

## Sociology of Deviant Behavior

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Spring 2016

Tuesday and Thursday 7:40-9:00 pm Murray Hall 211, College Avenue Campus

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### Communications:

- *Always use "Deviance" in your subject line.*
- *Send another message if you haven't received a reply in 48 hours.*
- *You will need to check your Rutgers email account regularly for course updates.*

**Office Hours:** Thursday 6:30-7:30 pm in our classroom, or by appointment

**Site:** <https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal/site/d719eebd-41b7-46b8-a711-824953f775ce>

### Course Overview

**Goals:** In this course we will ask: What exactly *is* deviance? Why do people engage in deviant acts? Who decides what is deviant and what is "normal?" How do we respond to deviance, and what can we learn from different patterns of response? What is deviance really like, from the inside perspectives of terrorists, sex workers, and corporate crooks?

This is not to say that we'll answer those questions! Some of the best courses will raise more questions than answers for you. The goal is to develop a more sophisticated set of lenses for looking at the world around you.

We will begin by closely studying a set of theories that sociologists have developed to help you understand how deviance comes to happen, or how certain things come to be seen as deviant. We will then use those theories to explore a series of specific experiences of deviance.

I have designed the course to help you develop your college-level skills in critical thinking, discussion and argumentation, and academic reading and writing. The course is also an excellent opportunity to practice the good study habits that will carry you through your college career. To pass the course and derive full benefit from it, you must attend all classes and keep up with the twice-weekly readings and assignments.

### Sources:

- Required readings will be posted on Sakai.

- About a quarter of our readings can be found in Rubington and Weinberg's reader: "Deviance: The Interactionist Perspective." The rest of the articles in this reader are excellent as well, and having the book will help you with your final project. I suggest buying a used copy online; the 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> edition is fine.
- Optional: Join SocFeed on Facebook; this is a page where students in my courses share links, articles, videos, and their own commentary. If I offer extra credit, it will be based on your use of this site.

### **Expectations**

Each of these elements is a significant part of your class experience and final grade.

Overall, you will earn good grades (a) by showing that you paid attention to the material, (b) by taking the time to engage with the reading and produce thoughtful insights, and (c) by showing your progress as a sociological thinker. Your opinions and life experiences can have a place in your arguments, but they should not take center stage. Try to let our authors and our discussions show you new, sociological ways of seeing things, and show me that you are practicing your new skills of sociological thinking.

**1. Twice-weekly assignments:** These are a chance to demonstrate your understanding of the material, to connect it to what you already know, and to think about how it might change your view of yourself and the world around you. Your written work must be edited to represent your best writing. Some assignments will be done with partners; each of you is individually responsible for reading all articles and for ensuring the quality of the final assignment.

**2. Participation:** Attendance of the full class period and active participation are required. Your participation score may include in-class assignments, participation in small-group discussions, and being attentive and responsive in group discussions.

I will help you earn your participation points by calling on you if I haven't noticed you volunteering. Do your part to keep a supportive and open-minded atmosphere by listening to others, considering their ideas, and responding to them in our discussions; some of the best class experiences are discussions among the group rather than back-and-forth with the instructor. If you are reluctant to speak in a class setting, let me know and we will work out another way for you to be involved in the ongoing conversation (through additional written or online contributions).

**3. Exit tickets:** At the end of most classes, you will be asked to summarize a selected topic that we covered that day before you leave. This gives me feedback on which

topics require more coverage, and whether students need additional assignments to master the material.

**4. Pop quizzes:** At random intervals, we will take short in-class quizzes. They will begin exactly 5 minutes after the start of class, and makeup quizzes will not be given in cases of unexcused lateness. All readings you completed up through the day of the quiz, and anything we have previously discussed may be on the quiz.

**5. Tests:** There will be three tests. The format will be short-answer, and any material covered up to the day of the test may be it.

**6. Final projects:** In small groups, you will (1) select a theme that is important to the study of deviance, (2) select a relevant article from the reader that we did not read together, or another article that I approve, and (3) prepare a presentation that reviews our class material through the lens of your chosen theme. The themes will be addressed at various points through the course, and it will be your group's job to track the development of your theme through our materials and bring in new material to include in your presentation. Themes will be made available for your selection as they arise in the first few weeks; when the list of themes is complete, those who have not volunteered for one will be assigned to a group. My reader is available for you to peruse at any point, and I will put one on library reserve. Project guidelines will be posted on Sakai later in the semester.

