

CRIMINOLOGY I - SOC. 221

Don Luidens - Instructor

Fall 2009

"Crime is essentially a label attached to a person's behavior by others. Behavior may be defined or labeled as crime, but it is not this behavior in itself that constitutes crime. Rather, the behavior is criminalized -- transformed into criminal behavior -- by a process of social ascription." (Hartjen, Crime and Criminalization.)



ARE YOU A CRIMINAL?

OR ARE YOU A POTENTIAL CRIMINAL?



From a sociological perspective, these are the only two possibilities.

Which one are you? If you think you're the second, what would it take to make you a criminal?

COURSE PURPOSE

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the French sociologist **Emile** (pronounced e-meel) **Durkheim** (NOTE: All sociology majors should know this name) declared that **CRIME WAS AN ESSENTIAL AND "INTEGRAL PART OF ALL HEALTHY SOCIETIES."**

Durkheim's comment will direct us to some basic issues:

- 1) Please put aside your previous notions about the "evils" of crime. This course operates with the assumption that **SOME FORMS AND SOME AMOUNTS OF CRIME ARE NECESSARY FOR THE HEALTHY FUNCTIONING OF EVERY SOCIETY.**

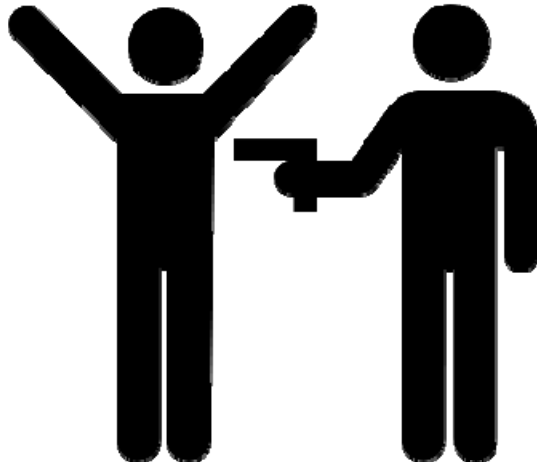
We will be asking why this might be so. In particular we will ask, from whose perspective might crime be seen as "healthy"?

Stu's Views

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They said to "think outside the box." Naturally, I assumed "box" meant "law."



2) Because some form of crime is necessary for healthy societies, it is important for sociologists to consider three central SOCIAL questions :

- a) WHAT GETS CALLED A CRIME?
- b) WHO GETS TO DETERMINE WHAT GETS CALLED A CRIME?
- c) WHO GETS CALLED A CRIMINAL?



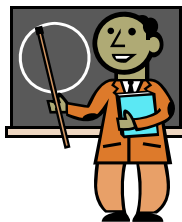
During this course, we will be looking at the social processes involved in these central questions.

3) This class is officially designated as a “writing” class. This means that you will be submitting four papers. Among these will be an analysis of capital punishment – up front and personal. What fun!

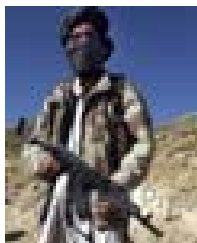
FYI: AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: Any student whose disability falls within ADA guidelines should inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester of any special accommodations or equipment needs necessary to complete the requirements for this course. Students must register documentation with the Office of Disability Services and/or Academic Support Center. If you have questions, call Student Development at extension 7800.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

You will be expected to contribute to the full life of this class. In particular, you should participate regularly in the class discussions. In order to be prepared to do so, **it is imperative that you read the required readings in advance of the class session. Remember: This is a half-semester class, so you have to jump in right away. Don't get behind.**



Your involvement will be especially important when "outside experts" come to speak. I expect that you will engage them with insightful questions and perspectives. Your classroom participation will be assessed by classmates as well as by me (more about that later).



Taliban in Afghanistan

Among the topics we'll consider is this: What is terrorism? Is it a “crime”? In what way is it a “crime”? According to whom? You will be involved in an in-class debate about what constitutes terrorism.



Tamil Tigers in Sri Lanka

Grading: Formal grades will be given for the following:

Three “Theory” Papers (20 percent each)	60
Execution Case Study	20
Debate Contribution (as measured by classmates, too)	15
Class Participation (as measured by classmates, too)	<u>5</u>
	100%

OFFICE HOURS

My office is in Van Zoeren, Room 264; phone: x 7554; e-mail address: luidens@hope.edu. I'll be in my office Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:30 – 11:30 am and Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3-4:00 pm. If you can't make one of those times, please feel free to contact me about an alternative appointment.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Frank P. Williams III and Marilyn D. McShane
Criminological Theory,
 Fifth Edition (**CT** below),
 Prentice Hall, 2010.



SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Readings</u>	<u>Topics</u>
Sept. 3	<u>CT</u> – 1 & 2	Welcome to the Wonderful World of Crime: Theory: Classical School <i>Theory Analysis Papers Described</i>
Sept. 8	<u>CT</u> – 3	Crime Statistics: Measuring the Illusive Theory: Positivist <i>Death Row Case Study Assigned</i>
Sept. 10	<u>CT</u> – 4	Theory: Chicago School <i>Theory Analysis Paper 1 Due</i>
Sept. 15	<u>CT</u> – 5	Theory: Differential Association

<u>Date</u>	<u>Readings</u>	<u>Topics</u>
Sept. 17	<u>CT</u> - 6	Theory: Anomie <i>Death Row Data Sheet Due</i>
Sept. 22	<u>CT</u> - 7	Theory: Sub-Culture Models <i>Theory Analysis Paper 2 Due</i>
Sept. 24	<u>CT</u> - 8	Theory: Labeling
Sept. 29	CT - 9	Theory: Conflict <i>Death Row Paper Due</i>
Oct. 1	<u>CT</u> - 10	Theory: Social Control <i>Theory Analysis Paper 3 Due</i>
Oct. 6	<u>CT</u> - 11	Theory: Social Learning
Oct. 8	CT - 12	Theory: Rational Choice Setting the Stage for TERRORISM Debate <i>Theory Analysis Paper 4 Due</i>
Oct. 13		Group work on Terrorism Positions
Oct. 15		<i>Formal Debate on Terrorism</i>



*Thanks to Wikipedia and
Clip Art for illustrations.*

Above: Mourners at the [Gateway of India](#) in Mumbai following bombing on November 27, 2008. On left: Ajmal Kasab, the only attacker caught alive, at Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus. On trial in Summer of 2009.;