I will mark when I analyze the material. The result will be formatted by running text and because the informants want to be anonymous, I will let them each choose a code name for themselves. The disadvantage of this interview is that some questions can be too sensitive and the informants may avoid answering them. The interview guide is a back up and it is possible to ask further questions than what the interview guide initially holds.
After the interview, the material will be transcript and in the results I will compare the four individual’s answers, in order to identify the differences and similarities between them. Aspers (2006) helped in learning how to go through interviews the best way. The book illustrated that an interview is the best method for developing an understanding of how another thinks, acts and feels. So it will for example be good if the informants choose the meeting point and then explain why they have chosen it. It will probably give more personal information, for understanding a little more about the informant’s thoughts. During the interview I will observe the informant’s behavior and attitudes towards a question. Aspers explains that observation during the interview provide opportunities for the researcher for adding important details to the study (Aspers 2006 p.159). Furthermore, Bryman writes about what should be considered after an interview and suggests making a note of how the interview went in turns of how the informant reacted to a certain question, how he/she was dressed, where it took place etc. (Bryman 2008 p. 444). These tips are quite important if you interview for the first time, it is not just a typical interview it is more than that. It is a deep discussion about the person’s background and life situation that can offer a picture of their subjective experiences.

3.2 Coding

There are two ways to code the material. The first way is either deductive or inductive coding (Aspers 2006 p. 170). Deductive means that the theoretical concepts are directly translated into a concrete field of codes. The other way to code the material is in an inductive way, meaning that the researcher identifies the codes directly in the text. This study focuses on the inductive way, because there are chosen themes which the study focuses on.

Every category will have its own color, this will make it easier to mark the information I am looking after the interview and the text will also be shorter. I will then summarize the colors and split the information between the four informants. The first category is family structure, here the study focuses on the central facts of family structure and the subcategories are: 1) economic status – mostly the parents economy, if it is high or low, 2) divorced parents – if the parents are divorced and if so which year they divorced, 3) relation in family – if the family has strong bonds within them or not, 4) their reaction when the child committed a crime – how did the parents react when they found out if they did etc., 5) criminal sibling – if the participant has any criminal sibling, the color to this category will be orange. I have chosen these categories and subcategories because I found family structure interesting to research.
with the intention of developing more concrete results on whether it has an impact on criminal behavior. The second category is school structure and the chosen subcategories here are: 1) attachment to school – if the participant had any good bond especially at upper school, 2) grades – if the participant at upper school had high or low grades, 3) teachers' behavior – if the teacher at upper school gave any interest of the student, 4) involvement in activities – if the participants were involved in any activity at upper school, 5) disorderly – if they acted disorderly at upper school, 6) completing upper secondary school – if the participant went to upper secondary school, 7) which school they attended – in which area they went to at upper school, this category will have a green color. School structure is an important category to this study, here I need to ask the participant about school focusing mostly at upper school level education. The third category is peers/schoolmates, the chosen subcategories are: 1) peer/schoolmates: pressure – if there were any group pressure among them before making an act, 2) peer/schoolmates delinquency – if the participant hanged out with other criminals, 3) involved in gangs – if the participant was a gang member, the color for this category is blue. Peers and schoolmates are important in terms of good bonds at upper school, so it is interesting to find out if the participant did have any bonds, if they were criminal or not and if they had an effect on the participants choices The last category is individual background, here it will focus generally on the individual and the subcategories I have chosen here is: personal feeling. What I mean with personal feeling how the participants felt when committing a crime – before, during and after, their personal reasoning for committing the crime their thoughts and opinions, attitude towards legislation and motivation for committing crime/s. This category will be marked in pink color and will possibly give more depth to the study.

3.3 Categories and Subcategories
I chose the categories in my study by own choice but also inspired by Hirchi’s theory and also from relevant articles that showed the importance of family and school to an individual. The category peers/schoolmates I consider as an important factor in individual lives. Peers and schoolmates may have some influence on the individual’s choices in life and can develop group pressure. I chose individual background with subcategories to try and focus on more than the structural backgrounds. This to understand more on how each participant felt when committing a crime, the reasons, causes etc. Because this study focuses on a qualitative approach and I had a chance to interview four participants who have committed a crime, it became quite clear to understand why they committed the crime and see this from their
perspective. All the subcategories under each main category are influenced by Hirschi´s theory but formulated by myself.

3.4 Validity & Reliability

Validity relates to the processing of the method. This includes whether the researcher is observing fieldwork, measuring or identifying and can vary depending on the procedure (Bryman 2008 p. 376). External validity relates to the findings that can be generalized beyond the study out of a social setting. Internal validity relates to a correlation between the researchers' observation and the theoretical idea and whether a reasonable link can be found between them. Moving over to reliability, external reliability is the degree to which a study can be repeated. In a qualitative research it is a difficult measure, it is hard for a researcher who interviewed or observed to repeat exact behavior and interaction in following interviews. For example, two people could do the same interview but it might lead to the collection of different information etc. In internal reliability, there is often more than one observer, where all parties have to agree on the observation and make a similar notification (refers to Bryman 2008 p. 376). Validity is about trustworthiness, how every step taken in this study has a link to another, a line of argument.

