

SOCI 835: THEORETICAL CRIMINOLOGY I

Dr. Karen F. Parker
Office Hours: T 2:00 to 5:00 pm & by apt.
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Description: Examines classical and contemporary theories of crime and crime control by focusing on various explanations for why select types of conduct are categorized and treated as criminal, as well as why people engage in criminal behavior. Specific deviant and criminal activities are described and explained using established theoretical frameworks. Provides a comprehensive background in the disciplinary development of criminology.

Readings:

a) Required Books:

Cullen and Agnew: Criminology Theory: Past to Present. Latest Edition.
Gottfredson and Hirschi. 1990. A General Theory of Crime. Stanford University Press.
Hirschi. Causes of Delinquency.
Messner and Rosenfeld. Crime and the American Dream. Latest Edition.

b) Recommended Books:

Joseph E. Jacoby. Classics in Criminology. 3rd Edition. Waveland Press.

Note: look for new and used copies at local bookstores, the university bookstore, and/or websites like www.amazon.com, www.barnes&noble.com etc.

b) Journal Articles: Most journal articles listed below are available online via e-journal. The accompanying bibliography with complete citation provides you with the necessary information to get the required articles on your own. In addition, a copy of the required readings, including those not available via e-journal, will be available via CD-Rom for you to copy and return to me.

Requirements:

Grades will be based on theory assignment and presentation (25%), seminar paper and presentation (40%), class contribution (10%), and midterm exam (25%). Each required task is offered to facilitate your learning and participation in the seminar.

Theory assignment and presentation (25%): Each student will select a criminological theory for presentation. Your objective: to share with the class how this theory is being utilized in the current peer-reviewed research. Thus, you will likely want to cover one or more of the following issues: 1) outline the types of behavior/conduct in which the theory is directed; 2) identify key concepts associated with the theory; 3) specify issues being addressed in theoretical tests; 3) spell out sample hypotheses that have been drawn from the theory and 4) give an overall summary of the current state of research by concluding that studies --- support, contradict, or largely call for modification of the theory. This report counts 25% of your grade (15% for the written version; 10% for the oral presentation of the report). Your presentation is limited to 20 minutes during the class session assigned. The written portion of the report can be submitted at the end of the week (Friday by 5pm).

Midterm Exam (25%): You will be given an in-class midterm exam that requires you to incorporate materials presented and discussed in class and in readings.

Seminar Paper and presentation (40%): You are to complete a seminar paper that focuses on a theory or set of related theories. A good paper topic is based on your research or theoretical interests and made in consultation with the instructor. A suggested guideline for the seminar paper is approximately 18-25 pages, double-spaced printing, in standard social science journal format (see ASR, Criminology, SF, etc.). Some examples are: a theoretical critique, a history and development of a conceptual framework, a review of existing studies, an evaluation of a theory, and/or an empirical application/test of a theory. You will orally discuss/present the paper topic (approximately 10-15 minutes per student). The written paper is worth 30% and the orally presentation is worth 10%. Note: For those students who plan to take SOCI 836, you might consider a paper that allows, and thus sets the stage, for empirical analysis. Such a paper would include: a research question, review of the literature, theory, hypothesis (es), and then information about your plans for data and analytical strategy.

Class Contribution and Discussion (10%): Each student is expected to be prepared for class and participate in class discussion. Prepared means that you should read and study carefully all the assigned readings prior to the class meeting in which it is to be discussed. Participate refers to your ability to provide an overview of the readings, asking relevant questions, and contribute to the general discussion.

The University Grading System is: 100-93=A; 92-90=A-; 89-88=B+; 87-83=B; 82-80=B-; 79-78=C+; 77-73=C; 72-70=C-; 69-68=D+; 67-63=D; 62-60=D-; 59- 0=F

Be Honest, Do your own work; Be respectful of others and their ideas; and all efforts to participate in this seminar are valued. Questions about this policy should be directed to me after reviewing the UD Student Guide.

COURSE OUTLINE

8/30 CRIMINOLOGICAL THEORY: THEORY CONSTRUCTION & EARLY FOUNDATIONS

Cullen and Agnew: Introduction

Cullen and Agnew: The Origins of Modern Criminology (pages 15-25)

Akers, R. Deviant Behavior: A Social Learning Approach. Chapter 2. Wadsworth Publishing.

