

MISANTHROPY AND CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty
of
California State University, Stanislaus

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
of Master of Arts in Criminal Justice

By
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April 2014

CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

MISANTHROPY AND CRIMINAL BEHAVIOR

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DEDICATION

I dedicate my thesis to my husband Dayner Gilmond. Without his support and gentle(ish) nudging, this would not have been possible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foremost, I would like to express gratitude to my advisor Dr. Morris for his patience with me as well as his knowledge about the topic and any issues related to it. His ideas helped me produce original and meaningful research.

Besides my advisor, I would like to thank the rest of my thesis committee—Dr. Mboka and Dr. Gao— for their encouragement and insightfulness. I have been able to work with both of them on other projects throughout my pursuit of higher education and I appreciate the learning and growing opportunities they have provided. I would like to thank my other professors—Dr. Wood, Dr. Chiang, and Dr. Gerstenfeld, all of who challenged me and helped me find my passion for education. Lastly, I have to thank Heather Von Biela, my reader and grammar guru, her patience and eye for detail were invaluable.

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between misanthropy and criminal behavior including the relationship between misanthropy and crime by sex.

Method: This study uses data collected from a self-report survey administered to California State University, Stanislaus students during the Spring 2013 semester. The survey included measures for misanthropy and criminal behavior, as well as general demographic information.

Results: The results showed some support for the hypothesis that misanthropy is associated with criminal behavior, but this finding was limited to vandalism.

Moreover, the misanthropy and crime relationship was fundamentally similar for males and females.

Conclusions: Misanthropy and its relationship to criminal behavior seems to work based on the Goldilocks principle; an individual may not be willing to physically harm another person but may still need a visible victim, making vandalism a crime that is “just right.”

Recommendations: This study, as the first of its kind, lays the groundwork for further studies to be done on different population particularly non-college students who are more likely to engage in crime.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Misanthropy is a term derived from the Greek words *misos*, meaning dislike or hate, and *anthropos*, meaning humans or people. Misanthropy is a lack of faith in others and a dislike of people in general. Even though misanthropy is considered an undesirable trait, numerous books, blogs, and websites idealize, promote, and encourage misanthropy.

Misanthropy is not only a source of negative attitudes toward others, it breaks down social cohesion by affecting the bonds between people and their communities. It is correlated with maladaptive behaviors such as sexism, homophobia, and ageism (Cattacin, Gerber, Sardi, and Wegener, 2006). Further research has found misanthropy to decrease people's willingness to participate and invest in their community (Weaver, 2009). According to many theorists, a lack of meaningful relationships with people makes it more likely for a person to commit crime (Hirschi, 1969; Walters and DeLisi, 2013; Fefchamps and Minton, 2003). Misanthropy may remove the bonds to society that typically prevent people from harming others and committing crime.

Misanthropy may also differ by sex (a.k.a. gender); previous studies have found that males are more misanthropic than females and theories suggest this is because males are more aggressive, more competitive, and less able to exhibit self-control than females (Smith, 1994). These factors have also been seen as the reason

for higher crime rates among males. Sex may also have a bearing on the relationship between misanthropy and crime, as males and females may express misanthropy through different criminal behaviors (Björkqvist, Österman, & Lagerspetz, 1994).

Purpose

The current research serves as an exploratory study to increase the knowledge about misanthropy and its relationship to criminal behavior and how sex affects this relationship. Anti-human beliefs are already known (such as racism leading to hate-crimes), and policies and programs exist to reduce these beliefs; however, no such programs exist to reduce misanthropy. Misanthropy may become a serious policy issue if it is known to predict crime, but the evidence between misanthropy and criminal behavior has yet to be examined. The relationship between misanthropy and crime seems clear and with an increased knowledge about the effects of misanthropy, steps can be taken to reduce its prevalence.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Misanthropy is commonly accepted to mean that an individual dislikes others, as well as a having general distrust, accompanied by the belief that others are incapable of acting fairly. Based on this, it is logical that misanthropy could lead to criminal behavior, particularly such behaviors that would directly harm another person. The direct causes of misanthropy are unknown, but the body of research available suggests that misanthropy is predicted by negative worldviews and negative experiences, which have a harmful effect on relationships. Males tend to have higher misanthropy levels than females and research attributes this to higher aggression and competitiveness (Smith, 1997). These same factors have been attributed as a reason for high criminal behavior among males. Given these previous findings, it is likely that misanthropy, sex, and criminal behavior are interrelated. However, gender roles are changing and this change may result in a shift toward more equal misanthropy levels between males and females. Moreover, misanthropy is important for further study because there is a possibility that anti-human attitudes will continue to grow, spreading from person to person and become ingrained in a large enough portion that there will be a danger of misanthropy “easily [becoming] a populist movement” (Cattacin et al., 2006, p.9).

The Nature of Misanthropy Research

Research concerning misanthropy is divided into three perspectives on causation: variables associated with misanthropy (such as ethnocentrism), variables that predict misanthropy (such as low socioeconomic status), and the effect of misanthropy on other variables (such as increased support for animal rights).

However, the causality should be considered a “soft” causal order as the speculations made in previous research have not been fully examined and remain undemonstrated until more is known about misanthropy.

