Throughout this article we’ve made imprecise statements and statements that ought to have had all sorts of qualifications and reservations attached to them; and some of our statements may be flatly false. Lack of sufficient information and the need for brevity made it impossible for us to formulate our assertions more precisely or add all the necessary qualifications. And of course in a discussion of this kind one must rely heavily on intuitive judgment, and that can sometimes be wrong. So we don’t claim that this article expresses more than a crude approximation to the truth.

—FC a.k.a. the Unabomber, “Industrial Society and Its Future”
(attributed to Theodore Kaczynski, A.B. 1962, Harvard University)

6.1 Reviewing the Results

One of the important modules of GB Theory—or of any previous grammatical theory based on the Principles and Parameters framework—has been a Theory of Control. To construe Control Theory as a separate component of grammar was not an unreasonable point of view: the empirical and explanatory success of Theta Theory, the Projection Principle and Case Theory (as well as the existence of D-structure itself) was persuasive evidence that modifying those theories was intractable, and that a separate Theory of Control was required, as well as the null element PRO.

However, with the advent of the Minimalist Program this argument was considerably weakened. Case Theory was completely reformulated, D-structure and the Projection Principle were eliminated, and Theta Theory was assumed to apply at LF. These changes opened up the possibility of re-examining Control Theory by removing the motivation to
preserve a separate Control Theory. In this dissertation, we have examined Control Theory and proposed that its properties can be derived from the principles already used in the Minimalist Program.

The basic strategy and the details of the reduction of Control Theory and PRO to Case-movement and theta-role assignment in the Minimalist Program were given in chapters 1 and 2. In particular, we saw that the Binding Theory approach to the occurrence of PRO was not possible in the Minimalist Program, and the Null Case approach relied on an unmotivated assumption that certain types of Tense check Null Case, and that only PRO can have Null Case features. We argued for a analysis of control data in which long-distance Case-chains were assigned two theta roles: one by the embedded clause and another by the control verb. This allowed us to derive the syntactic properties of control constructions, including the Minimum Distance Principle, and to compare and contrast control and raising constructions and subject versus object control. Also, the scopal properties of control constructions were analyzed in a way unavailable to a theory with PRO. Chapters 3 and 4 extended this theory to cover additional constructions in English and to analyze control constructions in other languages, including Romance and Germanic. Finally, chapter 5 discussed non-obligatory control (NOC) constructions, arguing that, unlike obligatory control (OC) constructions, NOC cannot be given a movement analysis. Instead, we argued that a minimal pronoun, with only D-features, exists in NOC constructions.

6.2 Remaining Problems and Future Directions

The research presented in this thesis argues for the replacement of a module of grammatical theory. In cases like this, there is a great deal of data to consider, and numerous implications which need to be examined. Control Theory did not operate in a vacuum, and its effects must be subsumed by a proposed replacement. Within a single dissertation, time and space constraints do not allow every angle to be considered and every language analyzed.
in such a situation.

Several directions for future research are immediately apparent. First of all, there are many languages whose control properties have not been discussed here. To name only a few, Modern Greek control constructions involve finite clauses with controlled pronouns (Joseph 1992). I have not discussed the relation between switch reference and control or between obviation and control, especially in languages like Hopi (Hale 1992), or control and morphological Case in secondary predicates in the Slavic languages (Franks and Hornstein 1992, Lasnik 1992)—and these examples are all out of only one book! Also, I have left completely untouched the issue of control in DP’s and in gerunds. Also, there are certain principles proposed in this thesis which, one hopes, could be derived from more elementary principles; an example of such a principle would be Amalgamation, proposed in chapter 3. Despite its empirical success, it would be clearly preferable not to have it as a primitive of the grammar. Perhaps, as argued in a footnote in chapter 3, Amalgamation arises from the interaction of Visibility with conditions on head movement. However, any clarification of this intuition must await future research.