Gibbs. 1987. "The State of Criminological Theory." Criminology 25:821-840.

9/6 DETERRENCE, RATIONAL CHOICE AND ROUTINE ACTIVITIES THEORIES

Presenters 1 and 2

Cullen and Agnew: Reviving Classical Theory (Part VII, pages 263-293)

Piliavin, Gartner, Thornton, and Matsueda. 1986. "Crime, Deterrence, and Rational Choice." American Sociological Review 51:101-119.

Paternoster. 1987. "The Deterrent Effect of the perceived certainty and severity of punishment." Justice Quarterly 4:173-217.

Mustaine, E., and R. Tewksbury. 1998. Predicting Risks of Larceny Theft Victimization: A Routine Activity Analysis using Refined Lifestyle Measures. Criminology 36 (4): 829-857.

9/13 SOCIAL ECOLOGY AND SOCIAL DISORGANIZATION THEORIES

Presenters 3 and 4

Cullen and Agnew: The Chicago School (Part III, pages 95-123)

Bursik. 1988. "Social Disorganization theories of crime and delinquency: Problems and Prospects." Criminology 26:519-552.

Sampson and Groves. 1989. "Community Structure and Crime: Testing Social Disorganization Theory." American Journal of Sociology 94: 774-802

Rose and Clear. 1998. "Incarceration, social capital and crime: implications for social disorganization theory." Criminology 36:441-479.

Sampson, Raudenbush and Earls. 1997. "Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy." Science 277:918-924.

9/20 DIFFERENTIAL ASSOCIATION AND SOCIAL LEARNING THEORIES

Presenters 5 and 6

Cullen and Agnew: Learning to be a criminal (Part IV, pages 125-154)

Akers, R. Deviant Behavior: A Social Learning Approach. Chapter 4. Wadsworth Publishing.

Akers, Krohn, Lanza-Kaduce, and Radoscevic. 1979. "Social Learning and Deviant Behavior: A Specific Test of a General Theory." American Sociological Review 44: 636-655.

Warr and Stafford. 1991 "The Influence of Delinquent Peers: What they think or what they do?" Criminology 29: 851-866.

Warr, Mark. 1993. "Age, Peers, and Delinquency." Criminology. 31:17-40

9/27 SOCIAL BOND AND CONTROL THEORIES

Presenter 7

Hirschi. Causes of Delinquency

Cullen and Agnew: Varieties of Control Theory (Part VI, pages 219-239)

Agnew. 1985. "Social Control Theory and Delinquency: A Longitudinal Test." Criminology 23:47-62

Matsueda, Ross L. and Karen Heimer. 1987. "Race, Family Structure, and Delinquency: A Text of Differential Association and Social Control Theories." American Sociological Review 52(December):826-840.

10/4 SELF CONTROL THEORY

Presenter 8

Gottfredson and Hirschi. 1990. A General Theory of Crime

Cullen and Agnew: Varieties of Control Theory (Part VI, pages 240-252)

Pratt, Travis and Francis Cullen. 2000. "The empirical status of Gottfredson and Hirschi's general theory of crime: a meta-analysis." Criminology 38 (3): 931-964.

Gramsick, Tittle, Bursik, and Arneklev. 1993. "Testing the core empirical implications of Gottfredson and Hirschi's general theory of crime." Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency 30:5-29

Hirschi, Travis and Michael Gottfredson. 1993. "Commentary: Testing the General Theory of Crime." Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency 30:47-54.

10/11 LIFE COURSE PERSPECTIVE AND LABELING THEORY

Presenters 9 and 10

Cullen and Agnew: Developmental Theories (Part XI, pages 441-482)

Cullen and Agnew: Labeling, Interaction, and Crime (Part VIII, pages 295-315)

Sampson, Robert J., and John H. Laub. 2005. "A Life Course View of the Development of Crime." The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science. 602 (1): 12-45.

Warr, Mark. 1998. "Life-Course Transitions and Desistance from Crime." Criminology 36(2):183-216.

Bernburg, J., M Krohn, and C. Rivera. 2006. Official Labeling, Criminal Embeddedness, and Subsequent Delinquency: A Longitudinal Test of Labeling Theory. Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency 43 (1): 67-88

Paternoster and Iovanni. 1989. "The Labeling Perspective and Delinquency: An Elaboration of the Theory and an assessment of the Evidence." Justice Quarterly 6:359-394.

