Sociology of Deviant Behavior

SOC 3560-001
Fall Semester 2009
T TH 10:45 – 12:05  LS 101

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Course Description

In sociology, deviance refers broadly to any behavior considered wrong or undesirable in a given social context. The distinguishing characteristic of deviance is that it elicits a negative response from a social audience. This course examines how particular attributes or behavior are defined as deviant, the social consequences of formal and informal deviant designations, and the construction and imposition of norms, values, and rules. Topics of deviance to be discussed include: drug/ alcohol use/abuse, drug dealing, occupational and corporate crime, mental illness, homosexuality, prostitution, homicide/serial killers/ murder, debt, positive deviance, and civil disobedience.

Course Objectives

• To understand how deviance is defined and produced
• To gain a working knowledge of the key sociological theories of deviance
• To apply these theories to selected case studies
• To critically evaluate institutional responses to deviance and control

Grading:

10%  Active class participation.  Come to lecture prepared to discuss the day’s readings.
5%  Course attendance.  Based on four random attendance checks throughout the semester
25%  Midterm exam
30%  Final Exam
20%  Assigned Papers
10%  Assignments

Grades are based on two exams, one book discussion quiz, two critical analysis papers, quizzes or assignments given in class, and attendance. The due date for the papers and dates for the exams and quizzes will be set firm. Late work will be penalized 10% per day. Excuses and rescheduled exams will only be permitted if discussed before the given date. If you are a student athlete, I want you to give a list of the dates when you are excused from the class due to athletic events. Please make an appointment to meet with me early in the semester.
Attendance and participation will be based on student participation in the course, along with random attendance checks taken four times in the semester. 5% of the grade will be based on the attendance checks. 10% will be based on participation.

Exams:

Exams will include both multiple choice and essay questions. The final is not cumulative.

Critical Analysis Papers  (2, 4-5 pages, Typed Double-Spaced)

The first critical analysis paper will cover *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio* by Philippe Bourgois.

The second critical analysis paper will have you examine a news article through the lens of a sociologist. You will describe the information given in the news source, the degree to which the source is biased or objective in its coverage, your personal reaction to the story, and finally, you will analyze the reported deviance and social control using one or more of the theories covered in class.

Grading

“Spouting off” an opinion on a topic is insufficient. An argument should be well-reasoned, logical and related to theory from the literature.

The papers should be composed of three sections: 1. A thesis section [no more than a page and a half]—this is an introduction to the paper and must include the name of the book you are using and a clearly stated thesis or list of the theory(ies) you will be using in the paper (this section can be as dramatic as you choose to make it); 2. an analysis section [three to four pages]—this entails a one-to one correspondence between the theory(ies) and the book/article, starting with a brief definition of the theory in your own words, followed by your choice of a corresponding aspect, character, or scene from the book/article that serves as a clear illustration of the theory (you may find more than one). You may use quotes to enhance your point but make them very brief, indented, and single-spaced. You must use at least one sociological theory covered in class; outside theory must be cited and included in a bibliography. You should use no more than two theories in your entire paper. Too many theories and your argument becomes brief and lacks in depth or thoroughness. Refer back to theory after each illustration. The analysis section should follow something like this:

**Definition of the theory in your own words**

**Proof** from the book/article

**Tie back:** refer back to the theory you are using at the end of the proof

**Required Texts**


Bourgois, Philippe. *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio* , New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. **The edition number does not matter.**

Supplementary readings will be available on course reserve. Reserve readings can be found using the Marriott Library website which is [http://www.lib.utah.edu/](http://www.lib.utah.edu/). When you get to this site, look to the right hand
side on the bottom and you will find the My.Utah.edu Student Portal. Login using your uNID and your password. Once you are logged in, on the left hand menu, click on the Academics option that has a little symbol of a graduation cap. Then, the middle column under My Courses, you should see all the courses for which you have registered for the current semester. You should find Sociology 3560. Underneath that you should find Course Reserves. You can click on Course Reserves and it will bring up all the readings for the course.