Reliability means when there is enough reliable data to summarize a conclusion and claim that this data is trustworthy. Reliability is about the thought of another researcher performing the same study and what the probability is that the researcher gets the same data? To get the same data the most important thing to do is to make the study as secure as possible, to have a high reliability so another researcher can get the same data again. The internal validity is used in this study, where the study’s purpose relates with the result. In this study there are four participants with different backgrounds, it is therefore difficult to claim that the results reflect the behavior of other criminal individuals because they may not have been affected by the same circumstances.

So the validity is quite high in this study within the four participant’s childhood and information. However, I do believe that four informants are sufficient for answering this study’s research questions and for collecting enough reliable data in order to reach a summarized conclusion. The information which I will collect is trustworthy and the stories shared by the participants are true.

As for reliability it is quite hard to point it out in this study since the material is sensitive so there can be some difficulties regarding interviewing the same informants in the future. The
collected material is based on stories that real people have experienced, so the data is suitably robust for the study.

4. Ethical principles
There are four categories of ethical principles Bryman mentions and they are: harm to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy and deception (Bryman 2008 p. 118). With harm to participants, Bryman states that you should maintain the confidentiality that the individual's identity and interview records have to be preserved in a safe and confidential manner (Bryman 2008 p 118). If part of the study gets published then you have to make sure that no one can identify the individual used for the study. Before beginning an interview, it is important to inform the participant as much as necessary, so that he/she can make a well-informed decision on whether they would like to participate or not (Bryman 2008 p. 121). If a question appears to be extremely sensitive and the informant feels uncomfortable, then I will proceed to the next question without pressuring the informant to share anything. The other part, lack of informed consent, is when you ask a person to participate and they have to be fully informed about the study's purpose and aims. The person has to know that their participation is voluntary, they are free to refuse to answer any of the questions, they could walk away in the middle of the interview and they could withdraw their data within two weeks of it being collected (Bryman 2008 p.123). Before the interview it is even important to have their approval to record the conversation and that no one except the researcher has access to the tapes. In addition, the participant must also be informed that the conversation will be transcribed but all details that may identify the person will be removed. During the interview, if the informant shares any information that may identify them then that information will be removed from the transcripts and results. The third part: invasion of privacy is the issue of what kind of privacy can be condoned. There can be sensitive material that the informant does not wish to share even though it is anonymous, they may feel uncomfortable and that is an issue which has to be well prepared for. In a case where the participant may be trying to avoid a question, then it's always good to attempt to reformulate the question (Bryman 2008 p.123). As all personal information has to be confidential, it is always recommended to choose a pseudo name for the informant and the key role is to know how much anonymity can be utilized but in a manner where the research question can still be answered. Basic information such as gender, age, status etc., could be something that you might still use but perhaps data where the person lives, works etc., it can still be an issue if it will be confidential or not. When another person reads the results; no one should be able to
identify the person who participated in the study. However, if the informant does not seem bothered, then some information may be included as it is also important to ensure that the research question is answered. Therefore, information will only be excluded if deemed to be necessary by the researcher. The last category is deception and that occurs the study to present the work in another way than what I told the participant (Bryman 2008 p. 124). It has to overwrite I as a researcher its principle aim of collecting the right information so I can have a valid result and conclusion. There has to be a balance, if I and other researchers only consider the ethics principles than it is possible there won't be a valid conclusion. As Bryman points out, it is difficult to draw a line between these two concepts (Bryman 2008 p.125). I am aware that it is a sensitive subject when I will interview but I will have all the steps in ethics principles into consideration.

5. Results
First there will be a short introduction to each informant. In the text there are even quotes picked out from the transcription. The interview was held in Swedish and the quotes where translated from Swedish to English. All the interviews were held within two weeks and each took approximately one hour.

On the basis of the informants’ answers, I will reach a conclusion regarding how the four main factors impact on future criminal behavior, if at all. Through the informant’s subjective point of view, I will also try to understand what they perceive to have had an impact on their criminal behavior.

4.1 Code – “Andreas”
The interview was held at a graveyard which “Andreas” chose as a location. He perceived it as a calming place and said that we will all eventually end up here. The participant wore casual clothes; he seemed a bit nervous but was polite and spoke in a calm manner. “Andreas” is 30 years old and lives in Kalmar. His parents were born in Morocco but he was himself born in Sweden. He used to live in Stockholm, because he mentioned that he went to Tallinschool at lower class and Fittjaschool at upper class.

In the first category, which is family structure, “Andreas” stated that his family moved homes on several occasions throughout his teenage years. During this conversation the participant seemed uncomfortable, so we moved on to the next question.

The informant said: A: - ... It is something I need to forget about.
According to “Andreas”, his family’s financial situation was stable whilst he was a teenager. His parents are not divorced and both of them where working during his adolescence. However, “Andreas” said that he personally had little money at that time and committed his first crime in order to acquire a car stereo. There is a possibility to claim that his parents wanted him to earn his own money through labor work but “Andreas” found it difficult to find any work, so crime was the easiest solution. He stole a car stereo but he was actually too young to drive. “Andreas” states that his parents took good care of him. The participant does not have any siblings; he is the only child and he has a good relation with his father but not with his mother and neither of the parents have committed any crimes. The father knows about “Andreas” criminal acts, however he is only aware of the times when “Andreas” was in jail on three occasions for assault.