Variables Associated With Misanthropy

To better understand the nature of misanthropy, some researchers have investigated closely-related factors. Sullivan and Adelson (1954) examined ethnocentrism as an associative factor to misanthropy. To establish this relationship, the authors used the UC-POS Preliminary Ethnocentrism Scale to determine levels of both ethnocentrism and misanthropy. When measuring misanthropy, the authors modified the UC-POS scale by replacing terms mentioning a specific ethnic group with the term “people in general” and when measuring ethnocentrism, the terms for various ethnicities were retained.

The authors found a weak but statistically significant correlation between ethnocentrism and misanthropy. Subjects with high levels of ethnocentrism exhibited high levels of misanthropy. The authors concluded that ethnocentrism and other group-specific prejudices may be rooted in misanthropy and that a dislike of one specific group may actually indicate an overall dislike for other people in general.

Cattacin et al., (2006) sought to determine how political affiliation and misanthropy were related in residents of Switzerland. The authors measured misanthropy by combining scales of self-reported sexism, homophobia, xenophobia, and ageism. Political affiliation was measured through subjects' level of agreement to different statements about political ideation.

The authors found a strong, statistically significant relationship between identification with conservatism and high levels of misanthropy. Further, higher levels of misanthropy were found be associated with political ideology nearing "right-wing extremism" while political ideology nearing left wing extremism had no significant relationship to misanthropy (Cattacin et al., 2006, p. 12). The authors speculate that extreme right-wing conservatism and misanthropy are related due to the "in-group cohesion" which allows ideas and ideals to become stronger due to constant affirmation from other group members combined with a lack of outsider input (Cattacin et al., 2006, p.15,).

Sex also has a relationship to misanthropy and multiple studies have found males to be more misanthropic than females (Melgar, Rossi, and Smith, 2013; Smith, 1997). However, as gender roles shift it is likely that this relationship is also changing. A study by Buchan, Croxen, and Solnick (2008) supports a shift in misanthropy levels between the sexes. The authors studied the behavior of 754 students (half males and half females) during an "investment game" in which subjects were instructed to anonymously exchange provided money to other players multiple times. Analysis of the surveys given periodically during the game showed that

women expected to receive less than they gave indicating that they did not trust other subjects to return an equal amount of money.

Predictors of Misanthropy

Research exploring the influences on misanthropy is multidimensional as there are likely numerous events, statuses, and other variables that can predict misanthropy. A study by Smith (1997) sought to establish a semi-definitive list of factors that appear to predict misanthropy in a sample of Americans. Data were collected through the National Opinion Research Center, an organization that surveys large samples of Americans annually. The study compiled measures of demographics, misanthropy (measured through trust of other people), crime victimization, and socioeconomic status.

The author found that unemployment, the recent loss of a family member, or being the victim of a recent crime predicted high misanthropy. The author found that other factors, such as past divorce or affiliation with a religious organization, had no significant relationship to misanthropy levels. While being happily married, a member of the local ethnic majority, or a high socioeconomic status predicted lower misanthropy in subjects (Smith, 1997, p.190).

A similar study by Melgar, Rossi, and Smith (2013) also established how various social factors could predict misanthropy. To do this, the authors used the National Identity Module and the Trust in Others Module of the International Social Survey. The survey was distributed to multiple cluster samples across several

European and North American countries. The authors assessed respondents' social statuses and demographic information in relation to trust in other people.

Across all demographics, the authors found that age predicts misanthropy in an inverse relationship; older subjects had lower misanthropy than the younger subjects. Being the victim of a crime was also found to predict high misanthropy while marriage had no relationship to misanthropy (Melgar et al., 2013). The authors also found misanthropy to be strongly and associated with corruption perception, revealing that a lack of trust in one's government may increase misanthropy toward other individuals (Melgar et al., 2013, p. 240).

Effects of Misanthropy

The effects of misanthropy are relatively unknown and the limited research available speculates causal order based on the likelihood of negative attitudes toward other people would, logically, lead to certain beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors.

In 1957, misanthropy was first examined as to how it influenced people's attitudes toward international affairs. This study investigated how an individual's level of misanthropy impacted their attitudes towards international affairs (Rosenberg, 1957). Data for this study were drawn from a sample of college students who were given a self-report survey. The misanthropy scale used is now known as the Rosenberg "Faith in People" scale and has since become the standard for measuring self-reported misanthropy. Attitudes toward international affairs were measured through questions concerning how subjects felt about international commerce,

international politics, war, and how international crime should be handled by the United States.

Analysis showed that individuals with high misanthropy levels believed that military or economic pressure were the only way to ensure international cooperation. On the other hand, subjects with low misanthropy felt that accommodation and compromise would result in mutual cooperation between nations. This revealed a possible link between misanthropy and the belief that coercion or pressure is the best way to resolve conflict. This finding could indicate that misanthropy may cause a person to resort to violence instead of diplomacy.

The Faith in People scale (Rosenberg, 1957) was used again in a later study, which investigated how misanthropy influenced a subject's attitudes toward animal rights. Wuensch et al. (2002) examined the extent to which a dislike of people influenced animal rights, specifically regarding attitudes toward product testing. The survey was given to 154 college students during their introductory general psychology course. Examination of the data showed a small but statistically significant correlation between misanthropy and support for animal rights (Wuensch et al., 2002). They found that misanthropic individuals place higher importance on animal life and well-being over the life and well-being of humans, and that they do not feel animals should come to any harm for benefit of human-kind. The authors point out that misanthropic individuals are not willing to see humans benefit from animals and may even consider "any benefit to humans as a negative value" (Wuensch et al., 2002, p. 145).

