

Sociology 2041
SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF REALITY*
Fall 2000

“Who you know yourself to be... is made up”

Instructor: Stacy L. Mallicoat
Class Location: Muenzinger E131
Class Time: MWF 2:00-2:50
Office Location: Ketchum 35
Office Hours: By appointment
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Course Objective:

This course will look at how reality is constructed in society. Specifically, we will focus on the reality constructions of fear, violence and crime in U.S society. What role does crime and violence play in the construction of our daily lives and vice versa? What role does the media play in this process?

Required Texts:

Brownstein, Henry. The Social Reality of Violence and Violent Crime. Boston: Allyn and Bacon; 1999.
Mauer, Marc. Race to Incarcerate: The Sentencing Project. New York: The New Press; 1999.

Required Reserve Readings:

A number of readings have been placed on reserve in the library. You are responsible for obtaining copies of these readings. A list of these readings can be found at the end of this syllabus.

Optional Text:

Hubbuck, Susan. Writing Research Papers Across the Curriculum. HBJ College and School Division:

I provide this optional text as a resource to you. If you have another writing guide from a previous class, please feel free to use it. Please note that you will be expected to follow proper citation formats (APA or MLA is fine, just as long as you are consistent), and paper organization. If you do not have a writing guide, I highly encourage you to purchase one.

* You are responsible for the material contained in this syllabus. Any changes will be announced in class.

Grading:

Grading for this course will be broken down into two components: 1) A research paper (50%) and; 2) active learning (50%).

1) The research paper for this course will focus on the question – what is crime? Papers should be 12-15 pages in length, double-spaced. You should focus on one topic and discuss how this topic constructs the reality of crime for society. You are free to choose a topic that we discuss in class this semester, or choose something different. Papers should contain a minimum of 10 sources as well as a data collection section. Specific requirements will be discussed in class. Papers will be due in class on December 1, 2000. Please note: Late papers will not be accepted. Papers should be written clearly, free of grammatical errors and all sources should be clearly cited.

2) The “active learning” component of your grade will be comprised of journal assignments, a group presentation, meetings with me, and most importantly, your contributions to class discussions.

- a) Journal assignments will consist of writing and respond to at least one question or issue that arises for you in each of the assigned readings. These assignments will provide not only fuel for class discussions, but may contribute to the formulation of your research paper. Your journal can simply be a part of your notebook. I recommend using a binder versus a spiral notebook as I may ask you to hand in your assignments from time to time. I may also pose a question during our class discussions and ask you to respond to it for our next class. Journal assignments are meant to be informal and provide a space in your notebooks for critical thinking.
- b) At the end of each topic, a class period has been allocated for group presentations. You will be divided into groups of six (6) and will be responsible for presenting some of the major issues of the topic. Do not simply restate the lecture and reading material. Additional research is required. How you choose to present your topic is entirely up to you. I encourage you to be creative. Some suggestions may include: organizing a class debate of an issue, showing video clips, breaking the class into small discussion groups to break up issues, role playing, etc. I request that groups schedule a time to meet with me prior to your presentation date so that we can discuss your plan for the class session together.
- c) You will also be required to meet with me twice throughout the semester to discuss you progress on your research paper. Dates and times for these meetings will be announced in class. Of course, you are welcome and encouraged to meet with me more often. My office hours are by appointment or you can always chat with me before and after class.

- d) It is my expectation that you will attend each class session, that you will arrive on time, and that you will remain in class for the entire class period. However, showing up to class is one thing; asking questions, participating in discussions about lecture and readings and being (or at least looking!) interested is another. If you tend to be quiet in class, please plan on sending me regular e-mail messages or scheduling appointments to meet with me to chat about the readings or to let me know what you're finding interesting or puzzling.

For those of you who are concerned about grades, if you do everything satisfactorily in the class, you can expect a grade in the "C" range. To receive an "A" in this course, you must go above and beyond the requirements, push yourself beyond your own limits and stand out about the crowd.

Course Schedule:

Day:	Date:	Topic:	Readings Due:
M	8/28	Course Introduction	
W	8/30	Meaning from Interaction	Mead, George Herbert. "The Self, the I, and the Me." Cooley, Charles Horton. "Looking-Glass Self"
F	9/1	Features of Reality	Watzlawick, Paul. "Self-Fulfilling Prophecies."
M	9/4	Labor Day	No Class
W	9/6	SCR of Violence and Violent Crime	Brownstein Ch. 1 Mauer Ch. 1
F	9/8	Research Methods and Statistics	
M	9/11	The CJ System	Mauer Ch. 4-6
W	9/13	The CJ System	Field Trip – Boulder County Jail
F	9/15	Drugs and Crime	Mauer Ch. 8 Marquart, James W. "Ceremonial Justice, Loose Coupling and the War on Drugs in Texas 1980-1989." Toney, Michael. "Racial Disparities and the War on Crime."
M	9/18	Drug Use and Crime	Guest Speaker -
W	9/20	Drug Use and Crime	Movie: Reefer Madness
F	9/22	Drug Use and Crime	Group Presentation
M	9/25	Family Violence	Brownstein Ch. 5 Browne, Angela. "Violence in Marriage: Until Death Do Us Part." Moore, Angela M. "Intimate Violence: Does Socioeconomic Status Matter?" Renzetti, Claire M. "Violence and Abuse Among Same-Sex Couples."
W	9/27	Family Violence	Guest Speaker – Boulder County Safehouse
F	9/29	Family Violence	Topic: Rape Donat, Patricia L. N. and John D'Emillio. "A Feminist Redefinition of Rape and Sexual Assault: Historical Foundations and Change."
M	10/2	Family Violence	Movie: Defending Our Lives
W	10/4	Family Violence	Group Presentation
F	10/6	Fall Break	No Class
M	10/9	Women and Crime	Brownstein 6 Topic Outlines for Research Paper – Due Today Journals Due During Meeting
W	10/11	Women and Crime	Schulhofer, Stephen J. "The Gender Question in Criminal Law." Kurshan, Nancy. "Behind the Walls: The History and Current Reality of Women's Imprisonment."
F	10/13	Women and Crime	Group Presentation
M	10/16	Youth and Crime	Brownstein 7
W	10/18	Youth and Crime	Bazemore, Gordon and Mark Umbreit. "Rethinking the Sanctioning Function in Juvenile Court: Retributive or Restorative Responses to Youth Crime." Benda, Brent. "Comparison of Rates of Recidivism Among Status Offenders and Delinquents."
F	10/20	Youth and Crime	Field Trip: Boulder Country Juvenile Court

M	10/23	School Violence	Manson, Marilyn. "Columbine: Whose Fault Is It?" Fitzgerald, Mark, Lucia Moses and Joe Strupp. "H.S. Shooting Kept Off Page One." "The Columbine Tapes: In Five Secret Videos They Recorded Before the Massacre, the Killers Reveal Their Hatreds -- and Their Lust for Fame." "Looking For Trouble: More and More Schools Are Trying to Spot The Potential Killers in Their Midst. But What About the Innocents?"
W	10/25	Youth and Crime	Guest Speaker – Kurt Morgan, Boulder Enhanced Supervision Team
F	10/27	Youth and Crime	Movie: Trouble with Evan
M	10/30	Youth and Crime	Group Presentation
W	11/1	Gangs and Violence	Guest Speaker – Dean Askew, StreetBeat
F	11/3	Gangs and Violence	Giordano, Peggy. "Girls, Guys and Gangs: The Changing Social Context of Female Delinquency." Vigil, Diego. "The Established Gang" Moore, Joan. "Gangs, Drugs and Violence"
M	11/6	Gangs and Violence	Group Presentation Annotated Bibliography Due Journals Due During Meeting
W	11/8	Class	Mauer 9 Brownstein 8 Reiman, Jeffery. "And the Poor Get Prison."
F	11/10	Class	Movie: Deciding Who Dies
M	11/13	Class	Group Presentation
W	11/15	Race	Guest Speaker – Allison Cotton
F	11/17	Race	Video: Drugs in Black and White
M	11/20	Race	Brownstein 8 Mauer 7 McGarrell, Edmund F. "Trends in Racial Disproportionality in Juvenile Court Processing: 1985-1989." Abstracts Due Today!
W	11/22	Death Penalty	Movie: Dead Man Walking
F	11/24	Thanksgiving Break	No class
M	11/27	Death Penalty	Casriel, Erika. "Bush and the Texas Death Machine." Rapaport, Elizabeth. "The Death Penalty and Gender Discrimination." Thompson v. Oklahoma 108 S. Ct. 2687 (1988).
W	11/29	Race	Group Presentation
F	12/1		Research Papers Due Today
M	12/4	Media and SCR	Mauer 10
W	12/6	Media and SCR	Movie: The Killing Screens
F	12/8	Media and SCR	Cavender, Grey and Mark Fishman. "In "The Shadow of Shadows": Television Reality Crime Programs." Koositra, Paul G. John S. Mahoney and Sandra D. Westervelt. "The World of Crime According to "Cops"."
M	12/11	Media and SCR	Brownstein 10 Mauer 11-12
W	12/13	Reality Revisited	Journals Due Today

