

SOCIOLOGY 2CC3E Constructing Deviance

Winter 2018

Lectures: Tuesday 7:00 – 9:00

Lecture Hall Location: KTH B135

Office Hours: Tuesdays 5:30 - 6:30pm or by appointment

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Course Description

From a sociological perspective, deviance may involve thoughts, beliefs and behaviours that are seen by others as violating informal social norms and values, and formally enacted rules or laws. While there are a number of sociological theories that attempt to explain deviant behaviour, this course will focus specifically on social constructionist perspectives of deviance. This approach is less concerned with theories that focus on the *causes* of deviant behaviour, i.e. conditions regarded as inherent to individuals (biology, psychology) or to pathological social conditions such as social disorganisation and social strain. Instead, our focus will be on the ways in which deviance emerges as a product of individuals engaged in definitional processes, and how they perceive, define and assert conditions to be deviant. Hence, our concern will be the ways in which deviance is *socially constructed* (created) and interpreted, and how individuals respond to perceived departures from social rules. We will begin with a focus on early and American Positivist approaches to the study of deviant behaviour, then moving on to Labeling, Social Problems and Post-Modernist conceptualisations. Finally, we will look at ways certain aspects of lived experience – sexuality, gender and the body are social constructed and defined as deviant.

Course Learning Objectives

This course addresses three University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (see, <http://ccl.mcmaster.ca/COU/pdf/Undergraduate%20Degree%20Level%20Expectations.pdf>). First, theoretical perspectives of the structure and organization of deviant behaviour are multiple and diverse in their conceptualizations and truth claims. Acquiring knowledge of these diverse approaches will expand students' depth and breadth of knowledge of this field of inquiry. Second, there is no single method (sociological and otherwise) that has been accepted as the final or best approach to explaining the complexities of deviant behaviour in Canada. As such, this course requires that students consider and critically evaluate all competing theoretical and empirical approaches. In so doing, students will gain an awareness of the problematics and limits of knowledge regarding our understanding of what is regarded as deviance. Finally, this course will encourage students to discuss theoretical and practical issues in class. Grading for this course will be based on regular tutorial attendance and participation, 1 written assignment and two examinations (mid-term and final). In each case, the student's communication skills will be challenged as well as enhanced.

Important Note: Introductory Sociology (1A06) is a prerequisite for this class.

Required Readings

(i) Courseware Package

Additional required readings may be made available via Avenue to Learn.

Evaluation:

1. Tutorial Attendance and Participation (10%)

The final component of your grade will be based on your attendance at, and performance in the weekly tutorials. Your teaching assistant (TA) will provide you with further details. Please note that students are expected to regularly attend tutorial. Failure to do so will result in a loss of this grade. Students must attend a minimum of 75% of tutorials in order to receive partial marks. **Full attendance is necessary in order to receive the full 10%.**

Tutorials begin the week of January 23rd 2018.

2. Midterm Exam (30%)

The exam will cover lecture and tutorial material, required readings, and content from films, etc., and will consist of multiple-choice, true & false and short answer questions. **The exam will be on Tuesday February 27th during class in a room to be determined.**

3. Written Assignment (30%)

To be determined, but will likely involve an 8 – 10pg research paper on a topic of your choice, utilising the one of the sociological perspectives discussed in class. If you have difficulty choosing a topic, suggested topics will be made available on AVE. **The paper is due Tuesday April 3rd at the beginning of class.**

4. Final Examination (30%)

The format for the final exam will be the same as the mid-term. You will be responsible only for the material covered after the mid-term exam. **The final exam will be scheduled by the Registrar's Office.**

Additional Information on Assignments

Assignments must be turned in during the beginning of class. All pages **must be numbered** and have 1" margins on all sides. All text should be double-spaced in an easy-to-read 12-point font. **Failure to adhere to these guidelines will be reflected in the mark for the assignment.**

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained. In assignments, complete citations are required for all quotes and paraphrases.

2. Improper collaboration in group work. In this course, I encourage students to work together to understand concepts, discuss ideas, study for exams, etc. Improper collaboration would be defined as using the work of others to get out of doing your own work, claiming the work of others as your own, etc.

3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Review of Marks

I will be diligent in marking all assignments fairly and accurately. Nonetheless, occasionally students disagree with the marks they receive. When this occurs, we will be happy to review the mark of any assignment or exam, if the procedure outlined below is followed. ***Please note that when a mark is reviewed, the new mark may be lower than the original.*** To request a review of a mark, write a 1-page memo (on paper, not email) describing in detail the nature of the perceived marking error. Submit this memo, with the original marked assignment to me. You may submit requests for review no sooner than one week and no later than one month after assignments/exams are handed back to the class.