Important Dates:

8 Oct: Midterm Exam
16 Dec: Final Exam 10:30 am – 12:30 pm

Course Outline and Reading List

AUG 25 Introduction
Deviant Behavior Vs Criminology

27 Positivist/ Constructionist Theories of Deviance:
• “What is Deviant Behavior?” by Thio p.3-15
• “Defining Deviance” in COD pages 11-15

SEPT 1 Constructionism
• “The Constructionist Stance” by Best in COD
• “The Three Perspectives” in COD pages 41-58
• Begin reading “Selling Crack in El Barrio” by Bourgois

3 Labeling Deviance
• “The Saints and the Roughnecks” in COD
• “Labeling Theory” by Howard Becker in COD

8 Labeling Deviance
• “Anorexia Nervos and Bulimia” by Penelope A. Mclorg and Diane E. Taub, in COD
• “The Police and the Black Male” in COD

10 Positivist Theories of Deviance
• “Strain Theory” chapter 7 in COD
• “Differential Association” chapter 8 in COD

15 Occupational and Corporate Crime
• “Social Power: Conflict Theory of Crime” chapter 5 in COD
• “Elite Organizational Deviance” by David R. Simon in COD
• “Privileged Deviance” by Thio page 333-353 in main text

17 Corruption
• “Political Corruption” by Thio pages 352-461
• “War Profiteering: Iraq and Halliburton” in COD

22 Stigma
• “The Stigma of Obesity” from Thio, Calhoun, Conyers

24 The Medicalization of Deviance
• Watch One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest

29 The Medicalization of Deviance
• “Deviance, Definitions, and the Medical Profession” by Conrad and Schneider

OCT 1 The Medicalization of Deviance
• “Drug Use as Deviant Behavior” by Goode
• “the Social Construction of Drug Scares” by Reinarman in COD

6 Mental Illness
• “The Insanity Defense Should be Eliminated” by Ullman
• “The Insanity Defense should be Retained” by Caplan

8 MIDTERM EXAM

20 Legal and Illegal drug Use
• “Drug Use as Deviant Behavior”
• “Drugs and Free Will” by Schaler” by Goode

22 Book Discussion Day and Quiz on Selling Crack in El Barrio

27 Critical Analysis Paper on Selling Crack in El Barrio due

29 Physical Violence: Homicide
• Brownstein, Walker
• “Who is more likely to kill?” Thio

NOV 3 Physical violence
• “Serial Murder: Popular Myths and Empirical Realities” from Thio, Calhoun, Conyers
• “What Triggers School shootings?” from Thio, Calhoun, Conyers
• “I Hope Someone Murders Your Mother!” “Extreme Support for the Death Penalty” from Thio, Calhoun, Conyers

5 Substance Abuse
• “Alcohol Use and Alcoholism” by Erich Goode
• “Hey, Don’t Blame me… Blame the Booze” by Peralta

10 Debt
• “Managing the Stigma of Personal Bankruptcy” by Thorne, Anderson in COD
• “My personal Credit Crisis” by Andrews on Course Reserve

12 Positive Deviance
• “An Integrated Typology of Deviance Applied to Ten Middle-Class Norms” by Heckert and Heckert in COD

17 Positive Deviance
Second paper due

19 The Subjectivity of Objectivism
• “Deviance and Morality” on Course Reserve from Moral Panic
• “Deviance, Moral entrepreneurs, and Criminal Law” on course reserve
• “Social Problems” on course reserve

24 Homosexuality
• “Homophobia and Women’s Sport” by Blinde, Taub in COD
• “Gays and Other Victims of Stigma” by Thio

DEC 1 Homosexuality
• “What triggers School Shootings?” Kimmel, Mahler
• “Family Values Stalkers” by Rich, nytimes

3 Occupational Deviance and Prostitution
• “Collective Stigma Management of Prostitutes” by Valerie Jenness in COD
• Reserve Reading Sterk

8 Prostitution
• “The Globalization of Sex Tourism” by Wonders and Michalowski

10 Exam Review

16 Final Exam 10:30 am – 12:30 pm
The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in the class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Union Building, 581-5020 (V/TDD). CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations.