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SOAN 314. CONTEMPORARY ISSUES IN CRITICAL CRIMINOLOGY

In this course we examine contemporary criminological issues from the critical perspectives offered by sociologists. Our focus is primarily on the United States with topics under examination including: how crime is conventionally defined, measured, and theorized; societal reactions to crime; and punishment of those who are deemed criminal. While exploring these topics, we will consider the impact of race, gender, and social class in shaping individuals' interactions with the U.S. criminal justice system. In their assignments, students will seek a cross-national comparative understanding of criminal justice approaches. By the end of the course, students will be: better equipped to question popular assumptions about crime; more knowledgeable about how sociologists theorize crime and investigate criminal justice policies and practices; and better skilled at forming evidence-based arguments about crime and criminal justice. Students will also gain expertise using technological programs such as WordPress and Tableau.

Contemporary Issues in Critical Criminology is a course that satisfies several graduation requirements: Social Inquiry, Intercultural Domestic Studies, Writing Rich 2, and Quantitative Reasoning. The course is also tagged as Academic Civic Engagement, Africana Studies, Public Policy, American Studies, and Digital Humanities.

As a **SOAN** course, students will learn how sociologists ask questions about crime, the data sources sociologists use to study crime, and how to interpret and present sociological research findings. By the end of the course, we hope to achieve the following SOAN "student learning outcomes":

- Connect information about historical and contemporary socio-cultural phenomena
- Formulate appropriate sociological research questions about socio-cultural phenomena
- Apply sociological theory to analyze socio-cultural phenomena

OFFICE HOURS

I love seeing students during my office hours. A one-on-one visit can clarify course material; provide answers to questions students may have; and assist with understanding, on a deeper level, my expectations for the work students complete in this course.

Please visit [this link](#) to schedule an appointment on one of the following days and times:

- Mondays 1:45-2:25pm
- Tuesdays 11am-noon
- Wednesdays 6:15-7:15pm
- Fridays 1:00-2:00pm.

Additional times are available by appointment so please do not hesitate to contact me. I will look forward to hearing from you.

COURSE MATERIAL

The following books are required reading for this class. Links to additional readings are provided on our course Moodle:

- Becket, Katherine and Steve Herbert. 2009. *Banished: The New Social Control in Urban America*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Davis, Angela. 2003. *Are Prisons Obsolete?* New York: Seven Stories Press.
- Shedd, Carla. 2015. *Unequal City: Race, Schools, and Perceptions of Injustice*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Van Cleve, Nicole Gonzalez. 2016. *Crook County: Racism and Injustice in America's Largest Court*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

READING REQUIREMENTS

To perform well in this course and to create a rewarding class discussion, you must commit to several hours of active, focused reading prior to each class meeting. The readings represent a mix of classic and contemporary works in the field of sociological criminology. Four types of readings are assigned: news articles, reports, journal articles, and scholarly books.

Be aware that course material reveals the ways in which people experience and participate in crime while also introducing students to criminogenic environments. You may find some of the material shocking or personally difficult to read. **Please consider this admission a trigger warning.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade in this course will be determined by your performance on several assignments. When completing this work, you are required to abide by **Carleton's standards for academic integrity**. Please click on [this link](#) to learn more about these standards, particularly as they relate to plagiarism. This course requires you to complete lots of writing and thus, it is essential that you know what plagiarism is and the different forms it can take.

A document titled, "class assignment schedule," is posted to our course Moodle page. This schedule briefly describes each assignment, its distribution and submission date, and the number of points awarded. I also provide an estimate of the time required to complete each assignment. Please note that a small assignment is due every week of the term.

Finally, 15 points are devoted to class participation. Please review the "grading rubric for class participation" posted to our course Moodle.

MOODLE AND ZOOM

All course readings, recordings, quizzes, documents, assignments, etc., are centrally located on Moodle (either directly or via links contained there). Synchronous classes are held via Zoom, which should be accessed through Moodle. Turning your camera on during class is encouraged. When you must turn your camera off, please upload a photo or avatar as a profile picture. You are welcome to use a virtual background on Zoom if you want to maintain privacy in your virtual workspace while your camera is on. Your microphone should be muted by default, and questions should generally be asked in the chat. In the event that you have difficulties accessing Zoom, please contact ITS. Also be aware that it is necessary update Zoom on a frequent basis.

E-MAIL AND MOBILE DEVICE POLICIES

Please use your Carleton account to send e-mail to me at anierobisz@carleton.edu. You can call me Dr. Nierobisz, Professor Nierobisz, or Annette. I will make every effort to respond to e-mail in a timely manner -- within 24-48 hours on weekdays. If you have not heard back from me within a couple of business days, please feel welcome to resend your message. To facilitate your attention and engagement during our synchronous class meetings, please keep any electronic device not necessary for class participation on silent mode and out of sight.