School structure, here “Andreas” mentions that school was not at all important for him, nothing that relates to school. During a question about his grades, he started to laugh and said:  

A: - **Grades? Had no grades.**

He said that at upper school he was restless and acted disorderly. School for him was not important at all, he “just” had to finish upper school and never went to upper secondary school. “Andreas” mentions that the teachers tried to support the students but it was almost impossible, they all acted in their own way and he never had a good relationship with any of his teachers. He was involved in an extra activity and that was basketball, he was very interested in it but eventually he stopped playing because he grew out of it. He was more interested in spending time with his friends. “Andreas” acted disorderly in school and especially in classrooms, he said that in classrooms it was always messy and it was because of him and his friends. The teacher could not control them, so the teacher had to throw them out from the classroom. “Andreas” said that it was important for him to choose his own friends, which he always did and he sought out friends who acted in the same way as he did, and that was to act disorderly. The last comment to this category is that he was involved in more fights at free time than during school time. When “Andreas” was holding this conversation, it seemed almost as if he was reminiscing over the good times he had. It did not seem as if he regretted anything but rather enjoyed the times. In some occasions he was even laughing whilst reminiscing. It appears that for “Andreas” school did not matter and he perceived it as a place where he had some fun with his friends. His attachment to teachers was none-existent and the same with school. He had a good attachment with his schoolmates and few of them where criminals. Here “Andreas” said:
A: - During the free time I hanged with my schoolmates but also with other friends and we often had fights. The reason to it... its group pressure.. but not always... the feeling after is also indescribable... You get all the support you need and you get it through your friends.

Even if “Andreas” has a high temperament, that is not the only reason that led him to be involved in fights, it was also group pressure. As he described ...the feeling after, he means that he felt good after completing the task and showed his friends that no one can get away from a fight with him. His schoolmates were the same age group, from different nationalities and few of them are currently criminals. The schoolmates whom “Andreas” hanged out with acted disorderly in classrooms and “Andreas” stated that if someone wanted to hang out with them, then they had to act in the same way. The crimes he committed with his schoolmates were burglary and theft, he felt good and he even said:

A: - You are never forced to commit any crimes.. It came to a point group pressure.. But those where my friends and we always stick together.

They did have strong a bond between them where they supported each other at all times. The participant met his peers during free time through basketball training and breaks. At free time they created a gang and the reason he was involved in a gang was because they were his friends and he enjoyed being with them. “Andreas” even said that in the beginning when they created their gang, no one had power. All of them were in the same level and all of them committed the crimes together, this was during upper school.

Individual background, “Andreas” was 15 years old when he committed his first crime and it was theft from a motor vehicle because he wanted a car stereo. There were not any feelings involved before committing the crime, he just had to do it and he felt happy once he acquired the stereo. Today “Andreas” has some difficulty to stay in work because of his temperament, his economy is bad and he lives on profit from committing crimes. After committing a crime, he does not feel any anxiety, as he said:

A: - ... its my own choice.

He has committed burglary, assault, theft and many other crimes. Recently he committed burglary and the reason he gave was that he needed money. He has been in jail three times. The interesting part is that when the question about what can have affected his future criminal behavior was asked, he answered:

A: - Myself and my friends.
“Andreas” meant that the crimes were his and his friends’ responsibilities and that is what had an effect on later criminal behavior. His attitudes towards social orders was negative, he does not cares about the police, courts, laws etc., he would not call the police for help because they are not trustworthy according to him. The interview took approximately one hour, the conclusion is that he had a strong bond with his friends, when he talked about them and he seemed relaxed and happy under the whole interview.

4.2 Code – “Jacob”

This interview is very different from the others interviews; the informant in this case is more focused on his parent’s role and blames his parents for his actions. This interview was held outside a mall, he wore black pants and a t-shirt, his hair was messy and he smelled of alcohol. “Jacob” is 30 years old, he came to Sweden when he was 7 years old, his mother is born in Palestine and his father is from Lebanon. “Jacob” lives today with his mother in Skärholmen and his father passed away almost 6 years ago.

In the category of family structure, “Jacob” stated that his sister raised him until he was around 7 years old because his mother left to Sweden when “Jacob” was 3 years old. He said that in Sweden their economy improved a lot, they lived well compared to Palestine. His father was an alcoholic and the mother worked and looked after the family. “Jacob” said that she never had any time for him. “Jacob” has three sisters and two brothers and he is the youngest child. His oldest sister was his role model and when his sister started committing crimes so did “Jacob”.

“Jacob” seemed sad when he talked about his sister and her acts, because he really looked up to her, he imitated her acts and wanted to be similar to her. The relationship between the siblings seems good. He has a strong bond to all his siblings but not to his father because he was an alcoholic.

As “Jacob” said:

J: - We loved our father but at the same time we were afraid of him, when he drank he could not control himself.

His father argued with his mother often about money because he wanted to buy alcohol.

J: - They fought a lot….It was always about money.

