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**Sociology 3270: Criminology
Weber State University, Fall 2013**

**Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30 – 11:45 am
SS 44**

Course overview

What is crime? How do we define it, measure it, explain it, and fight it? This course considers criminology – the scientific study of crime. While we often see crime as a straightforward matter of what is against the law and handled by the criminal justice system, sociological explanations involve complex historical, cultural, political, racial and gendered explanations. Thus, what is defined as a crime (and what is not), who becomes accused and punished as criminals (and who does not), as well as how crimes are battled, measured and explained are all complicated and controversial matters. This course will especially focus on how the theories of Marx, Foucault, and the Chicago School each understand crime. We will also question the moral and ethical choices of *researchers* of crime.

By the end of this course, you should have an understanding of basic concepts, theories, perspectives, problems, and perplexities involved in the study of crime. You will also learn about crime through three perspectives, as well as recent studies that use these theories to understand corporate crime, street crime, and public sex. Furthermore, you will sharpen your skills in research and analysis, critical thinking, academic writing, as well as public speaking.

Required readings

Bourgois, Philippe and Jeffrey Schonberg (2009) *Righteous Dopefiend*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press. ISBN: 978-0520254985

Humphreys, Laud (1975) *Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places*. Hawthorne, NY: Aldine de Gruyter. ISBN: 978-0202302836

Reiman, Jeffrey and Paul Leighton (2012) *The Rich Get Richer and The Poor Get Prison: Ideology, Class, and Criminal Justice, Tenth Edition*. Boston, MA: Pearson. ISBN: 978-0205137725

Additional readings found online.

Course requirements and grade percentages

Quizzes	35%
Research paper project	60%
In-class presentation	5%

Quizzes – To keep you on track with the readings, I will be asking you to complete seven quizzes. These will be **tests of basic ideas in the readings for that week**. Quizzes will happen at the beginning of class time, and they will not be announced beforehand. (7 quizzes X 5 points each = 35%).

Research paper project – In order to connect the course ideas to concrete examples, as well as strengthen your skills in writing, research, analysis and critical thinking, I am asking you to complete a research paper project, where you will **answer a question of your choice**. You will progressively work on the project, turning in parts throughout the semester. The final project will be graded on 1) your integration of the course materials, 2) your outside research and analysis, and 3) your writing and organization. See **page 5** for detailed instructions. (60%)

In-class presentation – In order to further discuss and digest the material, you will be asked to present a week's readings to the class. Your task for these presentations is NOT to lecture, but **facilitate a discussion**, asking the class questions regarding the main points of the readings, confusing and/or controversial sections, and integrating the readings into key themes and ideas of the course. Presentations will be graded on the quality of your preparation and performance. (5%)

Participation – I will also be observing your participation by taking roll at the beginning of each class period and monitoring your preparation and involvement while there. A good record of participation – few absences and active contributions – will result in a “bump” in grade if you are close to a higher grade (for example, a 89/100 will receive a grade of A-). A poor participation record = no bump.

Disclaimers

- By definition, this course considers aspects of social life that are offensive, dishonorable, and shocking. Be forewarned that we will be closely considering such subject matter.
- My preferred method of contact is in person, then by email. I do NOT respond to messages sent through the Canvas system.
- If you miss an assignment, be in touch with me as soon as possible. I am much more sympathetic to those who contact me before missing the assignment.
- Cheating will not be tolerated. Plagiarism – the use of others' words and/or ideas without clearly acknowledging their source – is also a form of cheating. I will take appropriate disciplinary action against offenders.
- If you are a student with a disability and require classroom accommodations, please meet with me to discuss arrangements (If you have not yet contacted Services for Students with Disabilities, please do so – Student Services Center, Room 181 or call (801) 626-6413).
- This syllabus, including all readings and assignments, is subject to change given the flow of the course and unforeseen circumstances. I may deliver such updates by email, so please regularly check your Weber email address or be sure that it forwards to your regular address.

Reading and lecture schedule

WEEK ONE: What is crime?
(August 27, 29)

Part I: Marx

WEEK TWO: Marxist criminology
(September 3, 5)

- “Crime Control in America: Nothing Succeeds Like Failure” (Reiman and Leighton, 1 pp. 11-46)

WEEK THREE: The Pyrrhic defeat theory
(September 10, 12)

- “Criminal Justice through the Looking Glass, or Winning by Losing” (Reiman and Leighton, Introduction pp. 1-10)
- “To the Vanquished Belong the Spoils” (Reiman and Leighton, 4 pp. 177-206)

Project proposals due Thursday, September 12th.

WEEK FOUR: Crime and class
(September 17, 19)

- “. . . And the Poor Get Prison” (Reiman and Leighton, 3 pp. 118-176)

WEEK FIVE: Example – the war on drugs
(September 24, 26)

Film: The House I Live In

WEEK SIX: Class project
(October 1, 3)

Part One of class project due in class Thursday, October 3rd.