Misanthropy has also been found to decrease civic engagement. In a study of Mexican-Americans, Weaver (2006) measured civic engagement through a survey of self-reported participation in community activities (such as voting, block parties, clubs, and city council.) and measured subjects' opinions of different community members (such as neighbors, police, city council, and teachers) through a misanthropy scale derived from Rosenberg's Faith in People scale (1957) and Fey's Acceptance of Others scale (1995). The study included a qualitative aspect in the form of interviews using a cluster sample of the non-civically engaged subjects.

Weaver (2006) found that a statistically significant number of misanthropic subjects did not participate in community events or organizations. The interviews revealed that subjects that do not invest in their community refrain from doing so because they do not trust their fellow community members and feel they would not be treated fairly by community. Additionally, Weaver found many subjects saying that they did not go to community functions or vote because they did not like and did not trust the people that attended or organized the events (Weaver, 2006). Even after controlling for income and language differences, the author still found a relationship between mistrust of others, the belief of unfair treatment, and the dislike of others (defining characteristics of misanthropy) as a cause of reduced civic engagement.

Research concerning the predictors and effects of misanthropy rely on speculated causality; however, many of these relationships are unclear and much of what predicts or is the effect of misanthropy is under debate. Predictor or results of

misanthropy should be considered “soft” causal order as there is not enough known about misanthropy to make assumptions about strong causal order.

Theoretical Link Between Misanthropy and Crime

Misanthropy is generally associated with maladaptive behaviors such as ethnocentrism, reduces value placed on human life, and decreases people’s willingness to invest in their community. Misanthropy leading to criminal behavior has yet to be tested, but the link between misanthropy and criminal behavior is buttressed by three of the most prominent criminological perspectives: learning theory, strain theory, and control theory. Learning theory could explain how misanthropy leads to criminal behavior in that misanthropy may be a learned behavior that makes it easier to rationalize criminal behavior. Strain theory could explain how the dislike and mistrust of others is the product of strain, which results in criminal behavior. Control theory, specifically social bond theory, could explain that misanthropy leads to criminal behavior because a misanthropic individual may have fewer and weaker bonds to society and is free to commit crime because of it.

Misanthropy, Crime, and Learning Theory

Learning theory states that criminal behavior is learned just as any other behavior is learned (Akers, 2009). Learning theory is typically attributed to Sutherland’s Differential Association theory (1966), which states that people learn to define legal codes as either favorable or unfavorable and that a person learns to rationalize their criminal behavior. These conclusions have been confirmed in more

contemporary research and the theory is generally accepted as one of the many factors that influence criminal behavior (Myers, 2008; Ormord, 2012).

Misanthropy may facilitate this learning process in a number of ways. First, misanthropy may make it easier for a person to define crime positively because they define legal codes as unfavorable since misanthropes may favorably define the harm it causes to other people. Second, similar to an arachnophobic individual crushing a spider, a misanthropic individual may have no qualms from harming others because they learn not to feel guilt over the injury caused to those they dislike and mistrust.

Misanthropy, Crime, and Strain Theory

American criminologist Robert Agnew developed General Strain theory (1992), a form of strain theory derived from Merton's strain theory (1968). Agnew identified different types of strain that people feel based on differing situations, which includes the strain resulting from the loss of positively-valued stimuli such as the loss of a relationship. Strain might also result from the presentation of negative stimuli, such as abuse or being immersed in an unsupportive environment (Agnew, 1992).

According to General Strain theory, when presented with strain, a person will have an emotional response and an anger response, which, according to Agnew (1992), is what leads to crime, as it "incites a person to action, lowers their inhibition, and creates a desire for revenge" (Agnew, 1992, p. 59).

Strain theory may provide some foundation for the relationship between misanthropy and criminal behavior. For a misanthropic individual, people in general may be a source of negative stimuli. If given few opportunities to continually avoid social

interaction, the misanthropic individual may perceive the environment as unsupportive and hostile. This strain will result in anger and that anger results in lowered inhibition that allows a person to commit crime. Additionally, if anger leads to the desire for revenge, the misanthropic individual may resort to violent crimes since they see other people as the source of their strain.

Misanthropy, Crime, and Control Theory

Control theory states that all people have, to varying degrees, some propensity toward criminal behavior; however, there are controls in place that prevent people from committing crime. From this perspective, Hirschi (1969) developed social bond theory, which states that controls take the form of bonds to society and people refrain from criminal behavior because it could damage those bonds. When these bonds are weak or broken, the controls are removed and a person is free to commit crime.

Social bond theory provides one of the best bridges between misanthropy and criminal behavior. According to Hirschi (1969) social bond is the degree to which an individual is bonded to society. For an individual to be bonded to society or others, they must have attachments to other people, must be committed to and involved in conventional behavior, and must believe in the common value system that comprises social norms (Hirschi, 1969). Current research finds social bond theory to influence the likelihood of someone committing criminal behavior (Salvatore and Taniguchi, 2012).

When a person is bonded to others and to society they will refrain from criminal behavior because it can weaken or break their bonds and harm their

relationship and social statuses. Misanthropy might reduce the faith a person has in others, therefore affecting a person's bonds to society; it reduces attachments to others, reduces desire to participate in conventional behavior, and could disrupt faith in society's common value system. Misanthropy breaks bonds and without the control that these bonds represent, a person is free to commit criminal behavior.

Logic, Theory, Misanthropy, Crime, and Sex

All three criminological perspectives provide a theoretical foundation for how misanthropy could be related to criminal behavior; learning theory explains how misanthropy could facilitate the process of learning criminal behavior, strain theory could explain how misanthropy causes strain that often leads to criminal behavior, and control theory could explain how misanthropy weakens or breaks controls, in the form of social bonds, which allows a person to commit crime without the fear of breaking their bonds to society. Negative world views and negative experiences have been shown to cause misanthropy, misanthropy in turn has been shown to lead to maladaptive behaviors and it is logical to assume that misanthropy may also lead to criminal behavior.

Historically, males have been found to be more misanthropic than females due to their competitive nature. However, with changing genders roles, it is likely that this relationship has changed and males and females may now have similar levels of misanthropy. Sex may also play a role in the relationship between misanthropy and crime as sex may temper the relationship as males and females may express misanthropy differently.

Consideration for Causal Order

Much like the research concerning factors that predict or are an effect of misanthropy, the theoretical foundation for misanthropy and criminal behavior is based on speculated or “soft” causality. Misanthropy may facilitate the process of learning criminal behavior, misanthropy may cause strain, and misanthropy may break bonds. Conversely, an individual may also learn how to be misanthropic, strain may cause misanthropy, and a poorly bonded individual may more readily develop misanthropy. Either way, the relationship between misanthropy and crime achieves theoretical logic.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research concerning the relationship between misanthropy and criminal behavior is nonexistent and the purpose of this research is to fill the gap in the literature. Data were collected from a self-report survey given to a sample of students enrolled in courses during the Spring 2013 semester at California State University, Stanislaus. Misanthropy was measured through three previously-used misanthropy scales (i.e. Rosenberg, 1957; Fey, 1995; Wuensch et al. 2002). The crime measures were derived from the Nye and Short criminal behavior scale (1957), which has been used repeatedly to measure delinquency in youth and young adults. The current study compares misanthropy between the sexes, crime between the sexes, the relationship between misanthropy and crime, and how the misanthropy/crime relationship might differ between males and females.

For this research the term “sex” is used instead of “gender” as sex refers to a person’s anatomical identity (male or female). Gender was not addresses in this study in the sense that contemporary gender research generally acknowledges more than just two genders.

Sample

Data collection occurred at California State University, Stanislaus (CSU Stanislaus) located in Turlock, California. The data consisted of human subjects, their self-reported criminal behavior, and personal beliefs about other people. For this

reason, the research proposal and informed consent were submitted to the California State, Stanislaus Internal Review Board (approved, Protocol # 1213-134). The survey included seven misanthropy measures and 12 criminal behavior measures.

A copy of the informed consent was stapled to each survey and was read aloud as the surveys were distributed. Subjects were informed that they were not required to fill out the survey and could stop at any time. Subjects were further instructed not to indicate their identity on the survey and to enclose their survey into an included envelope. Subjects under the age of 18 were instructed not to take a survey in order to protect them as a vulnerable population.

According to statistics gathered by the university, there were 9,246 students enrolled at the time of data collection. The current research surveyed 250 students from who were over the age of 18 and were taking introductory-level courses from randomly selected subjects offered during the Spring 2013 semester. The sample was formed using a cluster sampling technique, which according to Hu & Kravtsov (2003) involves the total population and then divides the population into groups or clusters for sampling. To develop the clusters for sampling, the class schedule for every subject (e.g. biology) offered during spring 2013 was printed out (each subject having its own page). The pages were then shuffled out of their previous alphabetical order, and then every 5th subject was pulled from the stack. The first introductory course listed under each subject was then selected for sampling. This process continued until the total number of students reached 250 (the enrollment count, available on CSU Stanislaus' website, was used to determine the number of students in each class). Five

subjects were selected for sampling and included one course each in chemistry, zoology, anthropology, humanities, and astronomy. Class sizes ranged from 25 to approximately 100 students.

Course instructors were contacted to obtain permission to administer the ten-minute survey to their students on the first day of class. The first day of class was seen as ideal because the majority of students attend the first day and professors tend to end this class session early. If a professor did not wish to have their class surveyed, or if they failed to respond, the next fifth subject, without replacement, was selected from the stack and the professor from the first listed introductory course was contacted. Introductory classes were chosen for study because they are relatively large classes and typically encompass a varied group of students, which increases the likelihood of obtaining a more generalizable sample from the population. In total, 212 complete surveys were used for analysis. Any surveys with missing responses to the misanthropy, criminal behavior, or demographic questions were disregarded. Table 1 compares the sex, ethnicity, and mean age of the sample compared to that the CSU Stanislaus student body.

Table 1

Sex, Ethnicity, and Age Comparison Between Sample and Population

	Sample	CSU Stanislaus
<u>Males</u>	33% (n = 69)	35% (N = 3,324)
<u>Females</u>	67% (n = 143)	65% (N = 6,012)
<u>Ethnicity</u>		
Hispanic/Latino	47.2%	38%
White	31.1%	37.3%
Asian	11.3%	10.4%
Black/African American	3.8%	2.9%
Native Hawaiian	0.9%	0.9%
American Indian	1.9%	.6%
Other	3.8%	7.2%
<u>Mean Age</u>	20	24

The sample adequately reflected the population in most demographics; the males and females were sampled in similar percentages to that present at the University; the sample was 33% male and 67% female compared to the population which was 35% males and 65% females. The percentages of ethnicities in the sample were somewhat different from that the population; however, the bulk of respondents were still Latino or Hispanic and White, followed by Asian then Black or African American. The mean age of the sample was four years younger than that of the University and the difference is likely due to the selection of introductory courses, which tend to have younger students enrolled.

