Criminology Online Calendar

Course Calendar

The calendar identifies the activities for each weekly module – specifically, the required readings and videos and graded assignments. The professor reserves the right to make changes to the course syllabus. Any changes will be announced ahead of time.

PROFESSOR

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WEEK ONE MODULE

Open Date: Sunday January 15 at 12:01am

Close Date: Saturday January 21 at 11:59pm
Topics

- What is criminology?
- Deviance and social control
- Media coverage of crime

Required Readings

1. Read our class Syllabus in detail
2. Read the “Reading Comprehension Strategies” link on our Blackboard homepage
3. Read the “Guide to Writing Reflection Papers” link on our Blackboard homepage
5. Deviance & Social Control
6. Barkan Chapter 2 & Mini-Lecture

Recommended Readings

- Media coverage of murdered women
- Missing and Murdered Indigenous People in Wyoming (read pp. 17-32)
- The Social and Intellectual Context of Criminology
- The History of Criminology
Required Videos

Queercore  (Watch only the first 45 minutes to answer the Quiz questions, watch all 120 minutes if you'd like)  [Available on Amazon Prime and Youtube.]

What I want you to get out of the Queercore documentary is a greater understanding of the concepts of deviance and deviant, especially as they apply to “differentness” (which connects to the statistical approach to defining deviance as discussed in our reading “Deviance and Social Control”). The term “queer” originally emerged as a slur against homosexuals but, in a turn of events, was reappropriated by the LGBTQ+ community as a term they embraced, as in the slogan “We’re here, we’re queer, get used to it!”  People who describe themselves as queer (or gay, lesbian, bisexual, etc.) have typically been highly marginalized in society – even modern societies like our own. The status of being queer was seen as wrong, immoral, deviant, and even criminal. Ever in the recent past, queer people were not allowed to get married, had their individual rights taken away from them, and had their own private, consensual sexual activities criminalized. The status of queer was considered so deviant that family and friends often disowned these individuals who, as a result, typically kept their identity hidden. To me, such a situation is horribly wrong. Marginalizing and criminalizing people just because of who they are violates the very idea America was founded upon – that all people are created equal and therefore should have equal rights. Importantly, Queercore shows how people who are marginalized can fight back and even emerge victorious in the social debate about who they are, how they should be regarded by society, and that they must have equal rights and justice. The Queercore documentary builds on this reality to look at how a new social movement was formed by this group, but which originally was a hoax, a joke played on the larger society.

Confession is Good for the Soul (3 min)

This short excerpt from Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (season 2, episode 25 “Tribunal”) exemplifies many of Emile Durkheim’s functions of deviance and social control, discussed in chapter one of our text and in our “Deviance and Social Control” reading. Here, O’Brien (the human) is being held in a prison on an alien world and talking with his defense attorney. Listen to their exchange and imagine what the criminal justice system is like on Cardassia. You can stop watching once their conversation is over at minute 2:30. You can watch the full episode on Netflix if you’d like.

Weekly Songs

Judas Priest – Breakin’ the Law

What better way to get our criminology class rolling than to rock out with this song? As you know from reading the syllabus (you have read it, haven’t you?), each module will have two songs that connect with
the week’s material in some way. So, given them a listen and email me any song suggestions you might have. I love listening to new songs and incorporating them into my classes.

The Clash – *Bankrobber*

Let’s stay in England for our second song, this one by The Clash (in their reggae phase). Like a lot of songs about crime, this one trivializes and glorifies crime. No worries about victims or getting caught. Crime is just good fun, right? “He just loved to live that way, and he loved to take your money.” What do songs like this have to say about how crime is viewed in our society?

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**WEEK TWO MODULE**

*Open Date: Sunday January 22 at 12:01am*

*Close Date: Saturday January 28 at 11:59pm*

**Topics**

- Measuring crime and deviance – What does the research say?

