McGill University
Department of Sociology

Sociology 514—Criminology
(in Leacock 721 from 1:35-3:25 on Mondays)

Fall, 2014

Professor Jason T. Carmichael
Office: Leacock 814
Office Hours: Wednesdays 10:30 -12:00

Course Overview:

This class exposes each student to the intellectual discussion related to the nature of criminal behavior that has taken place over the last several hundred years. We will explore in detail the major schools of thought that have been developed to help us understand why some individuals are more likely to commit crime and why variations in crime exist both spatially and temporally. Because an understanding of why some individuals deviate from legal and normative expectations are so fundamental to the understanding of society, each student should also gain a greater appreciation of the mechanisms through which a peaceful society is maintained. To accomplish this, we will examine in detail the development of 20th century criminological perspectives including human ecology/social disorganization, strain, differential association/learning, social control, developmental, labeling, and conflict theories. While the course will focus on sociological contributions to criminological theory, psychological and biological theories will also be considered.

The major objectives of the course are as follows:

- To become familiar with the foundations of current theoretical debates in criminology.
- The ability to apply these theoretical approaches to the explanation of deviance and crime.
- To critically evaluate the theoretical approaches.

Course Requirements:

Class participation (roughly 30% of final grade): Participation in class discussions and small group work is a vital component of the course. Students will be graded on participation, and you can't participate unless you **attend class** and do the readings. In order to promote useful class discussion, each student should have read all the required readings prior to class. Students should be prepared to share their thoughts and comments during class. **One student will be required to present a brief summary (10-12 minutes) and lead the discussion for each of the articles.** For each reading you are responsible for presenting, you must write a 1-2 page single-spaced summary of the article or chapter and make this available to the rest of the class prior to your presentation. This summary should also include criticisms, limitations, and weaknesses of the theoretical argument.

Note: I would prefer you not have laptops out during the class. You may choose to ignore this preference but distracting laptop use will result in a reduction of your class participation grade up to a maximum of your entire class participation grade (30%).

Seminar Paper and Class Presentation (*roughly 70% of final grade*): Students are required to complete a seminar length paper (due during the last class). Students will also be required to present their final paper to the class during the last class (10% of the final grade). Details will be given during the first few weeks of class. A paper proposal of 1-2 pages which summarizes your intended paper topic is due on the 6th week of class.

Final grades will be based on a relatively subjective assessment of your overall work in the course (presentations, participation, and final paper using the weights mentioned above).

Course Topics (readings will be made available on WebCT):

Week 1: Sept. 8th.

Introduction to the course.

Week 2: Sept 15th. Personal/Biological/Psychological Traits and Crime

Ellis, Lee and Anthony Walsh. 1997. "Gene-based Evolutionary Theories in Criminology." *Criminology*. 35: 2

Beaver, Kevin et al. 2008. A gene-based evolutionary explanation for the association between criminal involvement and number of sex partners. *Biodemography and Social Biology* 54: 47-55.

Herrnstein, Richard J. and Charles Murray. 1994. *The Bell Curve: Intelligence and Class Structure in American Life*. Chapter 11 pages 235-252.

Week 3: Sept. 22nd. Personality and Crime (cont.) and The Origins of Sociological Criminology

Personality and Crime Continued

Caspi, Avshalom et al. 1994. "Personality and Crime: Are some people crime prone?". *Criminology*. 32: 2

Miller, Joshua and Donald Lynam. 2001. Structural Models of Personality and their Relationship to Anitsocial Behavior: A met-Analytic Review. *Criminology* 39: 765-798.

The Durkheimian foundations of modern criminology

Durkheim, Emile. 1982. *The Rules of Sociological Method*. New York: The Free Press. Chapter III: "Rules for the Distinction of the Normal from the Pathological."

Durkheim, Emile. 1979. *Suicide*. New York: The Free Press. Chapter 5: "Anomic Suicide."

Week 4: Sept. 29th. Strain Theory (or Anomie Theory)

Classical Statements:

Merton, Robert K. 1963. *Social Theory and Social Structure*. New York: The Free Press. Chapter 4: "Social Structure and Anomie."

Cohen, Albert K. 1955. *Delinquent Boys: The Culture of the Gang*. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press. Chapters 4-5.

Cloward, Richard A. and Lloyd Ohlin. 1960. Delinquency and Opportunity: A Theory of Delinquent Gangs. Glencoe, IL: The Free Press. Chapters 4-6. (**2 students**)

Week 5: Oct. 6th. Strain (Cont) and Social Disorganization Theory

Strain Theory (cont): Contemporary reformulations:

Messner, Steven F. and Richard Rosenfeld. *Crime and the American Dream.* Chapters 1 and 4.

Agnew, Robert. 1992. "Foundation for a General Strain Theory of Crime and Delinquency." *Criminology* 30: 47-87.

The Chicago School and early ecological/social disorganization approaches to crime

Glueck, Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck. 1950. "*Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency*." Commonwealth Fund.

Shaw, Clifford R. and Henry McKay. 1969. *Juvenile Delinquency in Urban Areas.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press (pp. 43-89).

Week 6: Oct. 13th. Social Disorganization (cont) – *PAPER PROPOSAL DUE*

Contemporary reformulations

Sampson, Robert J., Stephen W. Raudenbush, and Felton Earls. 1997. "Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy." *Science* 277: 918-24.

Sampson, Robert J. and William Julius Wilson. 1990. "Toward a Theory of Race, Crime and Urban Inequality. In *Crime and Inequality*. (Eds) John Hagan and Ruth D. Peterson. Stanford University Press.

Pattillo-McCoy, Mary. 1999. *Black Picket Fences: Privilege and Peril Among the Black Middle Class.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 4: "Neighborhood Networks and Crime."

Warner, Barbara. 2007. Directly Intervene of Call the Authorities? A Study of Forms of Neighborhood Social Control within a Social Disorganization Framework. *Criminology* 45: 99-129.

Week 7: Oct. 20th. Routine Activity Theory and Learning theory

Routine Activity Theory

Cohen, Lawrence E. and Marcus Felson. 1979. "Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activity Approach." *American Sociological Review*: 588-608.

Ehrhardt-Mustaine, Elizabeth, and Richard Tewksbury. 1999. A Routine Activity Theory Explanation for Women's Stalking Victimization. *Violence Against Women*. 5: 43-62.

Differential association

Sutherland, Edwin H. and Donald R. Cressey. 1966. *Criminology*, 7th edition. Philadelphia, PA: J. B. Lippincott Company. Chapter 4.

Matsueda, Ross L. 1988. "The Current State of Differential Association Theory." *Crime & Delinquency* 34(3): 277-306.

Haynie, Dana. 2001. Delinquent Peers Revisited: Does Network Structure Matter? *American Journal of Sociology* 106: 1013-1057.

Week 8: Oct. 27th. Social Learning Theory and Social Control Theory

Social learning theory

Akers, Ronald L. 1998. *Social Learning and Social Structure: A General Theory of Crime and Deviance*. Boston: Northeastern University Press. Chapter 3.

Pratt, Travis, Francis Cullen, Christine Sellers, Thomas Winfree, et al. 2009. The Empirical Status of Social Learning Theory: A Meta-Analysis. *Justice Quarterly* 27: 765-802.

Social control

Hirschi, Travis. 1969. *Causes of Delinquency*. Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press. Chapters 1-2; 6-8.

Agnew, Robert. 1993. Why do they do it? An Examination of the Intervening Mechanisms Between "Social Control" Variables and Delinquency. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*. 30: 245-266.

Johnson, Byron et al. 2001. Does Adolescent Religious Commitment Matter? A Reexamination of the Effect of Religiosity on Delinquency. *Journal of Resea4rch in Crime and Delinquency* 38: -44

Week 9: Nov. 3rd. Self-Control Theory

Self-Control

Gottfredson, Michael and Travis Hirschi. 1990. *A General Theory of Crime.* Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press. Pp. 1-15, 85-120, 123-168.

Baron, Stephen. 2003. Self-Control, Social Consequences, and Criminal Behavior: Street Youth and the General Theory of Crime. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*. 40: 403-425.

Pratt, Travis and Francis Cullen. 2000. The Empirical Status of Gottfredson and Hirschi's General Theory of Crime: A Meta-Analysis. *Criminology*. 38: 931-964.

Simultaneous Examination

Hoffmann, John Pr. 2003. A Contextual Analysis of Differential Association, Social Control, and Strain Theories of Delinquency. *Social Forces* 81: 753-785.

Week 10: Nov. 10th. Other Theories of Crime

Containment Theory

Reckless, Walter. et al. 1957. "'The Good Boy' in a High Delinquency Area." *Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology, and Police Science*. 48: 18-25.

Neutralization Theory

Sykes, G. & David Matza. 1957. "Techniques of Neutralization: A Theory of Delinquency." American Sociological Review. 22: 664-670.

Topalli, Volkan. 2005. When Being Good is Bad: An Explanation of Neutralization Theory. Criminology 43: 797-836.

Criminal careers/interactional theory

Thornberry, Terence. 1987. "Toward an Interactional Theory of Delinquency." *Criminology* 25(4): 863-87.

The Seduction of Crime

McCarthy, Bill. 1995. Not Just "For the Thrill of It": An Instrumentalist Elaboration of Katz's Explanation of Sneaky Thrill Property Crimes. *Criminology* 33: 519-538.

Week 11: Nov. 17th. Developmental theories and Class-Based Theories

Life course theories

Sampson, Robert J. and John H. Laub. 1993. *Crime in the Making: Pathways and Turning Points Through Life.* Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press. Pp. 1-24, 123-178.

Moffitt, Terrie. 1993. "Adolescence-Limited and Life-Course Persistent Offending: A Complementary Pair of Developmental Theories" in *Developmental Theories of Crime and Delinquency*, ed. Terence P. Thornberry. New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction.

Kanazawa, Satoshi. 2003. Why Productivity Fades with Age: The Crime Genius Connection. *Journal of Research in Personality*. 37: 257-272.

Class Theories

Franworth, Margaret, Terrence Thronberry, Marvin Krohn, and Alan Lizotte. 1994. Measurement in the Study of Class and Delinquency: Integrating Theory and Research. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 31: 32-61.

Pratt, Travis, and Timothy W. Godsey. 2003. Social Support, Inequality, and Homicide: A Cross national test of an integrated theoretical model. *Criminology*. 41: 611-644.

Week 12: Nov. 24th. Conflict/Critical theories of crime

Labeling theory
Chambliss, William J. 1973. "The Saints and the Roughnecks" *Society*. Nov. 24-31.

Becker, Howard S. 1963. *Outsiders—Studies in the Sociology of Deviance.* Glencoe: Free Press. Chapter 1-4 (**2 students**)

Matsueda, Ross. 1992. "Reflected Appraisals, Parental Labeling, and Delinquency: Specifying a Symbolic Interactionist Theory." *American Journal of Sociology* 97: 1577-1611.

Bernburg, Jon, Marvin Krohn, and Craig Rivera. 2006. Official Labeling, Criminal Embeddedness, and Subsequent Delinquency: A Longitudinal Test of Labeling Theory. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency* 43: 67-88.

Dec. 1st and Dec. 4th for Paper Presentations – FINAL PAPER DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF CLASS. THEY MUST BE TURNED IN DURING THE CLASS. ANY PAPERS TURNED IN AFTER THE END OF THE LAST CLASS WILL BE MARKED DOWN.

Additional Points:

1) ***McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information).***

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/).

2) ***In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.***

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).

3) ***In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.***

4) ***If you have a disability that requires special accommodations please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 514-398-6009 before you do this.***

5) **There will be no incompletes given in this course except in the most extreme, documented medical circumstances (at the discretion of the instructor).**