Variables

Misanthropy

The self-reported misanthropy scale was based off of three different misanthropy scales. A subset of questions from each scale were modified and then merged to create the questions that appeared on the survey. First is the Rosenberg Faith in People scale (1957), which measures the extent to which people believe others are unfair, unhelpful, and untrustworthy. The original scale consisted of the following five measures: “no one is going to care much what happens to you when you get right down to it”, “if you don’t watch yourself, people will take advantage of you”, “most people can be trusted”, “most people are more inclined to help others than think of themselves first”, and “humans nature is basically cooperative.” The original study used a Likert five-item scale of agreement, with a score of one indicating strong disagreement and a score of five indicating strong agreement.

The second is Fey’s Acceptance of Others survey (1995), which measured how readily subjects accepted other people. The original scale included the following eight items: “I like to get to know people”, “people are quite critical of me”, “people are too easily led”, “people these days have pretty low moral standards”, “once you start doing favors for people they will walk all over you”, “people are always dissatisfied and hunting for something new”, “in my experience people are stubborn and unreasonable”, and “I can enjoy being with people whose values are very different from mine.” The original study assessed responses to the items with a

Likert three-item scale of agreement, where a one indicated disagreement and a three indicated agreement.

The third is a scale developed by Wuensch et al. (2002), which was designed to measure people's general dislike of others. The scale consists of the following five items: "humans are by nature basically corrupt", "both history and current events show that humans are basically wicked", "planet earth would be better off if humans would just disappear from it", "most people are basically good natured", and "I am proud to be a member of the human race." The responses were dichotomized into agreement or disagreement.

Criminal Behavior

Criminal behavior was measured through a crime scale derived from the Nye and Short delinquency scale (1957), which divided crimes into three different categories: personal crimes (intentionally causing harm to another person), property crimes (intentionally taking someone else's property without their permission), and vandalism (intentionally causing damage to someone else's property). All three categories included four different measures for a total of 11 measures.

Personal crimes were measured by asking subjects how many times they have done the following: participated in a physical fight, caused serious bodily harm to someone, used some sort of weapon against someone, and participated in a group versus group fight. Property crimes were measured by how many times in the subject did the following: shoplifted, stolen something worth more than \$2, stolen something worth less than \$2, and taken something out of or from someone else's car.

Vandalism was measured in the same manner with the following behaviors: intentionally damaged school or work property, intentionally damaged another person's vehicle, broken into or entered a building they were not supposed to, and set fire to someone else's property. In the original scale all crimes were measured by how many times they were committed over a subject's lifetime.

Measurement Instrumentation

Table 2 lists each of the seven misanthropy measures used in the survey. The measures were selected based on clarity and simplicity of wording and how well they seemed to capture the nature of misanthropy. *Care* was borrowed from the Rosenberg Faith in People scale (1957), *Dissatisfied*, *Favors*, and *Like* were borrowed from the scale developed by Wuensch et al. (2002) and *Unreasonable*, *Proud*, and *Smug* were derived from Fey's Acceptance of Others scale (1955). The subjects responded using a five-item Likert scale; one indicates strong disagreement, three indicates a neutral feeling, and five indicates strong agreement. To improve validity the misanthropy measures included a wide range of response choices to better reflect the subjects' genuine attitudes. A range of one to five allows subjects to find something close to their true feelings, versus a three-item scale that could "force" a subject into a selection that may not accurately portray their feelings.

Table 2

Misanthropy Measures

Unreasonable. In my experience people are stubborn and unreasonable.

Proud. I am proud to be a member of the human race.

Dissatisfied. People are always dissatisfied and hunting for something new.

Favors. Once you start doing favors for people, they will walk all over you.

Smug. Most people are pretty smug about themselves, never facing their bad points.

Care. No one is going to care what happens to you when you get right down to it.

Like. I like to get to know people.

Note. Items two and seven were reverse-coded upon analysis

To create the misanthropy measure used for analysis, all seven misanthropy measures were combined through indexing; the response values for all of the measures were added together and divided by the number of respondents. This was done to retain the original values of the response options and the new value of misanthropy measure follows: 1=very low misanthropy, 2=low misanthropy, 3=medium misanthropy, 4=high misanthropy, and 5=very high misanthropy. The reliability of the scale is weak ($\alpha = .60$) and removing some measures increased overall reliability, but only slightly. In the end all measures were included to preserve the breadth of the scale. Items two and seven were reverse coded upon analysis so that a high numerical score would indicate high misanthropy levels.

Table 3 lists the criminal behavior measures used in the survey. The measures were selected based on their clarity and because they represented the three different categories of crime used in this study (personal crimes, property crimes, and vandalism crimes). The original responses were based on a frequency scale that measured how many times a subject committed the behaviors during their lifetime.

To increase validity by minimizing the effect time has on memory, the survey in this study only asked for occurrences in the last three years.

