

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY  
(<http://soci.ucalgary.ca/> )

Sociology 499.03: Disorder and Crime Field School  
Sociology 499.04: Disorder and Crime Seminar

Fall, 2009

**Course Outline**

**Instructor:** Dr. Erin Gibbs Van Brunschot  
**Time:** Soci. 499.07 Block Week: MTWRF, Aug. 31 – Sept. 4, 2009  
Soci. 499.08 Fall Semester: Monday, 2:00 – 2:50 pm  
**Room:** SS 921, SS 115  
**Office:** SS 544  
**Phone:** 403-220-7203  
**Office Hours:** By appointment.

Note: Soci. 499.07 and Soci. 499.08 are quarter courses which are required to be taken together to receive credit for either part.

**Course Description:**

Crime stories capture news headlines, while evidence of societal decline graces newspaper covers. If one observes the nightly news or reads the daily newspapers, we have reason to be anxious: we live in a dangerous society. But beyond the borders of 'criminal' behaviour, incivilities and disorder that is both social (including 'rude' behaviour) and physical (unkempt lots and garbage on the street) may also generate doubt with respect to personal and societal security. The social and physical elements that we perceive as threatening, harmful, or hazardous, or as merely problematic, pervade the fabric of our lives – at work, at play, as well as at home. Threats are not limited to any particular realm or sphere of existence, nor are the dangers that we face necessarily identified as 'criminal'. A variety of factors come into play in the determination of how behaviours are labelled – including the characteristics of those observing the behaviour, the characteristics of the perpetrators themselves, and the networks and web of relations that observers and actors may be a part of. Further, the process of naming behaviour as criminal or otherwise unfolds within particular historical contexts that vary widely – particular stakeholders may wield more or less influence in the naming process; the numbers of people participating in particular behaviours may vary; and there may be more or less resources (both formal and informal) to deal with or control certain activities.

Our course will begin to examine the question, 'What is a crime?' from primarily a formal or institutional perspective, underscoring that a seemingly simple question may hide a complexity of interests and perspectives and elicit a variety of answers. While the existence of the Criminal Code might suggest that crimes are readily identifiable, behaviour that may be equally or more harmful/threatening may not, for a variety of reasons, be defined as such. On what basis, then, is the label of 'crime' used to demarcate behaviour? What are the implications of labelling (or failing to label) certain behaviours as crime for those who are involved in or observe such activities? Answering

these questions requires a close examination of the contexts in which behaviours occur, including the relevance of individual characteristics; social institutions and their memberships and directives; physical and geographic contexts; and socio-historical, legal and political parameters that influence how it is that behaviour is defined.

### **Questions and Objectives**

The field school component of this course will expose us to a variety of social control agents, each of which address a particular part of the crime event. Police and bylaw officers will begin to help us understand how crime is identified and how determinations are made to respond to particular behaviours in particular ways. We consider the court process, members of the courts, and their roles in the determination of identifying and labelling crime. Finally, we consider the aftermath of crime and the implications of having behaviours defined in particular ways by particular agents of social control. The remainder of the course will develop our understanding of various issues that emerge from and relate to our field school experience. In particular, our course will begin to address the following questions:

1. On what basis is behaviour considered criminal? On what basis is behaviour considered offensive?
2. How do we define the continuum of behaviour between 'disorder' and 'crime'?
3. Why and how do we rely on formal institutional structures and agents of control to deal with some forms of behaviour and not other forms?
4. Are some communities better able to address crime and disorder than other communities?
5. Are some methods better able to address crime and disorder than other methods?
6. What are the impacts of various strategies to reduce "unwanted" behaviour?

The objectives of this course are:

1. To provide exposure to the workings of various agents of social control and their everyday work.
2. To provide students with experience and readings that are relevant to appreciating the complexity of the above questions and the issues associated with the disorder/crime continuum.

### **Recommended Pre-Reading:**

Law Commission of Canada. 2003. "What is a crime? Challenges and Alternatives Discussion Paper."

[http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/206/301/law\\_commission\\_of\\_canada-ef/2006-10-20/www.lcc.gc.ca/research\\_project/gr/crime-en.asp](http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/100/206/301/law_commission_of_canada-ef/2006-10-20/www.lcc.gc.ca/research_project/gr/crime-en.asp)

**Course Schedule and Readings:**

Changes may be made to course format and content.