- Explaining the Crime Drop in America, Part I: Immigration and crime

- Crime Victims & Victimization

**Required Readings**

1. Barkan Chapter 3 & *Mini Lecture*

2. Barkan Chapter 4 & *Mini Lecture*

3. *Rethinking crime & immigration*

4. *Is immigration responsible for the crime drop?*
Recommended Readings

- Measuring Crime
- Criminal Justice Data Sources
- Cross-National Crime
- Immigration and Crime
- Victimization Patterns and Trends

Required Video

**Senorita Extraviada**: Crimes Against Women in Juarez (77 min)

This documentary was made in 2000, so it does not cover events since then. What I want you to get out of this documentary is a more comprehensive understanding of the violence that occurs in our sister city of Cd. Juarez which, at times, had the highest homicide rate in the world. While most homicides in Cd. Juarez involve male victims (and many of these are connected to the narcos), there is an astonishingly high number of killings of women, many of whom moved to Cd. Juarez to work in the maquilas. Many of these murders represent instances of femicide, which are cases where women are killed intentionally because they are women who are powerless economically, politically, socially, and physically. To learn more about the femicides in Cd. Juarez, click [here](#).

[From the official description] This award-winning documentary tells the haunting story of more than 350 kidnapped, raped and murdered young women from Juarez, Mexico. Visually poetic, yet unflinching in its gaze, this compelling investigation unravels the layers of complicity that have allowed for the brutal murders of women living along the Mexico-U.S. border.

Weekly Songs

**Lana Del Rey** – Ultraviolence

This strange, dreamy song is about being the victim of a crime, in this case violence in a relationship. Here, Lana Del Rey seems to revel in stereotypes about women who are beaten by their boyfriends and husbands, that somehow that women deserve it, or even like it, or that it can’t be that bad if she still
loves him or doesn’t leave him. Such themes have appeared in many genres of American music, from blues to country music, as well as rock and hip hop. How do these songs reflect cultural views of gender and intimate partner violence, and what messages do they send to the men and women who listen to them? And what does it say when the singer is a woman compared to a man?

Alien Ant Farm – Smooth Criminal

After something as heavy as Ultraviolence, let’s listen to and watch this funny remake (parody?) of Michael Jackson’s song. The lyrics are rather opaque but seem to describe the aftermath of a home invasion.

WEEK THREE MODULE

Open Date: Sunday January 29 at 12:01am

Close Date: Saturday February 4 at 11:59pm

Topics

- Classical and neoclassical perspectives
- Rational choice theories of crime
- Explaining the Crime Drop in America, Part II: Lead and environmental toxins

Required Readings

- Barkan Chapter 5 & Mini Lecture
- America’s real criminal element: Lead
- Poisoned Development
Recommended Readings

- Rational Choice Theories
- Lead and Crime
- Biosocial Criminology

Required Video

Quiet Rage: The Stanford Prison Experiment (55 min)

No college student should be without thorough knowledge of psychologist Phillip Zimbardo’s notorious prison experiment, which is a touchstone for understanding a host of criminology-related issues, as well as research ethics. Watch how a sample of very typical college students quickly descend into sadism, slavish submissiveness, and even madness in this experiment, which gets to the heart of questions regarding “human nature” and whether crime is truly abnormal behavior.

Weekly Songs

Peter Tosh – Wanted Dread and Alive

He’s wanted dread and alive, and he’s being pursued by the evil forces. But he’s never done nothing wrong. The lyrics are below the video.

The Clash – Police on my Back

Another good guy (“what have I done?”) being unjustly pursued, this time by the cops. What kind of deterrent value can be had when the cops are unfair as well as incompetent?

Graded Assignments

- Reflection Paper #1
WEEK FOUR MODULE

Open Date: February 5 Sunday at 12:01am

Close Date: Saturday February 11 at 11:59pm

Topics

1. Biological and psychological explanations of crime

2. More on lead poisoning and crime

Required Readings

1. Barkan Chapter 6 & Mini Lecture

2. New evidence that lead exposure causes crime

3. The Dark Triad and Crime

Required Video

Jim Fallon: Serial Killer?

[From the official description] Are serial killers literally different from the rest of us? And, if so, how are they different? Neuroscientist Jim Fallon thought he'd uncovered the defining characteristics of the "killer brain," only to discover later that he too had the brain and the genes of what he calls a "really bad news character." So why wasn't Fallon a killer? This film uses Jim Fallon's story to explore this question, illuminating the neurological and genetic bases of aggression, nature/nurture and epigenetics along the way, and giving a new angle on the age old question of whether what happens to us in early childhood can send us in one direction or another.
Recommended Readings

1. *Suffering Souls: The Search for the Roots of Psychopathy*
2. *The Science of Sex Abuse*
3. *How School Shootings Catch On*
4. *Genetics, Environment and Crime*
5. *Psychology and Crime*

Weekly Songs

*Talking Heads – Psycho Killer*

*I found a fantastic homemade video for this song about everyone’s worst fear: being chased by a psycho killer!*

*Ava Max – Sweet but Psycho*

*This song is kind of catchy and funny in places. But it rests on stereotypes of women as emotionally unstable and, as a result, potentially dangerous. But of course, as we all know, it is men who are more likely to lose emotional control in a relationship and engage in violence.*

1. *Quiz 4*

2. *Discussion Board Posts*

**WEEK FIVE MODULE**

Open Date: Sunday February 12 at 12:01am

Close Date: Saturday February 18 at 11:59pm (plus the automatic 24-hour grace period)
**Topics**

- Poverty and serious street crime: three theoretical explanations
- Macro-level theories of crime

**Required Readings**

- Barkan Chapter 7 & *Mini Lecture*
- *The Code of the Street*
- *Voices from the Barrio*

**Recommended Readings**

- "*The Corner*"

  - The reading called "The Corner" is a short, extremely well-written description as to how a highly organized, low crime neighborhood can, over time, become a high crime, highly disorganized neighborhood. The author is the same guy who did the highly acclaimed TV series "The Wire".

- *The Real Lord of the Flies*

  - Our textbook references the novel "The Lord of the Flies," which is an allegory about the fragility of society. However, there was a real case where a group of boys become
shipwrecked on a deserted island and had to survive on their own and create a new society. Click on the link above to see what happened.

- Social Disorganization Theory
- Collective Efficacy
- Anomie Theory
- Cultural Theories

Required Video

**Prisoners of the Ghetto** (30 min)

[From the official description] A brilliant film that powerfully portrays the difficult and dangerous life in the black ghettos of San Francisco. At 14, Shawn Richard was a gun-toting leader of a teenage gang dealing in drugs on the streets of San Francisco. ‘Whe’ you have money in your pocket, you always want more,’ he confessed. His story is that of many kids in America’s black ghettos, in which dozens of people are mown down by gunfire every year. The victims are usually black and poor. The US media spotlights the violence, spurring calls for ever more repressive laws. Meanwhile, gangs carry on slaying their rivals in a merciless, meaningless orgy of violence. ‘When they killed my brother, I saw it had to stop,’ says Shawn. Today he runs an NGO -- Brothers against Guns -- which is supported by San Francisco’s Mayor. He gives a civics course to local kids. He teaches them how to ask for a Social Security number, how to fill out a job application and other stuff they never learnt on the streets.

Weekly Songs

**Ramones – Outsider**

He doesn’t feel like he’s a part of anything and always gets pushed around. Is it anomie or strain, or does he just want to be a loner? Blind Willie McTell – **Dying Crapshooter Blues**

In this old blues song, feelings of anomie lead someone to choose the adaptation of innovation. But in this case it also leads to...
WEEK SIX MODULE

Open Date: Sunday February 19 at 12:01am

Close Date: Saturday 25 at 11:59pm

Topics

• Theoretical explanations of the age and street crime correlate
  
  • Micro theories of individual-level offending

Required Readings

• Barkan Chapter 8 & Mini Lecture
  
  • Adolescent Limited and Life Course Persistent Offenders

Recommended Readings

• Social Control Theory
  
  • Social Learning Theory
  
  • Self-Control Theory
  
  • Developmental and Life-Course Theories
  
  • Gangs, Peers, and Co-Offending

Required Video

Why They Kill (58 min)
What I want you to get out of this documentary is knowledge about a different theory of criminal behavior, one rooted in both psychology and sociology. The back story is that Dr. Lonnie Athens, who developed the violentization theory, went to prisons and extensively interviewed over 100 inmates convicted of violent offenses in an attempt to learn what commonalities or patterns existed across these cases. Using his own experiences as a child who was both a victim and perpetrator of violence, Dr. Athens developed a four-step model of violent behavior where if step one occurs in a person’s life, and if it leads to step two (and if step two leads to step three and so on), then violent behavior becomes much more likely as an adult. [From the official description: Why do some men, women, and even children assault, batter, rape, mutilate, and murder? The breakthrough research and singular theory proposed by renowned criminologist, Professor Lonnie Athens, comprehensively explains how violent criminals develop; how violent communities are created and transformed; and how violent acts are committed and can be prevented. Based on the critically acclaimed book by the Pulitzer Prize winning author, Richard Rhodes, this documentary is a startling exploration of the four-step “violentization” process that leads some to attack and murder.]

Weekly Songs

Van Halen – *Runnin’ with the Devil*

For some reason this song always makes me think of tearing around with my high school friends raising hell on a Saturday night. Maybe because we listened to this song while doing exactly this. Is this song an allegory for social learning theory?

Blind Willie Johnson – *Motherless Children have a Hard Time*

When you listen to this song, be sure to read the *lyrics*. This old blues song reminds me of Travis Hirschi’s Social Bonding Theory, and how the lack of attachment to a kind and loving parent can be very difficult for a child (in this case a deceased parent), and could be implicated in their delinquency. Can you think of any other theories that would apply to this song?

Graded Assignments

* Reflection Paper #2

WEEK SEVEN MODULE

Open Date: Sunday February 26 at 12:01am
Close Date: Saturday March 4 at 11:59pm

Topics

- Labeling theory of individual-level offending
- The consequences of criminal sanctions: deterrence, labeling and restorative justice
- Labeling, conflict, and feminist theories: Using law and law-enforcement to protect the status quo

Required Readings

- Barkan Chapter 9 & Mini Lecture.
- Racial politics, racial disparities and the war on crime

- This article digs into the “100:1 rule” where laws were passed in 1986 that mandated penalties for crack cocaine that were 100 times more severe than for powdered cocaine, and which led to a rapid increase in the number of African Americans in prison. The Fair Sentencing Act of 2010 reduced this disparity to 18:1. More information on crack cocaine sentencing policy can be found here.

- The rogue cop of Tulia Texas

- This article explains how 40 African Americans were unjustly convicted of crack cocaine offenses in 1999. In 2003, Governor Rick Perry issued official pardons for these individuals. A 60 Minutes segment about this case can be found here.

Recommended Readings

- Labeling Theory
• **Deterrence Theory**

• **Restorative Justice**

• **Critical Theories**

• **The Social Construction of Crime**

• **Social Threat and Social Control**

• **The Case for Reparations** (by Ta-Nehisi Coates)

• **A modern-day witch hunt: The day-care sex-abuse hysteria**

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**Required Video**

*Unnatural History: Vampires and Witches* [aka “The Deviantization of Witches.”] Begin at minute 21:15. (25 min)

This video explores how the label "witch" was created in Europe and the colonial United States. The issues presented in this video closely mirror those of Labeling Theory, discussed in Ch. 9 (as well as Conflict and Feminist Theories). As you watch this video, consider which groups benefit from the creation of the deviant label "witch," as well as which groups suffer from this label. How does power enter into the process of creating the label of witch? And who possesses this power, and what kind of power is it? Is it economic power, or political, or religious? And remember, while there is no such thing as a witch, over the course of over three hundred years in Europe and colonial America, hundreds of thousands of people were tortured and executed because the witch label was successfully applied to them. So, even a false label can have very real consequences. BTW, if you want to see Monty Python’s take on how medieval society determined who was and was not a witch (before burning her), then click [here](#).

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**Weekly Songs**

*Queen – I Want to Break Free*

*Especially in the beginning of this video, I feel that this fun, upbeat song addresses the need to “break free” from a coercive and restricting label – in this case for the lead singer Freddie Mercury, it may have been the desire to break free from the homosexual label which, at the time, was still seen as scandalous.*
Rush – *Witch Hunt*

Performed by the greatest band of all time, this song is something of a companion to our video on the creation of the “witch” label in this module. Here, the focus is more on mobs and a deep exploration of the fears that emerge from “outsiders” in society. This song has great atmospheric music and deeply philosophical lyrics.