“Jacob” said that his father hit his mother sometimes and that “Jacob” observed the assaults. However, when his father grew older he became calmer and “Jacob” said:
J: - .. then when he became older he told me to stop my criminal behavior, but it was too late... When I was younger he and my mother encouraged me when I committed a crime.

His family encouraged “Jacob” when he committed his first crimes. However, they later discouraged him from criminal acts but it was already too late and until today “Jacob” blames his mother for his life.

The next category is school structure; “Jacob” mentions that he had no attachment to his teachers, to school or to his schoolmates. At lower school “Jacob” went to Skärholmen and he never went to upper secondary school, because he was never interested in school. “Jacob” said that when he was younger, he liked school but when he got older he began to dislike school. His grades are average and he said that he almost never attended classes because he wanted to earn money instead. “Jacob” said that the teachers in upper school ignored him a lot, they were not interested in him, and that they never supported him in any way. The only activities “Jacob” attended were school trips. Since he mentions that he did not participate in school, he could not describe much about it nor his relationship with his schoolmates. He never got into fights at school. He was not a troublemaker, as he said:

J: - In the classrooms I was very calm and listened to my teacher but I did not have any interest in what she said.

Since “Jacob” did not spend any time in school he could not share anything about his schoolmates in the category peers/schoolmates, but during free time “Jacob” said that he did not have any real friends and liked to stay at home. He said:

J: - ...But when I was 20 years old I was a member of a gang for committing crimes, it was easier.

The reason for hanging out with a gang was because he wanted to earn money; “Jacob” got addicted to drugs, so he took drugs from the gangs and paid back by committing crimes with them. In this category “Jacob” will not/can not say any more details except for that he associates with gangs in his free time to earn money but usually commits other crimes alone.

The last category about personal feelings, “Jacob” was 13 years old when he committed his first crime and it was theft. The most common type of crimes he committed was thefts, and the reasoning is that he needed money to buy alcohol and drugs. Before committing a crime
he is usually intoxicated, which helps his nervousness during the crime and after the crime he drinks more and uses drugs. He has been in jail a few times and at a rehabilitation centre, but as soon he meets his old friends again, he starts using drugs. According to “Jacob”, his reason for committing crime is that it is his own personal choice and his friends affect him as well. If they are many of them then they can plan a crime much easier, where one looks out for the police while the others rob; “Jacob” shared that he trained himself first to unlock doors. His attitude towards social order was not fully answered as he simply stated:

J: - I am not against crime... I do not care if it is wrong or right.

In other words he is not against crime, he feels that people who commit crime have a reason to do so. He does not care about policies, courts, laws etc., the only thing that matters to him is getting money so that he can buy drugs. He ends the interview by saying:

J: - I hate this society because they have not helped me when I needed help. They did not believe me and thought I was feeling alright... But I was not and if they helped me, my life would have probably changed and I still blame my mother and father for this.

“Jacob” still feels strongly that it is his parents’ fault, but also blames society for not helping him get on the right track in life. He needed to earn money and because he liked to stay at home he watched his father’s acts when he drank alcohol and “Jacob” started to do the same. His sister was his role model and when she started committed crime, he observed her too and his family even supported him when he committed his first crime at the age of 13. This information is different from the other interviews, Jacob states that his family situation led him to crime while the others claim that it was their own choice.

4.3 Code – “Achilles”

The interview with “Achilles” was at a graveyard and he said that this is usually a place where he meets other criminal individuals. His clothes were sporty and he wore a cap. “Achilles” is born in Sweden, his parents are from Greece, he is 28 years old, used to live in Fittja with his parents but now lives nearby Södertälje. It is not appropriate to write exactly where he lives because it is a small area and there is a risk in identify the informant.

Within the first category, which is family structure, “Achilles” states that his parents got divorced when he was 16 years old and he has no strong bonds to his father or mother. He meets them quite often and they are not aware of his criminal patterns. His father was aware of his first crime, when he was 10 years old and punished him for it but as “Achilles” said:
Ac: - When I was 10 years old, one day one of my schoolmates hit me. I went to my father and told him what happened and he told me to go back and hit him...

His father is against his criminal acts but supports him, even by carrying out revenge if deemed necessary. Both of his parents work and they had a stable economy when he was a teenager; today “Achilles” works and has a good economy. He committed many crimes when he was younger but as he became older he settled down. He is the youngest child in the family with an older brother and sister, again to whom he has no strong bonds. He has more contact with his brother than his sister, his sister does not commit any crime but his brother is gambler. His brother lives alone and he did take drugs when he was younger. As “Achilles” said:

Ac: - ...Between myself and my brother, I am more a criminal than he is...

When he wants to commit a crime, I am afraid for his sake to not get involved with some bad people. So in some cases I can help him or commit the crime for him.

“Achilles” is afraid for his brother and wants to take care of him, he feels responsible for his brother’s behavior. It is difficult to determine whether his older brother is a criminal but it does not seem like “Achilles” sees him as a role model.

In the next category, school structure, “Achilles” was involved in many fights at school. He went to school in Fittja, both at lower and at upper school. Even if he acted disorderly, he had very good grades. Most fights were held at school but also during free time. He was interested in football and after school he played football quite often. He played for many years and went to play for a football union. “Achilles” said that they traveled to different countries and played football against other teams and he stopped playing because:

Ac: - ...My football teacher called my mother and said that they wanted me to stay because I was so good at it. My mother told to the teacher no, he will not do these things that I will study to become a doctor or something... (Ha Ha) yeah a doctor.. I am not interested in school but it was important for me to get high grades, at upper school it is enough, no need to study further.

