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Tarbutton 209
Office hours- M 2-4, WF
10:00-12
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Course Web Site: see below

CONTROLLING CRIME

Sociology 555

Course Overview

This course examines efforts to control crime and delinquency, with a special focus on the criminal justice system (police, courts, correctional institutions, community-based correctional programs) and related agencies. The course is in four parts.

First, we briefly review a) the theory and research on the causes of crime/delinquency and b) the requirements for good evaluation research. A knowledge of the causes of crime is essential if we are to control crime, since the effectiveness of crime control programs is largely a function of the extent to which they address the causes of crime. Evaluation research allows us to determine whether programs are in fact effective at controlling crime.

Second, we examine the efforts of the police, courts, correctional institutions, and community-based correctional programs to control crime. We address four questions about these institutions: 1) What do they now do to control crime? 2) How effective are they at controlling crime? 3) To what extent do they violate the rights of individuals and groups? And 4) What might they do to more effectively control crime? Answering the fourth question will involve an examination of several recent trends in criminal justice, including community policing, sentencing reform, restorative justice, "get tough" legislation and the dramatic increase in prison populations, and the increased use of "intermediate sanctions" like restitution and boot camps.

Third, we examine four general strategies for controlling crime; strategies that involve all components of the criminal justice system to varying degrees. These strategies are deterrence, incapacitation, rehabilitation, and prevention. We ask whether these strategies are effective, why they are effective or ineffective, and what might be done to make them more effective.

Fourth, we examine certain more specific strategies for controlling crime; strategies that focus on particular causes of crime or types of crime. Our focus will be on efforts to control crime through increased surveillance, through sanctioning juvenile offenders as adults, and through strategies of your choice (e.g., the "war on drugs," gang control, domestic violence interventions, juvenile curfews).

Course Web Site

The course web site contains a copy of the syllabus and links to a range of sites related to controlling crime. To get onto the course web site, first go to [Http://classes.emory.edu](http://classes.emory.edu) You then need to log in. Your username is the same as your university net id/username (ex. bagnew). Your password is your seven digit Emory Personal ID (ex. 0078902). You can change your password after you log in. Once you have logged in, click on courses. The web site for this class is Controlling Crime or SOC555_Agnew.

Course Goals

The course has three major goals. The first is to introduce you to the major literature in the above areas. The second is to equip you with the skills/knowledge to critically evaluate crime control efforts. Politicians and others often claim that some program is effective in controlling crime. Such claims, however, are often wrong, exaggerated, or without any basis in fact. The program in question often does little to address the key causes of crime and it often has not been properly evaluated (or proper evaluations suggest that it is ineffective). The third goal is to help you develop your own thoughts about how to best control crime.

Course Requirements

1. Active participation in class discussions. Also, I would like each of you to bring at least three written questions/comments about the assigned readings to class each week. Time permitting, I will ask you to present one or more of your questions/comments to the class for their reaction. Class participation is judged by the frequency and quality of your questions/comments. In particular, do your questions/comments reflect a knowledge and thoughtful consideration of the readings. Class participation counts for 17.5% of your grade.

2. Completion of a series of mini-assignments. The assignments are described in the course schedule. They are designed to get you to apply course materials and, in doing so, critically evaluate crime control efforts. The exercises count for 17.5% of your grade.

3. A midterm exam that counts for 25% of your grade. The exam will be closed book, open note. Sample exam questions will be given out three weeks before the exam.

4. A final paper counts for the remaining 40% of your grade. While I am open to all topics related to crime control, you might consider the following: Focus on a crime control program or policy of your choice. It may be a fairly specific program (e.g., Project Impact in DeKalb County, Drug Abuse Resistance Education throughout the United States), a closely related set of programs (e.g., mentoring programs, family training programs), or a more loosely related set of programs (the war on drugs, gun control). Describe the program/policy, including a discussion of its goals, its target audience, how it is implemented, and who implements it; describe why the program should or should not reduce crime, drawing on relevant theory and research; describe evaluations of the program, noting strong and weak points of these evaluations (or describe how the program might be evaluated); discuss any problems with the program, including problems in design and implementation; and discuss whether the program should be abandoned, revised (indicate how), or continued in its current form.

Readings

A number of articles and book excerpts are available through Direct Reserves (under Sociology 555, Controlling Crime).

Class Schedule

Sept. 11 Introduction , Causes of Crime and Delinquency

Readings: Chapters 2, 3, 5, and 11 from Why Do Criminals Offend? (2005) by Agnew; "Predictors of Youth Violence," by Hawkins et al.

Sept. 18 How Do We Determine if a Program/Policy is Effective in Reducing Crime?

Readings: "Outcome Evaluation and Juvenile Delinquency," by Sechrest and Rosenblatt; "Randomized Experiments in Criminal Justice Policy: Prospects and Problems," by Weisburd; "Dealing with Design Failures...," by Gartin; "The Maryland Scientific Methods Scale," by Farrington et al.; "Well-Meaning Programs Can Have Harmful Effects...," by Petrosino et al.; "Effects of Restrictive Licensing of Handguns on Homicide and Suicide...," by Loftin et al.; "Methods of Prior Research," by Kleck; Optional: "Don't You Dare," by Glass.

Assignment: Find and critique an evaluation of some crime control program. Several program evaluations are contained in the course web site (look under "External Links," then look in the "Program Evaluation" folder). Program evaluations are also reported in criminology, psychology, sociology, evaluation research, and other journals (do a search using "Info Gateway" on ELUCID– the journal *Criminology & Public Policy* is a great source). Evaluations may also be found in technical reports from the government and other organizations (check out the web site for the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (www.ncjrs.org) and many of the government/organization web sites listed on Cecil Greek's web site, such as the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention or OJJDP – see "External Links" on our course web site). Drawing on the above readings, you should briefly describe a) the goals of the evaluation, b) how the evaluation was done, c) strong and weak points of the evaluation, and d) any ways in which the evaluation might have been improved. Your critique should be about two pages in length, typed, double-spaced. Be prepared to give a brief overview of the evaluation and your critique in class.