**Bonus Song!**

Alice Cooper – *No More Mr. Nice Guy*

I love the opening line to this song: "I used to be such a sweet, sweet thing, ’til they got a hold of me." To what is he attributing his change of heart? Labeling, peer effects, or maybe a little of both?

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**WEEK EIGHT MODULE**

*Open Date: Sunday March 5 at 12:01am

Close Date: Saturday March 18 at 11:59pm*

Topics

- Violent crime: Homicide, assault, and robbery
  - Femicide
  - Family Violence

Required Readings

- Barkan Chapter 10 & *Mini Lecture*.

- *Why is Family Violence Lower in Immigrant Families?*
Recommended Readings

- Homicide
- Homicide Victimization
- Femicide
- Street Robbery

Required Video

**Defending Our Daughters** (50 min)

What I want you to get out of this documentary made in the late 1990s is a deeper understanding of
gender, and how the low status of women across a variety of different cultures relates to high levels of
criminal victimization and lack of rights. In some nations, women have such low status that their murders
are scarcely noticed and often uninvestigated. When they report being the victim of rape, they
themselves are arrested and, as punishment, often raped again by the police. In other countries most
young girls are subjected to ritual genital mutilation (**FGM**). In war, even elderly women were subjected
to gang rape as part of war crimes committed by the invading armies.

Weekly Songs

**Johnny Cash** – **Folsom Prison Blues**

Recorded live at Folsom Prison, this song has the famous line “I shot a man in Reno just to watch him die,”
which I’ve always wondered about. What theory would explain such a killing? There seems to be no
motive, no gain, no purpose. Is life really so cheap? Is it a thrill kill? Or does it tap into a deep rage that
the killer isn’t even aware he possesses? Incidentally, in the video you will see Johnny Cash’s mug shot
from when he was booked into the El Paso County Jail after being caught bringing amphetamine pills
across the border from Juarez. **Rihanna** – **Man Down**

Importantly, the killer in this song is a woman, which is quite rare. Compare her fear and guilt over the
murder she just committed, and her crying out to her mother to come help her, with Johnny Cash’s killer
in the above song, who seems very cold and remorseless.
WEEK NINE MODULE

Open Date: Sunday March 19 at 12:01am

Close Date: Saturday March 25 at 11:59pm

Topics

• Violence against women: Rape, sexual assault, and battering
  • Police responses to sexual violence
  • Family violence

Required Readings

• Barkan Chapter 11 & Mini Lecture

• An Unbelievable Story of Rape [There is also a Netflix series called “Unbelievable” based on this actual case.]

Recommended Readings

• "She’s such a Slut:" Sexual Bullying among Girls

• How Much is this Bride’s Life Worth?

• Meet the ex-football star on a mission to end sexual violence

• Can a New Approach Curb Domestic Homicide?
  • Femicides in Juarez
  • Rape and Sexual Assault
• **Family Violence**

• **Intimate Partner Violence**

• **Police Responses to Intimate Partner Violence**

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**Required Video**

**It Was Rape (60 min)**

*This video is difficult to watch. But it is an important look at how survivors deal with the aftermath of this terrible and all too common crime. To see the suffering and fear these women experienced, to see how they wrestle with self-incrimination which never seems to be a part of other types of victimization, is heart rendering. These women are our mothers, sisters, daughters, spouses, neighbors, and friends. They are victims of incredibly serious crimes. Why do we, as a society, tolerate such an astoundingly high level of this horrible crime?*

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**Weekly Songs**

**Jimi Hendrix – Hey Joe**

*Musically, this song is amazing. However, when you listen to the lyrics, you will quickly realize that this is a horrific song about a man who kills his girlfriend for supposedly cheating on him and then goes on the run “down to Mexico way”. Does this song glorify or trivialize the killing of women? How does this song compare to what you learned from the “It Was Rape” video?*

