

PEOPLE PROCESSING INSTITUTIONS
SOCY 292.02
Professor Robert Garot

Perspectives and Overview

Complex modern societies rely on formal institutions for both social control and providing "helping" services. While many of these institutions are state created, others function independently but within the shadow of the state. All these institutions show qualities of bureaucracy as identified by Weber, Foucault, and other classic sociological theorists. Indeed, some theorists have argued that what is distinctive of a number of such institutions is that they change the official status of the population or clientele who come within their jurisdiction. Thus, Hasenfeld (1972) has pointed to a number of common features of "people-processing institutions," including criminal and juvenile courts which designate "criminals" and "delinquents," welfare agencies which decide on clients' eligibility for benefits, HMOs which determine the appropriateness of medical procedures, etc. These institutions carry out their fundamental work tasks by creating cases and moving these cases through to different institutional outcomes. In this sense people-processing institutions contrast with "people-changing institutions" which work to treat, reform or in some other way actually do something to those processed.

This course will examine the functioning and significance of a variety of people processing institutions, including criminal and juvenile courts and related agencies, medicine, psychiatry, human service and education. Substantively, the course will first review the theoretical foundations of sociological analyses of people-processing institutions. It will then examine some generic properties of the interactional and organizational functioning of these institutions.

It is essential that you *wrestle* with the readings for each week, and *mull over* how they apply to your own experience. I hope to open new perspectives to you, and what transforms information into a perspective that opens up new ways of thinking is wrestling with what you encounter. For each reading, I hope that you work to understand not just *what* the author is saying, but *why*. What received wisdom is she or he trying to challenge? With what ideas might they be competing? What is their evidence? I hope that you will enhance for yourself the value of what you read through the paired (and perhaps literally opposed) habits of mind of skepticism (What I really believe that?) and suspended disbelief (What if it were true?).

The idea is to foster an intense, searching class discussion. A great deal of learning happens in discussion, when one's new ideas, guesses, hunches, ideological convictions, and moral persuasions rub unexpectedly up against others'. I will assist this process through my questioning in class, and want you to have challenged each reading so that you, in turn, can be challenged by others in class.

Please feel free to discuss topics further with me after class, or before class by appointment. Be sure to exchange phone numbers with two or three other students and form study groups.

Requirements

Weekly Journal

Your journal should reflect that you have deeply read and considered the readings, and that you have found a way to apply those insights to your own experiences. The length should be about two pages, and it must be type-written. Journals are due at the beginning of each Tuesday class session,

unless otherwise announced. Each journal will be worth 3% of your final grade, and one percentage point will be lost for journals not turned in on time (exceptions may be granted for the first two weeks of the course). I do not accept papers submitted through email. Prompts and suggestions will be provided for your journals throughout the course. On selected weeks, to be announced in advance, a short quiz will substitute for the journal. I will drop your two lowest journal grades in computing your final grade (thus, you may miss two journals without penalty).

Term Paper

One 10-15 page term paper is required for this course, based on ethnographic observations of the daily routines of a people processing institution, such as a courthouse. A list of potential field sites, and guidelines for conducting ethnographic observations and building an inductive analysis will be provided in class. Please keep up with the term paper prompts in the syllabus; I will check periodically on your work, and I will subtract paper progress points for those who do not keep up. Papers not handed in on time will lose one course percentage point for each day they are late. *I do not accept papers sent electronically.*

Grading Policy

You will not be graded on a competitive basis, so in theory everyone can do well in the class. However, in order to get a top grade, students will be expected to achieve standards of excellence in their work. If you are dissatisfied with any grade you receive, you must submit a written request for a review of the grade, including a defense, no later than one week after the work is handed back to the class. By requesting a review of the grade you receive, you invite the possibility that the new grade will be lower than the original grade, as well as the possibility that it will be higher. Points will be distributed as follows:

Weekly Journal: 45%

Exams (3): 30%

Final Paper: 20%

Evidence of Paper Progress: 5%

A+ 98-100	B+ 88-89	C+ 78-79	D+ 65-69
A 93-97	B 83-87	C 73-77	D 55-64
A- 90-92	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 50-54

Cheating/Plagiarism

Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be referred to the College Provost. For guidelines on avoiding these offenses, please see your Student Handbook

Required Readings

All readings for this course are held on reserve in the library, and some are on electronic reserve. Asylums, Street Level Bureaucracy, and Environment and Enforcement and are available at the Kenyon Bookstore.