<b>WEEK/DATE: (Mondays)</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT:</b>	<b>READINGS:</b>
September 7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Journals due Wednesday, September 9th, by 4:30 pm.</b>	<b>Incivilities and Fear Social Disorder</b> (See attached list of readings under this topic.)
September 28 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Midterm examination #1.</b>	
October 5 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Paper proposals due October 5th.</b>	<b>Physical Disorder Policing Disorder</b> (See attached list of readings under this topic.)
October 26 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Midterm examination #2.</b>	
November 16 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Presentations (2.5 hour class).</b>	
November 30 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Papers due.</b>	
December 7 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Reception 3:30-5:30 pm</b>	

**Evaluation:**

Participation in all discussions and activities is expected in this course. Formal course evaluation will consist of five components: a journal, in-class examinations, a paper proposal, presentation and term paper.

1. **Reflection Journal (25% of final grade):** You are expected to keep a journal of your field school experiences. A key objective of this course is that students are exposed to a selection of agents of social control with a view to determining how various types of behaviours are dealt with by these different agencies. The point of the journal is to record observations, thoughts and questions that may arise throughout the duration of the field school – many of these entries will be personal reflection. Students are also expected to reflect upon how theoretical ideas in criminology and sociology relate to the everyday experiences of various agents. You should plan to keep your journals with you and to record entries at convenient moments throughout the week. Journals must be written in daily. At various points throughout block week you will be asked specific questions or provided with specific observations (by the instructor) that you must reflect on in your journals. Journals must be submitted on **Wednesday, September 9<sup>th</sup>.**

Journals will be graded and will be evaluated based primarily upon quality; in this case, quality means connecting entries to the objectives and focus of the course. Quantity, in terms of number of entries, will also be part of the evaluation of the journal.

2. **Midterm examinations (15% each, 30% of final grade):** You will be asked to write two examinations during class time. These will primarily consist of responding to short essay questions that relate to the assigned readings and the field school. The first midterm will focus on the readings under the headings “incivilities and fear” and

“social disorder”. The second midterm will focus on the readings found under “physical disorder” and “policing disorder”.

3. **Paper proposal:** On or prior to October 5th, students must prepare and submit a one-page proposal on the term paper they plan to write for this course. A list of topics will be provided by the instructor. This may be submitted electronically.
4. **Class presentation (15% of final grade):** We have one date for class presentations, November 16th; please note that this class time may run for 2.5 hours. Presentations are expected to be 8 minutes each. An 8-minute maximum will be strictly adhered to. The presentations are expected to reflect the main ideas of your paper, which you will hand in on Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>.
5. **Term Paper (30% of final grade):** Term papers must be approximately 15 pages in length. The term paper is due on November 30<sup>th</sup>.
6. **Reception:** As a class, we will be hosting a reception on Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, for those who provided us with their time and expertise during our block week session. I am expecting that you will provide a 1-minute overview of your papers for the benefit of our guests. Please also note that the time of the reception is 3:30-5:30 pm. Location TBA.

Final Score (out of 100)	Final Grade
97-100	A+
90-96	A
85-89	A-
81-84	B+
78-80	B
75-77	B-
70-74	C+
65-69	C
60-64	C-
55-59	D+
50-54	D
0-49.9	F

#### Course Notes:

1. This class is geared toward practical issues that are relevant to the domain of social control, primarily through exposing students to the work that formal agents do. Our exposure to the work of others is a central aspect of professional socialization and we are representing both the University and our discipline to the communities with which we interact. Respect for those willing to share their expertise is not only critical, but is required for continuation in this course.
2. Interaction and exchange are encouraged: You are encouraged to participate, as well as encourage the participation of your classmates and others with whom you interact, in appropriate and respectful ways.
3. It is expected that students will attend every component of the Field School. In cases of emergency, please contact the instructor immediately.
4. For all of these events, individual arrangements for transportation must be made although I encourage you to car pool with other students if possible. It is especially critical that students arrive on time for each component of the field school. Lateness, except in cases of emergency, will result in withdrawal from the class.
5. Please ensure that you dress appropriately for the events that we will attend, keeping in mind a professional appearance.