#### **Grading Structure:**

- Bi-weekly assignments 25%
- Participation in class 25%
- Pop quizzes (and selected exit tickets) 20%
- Tests 25%
- Final projects 5%

Final grades are non-negotiable and will be assigned according to Rutgers' grading scale:

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Average</b>
A	90 to 100
B+	85 to 89
B	80 to 84
C+	75 to 79
C	70 to 74
D	60 to 69
F	< 59

**Late work and absences:** Late work will not receive a grade. However, you must complete all assignments in order to pass the class.

Approved absences or lateness include a medical excuse or family emergency that can be properly documented (e.g., doctor's note, police report, funeral program), and religious holidays (of which you will notify me in advance). In such cases, make-up work will be provided. It is in all cases your responsibility to connect with a peer tutor and find out what you have missed.

**Peer Tutoring:** Students who excel in the course will be offered the opportunity to volunteer as peer tutors. Peer tutors meet with students who need to make up for an excused absence; they review the classwork that was missed and prepare the student to take a short oral quiz with me at the end of the next class. Peer tutors may also be called upon to help students who are working with less of a background in sociology. Serving as a peer tutor is a good addition to a résumé and a way to deepen your own sociological knowledge.

**Extra credit:** I will offer up to three extra credit opportunities. They will be unlocked one at a time if student performance warrants. Extra credit will not be enough to make up for poor class work; it is meant to help you compensate for the minor slips we all make.

**Colloquia:** The sociology department holds monthly talks on different topics by professors who visit our department to share their research. Many of these talks are relevant to our study of deviance. If you attend one lecture with me and organize a 3-5 minute summary to present to the class, I will use that to replace your lowest-graded assignment.

### **General Business**

**Academic Integrity:** Do your own work, do it well, and let others do the same. Violations include copying others' work (classmates' work, internet sources, etc.) without proper attribution, cheating on quizzes and assignments or allowing others to cheat, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, plagiarism, denying others access to information or material. Any academic misconduct will be reported to your dean. Check <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/resources-for-students/> for more detail.

Students often assume that because information is available on the Web it is public information, does not need to be formally referenced, and can be used without attribution. This is a mistake. *All* information and ideas that you derive from other sources, whether written, spoken, or electronic, must be attributed to their original

source. This even includes people with whom you may discuss your ideas: friends, family members, and classmates deserve credit for their contributions, too!

**Class Conduct:** The Sociology Department encourages the free exchange of ideas in a safe and productive classroom environment. As such, students and faculty must act with mutual respect and courtesy. Behaviors that distract students and faculty are not acceptable. Such behavior includes cell phone use, surfing the internet, checking email, text messaging, listening to music, reading non-course material, leaving and returning, leaving early without permission, discourteous remarks, and other behaviors specified by the instructor. Courteous expression of disagreement with the ideas of the instructor or fellow students is, of course, permitted. If a student engages in disruptive behavior, the instructor, following the University Code of Student Conduct, may direct the student to leave class for the remainder of the class period. Serious verbal assaults, harassment, or defamation of the instructor or students can lead to university disciplinary proceedings. The University Code of Student Conduct is at <http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~polcomp/judaff/ucsc.shtml>.

**Laptops and other electronics:** No use of laptops, phones, iPads, or other electronics is permitted during class time.

Research shows that students who take traditional pen-and-paper notes learn more and perform better on tests than those who use laptops, iPads, etc. in class. As laptops can also cause you to absent yourself from our shared discussion, and may also be a distraction to those around you, laptops will not be allowed during class meetings.

If English is not your first language, I will allow electronic translators if you notify me in advance. If you need an accommodation for reasons of disability, see below.

**Accommodations:** In accordance with University policy, if you have a documented disability and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please contact me at the beginning of the semester or when given an assignment for which an accommodation is required. Students with disabilities must verify eligibility through the Office of Student Disability Services (<http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/>).

**Diversity:** The Rutgers Sociology Department strives to create an environment that supports and affirms diversity in all manifestations, including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, social class, dis/ability status, region/country of origin, and political orientation. We also celebrate diversity of theoretical and methodological perspectives among our faculty and students and seek to create an atmosphere of

respect and mutual dialogue. We have **zero** tolerance for violations of these principles and have instituted clear and respectful procedures for responding to such grievances.