Be sure to complete each week's readings PRIOR TO coming to class. Additional background readings are available for students who wish to read further on the week's topic. Also, be sure to check the class website frequently for announcements.

Weekly Topics and Readings

Please note that the following schedule, including project and exam dates, is tentative, and may change based on how quickly we cover the material.

Part I: Theoretical Foundations

Thursday, August 28th

Introduction: Issues and Approaches

Yeheskel Hasenfeld, "People Processing Organizations: An Exchange Approach." *American Sociological Review* 37:256-63 (1972).

Michael Lipsky, Preface, Chapter 1 in *Street-Level Bureaucracy* (Russell Sage, 1980).

Robert Meier, "Perspectives on the Concept of Social Control," *Annual Review of Sociology*, 8:34-55 (1982).

Week 1: Theoretical Foundations I

Tuesday, September 2nd, and Thursday, September 4th

Erving Goffman, "On the Characteristics of Total Institutions," and "The Moral Career of the Mental Patient," in Asylums (Anchor, 1961).

Intro Journal due 9-2.

Week 2: Theoretical Foundations II: Labeling/Societal Reaction Theories of Deviance

Tuesday, September 9th and Thursday, September 11th

Thomas Scheff. "The Role of The Mentally Ill and the Dynamics of Mental Disorder." Sociometry, 436-453.

Robert M. Emerson and Sheldon L. Messinger, "The Micro-Politics of Trouble." *Social Problems* 25:121-32 (1977).

Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw. "Writing up Fieldnotes II: Creating Scenes on the Page." Pp. 66-107 in Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes (University of Chicago Press, 1995)

Term Paper: Conduct Practice Observations

Week 1 Journal due 9-9.

Week 3: Theoretical Foundations: Social Control as Differential Outcomes

Tuesday, September 16th and Thursday, September 18th

Donald Black, Chapters 1, 2 and 6, in *The Behavior of Law* (Academic Press, 1976).

Donald Black, "Social Control as a Dependent Variable." Pp. 1-36 in Black (ed.), *Toward a General Theory of Social Control*, Vol. 1: Fundamentals. (Academic Press, 1984).

Term Paper: Practice Observations due 9-16. Begin contacting potential fieldsites.

Week 2 Journal due 9-16.

Exam #1: Tuesday, September 23rd

Week 3 Journal due 9-23.

Part II: Processing People

Week 4: Intake: Processing Complaints

Thursday, September 25th

James A. Holstein and Gale Miller, "Rethinking Victimization: An Interactional Approach to Victimology." *Symbolic Interaction* 13:103-122 (1990).

Richard V. Ericson, "Mobilization." Chapter 4 in *Reproducing Order: A Study of Police Patrol Work*. (University of Toronto Press, 1982).

Optional:

Albert J. Meehan, "Assessing the Police-worthiness' of Citizen Complaints to the Police: Accountability and the Negotiation of Facts". Pp. 116-140 in D. Helm et al (eds.), *Interactional Order: New Directions in the Study of Social Order*. (Irvington, 1987).

Term Paper: Begin Conducting Ethnographic Observations

Week 5: Discretion

Tuesday, September 30th and Thursday, October 2nd

Egon Bittner, "Police Discretion in Emergency Apprehension of Mentally Ill Persons." *Social Problems* 14:278-92 (1967).

Elizabeth A. Stanko, "The Arrest Versus the Case: Some Observations on Police/District Attorney Interaction." *Urban Life* 9:395-414 (1981).

Robert M. Emerson, "Case Processing and Interorganizational Knowledge: Detecting the Real Reasons' for Referrals." *Social Problems* 38: 198-212 (1992).

Week 4 Journal due 9-30.

Week 6: Rationing Services

Tuesday, October 7th and Thursday, October 9th

Michael Lipsky, "Rationing Services" and "Husbanding Resources," pp. 105-116, 125-32 in Steet *Level Bureaucracy*.

Keith Hawkins, "Creating Cases." Chapter 5 in *Environment and Enforcement: Regulation and the Social Definition of Pollution*. (Clarendon Press, 1984).

Robert M. Emerson, Rachel I. Fretz and Linda L. Shaw. "Processing Fieldnotes: Coding and Memoing." Pp. 142-168 in Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes (University of Chicago Press, 1995)

Term Paper: Open Coding.

Week 5 Journal due 10-7.

Week 7: Typifications and Normal Cases 1

Tuesday, October 14th and Thursday, October 16th

David Sudnow, "Normal Crimes." *Social Problems* 12:255-76 (1965).

Carol A. Heimer and Lisa R. Staffen, "Interdependence and Reintegrative Social Control: Labeling and Reforming 'Inappropriate' Parents in Neonatal Intensive Care Units." *ASR* 60:635-54 (1995).

Term Paper: Focused Coding

Week 6 Journal due 10-14.

Week 8: Typifications and Normal Cases 2**Tuesday, October 21st and Thursday, October 23rd**

Thomas Scheff, "Typification in Diagnostic Practices of Rehabilitative Agencies." Chapter 8 in Marvin B. Sussman (ed.), *Sociology and Rehabilitation* (1965).

Julius A. Roth, "Some Contingencies of the Moral Evaluation and Control of Clientele: The Case of the Hospital Emergency Service." *AJS* 77:839-56 (1972).

Lisa Frohmann, "Discrediting Victim Allegations of Sexual Assault: Prosecutorial Accounts of Case Rejection." *Social Problems* 38:213-25 (1991).

Week 7 Journal due 10-21.**Exam #2: Tuesday, October 28th****Week 8 Journal due 10-28.****Part III: Artifacts, Dilemmas and Consequences of People Processing****Week 9: Information, Records and Files****Thursday, October 30th**

John I. Kitsuse and Aaron V. Cicourel, "A Note of the Uses of Official Statistics." *Social Problems* 11:131-39 (1963).

Albert J. Meehan, "Record-Keeping Practices in the Policing of Juveniles." *Urban Life* 15:70-102 (1986).

Aaron V. Cicourel, "Routine Practices of Law Enforcement Agencies." Pp. 203-241 ("Smithfield") in *Social Organization of Juvenile Justice*. (Wiley, 1968).

Week 10: Practical Decision-Making: Caseloads and Decision Horizons**Tuesday, November 4th and Thursday, November 6th**

Egon Bittner, "The Police on Skid-Row: A Study of Peace-Keeping." *ASR* 32:699-715 (1967).

Robert M. Emerson, "Holistic Effects in Social Control Decision-Making." *Law & Society Review* 17:425-55 (1983).

Robert M. Emerson and Blair Paley, "Organizational Horizons in Complaint-Filing." In Keith Hawkins (ed.), *The Uses of Discretion*. (Oxford University Press, 1993).

Week 9 Journal due 11-4.**Term Paper: Analytic Memoing****Week 11: Rules and their Use****Tuesday, November 11th and Thursday, November 13th**

John Heritage. "Actions, Rules and Contexts." Chapter 5 in *Garfinkel and Ethnomethodology*. (1984).

Don H. Zimmerman, "The Practicalities of Rule Use." Chapter 9 in Jack Douglas (ed.), *Understanding Everyday Life*. (Aldine, 1970).

Week 10 Journal due 11-11.**Term Paper: Analytic Section****Week 12: Emotion Work****Tuesday, November 18th and Thursday, November 20th**

Erving Goffman. "On Cooling the Mark Out." *Psychiatry*. (1952)

Robert Garot and Jack Katz. "You have to sit there and look at them and say 'no.': The Phenomenology of Emotion Work in a Section 8 Housing Office."

Week 11 Journal due 11-18.

Term Paper: Rough Draft Due 11-20.

Week 12 Journal due 11-20.

November 24th-30th: Happy Thanksgiving

Week 13: Denunciation, Shaming and Last Resorts

Tuesday, December 2nd and Thursday, December 4th

Harold Garfinkel, "Conditions of Successful Degradation Ceremonies." AJS 61:420-24 (1956).

Keith Hawkins, "Assessing Evil." British Journal of Criminology 23: 101-25 (1983).

Robert M. Emerson, "On Last Resorts." AJS 87: 1 -20 (1981).

Term Paper: Revisions, Student Presentations

Journal 13 due 12-2.

