

University of Colorado at Boulder  
Department of Sociology

SOCY 5214  
**Patterns of Criminal Behavior**

Fall 2006  
Mondays, 4:00pm to 6:50pm  
Room: Ketchum 33

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### SEMINAR DESCRIPTION

This graduate-level seminar provides an overview of the epidemiology of crime. We will examine the patterns, prevalence, distribution, and control of criminal offending and criminal victimization. The course will afford an opportunity to review extant research and theories on the factors that may affect the propensity of individuals to commit criminal acts and/or be victimized. We will also reflect on the acts that are deemed “criminal” (and on those who make these decisions), along with the societal perceptions of who is considered “worthy” of being a “victim of crime.” Most of the reading material for this seminar will provide students with an ample overview of typically marginalized examinations of patterns of criminality. That is, the majority of the readings lie outside of that which is regarded as mainstream or traditional criminological theory and research, mainly because of the problem being studied, the method of analysis, or the theoretical contribution being made. Mainstream theories of why crime happens, how it is processed, and how offenders are dealt with is oftentimes what criminology students, and even lay persons, know and rely on. Thus, the purpose of this seminar is to explore a number of under-acknowledged perspectives on the epidemiology of crime and to reconsider mainstream modes of criminological thought. Accordingly, a special focus of this course is on the significance of gender, race, ethnicity, and class statuses in the epidemiology of crime. These are especially important issues to consider since there are social status disparities between the composition of the general population and those who commit criminal law violations, those who are formally processed in the criminal justice system, and those who are victimized by offenders.

### REQUIRED BOOKS

Elijah Anderson. 1999. *Code of the Streets: Decency, Violence, and the Moral Life of the Inner City*. W.W. Norton.

John H. Laub and Robert J. Sampson. 2003. *Shared Beginnings, Divergent Lives: Delinquent Boys at Age 70*. Harvard University Press.

Esther Madriz. 1997. *Nothing Bad Happens to Good Girls: Fear of Crime in Women's Lives*. University of California Press.

Ramiro Martinez Jr. and Abel Valenzuela Jr. (Eds.) 2006. *Immigration and Crime: Race, Ethnicity, and Violence*. New York University Press.

Jeffrey Reiman. 2007. *The Rich Get Richer and the Poor Get Prison: Ideology, Class, and Criminal Justice* (8<sup>th</sup> Edition). Allyn and Bacon.

Beth E. Richie. 1996. *Compelled to Crime: The Gender Entrapment of Battered Black Women*. Routledge.

Andrea Smith. 2005. *Conquest: Sexual Violence and American Indian Genocide*. South End Press.

## **WORKLOAD REQUIREMENTS FOR ASSESSMENT**

The seminar workload requirements and percentage points for grading are distributed as follows:

<i>Participation and Preparation</i>	= 20%
<i>Leading Seminar Discussion</i>	= 10%
<i>Research/Theory Paper</i>	= 70%

### ***Participation and Preparation***

Students are responsible for all material listed in the *Seminar Schedule* (see below). This seminar requires a substantial amount of reading, so plan your study time wisely. Prior to each class, students are expected to read the assigned material and be prepared with questions and reflections to ardently and coherently participate in the seminar discussions. A critical assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the readings is expected. Though there are specific readings assigned for each seminar session, students are encouraged to consider and discuss comparisons and disparities among the readings.

Students are expected to attend every class. Plainly stated, *if you do not attend, you cannot participate.*

### ***Leading Seminar Discussion***

Each student will be responsible for leading one seminar discussion. Based on the enrollment, there will be more than one discussion leader for some of the seminar sessions. Each student – regardless of the number of students to be leading during one session – will be responsible for leading the discussion for approximately one hour of the class time. This time may be extended dependent on the flow of the discussion and/or interjections made by the instructor.

The discussant is expected, at the least, to (1) provide a synopsis of the reading, highlighting the fundamental themes; (2) broach insightful and pertinent issues for discussion, including incorporating current events into the discussion; and (3) moderate the discussion. These presentations should be technology-free (i.e., no overhead transparencies, PowerPoint, etc.) unless absolutely necessary to the facilitation of the discussion.