Table 3

Criminal Behavior Measures

Fight. Gotten into a serious fight at work or school?

Group fight. Taken part in a fight where a group of your friends were against another group?

Weapon. Used a weapon to physically harm someone.

Bandages. Hurt someone badly enough where they needed bandages?

More \$50. Taken/stolen something from another person worth less than \$50?

Less \$50. Taken/stolen something from another person worth more than \$50?

Shoplift. Taken something from a store without paying for it?

Theft Car. Taken something from a car (purse, iPod, engine components, etc.)?

Vandalism Car. Damaged (scratched, dented, spray painted, etc.) a car on purpose?

Arson. Set fire to someone else's property?

Vandalism. Damaged someone's property on purpose?

Preliminary analysis revealed that only one behavior from each category was actually committed by a range of subjects. *Group fight* was used to represent personal crimes and represents a behavior that intentionally causes physical harm to the victim. *Shoplift* was used to represent property crimes with diffused or hidden victims. *Vandalism* of someone's property represented vandalism and is a crime with highly visible victims. These items are not scaled but are explored individually in all analyses below.

Research Design

The overall research design of this study was a cross-sectional correlational design with the goal of testing: 1) overall misanthropy of the sample and misanthropy

by sex; 2) crime and crime by sex; 3) the relationship between misanthropy and crime; and 4) the relationship between misanthropy and criminal behavior by sex.

Based on these tests, two hypotheses are proposed. 1) misanthropy is expected to influence the amount of criminal behavior; a high level of misanthropy is expected to increase criminal behavior because it works to reduce or weaken bonds and without these bonds, a person is free to commit crime 2) males are expected to be more misanthropic than females due to their competitive and more aggressive nature, though with changing gender roles this relationship is less clear.

Statistical Analysis

For analysis, the misanthropy variables were first evaluated. The responses for all of the misanthropy variables were compiled to determine the frequency of each response option overall and by sex. The mean levels of agreement for each of the misanthropy variables were then evaluated overall and by sex. To determine the overall misanthropy level of the sample, a misanthropy scale was created through indexing out of all the variables and the mean level of misanthropy was evaluated for the entire sample and by sex. The number of subjects that fell into each of the five misanthropy levels were compiled (the responses were rounded to the nearest whole number for clarity).

The three criminal behaviors were evaluated based on the frequency of how many times each behavior was committed overall and by sex. The mean number of occurrences for the three criminal behaviors was also evaluated overall and by sex.

Misanthropy levels are then explored between those that did commit each of the criminal behaviors and those that did not. The misanthropy mean for each of these two groups was evaluated. The final analysis compares sex differences in the mean level of misanthropy for each crime. This includes males that did commit one of the criminal behaviors, males that did not commit, females that did commit, and females that did not. An Independent Sample T Test was used to evaluate the difference of the means between each did and did not group.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Univariate Statistics of Misanthropy

Table 4 and Table 5 display the number of subjects overall and by sex that selected each level of agreement to the misanthropy variables (SD=strongly disagree, D=disagree, N=neutral, A=agree, and SA=strongly agree). A stronger level of agreement shows a higher level of misanthropy. The entire sample indicated strong disagreement 183 times, strong agreement 105 times, and indicated neutrality 488 times. Males indicated strong disagreement 67 times, strong agreement 70 times, and indicated neutrality 163 times. Females indicated strong disagreement 114 times, strong agreement 70 times, and indicated neutrality 334 times.

Table 4

Frequencies of Responses to Misanthropy

Item	<u>DS</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>SA</u>
<i>Stubborn</i>	3	55	101	68	5
<i>Proud</i>	70	85	44	7	6
<i>Dissatisfied</i>	2	19	61	89	41
<i>Favors</i>	9	56	76	48	26
<i>Smug</i>	10	38	81	64	19
<i>Like</i>	68	100	36	7	1
<i>Care</i>	19	71	89	28	5
Total	183	424	488	311	103

Table 5

Frequencies of Misanthropy Responses by Sex

Item	<u>SD</u>		<u>D</u>		<u>N</u>		<u>A</u>		<u>SA</u>	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
<i>Stubborn</i>	0	3	12	43	30	71	17	51	3	2
<i>Proud</i>	31	39	22	63	11	33	3	4	2	4
<i>Dissatisfied</i>	1	1	5	14	20	41	33	56	10	31
<i>Favors</i>	3	6	20	36	23	53	17	31	6	20
<i>Smug</i>	2	8	10	28	27	54	21	43	9	10
<i>Like</i>	20	48	29	71	14	22	5	2	1	0
<i>Care</i>	10	9	17	54	31	58	9	19	2	3
Total	67	114	115	309	163	334	105	206	33	70

Table 6 details the mean scores for each misanthropy measure and mean between the sexes for all of the misanthropy measures. Table 7 details the misanthropy scale mean, the mean for males and females, and the significance of the difference in misanthropy by sex. The table also details how many subjects by sex scored the different misanthropy levels. Females and males had between a low and medium level of misanthropy and had nearly identical mean levels; males scored 2.751 and females scored 2.756 and the difference was not statistically significant.