**Dixie Chicks – Goodbye Earl**

*This song represents something of a retort to Hendrix’s “Hey Joe,” and it stirred up a lot of controversy among country music fans when it came out because it seemed to glorify or revel in intimate partner violence. But note that this song is about a woman killing an abusive husband, so the gender roles are reversed. But is this song somehow worse than “Hey Joe” which, to this day, receives heavy airplay on classic rock radio? And why is “Hey Joe” not regarded as controversial? How do cultural views of gender help answer these questions?*
Graded Assignments

- Reflection Paper #3

WEEK TEN MODULE

Open Date: Sunday March 26 at 12:01am

Close Date: Saturday April 1 at 11:59pm

Topics

- Property crime and fraud
  - Sneaky thrills

Required Readings

- Barkan Chapter 12 & Mini Lecture
  - Sneaky Thrills

Recommended Readings

- Property Crime
  - Burglary
  - Fraud
Required Video

*The Thin Blue Line* (100 min) [Watch for free here.] [also available on YouTube or Amazon Prime for a small fee.]

This incredibly well-done documentary is about the trial and subsequent conviction of Randall Dale Adams for the murder of Texas police officer Robert Wood in 1976. The filmmaker, Errol Morris, became interested in the case while doing research for a film about Dr. James Grigson, a psychiatrist known in Texas as "Dr. Death" for testifying with "100 percent certainty" of a defendant's recidivism in many trials, including that of Randall Adams. “The Thin Blue Line” centers on the "inconsistencies, incongruities and loose ends" Errol Morris found in the case. Through his investigation, Morris not only comes to a different conclusion about who killed officer Wood, he actually obtains an admission of Adams’ innocence by the original suspect of the case, David Harris (who, ironically enough, was later executed in Texas, but for a different crime).

Weekly Songs

Chamillionaire – *Ridin’ Dirty*

The lyrics come so fast in places in this song that they are included here. I used to sing this song so much that my then four-year-old daughter could be heard saying that she was “ridin’ dirty” while cruising around the house on her scooter. AC/DC – *Dirty Deeds done Dirt Cheap*

Let’s stay with songs that include dirt in the title – and songs about using crime as a way to make money.

**WEEK ELEVEN MODULE**

Open Date: Sunday April 2 at 12:01am

Close Date: Saturday April 8 at 11:59pm

Topics

- Defining and understanding white-collar crime
• Comparing harms: White-collar crime v. street crime

• Organized crime

Required Readings

1. Barkan Chapter 13 & MiniLecture

2. How White-Collar Criminals Get Away with It

3. Too Big to Fail: Letting White-Collar Criminals off the Hook

4. Saving the Savings & Loans

Recommended Readings

In Texas, corrupt politicians face little accountability

If you ever wanted evidence of how elites who abuse their power get away with their crimes because the criminal justice system lets them off the hook, then click on the link above.

• White-Collar Crime

• Corporate Crime

• Organized Crime

Required Video

Getting Off Easy: White-Collar Crime

What I want you to get out of this documentary is a fuller realization of how white-collar crime is viewed by the criminal justice system and our larger society. Why do such serious offenders, who victimize hundreds and, in some cases, thousands of people, receive such mild penalties? And, in many instances,
no penalty? Although this film centers on Canada, the exact same thing happens here in the U.S. [From the official description: Even after stealing millions from innocent victims or bilking charities, first-time non-violent offenders are eligible for parole after serving as little as one-sixth of their sentence in Canada. Free to go with what some see as a slap on the wrist, some crooks and cons are released and at risk to re-offend without being required to pay restitution to their victims. CBC reporter Hana Gartner takes a look at the cons and crimes of two fraudsters and reveals what’s become of them since they were locked up.

Weekly Songs

MIA – Paper Airplanes

A cheerful, upbeat song about engaging in crime as a way to get by, even if murder is involved. Papa Roach – Getting Away with Murder

The video makes this song seem like it is about white-collar criminals who really don’t care about much of anything other than making money. And their power allows them to do whatever they want, including get away with murder.