While he was telling me this his voice got tougher and he was a bit irritated. “Achilles” wanted to stay with the football team and when he left upper school he and others established their own gang. His mother made decisions for him, but was not aware that “Achilles” was not interested in school. After that “Achilles” stopped going to football. He did not get any support from his parents or from the teachers. As he said:
Ac: - If just someone said just a single word, to keep going to the football practice, it would be as a weak up call, then nothing or no one could stand in my way.
Due to not getting any encouragement, he felt like maybe football was not the right thing for him in life. “Achilles” did not have any bond with his teachers but had good bonds with his schoolmates.

Ac: - We were all friends but of-course it was more divided, where some were nerds, others bully others, there were brawlers and I was involved in that group (Laughing). “Achilles” chose his own friends at school, he associated with others who were tough, his schoolmates were not criminals, they did fight a lot at school and in free time but they never committed crimes.

The next category, peers/schoolmates, the informant says that his schoolmates were not criminals they fought a lot and nothing more than that. However his friends during free time, were different. He had met them through other friends and at football practice. He did not feel any group pressure; he just wanted to commit crimes with them, it was just fun. “Achilles” started up a gang with his friends from free time, himself and two others were the leaders. The gang grew and they were at that time around 15 people in the gang. The gang still exists but “Achilles” has walked away from them because he thinks that it went too far. Due to his safety, there will not be any more explanations about the activities of this gang and the informant was starting to get uncomfortable.

The final category, which regards individual background, “Achilles” committed all kinds of crimes with his friends at free time. He stated that before, during and after a crime he felt excited.

Ac: - I could feel how my adrenaline pumped it was so exciting.
The reasons for committing crimes he said were different every time. Sometimes it was about money, sometimes about revenge. But considering all the crimes he does not regret any of them.

Ac: - When I was younger... yeah.. I just wanted to commit crimes and so I did. But when you get older, it did not feel right anymore, I just wanted to work. It was too much.. You have to sit, plan, then came the feeling of this is not right anymore. Wooo.. I can not tell you.. I did not want to be with them anymore, and then I had got problems.

When “Achilles” got older he stopped committing crimes and he is currently working. “Achilles” has been in jail for 6 months and he said that he liked the place. He does not have
any opinion about the social order, laws etc., and he does not care about police. The interview took approximately one hour. He happily participated and ended the interview by saying that it has nothing to do with his parents:

Ac: - ...This was my own choice and my friends.

4.4 Code – “Hulk”

The interview took place at a park and the participant explained that he enjoys the landscape. The participant seemed relaxed and calm; he had casual clothes, seemed serious and wanted to end the interview fast as if he was in a hurry. “Hulk” is 28 years old, lived in Örnsberg, his parents are from Armenian but are born in Sweden.

Regarding his family structure “Hulk” does not currently live with his parents but has a stronger bond with his father than mother. His parents are divorced and it came across that he was not comfortable with talking about his mother, the participant felt awkward and started to get annoyed.

H: - My mother left us when I was 14 years old... I do not have any contact with my mother. ... My father is always there for me.

His attachment to his father is stronger as he said: - I have a very good relationship with my father. “Hulk” said that after a few years of criminality he told his father about all the crimes that he had committed when he was younger and according to “Hulk” his father was disappointed:

H: - My father is not in favour of my criminal behavior.

It seems like his father is still aware of his criminal acts, as “Hulk” used the term “is” rather than “was”. It’s probable that “Hulk” is still committing crimes and his father is aware of it. It is even possible to consider that as they have a strong bond, they may speak openly about it.

“Hulk” has a younger sister, who is 18 years old; still living with their father and is fully against “Hulks” actions. According to “Hulk” she is a calm and nice girl. She did not go to the same school. Hulk” does not have any criminal siblings. They have a strong bond because she is his younger sister but they are not interested in each other’s activities as individuals.

H: - Our relation is alright.

“Hulk” informs that when he was a teenager, they had a satisfactory economy:

H: - …We were not rich but we survived.
The term teenager covers the age of being 13-15 years old, so their economic status was okay when the participant’s parents were still together. The difficulty here is that we will not know how the family’s economy was affected after his mother left them. There is a possibility that the participant thought that their economic status remained the same after his mother left them as it was not mentioned.

The next category of school structure was focused on the participant’s attachment to school. According to “Hulk” he was a good student and he was a good football player. “Hulk” went to Örnsberg at lower school and did not finish upper secondary school. His attachment to school was not very strong, as he stated that school was not important to him. However, his grades were still impressive considering he did not consider his education to be important. “Hulk” said that he was a good student at lower- and upper school, he had good attachment with his teachers both at lower- and upper school and he appreciated every teacher. He remembers them as good teachers who supported every student.