RECORDING AND DISSEMINATION OF COURSE MATERIAL

The materials developed for this course, including, but not limited to, lecture notes and slides, handout, assignments, and emails are the intellectual property of the course instructor. These materials have been developed for student use only and they are not intended for wider dissemination and/or communication outside of this course. Posting or providing unauthorized audio, video, textual material of lecture content, and emails to third-party websites violates faculty intellectual property rights.

ACCESSIBILITY

Please note that I am striving to make sure that this course is accessible to all students in a variety of living situations and with various abilities. If you have any concerns about or difficulties with course materials or requirements, please let me know as soon as possible so that I can work with you to rectify the situation.

COURSE OUTLINE

1/4 Welcome to Contemporary Issues in Critical Criminology

In this first class, we'll begin with brief introductions. Austin Mason, Assistant Director for Digital Humanities and Lecturer in History, will join us at 11:45a.m. to discuss our final course project, constructing a website.

- Before class, please complete this crime survey. Your **anonymous** responses will form the basis of class discussion. Thank you!
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1v9gaKjAKexpjNKDPa2ZueGf85AEyg8K3jC1haNI7Q-s/edit>

1/6 Media depictions of prisons, crime, and criminal victimization

- Cecil, Dawn K. 2015. "Televised Prison Dramas." Pp. 49-65 in *Prison Life in Popular Culture: From the Big House to Orange is the New Black*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers (Moodle).
- Kort-Butler, Lisa and Kelley Sittner Hartshorn. 2011. "Watching the Detectives: Crime Programming, Fear of Crime, and Attitudes about the Criminal Justice System." *The Sociological Quarterly* 52(1): 36-55.
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/23027459>

- Slackoff, Danielle and Pauline Brennan. 2019. "The Differential Representation of Latina and Black Female Victims in Front-Page News Stories: A Qualitative Document Analysis." *Feminist Criminology* 14(4): 488-516.

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What are some facts of crime?

- Hirschi, Travis and Michael Gottfredson. 1993. "Age and the Explanation of Crime." *American Journal of Sociology* 89(3): 552–584. www.jstor.org/stable/2779005.
- Shteir, Rachel. 2011. "Five Myths About Shoplifting." *The Washington Post*, August 2, 2011.
- Garduque, Laurie. 2020. "Five Myths About Criminal Justice." *Washington Post*, November 25, 2020,
- Roman, John. 2012. "Ten Popular Crime Myths." Urban Institute, online.
- Hurley, Martha. 2020. "[Why Prisoners are at Higher Risk for the Coronavirus: 5 Questions Answered.](#)" *The Conversation*, April 17, 2020.

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Explanations of crime: classical and early positivist perspectives

- Beccaria, Cesare. 1819/2012. "Of Crimes and Punishment." Pp. 406-414 in Joseph E. Jacoby, Theresa A. Severance, and Alan S. Bruce (eds.), *Classics of Criminology*, 4th Edition. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Carpenter, A. 2010. "Beccaria, Cesare: Classical School." Pp. 74-77 in *Encyclopedia of Criminological Theory*, edited by Francis T. Cullen and Pamela Wilcox. SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://www-doi-org.ezproxy.carleton.edu/10.4135/9781412959193.n19>
- Beccalossi, C. 2010. "Lombroso, Cesare: The Criminal Man." Pp. 561-565 in *Encyclopedia of Criminological Theory*, edited by F. T. Cullen, & P. Wilcox. SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://www-doi-org.ezproxy.carleton.edu/10.4135/9781412959193.n155>

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Explanations of crime: early sociological perspectives

- Hagan, John. 2010. ["Explaining Crime in the Age of Roosevelt."](#) Pp. 69-100 (just read: pages 69-88) in *Who Are the Criminals? The Politics of Crime Policy from the Age of Roosevelt to the Age of Reagan*. Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- You will present one of the following readings (reading assigned on 1/6):
 - Anomie theory: Merton, R. 1938. "Social Structure and Anomie." *American Sociological Review* 3(5): 672-682.
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/2084686>
 - Social disorganization theory: Kubrin, C. 2010. "Shaw, Clifford R., and Henry D. McKay: Social Disorganization Theory." Pp. 828-834 in *Encyclopedia of Criminological Theory*, edited by In F. T. Cullen, & P. Wilcox. SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://www-doi-org.ezproxy.carleton.edu/10.4135/9781412959193.n228>
 - Control theory: Costello, Barbara J. 2010. ["Hirschi, Travis: Social Control Theory."](#) Pp. 452-459 in *Encyclopedia of Criminological Theory*, edited by Francis T. Cullen and Pamela Wilcox. SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://www.doi.org/10.4135/9781412959193.n124>
 - Matsueda, Ross. 2010. "Sutherland, Edwin H.: Differential Association Theory and Differential Social Organization." Pp. 899-906 in *Encyclopedia of Criminological Theory*, edited by Francis T. Cullen and Pamela Wilcox. SAGE Publications, Inc., <https://www-doi-org.ezproxy.carleton.edu/10.4135/9781412959193.n250>
 - Neutralization theory: Sykes, Gresham, and David Matza. 1957. "Techniques of Neutralization: A Theory of Delinquency." *American Sociological Review* 22:664-670.
www.jstor.org/stable/2089195
 - Labeling theory. Chamblis, William J. 1973. ["The Saints and the Roughnecks."](#) *Society* 11(1): 24-31.
 - Assignment: write a short summary (approximately two pages) that teaches your theory to a classmate. Also create a visual (presented as a PowerPoint slide) that illustrates your assigned theoretical perspective. You will be asked to present the visual in class. Accompanying