Week 14: Rehabilitation and Reintegration

Tuesday, December 9th and Thursday, December 11th

Gresham M. Sykes, "The Corruption of Authority and Rehabilitation." Social Forces 34:257-62 (1956).

John Braithwaite and Steven Mugford, "Conditions of Successful Reintegration Ceremonies: Dealing with Juvenile Offenders." British Journal of Criminology 34: 139-56 (1994).

Term Paper: Revisions, Student Presentations

Journal 14 due 12-9.

Final Paper Due December 11th

Exam #3 (Final): Thursday, Dec. 18th, 6:30-8:30 PM

General Writing Guidelines*

Format and Presentation

Do not skip lines between paragraphs (like I'm doing here). Use an easily legible font, 12-point size works in most types. Papers should be typewritten, double-spaced with approximately 1" margins. Number all pages. Papers should be stapled. This means no plastic binders, no folding the edges together and no paper clips. The following information should appear in the upper right-hand corner of the first page: name, student ID#, date, paper topic number, and title. A bibliography is a necessary part of a research paper (see Citation, below), and should be attached at the end.

General Organization

You should make sure that you read the paper assignment instructions and follow them closely. The most important feature of your paper is that you have answered the question you have chosen. No matter how good your ideas are, if can't demonstrate your understanding of the question, and give an answer to it in your paper, then you will not do very well.

Academic papers have introductions, bodies, and conclusions. An introduction should be simple and explicit, and describe what you are going to do, and in what order. It should provide a complete "road map" for the rest of the paper. Tell your reader something about the study you are conducting, what you will focus on in the paper, what points you will be making, what you will

argue, and what you will conclude. It is perfectly acceptable to use the first person voice and say, "I will focus on ...", after all who is writing this paper, anyway?

The body of the paper must be well organized. You must use paragraphs to divide your thoughts. A paragraph is a set of sentences with one common idea. Each paragraph should have a topic sentence and make one main point. Your argument should flow logically from one paragraph to the next. Please use subheadings if they are appropriate or help the reader navigate through different sections of the paper. I should be able to make sense of your paper, in a general way, by reading the introduction, the first sentence of each paragraph, and the conclusion.

In your analysis, you will need to make explicit links between your "data" and the relevant course material. You will need to organize your paper around a description of the data you are analyzing and a review of the course material that helps to make your points. You should address all of the analytical issues I have proposed in the question. You may find that these do not exhaust the points you need to make, and answering your own additional questions may help further your analysis. Don't overlook a review of the course material (even though you know that I already know it). That way I can determine how fluent you are with the concepts, and how well you are able to apply them to your subject matter. There are various strategies for integrating the course material with an analysis of your data, but these are indispensable.

For your conclusion, restate the paper's highlights and take the opportunity to tie things up neatly. You may restate ideas from your opening paragraph. Repeat your thesis and briefly summarize the main evidence you have included. After reviewing your main points, you may speculate, include personal reactions, pose additional questions or suggest avenues for future research, and the like. If you have some doubts about whether your format will work effectively for the assignment, please feel free to consult with me first.

Citation

This is sometimes tricky, but by this point in your academic career, it is essential that you do it correctly. It is expected that you will use material from the texts and lecture to analyze your subject. Thus, whether you use direct quotes or paraphrases, you must give credit to the authors of those words, when they are not your own.

If you cite a lecture, do it this way: (Lecture, 9/9/02). However, relying solely on lecture citations for material that is also in the readings reveals to me that your familiarity with the readings is inadequate. So you should be sure to prioritize. Where appropriate, always cite the original source and not my delivery of it in lecture.

Directly quoted course materials from the reader should be cited in one of the following ways.

"Self-absorption is consistent with the emphasis on self-satisfaction fostered by capitalism in general and advertising in particular" (Karp, 1996:176).

Or alternately:

David A. Karp (1996:176) suggests that, "self-absorption is consistent with the emphasis on self-satisfaction fostered by capitalism in general and advertising in particular."

Also, be sure to cite any ideas that you borrow, not just quoted text. For instance:

Many analysts have noted how self-absorption may be fostered by capitalism (Karp, 1996:176).

Any direct quotation that is longer than three lines needs to be set off from the body of the paper by indenting and single-spacing. Since your papers will be double-spaced and indented only to begin paragraphs, you will see the contrast. Be careful to differentiate between what the textbook authors are saying themselves, and the other authors that they may in turn quote. Cite accordingly. Do not string quotes together without putting them in context with your own prose. When you use a direct quote, place it in the context of a sentence that includes an explanation of what the quote means and why it is useful in service of the point you are making.