When we talked about any distribution at school, if there were for example a group disorderly students, “Hulk” says that he does not remember any and that everyone was pretty friendly. He had the same perception over activities in the classrooms, where he remembers the atmosphere as being good, calm and sociable. “Hulk” participated in some school activities and after school he played football. His relationship with his schoolmates was good but he chose whom he befriended. To finish off this category, one can state that “Hulk” had a good attachment to school, had good grades and good bonds with schoolmates and teachers.

The next category relates to his relationship with peers/schoolmates. His schoolmates were not criminals and they were not the same friends that he associated with during free time. Some of his football peers associated with people who were involved in criminal activities and it was in this way “Hulk” met them. “Hulk” did not consider himself and his peers as being a gang, he perceived them as a group of friends that committed crimes together. Even if they did not consider themselves to be a gang they had one rule that had to be followed:

H: - Never rat anyone out.

The type of crimes they committed where theft, robbery, assault and fraud. “Hulk” said that when he committed crimes with his friends it was much easier and had more fun.

With the last category of individual background, the focus was on his personal feelings. In this case it became apparent that “Hulk” committed crime with his friends and considered it to be fun. While he was speaking about his thoughts around his involvement in criminal acts,
he seemed calm. His body language was relaxed, he straightened up his back and sat in a more what seemed relaxed position. He said that he committed his first crime when he was 16 years old and it involved theft. The reason for committing the crime was because his friends did it and he wanted to join them. This is what normally described to be group pressure, where everyone commits an act and in order to feel like part of a group he joined in without thinking about the consequences.

H: - *It felt good... It was fun.*

The question regarding how he felt before, during and after the offence, was answered by him stating that it was the same feeling; he did not regret it and he looked forward to it. It came to a point where “Hulk” said:

H: - *I have a job... but I am still committing crimes.*

He said that he commits all kind of crimes and his most recent crime is fraud. The reason for committing this type of crime is because he wanted to earn some extra money with his friends:

H: - *There were not any specially reasons.. I just wanted to earn some money with my friends..*

He changed his voice to a louder note. It felt like it was time to move on to the next question as the informant was getting defensive. He works as a carpenter and according to SCB\(^\text{19}\), a carpenter earns around +/-25 000SEK a month. It is reasonable to state that he earns a decent wage but still commits offences with his friends due to the excitement and camaraderie. After committing a crime the informant stated that he did not have any particular feelings about it, he just wanted to do it and acted as if it was simply a matter of fact. He even said that he did not really need the money; he just though why not earn some extra money. When the question: – *What do you believe can have driven you towards committing crime?* was asked “Hulk” answered:

H: - *I am not sure... I wanted to do everything... Try everything... I think its fun.*

“Hulk:s” attitude toward police is neither negative nor positive, he said:

H - *I never think of them.*

He has no special attitude towards social order, or any particular opinion of how society functions and how the police handle crime. He even said that if something would happen he´d take matters into his own hands and would not call the police. He does not care about laws, courts etc and he has never been in jail.

\(^\text{19}\) Sallary database (Lönedatabas), chosen carpenter, at SCB
H: - *I don't care about them.*

The interview took approximately 50 minutes. The problem was that his answers were very simple and it was clear that he was not willing to share any detailed information.

6. Coding scheme

Under this title there is a scheme over the four participant’s interview, it summarizes the most important facts of the interviews and provides an overlook of what the four informants have in common. Further explanations among each category and it’s subcategories are explained under the title *Coding.*

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<td>No</td>
<td>Stronger to his father</td>
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<td>The feeling before, during, after</td>
<td>What was the Reason</td>
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<td>Fun</td>
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### 6.1 Discussion

When considering “Andreas, “Achilles” and “Hulk”, it seems individual backgrounds take precedence over structural backgrounds.

It can be stated that three informants have quite a lot in common. “Andreas”, “Achilles” and “Hulk”, consider their criminal behavior not to be linked to their family or education. They believe that it was their own choice, that they wanted to associate with criminal peers and that it was fun. “Achilles”, committed crimes because he sought excitement and his goal was not based on financial gain but rather on the thrill of offending. He views his actions as an interest shared with his friends, almost as a hobby. What was different about “Jacob” was that he complained a lot about society and blamed his family for many of his criminal acts. This was very dissimilar to the other three interviews. If we think through the study's theories then it could probably be stated that all of the informants have a lack of social bonds.

Beginning with Hirschi’s theory over the idea of social bonds, the first element is attachment. It is argued that good attachment to family, school, peers etc., generates a sense of consideration towards others’ wishes and expectations, which then bonds an individual by norms (Hirschi 1969 p. 18). In the case of “Jacob” he has not developed an attachment to his parents, their relationship is good, they support each other but their bond is not strong. “Jacob” stated that his parents supported him when he committed his first crime. His attachment with his peers and school was not strong either and he was not interested in anything that relates to education. The lack of interest in school and education was something that was shared amongst all the participants. “Jacob” had a criminal sibling whom he looked up to, which possibly encouraged an involvement in crime. “Andreas”, is a little bit difficult to analyze as he said that when he was younger they moved a lot, so it’s a bit difficult to
determine if he had a stable bond with his parents. However, he still commits crimes so “Andreas” went against his parents’ wishes and expectations (Hirschi 1969 p.18). “Andreas” and “Hulk”, have a bond in common as both have strong bonds with their fathers and their fathers are aware of their crimes. Their fathers may not condone their behavior but they still support their sons. All of the informants have gotten involved with delinquent peers mostly during their free time and “Andreas”, “Jacob” and “Achilles” were involved in gangs. “Hulk” did not consider it to be a gang instead he described it as a group of friends with a common interest in crime. The next element commitment, is about whether the person is involved with some activity like labor work, charity work etc. (Hirschi 1969 p.20). None of the four informants were interested to commit themselves to something that involved regular work. “Achilles” differs from other informants as he no longer engages in criminal activities. He has outgrown that stage of his life and has chosen to involve himself in work as a laborer. “Achilles” has a stronger bond in this case than the rest of the informants. “Andreas”, “Jacob” and “Hulk” still commit crime when necessary. For example if they need money they feel the fastest way to get it is through committing a crime.

