

Criminology

New York University
Spring 2016
SOC – UA 503-001

Time and Location:

Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00am-12:15pm
7 East 12th Street, LL23

Instructor: John Halushka

Office Hours: Thursdays 1:00pm-3:00pm or by appointment
Location: 295 Lafayette St. (corner of Houston), 4th fl, Rm. 4176
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Course Assistant: Jessie Kalbfeld

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Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the social scientific study of criminal law, criminal behavior, and social control. Drawing on a variety of theories and methodologies, the goal of the course is to teach students how to think and write critically about crime and criminal justice. Some of the major themes addressed in this class are: What is crime and how is it defined? Who gets to decide what is criminal and what is not? What role do media and politics play in shaping public perceptions of crime in society? How do social scientists measure the prevalence of criminality and victimization in society? What causes criminal behavior? Is crime simply a matter of individual choice, or do other factors outside an individual's control determine criminal behavior? Why do certain neighborhoods have higher crime rates than others? Why do certain demographic groups have high rates of criminality and/or victimization? How does American society respond to the problem of crime? Is this response appropriate?

The course begins by exploring how society goes about defining crime, and how the media, politicians, and law shape public perceptions of crime in society. Next, we explore how social scientists measure the prevalence of criminality and victimization in society and discuss the strengths and limitations of these measurements. The core of the course is devoted to studying classical and contemporary theories of crime causation (or the etiology of crime). Starting from the role that individual biology and psychology play in criminal behavior, we then turn to explanations of crime that focus on the role of social interaction, social ecology, and social structure in shaping patterns of criminal behavior. Next, we study patterns of criminality and victimization for different types of crime: street crime, drug-related crimes, sexual and domestic violence, corporate crimes, and political and government crimes. The course concludes by examining how society responds to the problem of crime. We focus on the various institutions that make up the criminal justice system: the police, courts, prisons, and the death penalty.

Required Books

You may purchase the required texts at the NYU Bookstore or Amazon. You may buy hard copies or electronic copies, as long as they are the correct edition. The books will also be on reserve at Bobst Library. All other materials will be available on the course's NYU Classes website [CLASSES]

Berger, Ronald J., Marvin D. Free, Jr., Melissa Deller, and Patrick K. O'Brien. 2015. *Crime, Justice, and Society: An Introduction to Criminology*, 4th Edition. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers

Crutchfield, Robert D., Charis E. Kubrin, George S. Bridges, and Joseph G. Weis (Eds.). 2008. *Crime: Readings*, 3rd Edition. New York: Sage.

Requirements:

1. All reading assignments should be completed *before* class. You will be expected to come prepared to ask questions and critically discuss major issues and arguments.
2. There will be three (3) in-class exams during the semester. Each exam will count for 33 percent of your final grade. Each exam will cover 4-5 weeks of course material and will consist of short answer identification questions and an essay question. You are expected to take the required exams during the scheduled periods. Requests to take the exams at other times will be refused unless some extraordinary emergency occurs. A missed exam will be graded as an F and any approved make-up exam will be of greater difficulty than the regularly scheduled exam.

Grading

A (100-93)

A- (92-90)

B+ (89-87)

B (86-83)

B- (82-80)

C+ (79-77)

C (76-73)

C-(72-70)

D+ (69-67)

D (66-63)

D- (62-60)

F (Below 60)

Community of the Mind

“New York University is a community of scholars who value free and open inquiry...As scholars committed to the critical evaluation of ideas, free of personal prejudice, we also have an obligation to one another to create an educational atmosphere of mutual trust and respect in which differences of opinion can be subjected to deliberate and reasonable examination without animus.” - NYU Academic Integrity Policy

In this class we will discuss controversial topics such as racism, sexism, homophobia, and socioeconomic inequality. We will also be discussing sensitive subject matter, such as sexual

violence, including rape, sexual assault, and child abuse, as well as genocide and crimes against humanity. When discussing such topics, disagreement will be inevitable and this is okay. However, it is important to remember to respect the opinions of your fellow classmates. The following behaviors will NOT be tolerated: using raised voices or derogatory language; behaving in an intimidating way; dominating the conversation by not giving others fair opportunity to participate; or ridiculing another person for his or her ideas.

Academic Integrity

Please be aware of NYU's policy on academic integrity, which can be found here:

<http://cas.nyu.edu/page/academicintegrity>

Some important points to remember:

“Academic honesty means that the work you submit — in whatever form — is original.

Obviously, bringing answers into an examination or copying all or part of a paper straight from a book, the Internet, or a fellow student is a violation of this principle. But there are other forms of cheating or plagiarizing which are just as serious — for example, presenting an oral report drawn without attribution from other sources (oral or written), writing a paragraph which, despite being in different words, expresses someone else's idea without a reference to the source of the idea, or submitting essentially the same paper in two different courses (unless both instructors have given their permission in advance). Receiving help on a take-home examination or quiz is also cheating — and so is giving that help — unless expressly permitted by the instructor (as in collaborative projects). While all this looks like a lot to remember, all you need to do is to give credit where it is due, take credit only for your original ideas, and ask your instructor or advisor when in doubt.”

