UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY
Department of Sociology

Sociology 423 L01
The Sociology of Youth Crime
Fall **2008**

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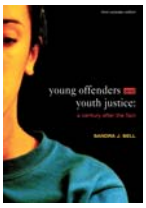
Class Hours: M/W/F 9:00-9:50, SS 012

Office Hours: M 1:00-2:30
W. 10:00-12:00

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to help the student develop an understanding of youth crime from a sociological perspective. This includes an examination of theoretical, methodological, and empirical perspectives on juvenile delinquency and youth crime. In addition, the social context in which youthful criminal offending takes place will be explored. Selected topics will include issues surrounding youth violence, female criminal behaviour, gang-related activity, and legislation dealing with youth in trouble with the law. The final section of the course will involve a discussion concerning the direction in which the discourse about youth crime is moving.

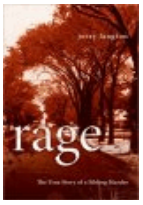
REQUIRED READINGS



Bell, Sandra J. (2007). *Young Offenders and Youth Justice*. (3rd ed.). Toronto: ITP Nelson.

Text website with on-line self-help quizzes available @ http://www.bellyoungoffenders3e.nelson.com

Kelly, Katherine D. and Totten, Mark. (2002). *When Children Kill.* Peterborough: Broadview Press, Ltd.



Langton, Jerry. (2008). *Rage: The True Story of a Sibling Murder*. Mississauga: John Wiley and Sons Canada.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade in the course will be determined by the following:

Midterm ..... Oct. 20 ..... 30%
Term Paper ..... Nov. 28 ..... 20%
Participation 10%
Final Exam ..... TBA 40%
(December Exam period)

Please Read Carefully

There will be two non-cumulative examinations. The examinations will cover a variety of course material (lectures, assigned readings, films, etc.). Students are responsible for material covered in class regardless of whether they are present for each class. Therefore, it is important that you are aware that I do not hand out my lecture notes to students for whatever reason, nor do I schedule private viewings of films that may be missed. It might be helpful to make contact with a colleague early in the course in case it becomes necessary for you to miss a class.

Please note that there will be no provision for make-up exams or other work for the purpose of improving grades. Be sure that you note the date of the two tests and the final exam **before** you make any plans (eg. December exam period runs from Dec. 8th to the 17th). The administrative notices which follow will provide further information regarding the procedure for missed exams/assignments and other issues of importance.

Term Paper:

The term paper based on the book by Jerry Langton, *Rage The True Story of a Sibling Murder* is due, in class, on Nov. 28, 2008. Complete details concerning the paper will be available in the first week of classes.

Participation:

The participation component for the course will be based upon both in-class and Blackboard course site participation.

Administrative Information:

Deferrals:

If at all possible you must provide advance notice to the instructor if you are unable to take a test or pass in an assignment or essay on time. All requests for deferral of a course component due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances:

illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, the instructor can require you to write a “make up” test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If the instructor schedules a “make up” test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Sociology Department.

Please note that requests to defer a final examination or to defer term work past the end of a term go through the Undergraduate Programs Office (UPO) and must be processed by the deadlines that are established in the U. of C. Calendar. You can find the forms you need at:

Deferred Final Exam Application:
http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/Winter2008DEFERREDFINALEXAMINATIONS.pdf

Deferred Term Work Form:
http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.pdf

You must submit these deferral forms to the Social Sciences Associate Dean (Students) through the UPO office: Undergraduate Programs Office, 4th Floor, MacEwan Student Centre.
To make an appointment with the Associate Dean, phone (403) 220-8155.

Only the Associate Dean approves requests for deferrals which extend beyond the end of a term. Instructors are not involved in such decisions.

Research Ethics: Students are advised that any research with human subjects--including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation--must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

Academic Misconduct: Plagiarism, cheating and other academic misconduct are regarded as serious academic offenses. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar, which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

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 an instructor’s office or the Department main office. Term assignments must be returned to students individually, during class, or during the instructor’s office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

Safewalk: The University of Calgary provides a “safe walk” service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the “Help” phones located around Campus.