reading: Swedberg, Richard. 2016. "[Can You Visualize Theory? On the Use of Visual Thinking in Theory Pictures, Theorizing Diagrams, and Visual Sketches.](#)" *Sociological Theory* 34(3): 250–275.

1/15

What is crime?

- Guest speaker: Lawyer Maurice Suh, partner in the Los Angeles office of Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher.
- Brodeur, Jean-Paul Brodeur with Geneviève Ouellet. 2003. "What is Crime? A Secular Answer." Pp. 1-33 (**just read pages 1-12**) in *What is Crime? Defining Criminal Conduct in Contemporary Society*, edited by Law Commission of Canada. Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press. <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.carleton.edu/lib/carleton-ebooks/reader.action?docID=3412069&ppg=27>
- Visit the website, [Million Dollar Hoods](#). [Enter the Maproom](#) and start mapping. In class you will be asked to share some of the facts you learned.

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Finding library resources and high-resolution images with Kristin Partlo, Reference and Instruction Librarian for the Social Sciences

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How does the FBI define and record crime?

- Mosher, Clayton J., Terance D. Miethe, and Dretha M. Phillips. 2011. "Official Crime Data." Chapter 3 in *The Mismeasure of Crime*, 2nd Edition. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

1/22

Are accurate crime measures possible?

- Desmond, Matthew, Andrew V. Papachristos, and David S. Kirk. 2016. "Police Violence and Citizen Crime Reporting in the Black Community." *American Sociological Review* 85: 857-876.
- Monbiot, George. 2016. "Neoliberalism – The Ideology at the Root of all of Our Problems." *The Guardian*, April 15, 2016. Retrieved December 30, 2020

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2016/apr/15/neoliberalism-ideology-problem-george-monbiot>

- 1/25 Banishment: The New Social Control in Urban America by Katherine Beckett and Steve Herbert
- **Introduction** and **Chapter 1** ("Banishment's Reemergence")
 - Dordick, G. 2012. Review of *Banished: The New Social Control in Urban America*. *Contemporary Sociology* 41(2): 174-175. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23212500>
 - McGinnis, B. 2017. "This is Why Some U.S. Judges Banish Convicts from Their Home Communities." *Washington Post*, March 16, 2016
 - Gau, J. 2010. "Wilson, James Q., and George L. Kelling: Broken Windows Theory." Pp. 1019-1022 in *Encyclopedia of Criminological Theory*, edited by F. T. Cullen, & P. Wilcox. SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://www-doi-org.ezproxy.carleton.edu/10.4135/9781412959193.n281>
- 1/27 Banishment: The New Social Control in Urban America by Katherine Beckett and Steve Herbert
- **Chapter 2** ("Toward Banishment: The Transformation of Urban Social Control") and **Chapter 3** ("The Social Geographies of Banishment")
- 1/29 Banishment: The New Social Contract in Urban America by Katherine Beckett and Steve Herbert
- **Chapter 4** ("Banishment and the Criminal Justice System"), **Chapter 5** ("Voices of the Banished"), and **Chapter 6** ("Banishment Reconsidered")
- 2/1 Unequal City: Race, Schools, and Perceptions of Injustice by Carla Shedd
- **Preface, Chapter 1** ("Introduction: Crossing Boundaries of Race, Class, and Neighborhood"), **Chapter 2** ("And We Are Not Saved": Safe Passage Through a Changing Educational Landscape"), and **Appendix A** ("Methods")

- Kaufman, Nicole. 2017. Review of *Unequal City: Race, Schools, and Perceptions of Injustice*. *American Journal of Sociology* 123(3): 911-913.