The next element, involvement, is regarding whether the informant participates in any conventional activities (Hirschi 1969 p.22). All the informants except “Jacob” were involved in some form of leisure activity, in other words football or a basketball union. “Jacob” committed many crimes at the time so he did not have any time to consider it. “Andreas”, “Achilles” and “Hulk”, were initially involved in activities but discontinued it because of different reasons.

The final element belief is when the informant believes that crime is wrong and when they believe in a conventional society (Hirschi 1969 p.23). None of the informants cared about social order; they were not against crime as “Jacob” pointed out with:

J: - ... I am not against crime...

In conclusion, it feels quite evident that all of the informants do not have strong social bonds according to Hirschi’s theory and that this can lead to criminal behavior. All of these elements are related to each other and the informants had a lack of social bonds except for when it came to an element of involvement. As Hirschi points out, if one of the social bonds is weak or broken then it can lead to criminal behavior (Hirschi 1969 p.16). Even if “Andreas” and “Hulk” had a strong bond to their father, it does not seem to have been enough to deter them from committing crimes despite their fathers opposing it. In doing so, they went against their father’s wishes and as Hirschi argues, attachment to others is shown through caring about
others wishes and expectations. It is likely that all of the informants had a lack of social bonds, however “Andreas”, “Achilles” and “Hulk” believe that it had nothing to do with their criminality. In hindsight, it could have been beneficial to this study if they were asked further questions about the father's role in their lives but also in society. For example, whether he had a job, what he worked with, how much or little time did the informants have with their father, did they share any of their father's hobbies etc. Nevertheless, they personally believe that it was their own choice and that they ended up being involved in crime simply through some group pressure. That is the restricting part of Hirschi’s theory, it gives inflexible explanations focused on weak social bonds as a firm cause of criminal behavior.

Sutherland explains criminal behavior through interaction. He argues that it is a learnt process and it goes through nine statements. The first statement is about crime being a learnt process. It could be agreed that “Jacob” learned criminal behavior through his interactions, which is relevant to the second statement as it was through his sister. He initially acted in the same way as her in terms of crime, he then built up his own criminal network and started committing the crimes alone. What could then be said about “Andreas”, “Achilles” and “Hulk” as they did not learn their criminal behavior? However, they did associate with other criminals as shown through the seventh and eighth statement of Sutherland’s theory: association with other criminals and gathering skills etc. Except for “Jacob” all of them had close peers who were involved in criminal activities and they would socialize and interact by committing crimes together, which relates to the third statement. The fourth and fifth statement is about the techniques, motives and drives. All of the informants had something in common regarding their motives and drives. They all wanted to gain their reward at the end of their activities, which was money. “Achilles” also committed the offences for the thrill so his reasons varied from crime to crime. The ninth statement concerns the extra needs and values. Well in this case, “Andreas” points out his first crime was car theft and his reasoning for committing this crime was the fact that he felt that he needed a car stereo. This is about his extra needs. Whilst explaining this theory and how it relates to the informants’ experiences, Sutherland's description is felt to be more appropriate and relevant as it includes details that Hirschi’s theory fails to consider.

Hirschi's theory explained individuals' social bonds, Sutherland includes whether the individuals associate with criminals and how then through the ninth statements, it is possible that one develops a criminal pattern. In this case all of the individuals have a common experience through the nine statements. Every individual learnt criminal acts through
interaction, techniques, their motivation, drives etc. that drove them to complete a crime. The drawback of this theory is that it does not explain why/how/when the person is associated with criminal patterns. It states that a high crime rate is due to social disorganization and that the crime has its base in this social disorganization (Sutherland 1939 p. 8). If we look over the coding scheme, then “Andreas” and “Achilles” lived in Fittja, looking on the internet the area of Fittja has a high rate of crimes and almost 90% are foreigners\textsuperscript{20}. “Jacob” lives in Skärholmen, it’s a wider area, but it is also believed to be an area where one can easily associate with criminals. “Hulk” differs from the others because he lives in Örnsberg, an area which does not have a high rate of crime\textsuperscript{21}. The theory could not account for why “Hulk” chose to associate with criminals although he grew up in an area that has a low rate of crime. However, all of the informants started to associate with criminality when they were juveniles.