WEEK TWELVE MODULE

Open Date: Sunday April 9 at 12:01am

Close Date: Saturday April 15 at 11:59pm

Topics

- Political crime: By and against government
  - Hate crime
  - Terrorism
- State-corporate crime
Required Readings

1. Barkan Chapter 14 & Mini-Lecture
2. Fire in Hamlet

Recommended Readings

- Hate Crime
- Terrorism

Required Video

I Am Not Your Negro (94 min)

What I want you to get out of this documentary is a greater understanding of race and race relations in American society, particularly for African Americans, and how severe discrimination was (and is) toward this group, particularly by the police and larger criminal justice system. [From the official description: An Oscar-nominated documentary narrated by Samuel L. Jackson, I Am Not Your Negro explores the continued peril America faces from institutionalized racism. In 1979, James Baldwin wrote a letter to his literary agent describing his next project, Remember This House. The book was to be a revolutionary, personal account of the lives and successive assassinations of three of his close friends--Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. At the time of Baldwin’s death in 1987, he left behind only thirty completed pages of his manuscript. Now, in his incendiary new documentary, master filmmaker Raoul Peck envisions the book James Baldwin never finished. The result is a radical, up-to-the-minute examination of race in America, using Baldwin’s original words and flood of rich archival material. I Am Not Your Negro is a journey into black history that connects the past of the Civil Rights movement to the present of #BlackLivesMatter. It is a film that questions black representation in Hollywood and beyond. And, ultimately, by confronting the deeper connections between the lives and assassination of these three leaders, Baldwin and Peck have produced a work that challenges the very definition of what America stands for.]
Weekly Songs

Indigo Girls – *Bury my Heart at Wounded Knee*

*Referencing the Wounded Knee Massacre*, where in 1890 the U.S. Army slaughtered over 250 Lakota men, women, and children (and awarded 20 soldiers the Medal of Honor for doing so), this song also addresses a range of political crimes, and how they happen.

Scatman Crothers – *The Death of Emmitt Till*

*Hate crimes, such as lynchings, are among the most sickening types of political crimes. This song is a lament about the brutal lynching of 14 year old Emmitt Till at the hand of White racists who kidnapped, tortured, and killed him. The two murderers were found not guilty by an all-White jury, but later admitted on the record that they had killed him. Between 1882 and 1968, over 3,400 African Americans were lynched in the U.S., mainly in the South, and often with the support of local all-White law enforcement. Modern day lynchings still occur, as the cases of Trayvon Martin and Ahmaud Arbery sadly demonstrate.*

Graded Assignments

- Reflection Paper #4

**WEEK THIRTEEN MODULE**

*Open Date: Sunday April 16 at 12:01am*

*Close Date: Saturday April 22 at 11:59pm*

Topics

- Consensual & public order crime: Mala prohibita offenses
  - Drug decriminalization
  - Harm reduction policies
Changes in marijuana laws

Required Readings

- Chapter 15 & Mini-Lecture
- The Benefits and Penalties of Gender for CJ Processing

Recommended Readings

- Public Order Crimes
- Prostitution
- Drugs and Crime
- Social Threat and Social Control
- Racial Threat Hypothesis

Required Video

*Sex, Drugs, & Consenting Adults* (41 min)

Although made in 1998, this video presents an excellent look at many of the most important questions that surround the illegality of consensual crimes, including drug use, pornography, and gambling.

Weekly Songs

*Steve Earle – Copperhead Road*

A song about a son from a moonshining family who grows up to become a marijuana grower. This song represents a major theme in modern music where lawbreakers are glorified and make millions of dollars and go on to live the good life on their own terms. *Charlie Daniels – Long Haired Country Boy*
Representing another major music theme about drugs in society: humorous songs about getting drunk and stoned and wanting to be damn well left alone by those who don’t like it.