I will investigate any possible instances of academic dishonesty. If I conclude that you engaged in academic dishonesty on test you will receive a zero on the test and possibly face further disciplinary action from the University.

Email Policy

I will only respond to student emails for two reasons: (1) notifying me of an absence ahead of time. Do not email me an excuse for your absence after the fact. Email me *before* your absence takes place. Please note that just because you email me ahead of time does not mean your absence is automatically excused. You must have a legitimate reason for being absent (e.g. illness, family emergency, a prior obligation planned well in advance that you cannot get out of); (2) Scheduling an office hours appointment outside of the normal times. Do not email questions about course materials. You should ask me before or after class or come to office hours and ask in person.

Course Outline:

Introduction

Tues, Jan. 26

- No assigned readings

Thurs, Jan. 28

- CLASS CANCELED - Make-up class during Finals Week (May 9, 10, or 11)

Cultural Representations of Crime: Media, Politics, and Law

Tues, Feb. 2 - Media and Crime

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “The Social Problem of Crime”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 1-13
- Ronald Weitzer and Charis E. Kubrin - “Breaking News: How Local TV News and Real-World Conditions Affect Fear of Crime”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 43-47
- Drew Humphries - “Realities and Images of Crack Mothers”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 33-42

Thurs, Feb. 4 - Politics, Law, and Crime

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “The Social Problem of Crime”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 13-33
- John Hagan - “Defining Crime: An Issue of Morality”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 3-9
- Howard S. Becker - “Outsiders”
 - CLASSES

Measuring Crime Statistics

Tues, Feb. 9 - The Uniform Crime Report

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Counting Crime”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 35-46
- Steven F. Messner, Glenn D. Deane, Luc Anselin, and Benjamin Parson Nelson - “Locating the Vanguard in Rising and Falling Homicide Rates in US Cities”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 113-125

Thurs, Feb. 11 - Other Sources of Crime Statistics

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Counting Crime”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 46-55
- Carl Bialik – “Scare Headlines Exaggerated the U.S. Crime Wave”
 - CLASSES

Individualistic Explanations of Crime: Biology, Psychology, and Crime

Tues, Feb. 16 - Biology, Psychology, and Crime

- C. Ronald Huff - “Historical Explanations of Crime: From Demons to Politics”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 10-20
- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Individualistic Explanations of Crime”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 57-84
- James Q. Wilson and Richard Herrnstein - “A Bio-Psychological Theory of Choice”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 392-394

Microsocial Explanations of Crime: Social Interaction, Social Bonds, and Crime

Thurs, Feb. 18 - Symbolic Interaction and Social Learning

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Microsocial Explanations of Crime”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 85-95
- Edwin Sutherland - “A Theory of Crime: Differential Association”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 223-225
- Howard S. Becker - “Becoming a Marijuana Smoker”
 - CLASSES
- Edwin Schur - “Labeling Criminals”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 281-283

Tues, Feb. 22 - Social Control Theory

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Microsocial Explanations of Crime”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 95-102
- Travis Hirschi and Michael Gottfredson - “Age and the Explanation of Crime”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 167-170
- Robert J. Sampson and John H. Laub - “Toward an Age-Graded Theory of Informal Social Control”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 312-315
- Josine Junger-Tas, Denis Ribeaud, and Maarten J. L. F. Cruyff - “Juvenile Delinquency and Gender”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 171-186

Thurs, Feb. 24 - EXAM #1

Macrosocial Explanations of Crime: Social Ecology, Social Structure, and Crime

Tues, March 1 - Social Ecology and Crime: Neighborhoods and Social Disorganization

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Macrosocial Explanations of Crime”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 103-108
- Clifford R. Shaw and Henry McKay - “Juvenile Delinquency in Urban Areas”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 189-215
- Jeffrey D. Morenoff, Robert J. Sampson, and Stephen W. Raudenbush - “Neighborhood Inequality, Collective Efficacy, and the Spatial Dynamics of Urban Violence”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 216-222

Thurs, March 3 – Social Ecology and Crime: Routine Activities Theory

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Macrosocial Explanations of Crime”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 108-111
- Lawrence E. Cohen and Marcus Felson - “Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 323-329
- Elizabeth A. Armstrong, Laura Hamilton, and Brian Sweeney - “Sexual Assault on Campus: A Multilevel, Integrative Approach to Party Rape”
 - CLASSES

Tues, March 8 - Strain Theory and Conflict Theory

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Macrosocial Explanations of Crime”

- *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 111-129
- Robert K. Merton - “Social Structure and Anomie”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 232-237
- Robert Agnew - “Foundations for a General Strain Theory of Crime and Delinquency”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 339-347
- William J. Chambliss - “Crime and Structural Contradictions”
 - *Crime Readings* pp. 289-295