6. Please keep your journal with you at all times during block week.
7. Students seeking reappraisal of graded exercises must discuss their work with the instructor within two weeks of the date the exam/assignment is handed back; the assignment will be remarked, and the mark may be raised, lowered, or remain the same.
8. Please refer to the website listed below for information on University of Calgary policies on Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct:  
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/honesty/plagiarism>
9. "The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside instructors' offices, the department office, etc. Term assignments must be returned to students individually, during class or during the instructor's office hours; if students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment."

## Sociology 499.03/.04: Disorder and Crime

### Required Readings

**Please note: With the exception of the Hope and Wilson and Kelling readings, all of these readings are available through the library website. If you have difficulties locating these, please let me know immediately.**

#### **Incivilities and Fear**

Duff, R.A. and S.E. Marshall. 2006. "How Offensive Can You Get?" pp. 57-90 in *Incivilities: Regulating Offensive Behavior*, Andrew Von Hirsch and A.P. Simester (eds). Oregon: Hart Publishing.

Hornqvist, Magnus. 2004. "The Birth of Public Order Policy." *Race and Class*, 46 (1): 30-52.

Phillips, Tim and Philip Smith. 2004. "Emotional and Behavioural Responses to Everyday Incivility: Challenging the Fear/Avoidance Paradigm." *Journal of Sociology*, 40 (4): 378-399.

Sparks, Richard, Evi Girling and Ian Loader. 2001. "Fear and Everyday Urban Lives." *Urban Studies*, 38 (5-6): 885-898.

Van Swaaningen, Rene. 2005. "Public Safety and the Management of Fear." *Theoretical Criminology*, 9 (3): 289-305.

#### **Social Disorder**

Beckett, Katherine and Steve Herbert. 2008. "Dealing with disorder: Social control in the post-industrial city." *Theoretical Criminology*, 12 (1): 5-30.

Dixon, John, Mark Levine and Rob McAuley. 2006. "Locating Impropriety: Street Drinking, Moral Order, and the Ideological Dilemma of Public Space." *Political Psychology*, 27 (2): 187-206.

Squires, Peter and Dawn E. Stephen. 2005. "Rethinking ASBOs." *Critical Social Policy*, 25 (4): 517-528.

#### **Physical Disorder, Urban Environments and Public Spaces**

Herbert, Steve. 2001. "Policing the Contemporary City: Fixing Broken Windows or Shoring Up Neo-Liberalism?" *Theoretical Criminology*, 5 (4): 445-466.

Hope, Tim. "Privatopia on Trial? Property Guardianship in the Suburbs." *Crime Prevention Studies*, 10: 15-45  
[http://www.popcenter.org/library/crimeprevention/volume\\_10/02-Hope-Privatopia\\_on\\_trial.pdf](http://www.popcenter.org/library/crimeprevention/volume_10/02-Hope-Privatopia_on_trial.pdf) ]

- Novak, Kenneth J. Seiler, Charlotte L. 2001. "Zoning Practices and Neighborhood Physical Disorder". *Criminal Justice Policy Review*, 12 (2):140-163.
- Parnaby, Patrick F. 2006. "Crime Prevention through Environmental Design: Discourses of Risk, Social Control, and a Neo-Liberal Context." *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice*, 48 (1): 1-29.
- Sampson, Robert J. and Stephen W. Raudenbush. 1999. "Systematic Social Observation of Public Spaces: A New Look at Disorder in Urban Neighborhoods." *American Journal of Sociology*, 105(3): 603-651.
- Wilson, James Q. and George L. Kelling. 1982. "Broken Windows." *The Atlantic Monthly*, March: 29-38. [See Blackboard.]

### **Policing**

- Hier, Sean P., Josh Greenberg, Kevin Walby and Daniel Lett. 2007. "Media, Communication and the Establishment of Public Camera Surveillance Programmes in Canada." *Media, Culture & Society*, 29 (5): 727-751.
- Katz, Charles M., Vincent J. Webb and David R. Schaefer. "An assessment of the impact of quality-of-life policing on crime and disorder." *Justice Quarterly*, 18 (4): 825-876.
- Newburn, Tim and Trevor Jones. 2007. "Symbolizing Crime Control: Reflections on Zero Tolerance." *Theoretical Criminology*, 11 (2): 221-243.
- Vaughan, Barry. 2007. "The provision of policing and the problem of pluralism." *Theoretical Criminology*, 11 (3): 347-366.