

Sociology 203
Criminology
John Jay College of Criminal Justice, Fall, 2007
Dr. Robert Garot

Office: 520.33T
Office Hours: 11-12 Tuesday and Thursday and by appointment
Office Phone: (212) 237-8680
Secretary: Theresa Rockett
Email: rgarot@yahoo.com
Office Hours: 11-12 Monday and Wednesday

Course Objectives

How do we explain crime, and how should we respond to it? While these questions consume a great deal of public and media attention, criminologists have spent nearly 250 years developing complex, nuanced and competing responses. Although such complexity is typically overlooked in popular discourse, it will be our task to come to terms with these various insights, understand how they interrelate, and how they have changed over time. The aim is to provide you with a more sophisticated sense of the complexity of crime, to aid you in formulating questions about crime.

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 (“Ought 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 before class, or after class by appointment. *Be sure to exchange phone numbers with two or three other students and form study groups.*

Required Readings

Cullen, Francis T. and Robert Agnew. 2006. Criminological Theory: Past to Present. Los Angeles: Roxbury. (*Hereafter “CT”*)
Culbertson, Robert G. and Ralph A. Weisheit. 2002. “Order Under Law”: Readings in Criminal Justice. Sixth Edition. Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland. (*Hereafter “OUL”*)

These are available in the campus bookstore. Additional background readings are provided for students who wish to read further on the week's topic. Also, be sure to check the class website frequently for announcements.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance and participation are important to maintain our momentum and morale, especially in an intense class such as this. In order to award those who attend, and to provide an incentive for those who might not, 15% of your course grade will depend on this factor. If I find there is a problem with attendance, I will use weekly reflection questions (posted online or provided in class) or quizzes.

Exams

There will be three exams: two midterms and a final. Some questions will be cumulative, but most of each exam will focus on the immediately preceding material. Exams will be based on lectures, readings and class discussions. Make-up exams will be provided during my office hours, only for *well documented* cases of *extreme emergency*. Further details about the midterm and final exams will be discussed in class.

Papers

For the final paper, you will analyze an experience with crime in terms of at least three of the authors discussed in class. To prepare for this paper, you will first write a 2-3 page thick description of a crime you experienced, *due September 11th*. *For those students who missed the first week of class, they will be able to send in the paper via email on September 18th*. *I will not offer extensions for other papers or exams.* This paper will be graded sheerly for writing style. I will look for how well you address *who, what, when, where, why and how*, how well you invoke the five senses in your writing, your use of dialog, the power of your description, your organization, and basic grammar and spelling. Once I grade this paper, I will return it to you for revisions, to form the nucleus of your final paper. Your final paper will include three sections: 1) a literature review of at least three authors from class, 2) a description of your personal experience with crime, and 3) an analysis of your personal experience in terms of those theories. Further details will be discussed in class.

The paper must be typed and double-spaced. All pages must be stapled together, without special covers or folders. Include your name and P00# in the upper right corner, and center the title over the text on the first page. The written assignment will be accepted on or before the due date; for each day that the paper is late, one point will be deducted, unless a written excuse from a recognized authority figure, such as a doctor, a dean, or an athletic coach, is provided. *No electronic versions will be accepted.* I will be happy to discuss your paper, but I will not read preliminary drafts. Further details about the term paper will be discussed in class. You will present your paper during the last week in order to receive feedback from me and your peers.

Grading Policy

You will not be graded on a competitive basis, so in theory everyone can do well. However, to earn a top grade, you will be expected to achieve standards of excellence in your work. Points will be distributed as follows:

Mid-Term #1 (10-2): 40 points

Mid-Term #2 (11-15): 40 points

Final (12-13): 40 points

Experience with Crime paper (9-11): 10 points

Final Paper (12-6): 40 points

Attendance and Participation in Class: 30 points

An optional 5 point, 10-15 minute extra-credit oral presentation based on your paper topic is an available option on week 15.

A: 179.5-200

B: 159.5-179.49

C: 139.5-159.49

D: 110-139.49

Cheating/Plagiarism

Familiarize yourself with the John Jay Academic Honesty Policy, under Undergraduate Academic Standards on the John Jay website. Any student who violates this policy will be referred directly to the Vice President of Student Development.

Academic Assistance

Your first source of assistance should be other students in class. Be sure to exchange phone numbers with others, and form study groups. Secondly, come see me during office hours, or contact me with your questions via email. In addition to me, following are some of the resources available on campus to assist you:

<u>Resource</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Phone</u>
Basic Skills Program	2420N	(212) 237-8138
Writing Center 2	450N	(212) 237-8569
Reading and Study Skills Center	3200N	(212) 237-8126
Learning Enhancement Center	011W	(212) 237-8019
Counseling Department	3140N	(212) 237-8111
SEEK Tutoring Program	3308N	(212) 237-8883

Etiquette

Attendance and participation in lecture are integral to this course. Because we will discuss materials not included in the readings, it is essential that you attend every class meeting. I will encourage you to participate in multiple ways during lectures, so come prepared. If you choose to disrupt the class, I will stop the class and wait for you to leave as a courtesy to the other students. This applies especially to the use of *cellular phones*.