Patterns of Criminality and Victimization: Urban Inequality and Street Crime

Thurs, March 10 - Urban Inequality and Street Crime

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Street Crime”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 133-170
- William Julius Wilson and Robert Sampson - “Toward a Theory of Race, Crime, and Urban Inequality”
 - CLASSES
- Elijah Anderson - “The Code of the Street”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 365-373

March 14-March 20: **SPRING BREAK**

Patterns of Criminality and Victimization: Illegal Drug Use and the War on Drugs

Tues, March 22 - The War on Drugs

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Illegal Drugs”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 171-192
- Marc Mauer - “The War on Drugs and the African American Community”
 - CLASSES

Patterns of Criminality and Victimization: Gender Inequality and Sexual Violence

Thurs, March 24 - Rape and Sexual Assault

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Sexual Violence”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 193-210

Tues, March 29 - Child Abuse and Domestic Violence

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Sexual Violence”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 210-227
- Hillary Potter - “An Argument for Black Feminist Criminology: Understanding African American Women’s Experiences with Intimate Partner Abuse Using an Integrated Approach”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 386-391

Patterns of Criminality and Victimization: Corporate Crime

Thurs, March 31 - Corporate Financial Crimes and Corporate Violence

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Corporate Crime”

- *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 229-268

Tues, April 5 - EXAM #2

Patterns of Criminality and Victimization: Political and Government Crime

Thurs, April 7 - Terrorism and Hate Crimes

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Political and Government Crime”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 269-281
- Gary LaFree and Laura Dugan - “How Does Studying Terrorism Compare to Studying Crime”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 103-112

Tues, April 12 - State Crimes, Genocide, and Crimes Against Humanity

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Political and Government Crime”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 281-313
- John Hagan, Wenona Rymond-Richmond, and Patricia Parker - “The Criminology of Genocide: The Death and Rape of Darfur”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 144-151
- International Center for Transitional Justice – “What is Transitional Justice?”
 - CLASSES
- Paul van Zyl – “Dilemmas of Transitional Justice: The Case of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission”
 - CLASSES

The Criminal Justice System: Police and Courts

Thurs, April 14 - History and Organization of the Police

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Police and Courts”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 317-339

Tues, April 19 - Stop and Frisk and Police Brutality (Guest Lecture by Jessie Kalbfeld)

- James Q. Wilson and George L. Kelling - “Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 438-447
- Loren G. Stern - “Stop and Frisk: An Historical Answer to a Modern Problem”
 - CLASSES
- Daniel Bergner - “Is Stop and Frisk Worth It?”
 - CLASSES
- Michael Bloomberg - “Stop and Frisk Keeps People Safe”
 - CLASSES
- Kimberly Kindy - “Fatal Police Shootings in 2015 Approaching 400 Nationwide”
 - CLASSES

Thurs, April 21 - Criminal Courts

- Berger et al. - “Police and Courts”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 339-357

- Issa Kohler-Hausmann - “Misdemeanor Justice: Control Without Conviction”
 - CLASSES

The Criminal Justice System: Punishment and Corrections

Tues, April 26 - Philosophies of Punishment and The Death Penalty

- Anthony Walsh and Craig Hemmens - “Law and Social Control”
 - CLASSES
- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Punishment and Corrections”
 - *Crime, Justice and Society*, pp. 359-365
- Michael L. Radelet and Marian J. Borg - “The Changing Nature of the Death Penalty Debates”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 448-454

Thurs, April 28 - The Prison: Historical Development and Life on the Inside

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Punishment and Corrections”
 - *Crime, Justice, and Society*, pp. 365-368 (top), 372-384
- Megan Comfort - “‘Papa’s House’: The Prison as Domestic Social Satellite”
 - CLASSES

Tues, May 3 - Mass Imprisonment: Causes and Consequences

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Punishment and Corrections”
 - *Crime, Justice and Society*, pp. 368-371
- Katherine Beckett and Theodore Sasson - “The Politics of Crime”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 48-49
- David Garland - “Mass Imprisonment”
 - CLASSES
- Bruce Western and Becky Pettit - “Beyond Crime and Punishment: Prisons and Inequality”
 - *Crime Readings*, pp. 478-481

Thurs, May 5 - Community Corrections and Prisoner Reentry

- Ronald J. Berger et al. - “Punishment and Corrections”
 - *Crime, Justice and Society*, pp. 384-394
- Devah Pager - “The Mark of a Criminal Record”
 - CLASSES
- Alice Goffman - “On the Run: Wanted Men in a Philadelphia Ghetto”
 - CLASSES

Review and Final Exam

Tues, May 9, 10, or 11 - Review Session

- Time and Location TBA

Thurs, May 12 - FINAL EXAM

- 7 East 12th Street, LL23, 10:00am-11:50am