Table 6

Misanthropy Mean Comparison by Sex

Item	Overall Mean	M Mean	F Mean
<i>Stubborn</i>	3.05	3.15	3.01
<i>Proud</i>	2.02	1.88	2.09
<i>Dissatisfied</i>	3.36	3.66	3.71
<i>Favors</i>	3.15	3.04	3.20
<i>Smug</i>	3.20	3.36	3.13
<i>Like</i>	1.92	2.10	1.84
<i>Care</i>	2.66	2.65	2.67

Table 7

Overall Mean Comparison of Misanthropy

	<u>Overall</u> <u>Mean</u>	<u>F</u> <u>Mean</u>	<u>M</u> <u>Mean</u>	<u>Sig.</u>	Misanthropy Scores by Sex									
					<u>1</u>		<u>2</u>		<u>3</u>		<u>4</u>		<u>5</u>	
					M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Misanthropy	2.75	2.75	2.75	.344	3	5	39	86	25	53	2	1	0	0

Univariate Statistics of Criminal Behavior

Table 8 details the overall frequencies of criminal behaviors by the entire sample. Table 9 details the number of subjects that committed criminal behaviors by sex on one occasion through four or more occasions. There were 233 criminal occurrences, with males having had 79 occurrences and females having 154 occurrences and the majority of subjects did not commit any of the behaviors.

Table 8

Number of Subjects That Committed Criminal Behaviors

	0 Times	1 Time	2 Times	3 Times	4+ Times
Fighting	196	12	5	1	0
Group Fight	196	7	3	2	2
Bandages	198	5	2	0	0
Weapon	212	0	0	0	0
More \$50	191	13	4	4	0
Less \$50	208	4	1	0	0
Shoplift	177	17	7	4	6
Theft Car	204	5	3	0	0
Vandalism Car	205	6	0	0	0
Arson	212	0	0	0	0
Vandalize	203	5	1	1	1
Total	2202	74	26	12	9

Table 9

Number of Criminal Behaviors by Sex

Item	<u>0 Times</u>		<u>1 Time</u>		<u>2 Times</u>		<u>3 Times</u>		<u>4+ Times</u>	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Fighting	66	128	3	9	0	5	0	1	0	0
Group	64	132	1	6	1	2	1	1	0	2
Bandages	66	132	2	3	1	1	0	0	0	0
Weapon	69	143	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
worth \leq \$50	58	133	8	5	2	2	1	3	0	0
worth \geq \$50	69	139	1	3	0	1	0	0	0	0
Shoplifted	55	122	8	10	2	5	2	2	2	4
Theft car	67	137	2	3	0	3	0	0	0	0
Vandalized car	66	139	2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0
Arson	69	143	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Vandalize	65	138	2	3	1	1	0	1	1	0
Total	714	1486	21	46	7	20	4	8	3	6

Table 10 details the overall mean times each test variable for criminal behavior was committed and the comparative mean of criminal commitments between males and females. For personal crimes, group fights occurred 29 times and the greatest standard deviation ($SD = .56$). For property crimes, shoplifting had the highest frequency ($n = 90$) and the greatest standard deviation ($SD = 1.42$). Lastly, of vandalism crimes, vandalism of someone's property had the highest frequency ($n = 17$) and greatest standard deviation ($SD = .46$). For this reason, only these three crimes are used when testing for mean differences in misanthropy by crime. Regardless of crime, the mean difference between males and females was minimal, ranging from 0.03 to 0.2.

Table 10

Mean Comparison of Crime (by Sex)

Item	Overall Mean	M Mean	F Mean
Group Fighting	.13	.11	.14
Shoplifted	.42	.49	.39
Vandalize	.23	.13	.33

Misanthropy Mean and Dichotomized Criminal Behaviors

Table 11 features the misanthropy mean of subjects that did (yes) and did not (no) commit the criminal behaviors and the statistical significance of this difference. One-hundred-six of the subjects did not group fight and 16 of the subjects did at least once; 177 subjects did not shoplift and 35 of the subjects did at least once; 203 subjects did not vandalize while nine subjects did so at least once.

Table 11

Misanthropy Mean by Crime

<u>Criminal Behavior</u>	Overall Mean Yes	Overall Mean No	Sig.
Group Fight	2.81	2.75	.710
Shoplift	2.81	2.74	.510
Vandalize	3.09	2.74	.036

The difference in means between subjects who did and did not participate in group fighting was 0.06, subjects who did and did not shoplift had a difference in

means of 0.07, and subjects who did and did not vandalize had a difference in the means of 0.35. Only the difference between those who did and did not vandalize was statistically significant ($p = .036$) and all of the other differences were likely due to chance or error ($p > .05$)

Misanthropy and Crime by Sex

Table 12 compares the misanthropy mean of males (M) and females (F) that did and did not commit the three criminal behavior variables and the significance between males and females that did and did not commit each one.

Table 12

Misanthropy Mean by Crime and Sex

Group	Male Mean		Female Mean		Sig. M/F Yes	Sig. M/F No
	Y	N	Y	N		
	Group	3.32	2.69	2.75	2.75	.926
Shoplift	2.77	2.74	2.75	2.77	.344	.304
Vandalism	2.75	2.92	3.06	3.13	.538	.408

The difference of means between males and females that did group fight was 0.57 and the mean difference between males and females that did not group fight was -0.06 The difference in the means between males and females that did shoplift was 0.02 and the difference in the means between males and females that did not shoplift was -0.03. Lastly, the difference in the means between males and females that did vandalize was -0.31 and the difference in the means between males and females that

did not vandalize was -0.21. However, none of these differences were statistically significant and were likely due to chance or error (p values ranged from .344 to .926).