Readings on Reserve

- "The Columbine Tapes: In Five Secret Videos They Recorded Before the Massacre, the Killers Reveal Their Hatreds -- and Their Lust for Fame." Time 20 Dec. 1999: 40.
- "Looking For Trouble: More and More Schools Are Trying to Spot The Potential Killers in Their Midst. But What About the Innocents?" Time 24 Apr. 2000.
- Bazemore, Gordon and Mark Umbreit. "Rethinking the Sanctioning Function in Juvenile Court: Retributive or Restorative Responses to Youth Crime." Crime and Delinquency 41.3 (1995): 296-316.
- Benda, Brent. "Comparison of Rates of Recidivism Among Status Offenders and Delinquents." Adolescence 22.86 (1987): 445-57.
- Browne, Angela. "Violence in Marriage: Until Death Do Us Part." Violence Between Intimate Partners: Patterns, Causes and Effects. Albert P. Cardarelli. 1997.
- Casriel, Erika. "Bush and the Texas Death Machine." Rolling Stone 3 Aug. 2000.
- Cavender, Grey and Mark Fishman. "In "The Shadow of Shadows": Television Reality Crime Programs." Entertaining Crime: Television Reality Programs. Editors Grey and Mark Fishman Cavender. New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1998. 79-94.
- Cooley, Charles Horton. "Looking-Glass Self." The Production of Social Reality: Essays and Readings on Social Interaction. Editors Jody and Peter Kollock O'Brian. 2nd ed. Pine Forge Press, 1997. 303-05.
- Donat, Patricia L. N. and John D'Emillio. "A Feminist Redefinition of Rape and Sexual Assault: Historical Foundations and Change." Journal of Social Issues 48.1 (1992): 9-22.
- Fitzgerald, Mark Lucia Moses and Joe Strupp. "H.S. Shooting Kept Off Page One." Editor and Publisher 24 Apr. 1999.
- Giordano, Peggy. "Girls, Guys and Gangs: The Changing Social Context of Female Delinquency." Female Gangs in America: Essays on Girls, Gangs and Gender. Editors Meda and John Hagedorn Chesney-Lind. 1st ed. Chciago: Lake View Press, 1999. 90-99.
- Koositra, Paul G. John S. Mahoney and Sandra D. Westervelt. "The World of Crime According to "Cops"." Entertaining Crime: Television Reality Programs. Editors Grey and Mark Fishman Cavender. New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1998. 79-94.
- Kurshan, Nancy. "Behind the Walls: The History and Current Reality of Women's Imprisonment." Criminal Injustice: Cinfroting the Prison Crisis. Editor Elihu Rosenblatt. Boston: South End Press, 1996. 136-164.
- Manson, Marilyn. "Columbine: Whose Fault Is It?" Rolling Stone 24 June 1999: 23-25.
- Marquart, James W. "Ceremonial Justice, Loose Coupling and the War on Drugs in Texas 1980-1989." Crime and Delinquency 39.4 (1993): 528-42.
- McGarrell, Edmund F. "Trends in Racial Disproportionality in Juvenile Court Processing: 1985-1989." Crime and Delinquency 39.1 (1993): 29-48.
- Mead, George Herbert. "The Self, the I, and the Me." The Production of Social Reality: Essays and Readings on Social Interaction. Editors Jody and Peter Kollock O'Brian. 2nd ed. Pine Forge Press, 1997. 298-302.

Moore, Angela M. "Intimate Violence: Does Socioeconomic Status Matter?" Violence Between Intimate Partners: Patterns, Causes and Effects. Albert P. Cardarelli. 1997.

Moore, Joan. "Gangs, Drugs and Violence" 27-46

Rapaport, Elizabeth. "The Death Penalty and Gender Discrimination." Law and Society Review 25.2 (1991): 367-83.

Reiman, Jeffery. "And the Poor Get Prison." Empirical Approaches to Sociology. Editor Gregg Lee Carter. 2nd ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1998. 284-318.

Renzetti, Claire M. "Violence and Abuse Among Same-Sex Couples." Violence Between Intimate Partners: Patterns, Causes and Effects. Albert P. Cardarelli. 1997.

Schulhofer, Stephen J. "The Gender Question in Criminal Law." Social Philosophy and Policy 7.2: 105-37.

Thompson v. Oklahoma 108 S. Ct. 2687 (1988).

Toney, Michael. "Racial Disparities and the War on Crime." Crime and Delinquency 40.4 (1994).

Vigil, Diego. "The Established Gang" 95-112.

Watzlawick, Paul. "Self-Fulfilling Prophecies." The Production of Social Reality: Essays and Readings on Social Interaction. Editors Jody and Peter Kollock O'Brian. 2nd ed. Pine Forge Press, 1997. 425-37.