### **Schedule of Readings and Assignments**

- The readings and assignment listed under a date are due ON that date.
- Unless otherwise mentioned, folders of assignments and readings are in Sakai>Resources, and assignments should be submitted at Sakai>Assignments.
- I reserve the right to alter the schedule of readings and assignments. If a topic is especially difficult or intriguing for the class, we will take more time with it.

#### **PART I: Introduction to the Sociology of Deviance**

*In this part of the course, we will review the basics of sociology, get an overview of the different strands of thought in the sociology of deviance, and look at how sociological analysis can both complicate and improve our understanding of a social issue. For our first social issue, we'll investigate the problem of violence in the form of mass killings by civilians.*

**Tuesday 1/19—Thursday 1/21**

**What Is Sociology? Intro to the Course and Review of Sociological Concepts**

Reading (for Thursday):

- David M. Newman "Seeing and Thinking Sociologically"
- Dalton Conley "Cultural Effects: Give and Take" excerpt

Assignment (due Thursday):

After doing the readings and understanding the authors' explanations of social norms, complete the "Breaking a Social Norm" assignment with your partner. Make sure you leave time for planning, carrying out the project, and getting together to write up your report afterward.

**Tuesday 1/26—Thursday 1/28**

**Introduction to the Sociology of Deviance**

Reading:

- Alex D. Thio, Thomas C. Calhoun, and Adrain Conyers "Introduction to Readings in Deviant Behavior"
- Erich Goode "The Significance of Extreme Deviance"
- Maria Konnikova "Is There a Link between Mental Health and Gun Violence?"
- Robert J. Brym "Six Lessons of Suicide Bombers"

Assignment (for Thursday):

3 Key Points, 3 Connections, 3 Questions Assignment

**PART II: Positivist Theories of Deviance**

*Here, we will learn about theoretical perspectives that treat deviance as something that can be studied objectively, with a focus on identifying the causes of deviance.*

**Tuesday 2/2 Control Theory**

Reading:

- Travis Hirschi “A Control Theory of Delinquency”
- Lamar T. Empey “Social Control Theory”
- Bernice Pescosolido “A Community Safety Net to Prevent Rampage Shootings”

Assignment:

Understanding and Applying Control Theory Assignment

**Thursday 2/4—Tuesday 2/9 Anomie Theory**

Reading:

- Emile Durkheim “Anomic Suicide” (excerpt)
- Robert K. Merton “Strain Theory”
- Nikos Passas “Anomie and Corporate Deviance”

Assignment (due Tuesday):

Understanding and Applying Anomie Theory Assignment

**Thursday 2/11 Anomie in Marginalized Communities**

Reading:

- Victor M. Rios “Stealing a Bag of Potato Chips and Other Crimes of Resistance”
- John M. Hagedorn “Homeboys, New Jacks, and Anomie”

Assignment:

Anomie and Adaptation in Marginalized Communities Assignment

**Tuesday 2/16 Differential Association Theory**

Reading:

- Edward H. Sutherland and Donald R. Cressey “The Theory of Differential Association”
- Elijah Anderson “The Code of the Streets” (excerpt)

Assignment:

Differential Association: Learning to Be Deviant Assignment

*Note: The Cheating in Class Interview Assignment will be due soon; you may want to start early!*

**Thursday 2/18 Techniques of Neutralization**

Reading:

-Gresham M. Sykes and David Matza “Techniques of Neutralization: A Theory of Delinquency”

Assignment:

Cheating in Class Interview Assignment

Categorize your interview data in the class wiki; directions are on the wiki.

**Tuesday 2/23 “Formation” and Consolidating Your Knowledge (test prep)**

Watch, listen and read:

-Beyoncé “Formation” (video is linked in the article below)

-Syreeta McFadden “Beyoncé’s Formation Reclaims Black America’s Narrative from the Margins”

Assignment:

Beyoncé Confronts Anomie Assignment

We will use this assignment to review concepts in anomie. Please also bring your questions and come prepared to work in small groups to consolidate your understanding of the material we have covered so far.