A full reference, including the author's name, book or article title, publishing information and page numbers will appear in a separate, alphabetically organized bibliography at the end of the paper, under the heading, "References." Refer the bibliographies of our articles as examples.

Style

In general, write as simply as possible. Never use a big word, when a little one will do. Big words don't necessarily convey intellectual prowess – especially when they are awkwardly used. Your word choice should be appropriate to formal writing: no slang, and no contractions ("can't", "don't"), unless you are quoting others or it somehow better helps you to make your point. You must use words that actually exist, and words must be used correctly. Look up definitions and spellings if you are unsure. Spell check often misses words.

Avoid using the indefinite "you". You will notice that I am addressing these instructions to you; that is, I am using the second person. That is because I am giving these instructions to a definite person or set of persons. In your papers, unless you mean to address the reader directly, do not use "you" when you mean to use "one" or "we." Refer to yourself as "I" instead of the royal "we." It is perfectly acceptable to use the first person singular in papers – it is not too informal. Use "we" for the author and the reader together: "We have seen how breaching experiments disturb our taken-for-granted notions about reality." Never refer to "society" as an active agent (that's my pet peeve), as in, "Society requires that people follow norms."

Avoid "a lot" (and by the way it's not spelled "alot"), and "very". Hemingway and Morrison do not need them, and neither do you. Don't confuse "their/there/they're" or "it's/its", or "to/two/too", or "were/we're/where", etc. Also please differentiate between "suppose" and "supposed" – these are not interchangeable, and are almost always improperly applied. These are sets of words that give students trouble, so please be careful.

Try to avoid using "he", "his", or "mankind" to mean anyone or all in general. If for some reason you have a strong ideological commitment to using "he" as the generic, you may do so, but it is not accurate, and there are other options available.

Make sure that nouns and verbs agree in number. Avoid sentence fragments. Make sure that the sentences you write have subjects and predicates. Verbs are also necessary. Do not leave a clause hanging without these necessary components. Avoid run-on sentences. Make sure that if you link things together in a sentence that you do so by using the proper connective words or punctuation

marks. These kinds of mistakes can often be caught by reading your paper aloud. If it sounds wrong, it probably is.

Always follow the parsimony principle. That is, use as few words as possible to make your point.

Process

One way to start is by saying your ideas out loud, and writing them down. Just get the words out of your head and onto the page where you will be able to work with them more easily. I strongly suggest that you write more than one draft of your paper. Most successful papers are begun well in advance of the night before the assignment is due. The best way to start is to just spew out a messy first draft, getting all of your ideas and facts down on paper (if you write long-hand) or your computer screen (if you prefer to word process). Then, a second draft will help you to organize the sections, focus your argument, and refine the content and style.

You must be at this point before you come to see me about your paper. Although we will be unable to read entire drafts, we may be able to discuss with you specific parts of your thesis or analysis, and/or help you with difficulties in transitions between ideas or sections of your argument. A final draft is useful for correcting spelling and grammatical errors, and for formatting the paper. You must proofread your own paper. It is not acceptable to turn in a paper with typographical errors, misspellings, nouns and verbs that do not agree, misused words, run-on sentences, sentence fragments, etc. You may want to rewrite the beginning or end of your paper in the last draft. Often in composing your paper, you will have changed your focus or ideas somewhat by the time you finish. You will want to make sure that these changes are reflected in a new version of your introduction or conclusion.

Finally, re-read your own paper and imagine that someone else wrote it. Does it make sense? Fix it, if it doesn't. You may also want to get someone else to read your paper and give you comments. It is often hard to be objective when you are so close in the writing process. If you have trouble with your writing, get help: see me during office hours, or seek assistance from the writing center on campus. For further suggestions on writing, I suggest:

Richlin-Klonsky, Judith and Ellen Strenski (Eds.). 1994. A Guide to Writing Sociology Papers. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Becker, Howard S. 1986. Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Also, please feel free to visit during office hours for personal assistance.

Good luck, and start writing now!

* This document adapted with thanks from Dr. Kerry Ferris' Case Study Essay Guidelines.