### ***Research/Theory Paper***

Each student is required to write a research and/or theoretical paper of graduate-level or publishable quality on any aspect of the *epidemiology of crime, which must include an examination of gender, race/ethnicity, class, or some other demographic classification*. The specific topic will be of the student's choosing, but will be done in consultation with the instructor. The proposed paper topic must be turned in via e-mail (no attachment necessary) by Friday, September 15, 2006.

After consultation with the instructor – through e-mail or during a personal meeting – and approval of the topic, students are expected to fervently begin constructing the paper. The research for the paper, including theoretical papers, is to include gathering and reading *scholarly* articles and/or books on the subject(s) from the university libraries, library internet databases, or other academic resources. In addition, please review *Professor Potter's Paper Pet-Peeves* (separate handout) and strictly follow these technical requirements:

- Typed on white paper, using a black, "Times New Roman" (or equivalent), 12-point font and double-spacing
- Include a cover page with student name, title of the paper, and an abstract of 100 words or less
- Use APA-style or ASA-style of citation throughout the paper and on the "References" page(s) (preferable format for sociology students); *or* law journal format (preferably reserved for law school students)
- 20 to 30 pages total, not including the cover page or references pages

An abstract of the paper, a paper outline, and a working bibliography are to be turned in via e-mail (in an attached word-processing document) by Friday, October 27, 2006.

As a component of the participation grade, each student is required to discuss her or his paper on Monday, December 11, 2006 (the last day of seminar).

Papers are due on Monday, December 18, 2006, by 12:00pm via an e-mail attachment *and* in hard-copy format.

## SEMINAR SCHEDULE

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
August 28	<b><i>Defining "Crime" and Review of Published Crime Statistics</i></b>	Syllabus Handouts
September 4	No Seminar – Labor Day	
September 11	<b><i>Implications of Criminal Victimization</i></b>	<b>Madriz</b>
September 18		<b>Smith</b>
September 25	<b><i>Paths to Criminal Behavior</i></b>	<b>Richie</b>
October 2		<b>Laub &amp; Sampson: Chapters 1-5</b>
October 9		<b>Laub &amp; Sampson: Chapters 6-10</b>
October 16	<b><i>Place, Space, &amp; Criminal Behavior</i></b>	<b>Anderson: Chapters Introduction-4</b>
October 23		<b>Anderson: Chapters 5-Conclusion</b>
October 30		<b>Martinez &amp; Valenzuela: Chapters 1, 2, 3, 7, &amp; 9</b>
November 6		<b>Martinez &amp; Valenzuela: Chapters 6, 5, 10, 8, &amp; 4</b>
November 13	<b><i>Discussion with Inmates at the Denver County Jail</i></b>	
November 20	No Seminar – Fall Break	
November 27	<b><i>Power, Elitism, &amp; Criminal Behavior</i></b>	<b>Reiman: Chapters Introduction-2</b>
December 4		<b>Reiman: Chapters 3-Conclusion</b>
December 11	<b><i>Paper Presentations &amp; Concluding Remarks</i></b>	

### ADDITIONAL RELEVANT INFORMATION

#### ***Student Disability Services***

Students desiring a reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act must contact Professor Potter immediately to discuss their needs and seek assistance at the Disability Services Office, located at Willard Administrative Center, Room 322, 303-492-8671 (voice/TTY), [DSinfo@colorado.edu](mailto:DSinfo@colorado.edu).

#### ***The CU-Boulder Honor Code***

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Students are encouraged to review the Honor Code booklet at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/files/honor%20code%20booklet.pdf>.

#### ***Discrimination and Harassment***

The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment (<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/discrimination.html>), the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment, and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships applies to all students, staff, and faculty. Any student who believes she or he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>.

#### ***Professor Responsibility Statement***

As the professor for this course, I am devoted to maintaining a safe place (figuratively and literally) for students to discuss issues related to this course. It is my goal that students will not only leave the course with a better and more critical understanding of the issues addressed in the course, but that they will feel I treated them fairly and with respect regarding discussions, handling of course topics, administration of the classroom, and grading. If students have any questions or concerns about any of my statements, omissions, grading decisions, etc., I strongly encourage them to come to me with their concerns at their earliest convenience.

**Hillary Potter**