**Thursday 2/25 Test on positivist theories of deviance**

**PART III: Constructionist Theories of Deviance**

*Here, we will learn about theoretical perspectives that treat deviance as a social construction, with emphasis on how something comes to be defined as deviance, and what consequences that definition has.*

**Tuesday 3/1 Labeling Theory**

Reading:

-Howard Becker “Outsiders” (excerpts)

Assignment:

Understanding and Illustrating Labeling Theory Assignment

**Thursday 3/3 Stigma**

Reading:

-Erving Goffman - summary sheet on types of stigma

-Adina Nack “Medical Diagnosis and the Reinforcement of Deviant Labels”

-Iain Crinson “Concepts of Health and Illness: Labeling and Stigma”

Assignment:

Labeling and Stigma Assignment

**Tuesday 3/8 Social Control: Normalization, Discipline, Internalization**

Reading:

- William Little "Deviance, Crime, and Social Control"
- Katherine Irwin "Tattoos without Stigma"

Assignment:

Social Control: Normalization, Discipline, Internalization Assignment

**Thursday 3/10 Definition and Application of Deviant Labels: Medicalization**

Reading:

- David L. Rosenhan "On Being Sane in Insane Places"
- Jane R. Mercer "Labeling the Mentally Retarded"
- Peter Conrad and Joseph Schneider "Deviance, Definitions, and the Medical Profession"

Assignment:

Medicalization of Deviance Assignment

**Tuesday 3/15—Thursday 3/17 Spring break—no class**

Extra credit opportunity:

Prepare a 3-5 minute presentation for the class on any one of these articles:

- Rick Mayes and Allan V. Horwitz "DSM-III and the Revolution in the Classification of Mental Illness"
- Ian Hacking "Making Up People" (excerpt)
- Peter Conrad and Joseph Schneider "From Badness To Sickness" chapter 3 (madness), 4 (alcoholism), 6 (children), **or** 9 (medicine)

**Tuesday 3/22 Definition and Application of Deviant Labels: Making Up People**

Reading:

- Donileen R. Loseke & Spencer E. Cahill "Experts on Battered Women"
- Kathryn J. Fox "Control Agents and the Creation of Deviant Types"

Assignment:

Making Up People Assignment

**Thursday 3/24 Consolidating Your Knowledge (test prep)**

Bring any questions you may have; we will spend part of our class time

working in groups on writing projects that will help you master and differentiate between the constructionist and positivist approaches to deviance we've studied.

Plan ahead: contact a peer tutor to help you study.

**Tuesday 3/29 Test on constructionist theory**

**Wednesday 3/30 Colloquium (optional)**

Michael Walker will present his work on the penal system (see announcement).

Email me if you plan to attend; I will meet you there.

**PART IV: Special Topics in Deviance**

*In this part of the course, we will use the theories you studied in Parts II and III to address a few very complex topics in depth. Your task is to ascertain which of the theories serve as the most revealing lenses on each topic.*

**Thursday 3/31—Tuesday 4/5 Policing Deviance: School to Prison Pipeline**

Reading:

- The collected fact sheets, infographics, and graphic art posted in Sakai.
- David Blanding "Dropout Factories and the School to Prison Pipeline"
- Melinda Anderson's interview with Monique Morris, author of "The Black Girl Pushout"
- In the Morris interview, click the links to read about Kiera, Dajerria, and Shakara.
- Wesley Lowery "Clogging the Pipeline"

Assignment:

School to Prison Pipeline Assignment (due Thursday)

School to Prison Pipeline Group Work (due Tuesday)

**Wednesday 4/6 Colloquium (optional)**

Amanda Armenta will present her work on criminalization of undocumented immigrants (see announcement). Email me if you plan to attend; I will meet you there.

**Thursday 4/7 What's Dirty? What's Clean?**

Reading:

- Mary Douglas "Purity and Danger" (excerpts)
- Norbert Elias "The Civilizing Process" (excerpts)

Assignment:

Clean vs. Dirty, Self vs. Other, Safe vs. Dangerous Assignment

**Tuesday 4/12 Porn and Sex Work**

Reading:

- Murray S. Davis "Smut: Erotic Reality, Obscene Ideology" (excerpts)
- Sharon A. Abbott "Doing Porn"
- Patrick Campbell "Censoring the Body: Whores, Goddesses, and Annie Sprinkle" (excerpt)
- Feminists for Sex Workers "Feminist Manifesto in Support of Sex Workers' Rights"

Assignment:

Porn and Sex Work Assignment

**Thursday 4/14—Tuesday 4/19 Open Topic!**

Readings will be determined by student input. Suggestions received by 3/15 can be considered. I have prepared lessons on the following topics, but I will teach on any topic in which there is sufficient interest.

- Civil Disobedience: Riots, Protests, and Insurgencies
- Governmental Deviance
- Privilege and Deviance
- Deviant Beliefs
- Extreme Conformity

**Thursday 4/21—Tuesday 4/26 Final project presentations**

**Thursday 4/28 Test**