Part II: Foucault

WEEK SEVEN: An introduction to Foucault
(October 8, 10)

- “Michel Foucault” (Scott McGaha, ONLINE or here: <http://www.criminology.fsu.edu/crimtheory/foucault.htm>)
- “A Word About Foucault” (Reiman and Leighton, pp. 49-51)

WEEK EIGHT: Lumpen abuse
(October 15, 17)

- “Introduction: A Theory of Abuse” (Bourgois and Schonberg, pp. 1-23)
- “Chapter 1: Intimate Apartheid” (Bourgois and Schonberg, pp. 24-45)

WEEK NINE: Survival
(October 22, 24)

- “Chapter 5: Making Money” (Bourgois and Schonberg, pp. 146-181)

WEEK TEN: Bodies (Warning: These chapters have much rough content.)
(October 29, 31)

- “Chapter 3: A Community of Addicted Bodies” (Bourgois and Schonberg, pp. 78-115)
- “Chapter 7: Male Love” (Bourgois and Schonberg, pp. 208-239)

WEEK ELEVEN: Class project
(November 5, 7)

Part Two of class project due in class Thursday, November 7th.

Part III: The Chicago School

WEEK TWELVE: An introduction to the Chicago School
(November 12, 14)

- “The Chicago School and Cultural/Subcultural Theories of Crime” (Tibbetts and Hemmens pp. **381-395** ONLINE)

WEEK THIRTEEN: Private activity in public places
(November 19, 21)

- “Chapter 1. Public Settings for “Private” Encounters” (Humphreys pp. 1-15)
- “Chapter 2. Methods: The Sociologist as Voyeur” (Humphreys pp. 16-44)

WEEK FOURTEEN: Private activity in public places, continued
(November 26)

- “Chapter 4. Patterns of Collective Action” (Humphreys pp. 59-80)
- “Chapter 6. The People Next Door” (Humphreys pp. 104-130)

No class Thursday, November 28th

WEEK FIFTEEN: Private activity in public places, continued
(December 3, 5)

- “‘The Breastplate of Righteousness’: Twenty-Five Years After Laud Humphreys’ Tearoom Trade: Impersonal Sex in Public Places” (Nardi, ONLINE)
- *Film: Outrage*

Final project due Thursday, December 12th by 12 noon.

Research project instructions

You will complete a research project where you **answer a question of your choice**. For example, “How do murder rates vary between the United States and Canada?” or “Why do customers use the grocery store express line when they have more than fifteen items?” When choosing a question, feel free to think outside of the box – Is crime simply what is against the law?

To break the project into manageable pieces and provide you with much feedback, I have divided it up into multiple parts that are due at different times during the semester. Late assignments will be marked down **2 points and then 2 points for each day late**.

PROPOSAL – To start, I want you to find a topic that will be the focus of your project. **What is your main research question?** Also, briefly explain how your topic an example of crime, what are attempts to control it, and what are the effects of this control. You may change your question after I have approved your proposal, but you must consult with me first. **(One page – due Thursday, September 12th) (5%)**

PART ONE – What do other researchers say about your topic? Use **two sources from the course and at least five outside studies** (Outside sources should be academic journal articles and/or books. If you have any questions, please contact me). You can present this as an “annotated biography,” where you summarize each article separately and explain how each fits your research question, or you can integrate the research by topic or analyze it in other ways. **(Three or more pages – due Thursday, October 3rd) (15%)**

PART TWO – How would you **analyze your topic given the theories of the course?** In this course, we will focus on three main perspectives – Marxism, Foucault, and the Chicago School. Briefly explain the perspectives of Marxism and Foucault (one page each), and then analyze how your topic fits, does not fit, or partially fits each theory. **(Three or more pages – due Thursday, November 7th) (15%)**

FINAL COMBINED PROJECT – Your final project is **due Thursday, December 12th** by noon in my mailbox in the department office. The body of the paper should be 8-10 pages long. Along with an introduction – where you present your topic and explain why it is important – as well as a conclusion – where you sum up your findings, it should **organize and streamline Part One and Part Two** (adding the perspective of the Chicago School to Part Two). Maybe most importantly, you should also **answer your research question**, analyzing what you have discovered through this journey to knowledge and understanding. **(25%)**

Additionally:

- First of all, **THIS ASSIGNMENT REPLACES EXAMS AS TESTS OF YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE COURSE MATERIAL**. Your answers to each assignment should be well supported by detailed evidence from the reading materials.
- **All sources must be cited** with the format of [author, year] for general ideas (Glass 2013), and [author, year, page number] for specific ideas or direct quotations (Glass 2013, p. 6). You may use another format, but be consistent with your citations. You **must include a bibliography** with all sources used, including course sources.
- I am open to alternative versions of this assignment, if you are interested in doing original research, group papers, etc. These **MUST** be approved by me beforehand.

Many lands saw Zarathustra, and many peoples: thus he discovered the good and bad of many peoples. No greater power did Zarathustra find on earth than good and bad.

No people could live without first valuing; if a people will maintain itself, however, it must not value as its neighbour valueth.

Much that passed for good with one people was regarded with scorn and contempt by another: thus I found it. Much found I here called bad, which was there decked with purple honours.

Never did the one neighbour understand the other: ever did his soul marvel at his neighbour's delusion and wickedness.

– Friedrich Nietzsche – *Thus Spake Zarathustra*