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Even though misanthropy has been found to be associated with maladaptive behaviors, no published research has examined its relationship to crime. The purpose of this study was to examine the reality of this relationship via a self-report survey given to a sample of college students, which measured sex, current misanthropy levels, and criminal behavior over the last three years.

Univariate statistics revealed that the entire sample had between a low and medium mean misanthropy level and that males and females had nearly identical levels of misanthropy. The number of criminal occurrences was relatively low and males in the sample committed more crime than the females (based on the percentage of males to females).

When comparing misanthropy levels between those that did and those that did not commit any of the three criminal behaviors, those that reported group fighting, shoplifting, or vandalizing had a higher mean level of misanthropy than those who did not commit any of the behaviors. However, the difference was only statistically significant for vandalism. Males that did group fight and males that did shoplift had a higher mean level of misanthropy than females that did these behaviors. However, males that vandalized had a lower level of misanthropy than females that vandalized.

Discussion

If there was no relationship between misanthropy and the selected measures of criminal behaviors used in this study, analysis would have revealed the same misanthropy level between those that did and those that did not commit the criminal behaviors; however, for all three crimes, those that committed them had a higher misanthropy level. The association between misanthropy and vandalism (the only statistically significant relationship) gives particular insight as to how misanthropy relates to crime; vandalism is an obvious crime with an obvious victim but it is a behavior that does not physically injure someone.

The lack of a statistically significant difference between misanthropy and group fight gives insight to how misanthropy breaks bonds. Group fights are not a secret as there are multiple participants, there are typically witnesses to these fights and these fights are entered upon with the purpose of injuring others. Misanthropy may leave enough bonds in tact so that a person does not want to physically harm another person.

The lack of a statistically significant difference between misanthropy and shoplifting also gives insight to the relationship between misanthropy and criminal behavior. Those who commit this often consider shoplifting as a “victimless” crime (Smith and Schneider, 2014). Misanthropy may break bonds to the extent that the misanthropic individual may need to see some harm come to a person if they are going to run the risk of committing a crime and the harm done by shoplifting may be too hidden and the victim(s) too defused.

The entire sample had between a low and medium level of misanthropy, this is not surprising as the sample consisted of individuals that previous research has found to have low levels of misanthropy (e.g. those with or obtaining a higher education, part of a middle class socioeconomic demographic, or of the ethnic majority). However, the nearly identical misanthropy levels between males and females is in contrast to previous research and supports the idea that shifting gender roles and the fact that females are competing for the same resources as males may be influencing the relation between sex and misanthropy.

For group fighting and shoplifting males that did commit these crimes had a higher misanthropy levels than the females that committed them. However, females that vandalized had higher misanthropy than the males that vandalized. Sex likely influences the relationship between misanthropy and criminal behavior in that females may express their broken bonds and strain through vandalism while males use other behaviors. Misanthropy may more aggressively breaks bonds in males allowing them to physically harm others, but it may only breaks bonds in females to certain degree allowing them to have a visible yet physically unharmed victim.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

The self-reported data may be to blame for the low levels of misanthropy, as many students may not have been willing to reveal the full extent of their negative attitudes toward others. Misanthropy in itself may be difficult to measure; the state of a subject's current mood may greatly influence their responses to the misanthropy

measures and attaining a person's *general* level of misanthropy is difficult and subject to many factors that cannot all be controlled.

Crime among college students is typically rare, and use of a different population that better represents the criminal behavior of young adults may have made the association between misanthropy and crime more clear. This research does not address the relationship between misanthropy and social bond theory or any of the other theoretical foundations, nor does it examine the causal order of the concepts. Once this relationship is more formally understood, the causal ordering of misanthropy, criminological theory, and criminal behavior can be more fully known. However, this study was explorative with the purpose of laying a foundation for the potential theoretical bridge between misanthropy and criminal behavior.

Conclusion

The link between misanthropy and criminal behavior is two-pronged: logical and theoretical. Previous research had made the logical link between misanthropy and maladaptive behaviors, and social bond theory provides the strongest theoretical link between misanthropy, maladaptive behaviors, and criminal behavior.

The current research found little association between misanthropy and criminal behavior but the shifting nature of gender roles is reflected in this study as males and females had nearly identical levels of misanthropy. This finding implies that females, at least in this population, share many of the same beliefs about others as the males and females seem to express misanthropy through vandalism while males rely on other behaviors.

The results of this study imply that misanthropy's relationship to the criminal behaviors used in this study may be based on the Goldilocks principle in which something must fall into some middle ground to work. Misanthropy is not strong enough to motivate a person to physically harm other people such as through group fighting, yet it motivates a person beyond crimes with a hidden or defused victim such as shoplifting. Vandalism seems to be "just right" as no one is physically harmed but it is a visible crime with visible victims. This is particularly true with the females in the sample as the females that vandalized had a higher misanthropy level than the males that vandalized.

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APPENDIX

Taken/stolen something from another person worth less than \$50 _____

Taken/stolen something from another person worth more than \$50 _____

Taken something from a store without paying for it _____

Taken something from a car (purse, iPod, engine components etc.) _____

Damaged (scratched, dented, spray painted etc.) a car on purpose _____

Set fire to someone else's property _____

Damaged someone else's property on purpose _____