Sept. 25 The Police: What Do They Do to Control Crime? How Effective Are They? What Might They Do to be More Effective?

Readings: "The Police," by Agnew; "Newport News Tests Problem Oriented Policing," by Spelman and Eck; "Funding Community Policing to Reduce Crime...", by Zhao et al.; "Fair and Effective Policing," by Sherman; "Pulling Levers: Getting Deterrence Right," by Kennedy; "The Benefits and Consequences of Police Crackdowns," by Scott. Optional: On the class web site, look under "External Links," then check out the web sites in the "Police" folder.

Oct. 2 The Courts.

Readings: "The Odyssey of Peter Randolph," by Rossett and Cressey; "The Social World of America's Courts," by Myers; "The Fragmentation of Sentencing and Corrections in America," by Tonry; "Reconsidering Indeterminate and Structured Sentencing," by Tonry; "Incorporating Restorative and Community Justice Into American Sentencing and Corrections," by Kurki; "The Fall and Rise of Restorative Justice," by Braithwaite; "Does Restorative Justice Work," by Braithwaite; "Effectiveness of Drug Treatment Courts...", by Gottfredson et al..

Assignment: Visit at least two criminal courtrooms at the DeKalb County Courthouse (or another court) for at least two hours total. Orally describe your courtroom observations, relating it to the above readings where possible. A written report is not required.

Oct. 9 FALL BREAK- NO CLASS

Oct. 16 Correctional Institutions

Readings: "Imprisonment in the United States," by Cullen and Sundt; "The Evolution of Decision-making Among Prison Executives," by Wright (CJ 2000). "Recidivism of Prisoners Released in 1994," by Langan and Levin.

Oct. 23 Midterm

Oct. 30 Community-Based Corrections

Readings: "Sentencing Alternatives to Traditional Confinement," by Georgia Dept of Corrections; "Correction Beyond Prison Walls," by Clear; "Community Corrections," by Petersilia; "Intensive Rehabilitation Supervision...", by Gendreau et al.; "The Origins and Evolution of Modern Parole," by Petersilia.

Nov. 6 To What Extent Does the Criminal Justice System Violate the Rights of Individuals and Groups in its Efforts to Control Crime?

Readings: "A Crime By Any Other Name," by Reiman; "And the Poor Get Prison," by Reiman; "The Convergence of Race, Ethnicity, Gender and Class ...," by Zatz (CJ 2000); "The Politics of Race and Juvenile Justice...", by Feld.

Assignment: Begin serious work on your final paper.

Nov. 13 Deterrence and Incapacitation as General Crime Control Strategies

Readings: “Chapter 23 in Juvenile Delinquency: Causes and Control, 2nd edition, by Agnew; “Effects of Judges’ Sentencing Decisions on Criminal Careers,” by Gottfredson; ““Striking Out””As Crime Reduction Policy...” by Kovandzic et al.; “Identifying ‘Deterrable Offenders...,” by Pogarsky; “Career Criminals and Crime Control,” by Visher; “Did Increased Incarceration Reduce Crime?,” by Conklin.

Assignment: Give a 15 minute presentation describing your final paper.

Nov. 20 Rehabilitation and Prevention as General Crime Control Strategies

Readings: “The Twelve People Who Saved Rehabilitation...: By Cullen; "Assessing Correctional Rehabilitation," by Cullen and Applegate (CJ 2000); Chapter 24 in Juvenile Delinquency: Causes and Control, 2nd edition by Agnew; “The Community,” by Sampson; “Crime Prevention, Politics, and the Art of Going Nowhere Fast,” by Lab. Optional: "The Prevention of Serious and Violent Juvenile Offending," by Wasserman and Miller; "Comprehensive Community and School-Based Interventions to Prevent Antisocial Behavior," by Catalano et al.

Assignment: Determine the specific crime control strategy you will discuss in the Dec. 4 class (e.g., capital punishment, the “war on drugs,” Project DARE, zero-tolerance policies in the school system, neighborhood empowerment zones).

Nov. 27 Controlling Crime – Specific Strategies: Public Surveillance, Treating Juvenile Offenders As Adults

Readings: “Surveillance for Crime Prevention...” by Welsh and Farrington, and Reaction Essays; “Under Surveillance...,” by Padgett et al., and Reaction Essays; “Transfer of Juveniles to the Criminal Justice System,” by Howell.

Assignment: Bring one or two readings to class dealing with your specific crime control strategy.

Dec. 4 Crime Control Strategies of Your Choice

Readings: To be assigned.

Assignment: Take about 20-30 minutes to present an overview of the specific crime control strategy you selected, describing the strategy itself, the rationale or theoretical justification behind the strategy, the extent to which the strategy has been implemented, evidence on the effectiveness of the strategy, any special disadvantages or advantages associated with the strategy (e.g., is it expensive, does it violate rights, does it have positive outcomes on other variables besides crime), and your recommendations regarding the continued use of the strategy.

Dec. 11 Pulling It All Together: Developing an Overall Crime Control Strategy

Reading: "Conclusion: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising, and Future Directions" by Sherman et al.; "Assessing the Penal Harm Movement," by Cullen; "A Crime Control Rationale for Reinvesting in Community Corrections," by Petersilia; "The Comprehensive Strategy Framework," by Howell; "National Evaluation of Weed and Seed," by Dunworth and Mills.

Assignment: Prepare a two page statement summarizing your major recommendations for reducing crime in the United States.

Dec. 18

Final Papers Due by 10 AM