2/3 Unequal City: Race, Schools, and Perceptions of Injustice by Carla Shedd

- **Chapter 3** ("Of the Meaning of Progress") and **Chapter 4** ("The Universal Carceral Apparatus")

2/5 Unequal City: Race, Schools, and Perceptions of Injustice by Carla Shedd

- **Chapter 5** ("To Serve and Protect?") and **Chapter 6** ("Conclusion: Paradoxes of Progress")

2/8 MID-TERM BREAK

2/10 Crook County: Racism and Injustice in America's Largest Criminal Court by Nicole Gonzales Van Cleve

- **Preface, Introduction** ("Opening the Court Doors"), **Chapter 1** ("Separate and Unequal Justice"), and **Methods Appendix**
- Reifer, Thomas E. 2017 "Crook County: Racism and Injustice in America's Largest Criminal Court." *Law & Society Review* 51 (1): 204-206.
<http://ezproxy.carleton.edu/login?url=https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.carleton.edu/scholarly-journals/crook-county-racism-injustice-americas-largest/docview/1869846228/se-2?accountid=9892>.
- Visit the website, [Cook County Justice Audit](#) and click on the links **The Big Picture**, **The System at Work**, and **What Drives the Jail Population**. Also visit other links you find at this website. In class you will be asked to share some of the facts you learned.

2/12 Guest Speaker from the Chicago Community Bond Fund

- Crook County by Nicole Gonzalez Van Cleve, **Chapter 2** (Of Monsters and Mopes: Racial and Criminal 'Immorality')

- Visit the website, [Million Dollar Blocks](#) and click on **Intro**, **Alternatives**, **Evidence**, **About**, **Full Map**. Also visit other links that interest you. In class you will be asked to share some of the facts you learned.

2/15 WordPress Session with Austin Mason, Assistant Director for Digital Humanities and Lecturer in History

2/17 Crook County: Racism and Injustice in America's Largest Criminal Court by Nicole Gonzales Van Cleve

- **Chapter 3** ("Race in Everyday Legal Practices") and **Chapter 4** ("There Are No Racists here: Prosecutors in the Criminal Courts")

2/19 Crook County: Racism and Injustice in America's Largest Criminal Court by Nicole Gonzales Van Cleve

- **Chapter 5** ("Rethinking Gideon's Army) and **Conclusion** ("Racialized Punishment in the Courts: A Call to Action")
- Visit the website, [Justice Mapping](#). Click on links that interest you. Where did you go and what did you find? In class you will be asked to share where you went and what you found.
- Tableau, [Data Literacy for All](#). Video #1: Introduction to Data Literacy
 - Note: To access this and other assigned Tableau videos, you must create a Tableau account.

2/22 Are Prisons Obsolete? By Angela Davis

- **Chapter 1** ("Introduction – Prison Reform or Prison Abolition?")
- Tableau, [Data Literacy for All](#). Video #2: Recognizing Well Structured Data
- Tableau, [Data Literacy for All](#). Video #3: Exploring Variables and Field Types

- Tableau, [Tips for creating effective, engaging data visualizations](#)
- Death Penalty Information Center. No Date. [The Death Penalty in 2020: Year End Report](#) (skim the report; closely examine the data visualizations)

2/24

Are Prisons Obsolete? By Angela Davis

- **Chapter 2** ("Slavery, Civil Rights, and Abolitionist Perspectives Toward Prison") and **Chapter 3** ("Imprisonment and Reform")
- Murff, Santonio. 2019. [Mass Incarceration: The Shame of a Nation](#). [Santonio D. Murff was awarded Third Place in Essay in the 2019 Prison Writing Contest.]
- Tableau, [Data Literacy for All](#). Video #4: Exploring Aggregation and Granularity

2/26

Guest Speaker: Whitney Richards-Calathes '08 (SOAN major), Ph.D., School for International Training

- Are Prisons Obsolete? By Angela Davis. **Chapter 4** ("How Gender Structures the Prison System")
- Blakinger, Keri. 2020. 2019. "Can We Build a Better Women's Prison." *Washington Post*, October 28, 2019.

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COVID-19 in Prison

- Reese, Kevin. No date. [The Time of COVID-19](#)
- Lyons, L. 2020. "[Incarceration, COVID-19, and Emergency Release: Reimagining How and When to Punish.](#)" *Kennedy Institute of Ethics Journal*, advance copy.
- Tableau, [Data Literacy for All](#). Video #5: Understanding Distributions
- Tableau, [Data Literacy for All](#). Video #6: Understanding Variation for Wise Comparisons

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Are Prisons Obsolete? By Angela Davis

- **Chapters 5** (“The Prison Industrial Complex”) and **Chapter 6** (“Abolitionist Alternatives”)
- Gross, Richard. 2019. [Death by Incarceration: Cruel and Unusual](#). [Richard Gross was awarded Second Place in Essay in the 2019 Prison Writing Contest]
- Tucker, S. and E. Cadora. No date. [Justice Reinvestment](#). Ideas for an Open Society Foundation, Occasional Papers from OSI-U.S. Programs.

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Incarceration: Local and Cross-cultural Approaches

- Presentation and workshopping student website contributions

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To be announced

- Website assignment due