Academic Accommodation: Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 295, telephone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. It is a student’s responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.

Letter Grade Assignment:

A letter-grade will be assigned to each student at the end of the semester and submitted to the registrar. Your letter-grade will be assigned according to the following scale:

Points (/100)	Letter Grade
95–100	A+
90-94	A
85-89	A-
80-84	B+
75-79	B
70-74	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
59-62	C-
54-58	D+
50-53	D
49 or less	F

Note: The grades for a course component may be scaled to maintain equity among sections and to conform to departmental norms.

Handing in Papers Outside of Class, Return of Final Papers, and Release of Final Grades:

1. When students are unable to submit papers at class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or teaching assistant rather than at the Sociology Department main office.

2. Final papers will not be returned through the Sociology Department main office. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, (i.e., outside an instructor's office, the department office, etc.). Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise final papers will only be available for pick-up during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or the beginning of the next term.

3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology department. They are only available online.

SYLLABUS

Date	**Topic**	**Readings**

(B) indicates reading from **Bell** **(KT)** indicates reading from **Kelly & Totten**

Part One: Historical perspective; Measurement of Youth Crime

Sept. 8-12	Introduction	**(B)** Ch. 1
Sept. 15-19	Social and Legal Definitions/ Youth Justice System (Pt. 1)	**(B)** Ch. 2 (pgs. 34-52) **(KT)** Preface & Ch. 1 (pgs. 1-4)
Sept. 22-29	Measurement of Criminal Activity	**(B)** Ch. 3 & 4 **(KT)** Ch. 2 (pgs. 21-27)
Oct. 1-3	Violent youth	**(KT)** Ch. 2 (pgs. 28, 39-49) Ch. 4 (pgs. 101-111) Ch. 5 (pgs. 146-171 and pgs. 187-188)

Part Two: Theories of Juvenile Delinquency & Youth Criminal Behaviour

Oct. 6-10	Biological and Psychological explanations	**(B)** Ch. 5 (pgs. 126-142) **(KT)** Ch. 3 (pgs. 51-57)
Oct. 13	***Happy Thanksgiving***	
Oct. 15-17	Social Structural Theories	**(B)** Ch. 5 (pgs. 142-146) **(KT)** Ch. 1 (pgs. 4-18)

Oct. 20	**Mid-term test**	
Oct. 22-27	Social Process Theories	**(B)** Ch. 5 (pgs. 146-150) Ch. 6 (pgs. 152-157 and pgs. 161-163)
Oct. 29-31	Female Criminal Behaviour	**(B)** Ch. 6 (pgs. 163-173) Ch.11(pgs. 327-331 and pgs. 334-336)

Part Three: The Social Context of Youth Crime

Nov. 3-14	Influence of Family	**(B)** Ch. 7 (pgs. 180-194) Ch.11(pgs. 331-334) **(KT)** Ch. 3 (pgs. 57-78)
Nov. 17-19	Role of the Educational System	**(B)** Ch. 7 (pgs. 194-204) **(KT)** Ch. 3 (pgs. 78-99) Ch. 4 (pgs. 120-133)
Nov. 21-28	Gang Activity	**(B)** Ch. 7 (pgs. 204-213) **(KT)** Ch. 4 (pgs. 112-120)
Dec. 1-5	Youth Justice System (Pt. 2)	**(B)** Ch. 2 (pgs. 52-60) Ch. 8 (pgs. 225-237) Ch.10(pgs. 300-315) Ch.12(pgs. 343-347 and pgs. 352-359 and pgs. 369-375 **(KT)** Ch. 4 (pgs. 133-140) Ch. 7

Note: This outline is tentative and as such the dates of the topics may change.
Please check the course BB site for class cancellations or important announcements/changes to course outline.