WEEK FOURTEEN MODULE

Open Date: Sunday April 23 at 12:01am

Close Date: Saturday April 29 at 11:59pm

Topics

- Policing: Issues and dilemmas
- Procedural justice and police legitimacy
- Explaining the Crime Drop In America, Part III: Policing Improvements

Required Readings

3. Don’t Shoot

Recommended Readings

- Police History
- Racial Profiling
- Police Legitimacy
• Procedural Justice
• Hot Spots Policing
• Focused Deterrence
• National Network for Safe Communities
• Evidence-Based Policing

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**Required Video**

*Policing the Police* (54 min)

[From the official description.] This documentary is a provocative journey inside one police force that’s been ordered to reform by the Department of Justice: the Newark Police Department in New Jersey. Take a nuanced glimpse into how topics in the national discussion about race and policing are playing out every day on the streets of Newark, in community members’ homes, and in the city's police precincts. For a recent article on the police reforms that took hold in Newark click here.

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**Weekly Songs**

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**Vic Mensa – 16 shots**

A powerful song about the police killing of Black teenager Laquan McDonald, who was shot 16 times by a Chicago Police officer while walking down the middle of a street high on drugs. The police went on to attempt to cover up this incident, but the video was all too clear. Surprisingly, the officer was convicted of second-degree murder and major reforms of the Chicago Police Department were implemented. Read more about this case here.

**Ice-T – Cop Killer**

Extremely controversial when it came it, this song advocates what it says, the killing of police officers. But what is often missed in analyses of this song is the qualifier that only those police officers who engage in brutality and kill young Black men are the ones to be killed. “Fuck the police” is the refrain of the song (and reminiscent of NWA’s earlier song *Fuck the Police*) and it symbolizes the anger and fear that the police often engender in poor, urban, minority communities. As much as any song ever written, *Cop Killer* speaks to the dire need for the police to obey the law, not use force unnecessarily, and gain the
trust of the public, also known as police legitimacy. Please note that of course I do not endorse the idea of killing police officers or the message of fuck the police as a way to address problems in policing. But such songs are powerful statements that respond to serious cases of policing abuses which, in a free democratic society like ours, cannot be tolerated. So, I am including these songs because of the issues they address. We should be aware of these songs and not have a knee-jerk reaction to them, but rather reflect on what they are saying and where such messages and ideas come from.

WEEK FIFTEEN MODULE

Open Date: Sunday April 30 at 12:01am

Close Date: Saturday May 13 at 11:59pm

Topics

- Prosecution & sentencing decisions: Impacts of race/ethnicity and gender
- Capital punishment
- Barkan’s prescription for reducing crime

Required Readings

2. Barkan Chapter 18 & Mini-Lecture.
3. Did Texas Execute an Innocent Man?
4. Bail Burden Keeps US Jails Stuffed with Inmates

Recommended Readings

- Capital Punishment
Recommended Video

**A Hard Straight** *(75 min)*

A fantastic documentary that follows four individuals after they are released from prison to see if they can go straight and, if so, for how long. As you watch, pay attention to the various problems and challenges the individuals face as well as the resources and support system they possess. Consider the balance between the two as you assess their chances for success and what factors tip the scale in one direction or the other.

Weekly Songs

**Led Zeppelin – Gallows Pole**

Based on an old English legend, this boisterous song tells the tale of a man about to be executed on the hangman’s gallows pole. As the song proceeds, he hopes for someone to come rescue him and his brother indeed shows to help him, but he fails. Then his sister appears and she tries to save him from the gallows pole, but she also fails. There is a little humor mixed into the song before the man ends up, after all, swinging on the gallows pole, with the executioner laughing about the dirty trick he just pulled on everyone.

**Bruce Springsteen – Nebraska**

This is another song about an execution. But it is not fun and rollicking like the Led Zeppelin tune. Here, the song is very bleak and slow. It is also based on the true story of the spree killer Charles Starkweather who, at age 19, along with his 13-year-old girlfriend Caril Ann Fugate, killed Caril’s parents and her two-year-old sister Betty Jean and ran away, driving around Nebraska and Wyoming robbing and killing everyone they encountered for over a week in 1958 until they were finally apprehended. Their crime spree has become a cultural touchstone, inspiring numerous movies, like Badlands and Natural Born Killers, as well as songs like this one by Springsteen. When asked why he did what he did, Charles
Starkweather responded “The more I looked at people, the more I hated them... I don’t think too much of killing individual people. I use (sic) to think of killing the human race sometimes.” Here is a link to this story.