10/18 MidTerm—In Class Essay Exam

ANOMIE

Presenter 11

Messner and Rosenfeld. Crime and the American Dream

Cullen and Agnew: Anomie and Strain Theories of Crime (Part V, pages 171-207)

Agnew. 1987. "On testing structural strain theories." Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency 24:281-286.

Chamlin, Mitchell and John Cochran. 1995. Assessing Messner and Rosenfeld's Institutional Anomie Theory: A Partial Test. Criminology 33 (3): 411-429

10/25 GENERAL STRAIN THEORY

Presenter 12

Cullen and Agnew: Anomie and Strain Theories of Crime (Part V, pages 208-217)

Agnew. 1992. "Foundation for a general strain theory of crime and delinquency." Criminology 30:47-88.

Agnew. 2001. "Building on the foundation of general strain theory: Specifying the types of

strain most likely to lead to crime and delinquency.” Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency 38:319-361.

Broidy, Lisa. 2001 “A test of General Strain Theory.” Criminology 39: (1) 9-36

11/1 CONFLICT AND POWER-CONTROL THEORIES

Presenters 13 and 14

Cullen and Agnew: Critical Criminology (Part IX, pages 333-378)

Cullen and Agnew: Varieties of Control Theory (Part VI, pages 253-261)

Turk, A. 1977. “Class, Conflict and Criminalization.” Sociological Focus 10 (3):209-220.

Hagan, John, John Simpson, and A.R. Gillis. 1985. "The Class Structure of Gender and Delinquency: Toward a Power-Control Theory of Common Delinquent Behavior." American Journal of Sociology 90(6):1151-1175.

Blackwell. 2000. “Perceived Sanction Threats, Gender and Crime: A test and elaboration of Power-Control Theory.” Criminology 38:439-488.

11/8 FEMINIST AND RACE-BASED THEORIES

Presenters 15 and 16

Cullen and Agnew: Feminist Theories (Part X, pages 397-440)

Daly, Kathleen. 1989. "Neither Conflict nor Labeling nor Paternalism will suffice: Intersections of Race, Ethnicity, Gender, and Family in Criminal Court Decisions." Crime and Delinquency 35:136-168.

Simpson, Sally S. 1989. "Feminist Theory, Crime, and Justice" Criminology 27(4):605-631.

Cullen and Agnew: Anderson’s Code of the Street (Part IV, pages 159-169)

Parker, Karen F., Brian J. Stults and Steven K. Rice*. 2005. “Racial Threat, Concentrated Disadvantage and Social Control: Considering the Macro-Level Sources of Variation in Arrests.” Criminology 43 (4): 1111-1134.

Sampson and Wilson. 1995. “Toward a Theory of Race, Crime and Urban Inequality.” In Hagan and Peterson (eds.) Crime and Inequality.

11/15 No Class—ASC Conference

11/22- Holiday

11/29 Presentation of Paper Topics

Cullen and Agnew: Integrated Theories of Crime (Part XII, pages 483-514)

Elliott. 1985. “The Assumption that Theories can be combined with Increased Explanatory Power: Theoretical Integrations” Pp: 123-149 in Meier (ed.) Theoretical Methods. Beverly Hills: CA Sage.

Bernard. 1990. "Twenty years of testing theories: what have we learned and why?"
Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency 27: 325-347.

12/10 SEMINAR PAPER DUE (Monday)

THEORY ASSIGNMENT:

1. Rational Choice-Deterrence Presenter: _____
2. Routine Activities/Opportunity Presenter: _____
3. Social Disorganization Theory Presenter: _____
4. Other Spatial/Ecological Theories Presenter: _____
5. Differential Association Theory Presenter: _____
6. Social Learning Theory Presenter: _____
7. Social Control Theory Presenter: _____
8. Self Control Theory Presenter: _____
9. Life Course/Developmental Approach Presenter: _____
10. Labeling Theory Presenter: _____
11. Anomie Theory Presenter: _____
12. General Strain Theory Presenter: _____
13. Conflict Theory Presenter: _____
14. Power Control Theory Presenter: _____
15. Feminist Perspectives Presenter: _____
16. Race Theories Presenter: _____