Late Assignments and Absences

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf>) is a self-reporting tool for undergraduate students to report absences that last up to 3 days. This form allows students to request accommodation for any missed academic work. This tool cannot be used during any final examination period. You may submit a maximum of one Academic Work Missed request per term. It is your responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation. If you are absent more than 3 classes, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a non-medical reason, you must visit the office of the Associate Dean of your Faculty. You may be required to provide supporting documentation. Any disruption this causes to turning in assignments on time, completing exams, and so forth, must be addressed directly with me as soon as possible. **For late assignments without approved excuses, you must make arrangements directly with me to submit the assignment.** Assignments will be marked down 5 percentage points for each day it is late, including weekend days and holidays. **I will NOT accept late papers that are 3 or more days late, and you will be given a mark of 0 for this assignment.**

Accommodations

We are committed to making appropriate accommodations for students' observance of religious holidays. Please contact your instructor as early in the term as possible to make individual arrangements. We are also committed to working with students with disabilities to make individualized accommodations according to your specific needs. All such arrangements must be made through the Student Accessibility Services department. Please drop by the instructor's office hours at the beginning of the term to make individual arrangements and to complete the necessary paperwork. All such arrangements will be kept confidential.

Email

Please consider email equivalent to any other form of written communication. Students who write to their professors and teaching assistants are expected to follow rules of spelling, grammar and punctuation. In addition, please include a proper greeting, such as "**Dear Dr. Shaw,**" and a

closing that includes your full name, such as "**Sincerely, Anita Koctail.**" Email failing to meet these standards may be returned unanswered. Email containing questions that can be answered by referring to this syllabus or to Avenue to Learn may not be answered. I do check the separate Avenue to Learn email, but only intermittently, so please do not try to contact me that way. ***All email communication must come from your mcmaster.ca email account.***

DEPARTMENTAL/UNIVERSITY POLICIES:

Do NOT fax assignments. Please see your instructor for the most appropriate way to submit assignments. The Sociology staff do NOT date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers.

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Students should check the web, the white board and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (eg. class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, TA job postings, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances (RISO)

The University recognizes that, on occasion, the timing of a student's religious, Indigenous, or spiritual observances and that of their academic obligations may conflict. In such cases, the University will provide reasonable academic accommodation for students that is consistent with the Ontario Human Rights Code. Please review the [RISO information for students in the Faculty of Social Sciences](#) about how to request accommodation.

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Week No.	TOPICS & READINGS
Week 1 Jan 9 th	Introduction & Overview of course
Week 2 Jan 16 th	Early Positivist Theories of Deviant Behaviour Readings: (i) Nassi and Abramowitz. From phrenology to psychosurgery and back again: Biological Studies of Criminality.
Week 3 Jan 23 rd Tutorials Begin	American Positivist Approaches to Studying Deviant Behaviour Readings: (i) Downes et al. Chapter 4 – Functionalism, Deviance, and Control.
Week 4 Jan 30 th	Symbolic Interactionism & Labeling Theory Readings: (i) Deutschmann, L. Chapter 10 – Interaction Theories.
Week 5 Feb 6 th	Deviant Careers Readings: (i) Becker – Becoming a Marijuana User.
Week 6 Feb 13 th	Developing a Deviant Identity Readings: (i) Weinberg, et al. Becoming Bisexual. (ii) Irwin. Tattoos without Stigma.
Week 7 Feb 20 th	READING WEEK NO CLASS
Week 8 Feb 27 th	MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS
Week 9 Mar 6 th	Deviant Identities – Rationalizing Deviance & Stigma Management Readings: (i) Scully & Marolla. Convicted Rapists’ Vocabulary of Motive: Excuses and Justifications. (ii) Flett. To tell or not to tell. Managing a concealable identity in the workplace.
Week10 Mar 13 th	Social Problems, Social Constructionism & Post-Modernism Readings: (i) Best J. The Constructionist Stance. (i) Maratea, R. Online Claims-Making: The NRA and Gun Advocacy in Cyberspace.
Week 11 Mar 20 th	Social Construction of Deviant Bodies National Geographic documentary – Marked for Life https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTN0Pn9zWhs Readings: (i) Kleese, C. ‘Modern ‘Primitivism’: Non-mainstream body modification and racialized representation.
Week 12 Mar 27 th	Social Construction of Deviant Sexualities Readings: (i) Bullough, V. Homosexuality and the Medical Model.

Week 13

Apr 3rd

**Papers due in
class**

Social Construction of Gender Deviance & Medicalisation of Deviance

Orgasm Inc. <http://www.veoh.com/watch/v37017853nDqcZaZ2?h1=Orgasm+Inc.>+

Readings:

- (i) Sheridan Le Fanu's *Carmilla* and Bram Stoker's vampire ladies as representations of Cesare Lombroso's *donna delinquent*?
- (ii) Moniyhan, R. The making of a disease: female sexual dysfunction.