Calendar

Please note that the following schedule is tentative, and may change based on how quickly we cover the material. **Be sure to read the assigned materials prior to the day when they are assigned.**

Part I: The Origins of Modern Criminology

Week 1: Introduction

Tues., 8-28: CT, Introduction

OUL, Preface

Thurs., 8-30: CT, Part I: Beccaria and Lombroso

OUL, Reading #2: Felson on Fallacies

Week 2: Individual Theories

Tues., 9-4: CT, Part II: Positivism

Thurs., 9-6: OUL, Reading #3: Packer on Two Models of the Criminal Process

Week 3: The Chicago School

Tues., 9-11: CT, Part III

A 2-3 page thick description of a personal experience with crime is due (10 points).

Tues., 9-25: OUL, Reading #4: Van Maanen on Police Socialization

Week 4

Thurs., 9-27: OUL, Reading #7: Cooper's Afrocentric Perspective

Tues., 10-2: Review for Mid-Term #1

Part II: The Big Three: Differential Association, Control, and Strain Theories

Week 5

Thurs., 10-4: Mid-Term #1

Week 6: Learning to be a Criminal

Tues., 10-9: CT, Part IV

Thurs., 10-11: OUL, Reading #6: Vice isn't Nice

Week 7: Anomie/Strain Theories

Tues., 10-16: CT, Part V

Thurs., 10-18: OUL, #1: Crime and the American Dream

Week 8: Varieties of Control Theory

Tues., 10-23: CT, Part VI

Thurs., 10-25: OUL, #5: Militarizing American Police

Part III: Rethinking Criminology

Week 9: Societal Reaction Theories

Tues., 10-30: CT, Part VII

Thurs., 11-1: OUL, #8: The Practice of Law as a Con Game

OUL, #12: Blue Hairs in the Bighouse

Week 10: Critical Criminology

Tues., 11-6: CT, Part VIII

Thurs., 11-8: OUL, #14: The Prison Industrial Complex

Weeks 11-12

Tues., 11-13: Review for Mid-Term #2

Thurs., 11-15: Mid-Term #2

Tues., 11-20: Film: *The Savage Nomads*

Thurs., 11-22: Holiday

Week 13: Feminist Criminology

Tues., 11-27: CT, Part IX

Thurs., 11-29: Movie: Mi Vida Loca

Week 14: Integrated Theories

Tues., 12-4: CT, Part XIV

Thurs., 12-6 OUL, #15: Why are U.S. Incarceration Rates so High?

Final Paper is due Thursday, December 6th.

Week 15

Tues., 12-11: Review for final, optional oral presentations (5 points)

Thurs., 12-13: Reading Day—No classes held

Note that the final exam will be held in your regularly scheduled classroom.

General Writing Guidelines*

Format and Presentation

Do not skip lines between paragraphs (like I'm doing here). Use Times New Roman or CG Times as your font, 12-point size. Papers must be typewritten, double-spaced with approximately 1" margins. Number all pages. Papers must be stapled. This means no plastic binders, no folding the edges together and no paper clips. Do not use a cover page. Include your name and P00# on the upper right-hand corner of the first page, followed by the title, centered. A bibliography is a necessary part of a research paper (see Citation, below), and should be attached at the end. Papers which egregiously fail to follow these guidelines will be returned to the authors without a grade.

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, 5/31/05). 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.

In the text, directly quoted course materials from the textbook should be cited in one of the following ways:

"The stereotypes that we learn not only justify prejudice and discrimination but also can produce the behavior depicted in the stereotype" (Henslin, 2001:331).

Or alternately:

James Henslin (2001:331) suggests that, “The stereotypes that we learn not only justify prejudice and discrimination but also can produce the behavior depicted in the stereotype.”

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

Many analysts have noted how stereotypes may produce the behavior they depict (Henslin, 2001:331).

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”. Below is an example of a reference from the reader and from Henslin.

Anderson, Elijah. 1996. “The Code of the Streets.” Pp. 62-73 in Susan J. Ferguson (Ed.) Mapping the Social Landscape. London: Mayfield.

Henslin, James. 2001. Mapping the Social Landscape. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

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 improves 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” in describing your experience, and as “we” in your analysis. 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.”

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. Never refer to “society” as an active agent (that’s my pet peeve), as in, “Society requires that people follow norms.”

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 I will be unable to read entire drafts, I may be able to discuss specific parts of your thesis or analysis, and/or help you with difficulties in transitions between ideas or sections of your argument. Be sure that all spelling and grammatical errors, and the formatting the paper are correct in the final draft. 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. I am happy to help you in office hours or by appointment, and the campus has a variety of tutoring services available to you.

Good luck, and start writing now!

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