The last theory considered in this study is rational choice. With this theory we could explain the impact of personal feeling in greater detail. All the informants committed a crime based on their rational action. In other words they were all aware of the consequences and they all said that they realized there was an element of risk. “Hulk” is the only one who had never been to jail. In fact “Jacob” has been to jail on several occasions. After committing a crime the participants do not seem to consider the impact it may have had on the victim. Traditionally none of the informants would physically hurt their victims but took advantage of the victim instead. This is considered to be an irrational act, in others words crime is an irrational act. Rational action explains the individual’s acts and they express themselves through that (Scott 1995 p. 76). These actions are driven by their needs, goals etc., which the individuals want to achieve. Through legal labor it can take some time for a person to accomplish such goals, so the easiest and the fastest way to achieve is through committing a crime. All the informants have goals, needs, wants etc., they basically committed crimes for different reasons and they needed fast cash. “Andreas”, “Achilles” and “Hulk” as their acts were considered to be personal choices. They acknowledge their desires and wanted to achieve their goals and decided to do so through committing crime.

Previous studies argue that the largest affect on crime is related to the impact of family but based on the interviews there are other effects that can have as much of a powerful impact. This could be based on Hirschi’s explanation but also on Sutherland’s findings and is mostly related to rational action definition. The research questions are being answered, based

\textsuperscript{20} Aftonbladet – Så många brott begår invandrare, Stockholm 
\textsuperscript{21} According to a statistic at BRÅ http://statistik.bra.se/solwebb/action/anmalda/urval/sok
on the interviews, through stating that the personal feeling provides a stronger explanation as to why the informants still commit crime. For “Hulk” it’s leaning more towards the factor attachments, as the family structure had a stronger impact on “Hulk” than on any of the other participants. For the rest of the informants it was about the convenience of getting what they needed in a much faster, smoother way. The highest impact is from then the individual background: personal feelings, where 3 out of 4 had the common factor of viewing their behavior as a rational act. They had their goal and the drive to achieve them through crime. The previous study called “Crime in the making”, “Achilles” was involved in antisocial behavior during adolescence but soon after his social bonds grew stronger. He developed a strong bond to his choice of legal labor and this made him eventually stop his involvement with criminal acts. “Andreas”, “Jacob” and “Hulk” continued to have weak social bonds up until adulthood. Another question that should be asked is whether the informants are married because according to Sampson & Laub if you have a high marital attachment then you develop stronger social bonds. However it also argues that weak attachments, erratic behavior, harsh discipline and lack of supervision at adolescence, are all factors that can relate to later criminal behavior.

According to the informants they had a good childhood, there was not a case of any harsh discipline but instead a lack of supervision should have been considered. “Jacob” said that his mother worked a lot, so she did not have any time for him. Due to the mother’s long hours of employment, she did not have the time to supervise “Jacob’s” behavior. “Hulk” did not have any contact with his mother at all whereas “Achilles” did not have a very strong attachment to his parents and stated that he could not talk to them openly etc. With “Andreas” it is quite hard to tell as during his adolescence they moved around a lot and this could have affected his supervision. Other factors brought up by Sampson & Laub are temper and aggressiveness, which can lead to antisocial behavior that then can lead to weak social bonds. In this case “Andreas” and “Achilles” acted disorderly in the classrooms and got into fights during school times. “Hulk” did not behave disorderly in the classroom but he did get involved in fights during his free time. “Jacob” did not participate in classrooms but he spent most of his free time with a gang.

Jonas Ring states that separated families, economic status and immigrant backgrounds have a strong connection with criminal records. He considered the strongest impact to affect youths from separated families (Ring 1999 p. 191). Separated families affected “Achilles” and “Hulk and that can have a strong connection with their criminal records. “Achilles” did not have any attachment to his parents whilst “Hulk” said that he did not care about the mother as
the father was always there for him. With economic status, there is nothing to consider in this occasion because all of the informants had a relatively good status. When considering immigrant backgrounds then “Andreas”, “Jacob” and “Achilles” have parents who were born out of the country whereas “Hulks” parents were born in Sweden. Out of all four participants, it was just “Achilles” who stopped committing crime in later life. “Jacob” could not stop because he got addicted to drugs, so he needed money in order to feed his addiction. “Andreas” has anger management issues, which affected his chances for employment and “Hulk” commits crimes due to his bad temper.

7. Future research

After reviewing the results it seems that the participants were leaning towards individual factors that could be further examined. When personal feelings were mentioned, it seems that these factors had a stronger effect than the structural factors. In further studies within this topic, it might be interesting to interview the participants' teachers in 6th grade and to observe the differences in their perspective of how the participant acted at lower and upper school. It might even be useful to interview their parents and ask them about supervision, extra help with homework, if they were aware of whom their children socialized with etc., and see their perspective. It would also be useful to interview the participants' schoolmates/peers and asking them about their views over the participant’s behavior. Interviewing schoolmates may be hard because it would be difficult to locate them, especially if the participants do not associate with them anymore. The other perspective is to concentrate on the individual's background, examples that I could think of are: thrill-seeking, personal causes, economical status (low or high), cognitive reasoning, social status, ethnic background etc. It could even be a syndrome of impulsiveness where the person might feel like s/he can not control their actions. Within criminality there are many issues that need to be resolved and everyday there are new issues to be examined.

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