

**SOCIOLOGY 3J03**  
**Special Topics in Sociology of Deviance – Extreme Deviance**

**Fall 2019**

Lectures: Thursdays 2:30 – 4:20; some Fridays 2:30 – 3:20 see timetable below

Office: KTH 632

Lecture Hall Location: KTH B124

Office Hours: Thursdays 1:30 - 2:20 & by appointment

**Instructor: Dr. Rhona Shaw**

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**Course Description**

Extreme Deviance refers to behaviours, beliefs or physical traits of individuals that are so unconventional and outside the norm that they elicit strong negative emotions and responses from others, and make routine and ordinary interaction virtually impossible. In this course we will investigate a range of behaviours, beliefs and ‘ways of being’ that are at present, understood as exceptionally deviant. Topics to be addressed include: extreme body modification (transabilism and transhumanism, tattoos, Freak shows), belief in extraterrestrials and the paranormal, white supremacy, cannibalism, and serial killing from a sociological perspective. We will also investigate a range of sexual practices – BDSM, pedophilia, bestiality – that are perceived as perverse and pathological.

**Course Learning Objectives**

This course addresses three University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (see, <http://cfl.mcmaster.ca/COU/pdf/Undergraduate%20Degree%20Level%20Expectations.pdf>). First, sociological theories of deviance are multiple and diverse in their conceptualizations and ‘truth’ claims. Acquiring knowledge of these diverse theories will expand students’ depth and breadth of knowledge of this field of inquiry. Second, there is no single theory (including sociological theories) that has been accepted as the final or best approach to explaining the complexities of how deviant behaviour is conceptualized, represented, socially controlled and experienced. As such, this course requires that students consider and critically evaluate all competing theoretical approaches. In so doing, students will gain an awareness of the complexities and limits of sociological knowledge regarding behaviours, beliefs, and physical traits that elicit extreme negative reactions. Finally, this course will encourage students to discuss theoretical and practical issues in class. Grading for this course will be based on one paper proposal, one major term paper and two examinations (mid-term and final).

**Important Note:** Introductory Sociology (1Z03) is a prerequisite for this course, or in some situations, with permission from the instructor.

**Required Readings**

The following books are available for purchase at the Bookstore. Please be aware that you are responsible for completing all assigned readings by the beginning of class on the day they are listed (unless otherwise noted).

- Good, E., and D Vail. 2008. *Extreme Deviance*. Pine Forge Press: Los Angeles.
- *Additional required readings will be assigned. Links will be made available via Avenue to Learn.*

## Method of Evaluation

### 1. Mid-term Examination (35%)

The mid-term examination will cover lectures, required readings, films and guest speakers. The exam will consist of multiple-choice, true & false, short answer & essay questions. **It will be scheduled during class on Thursday October 24<sup>th</sup> 2019, classroom to be determined.**

### 2. Research Paper (30%)

Your research paper may be on any topic, *as long as it related in some way to an extreme form of deviance*. This means your paper may be about a topic that was once considered extremely deviant, but no longer is (e.g. BDSM, homosexuality), or is an activity, belief or way of being that is now defined as such. A list of *suggested* topics will be posted on Ave to Learn. Your paper will involve a synthesis and critical analysis of sociological research on a particular type of extreme deviance, be it attitudinal, behavioural or a way of 'being' (self-presentation). A detailed handout on "How to write a research paper" and other details will be provided on Avenue to Learn and will be addressed in tutorial. **The assignment is due Thursday November 28<sup>th</sup> at the beginning of class.**

### 3. Final Examination (35%)

The format for the final exam will be the same as that of the mid-term. You will be responsible only for the material covered since the mid-term exam. **The final exam will be scheduled by the registrar.**

## Additional Information on Assignments

Assignments must be turned in during the beginning of class, and by the deadline on the course schedule. All pages must be numbered and have 1" to 1.25" 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.

## 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.

**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. If your paper is 3+ days late, you will be given a mark of 0 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 <http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

## **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. 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 and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit a maximum of 1 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 days, exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a reason other than medical, you MUST visit your Associate Dean's Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation. This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence.

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 (e.g. 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.

### **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* contact me that way. *All email communication must come from your mcmaster.ca email account.*

Week No. Date	TOPICS & READINGS
<b>Week 1</b> Thurs Sept 5 <sup>th</sup>  Fri Sept 6 <sup>th</sup>	<u><b>Introduction &amp; Overview of course</b></u>  <u><b>EXTREME DEVIANT BELIFS</b></u> <b>Belief in the Paranormal</b> <b>Readings:</b> (i) Introduction: The Significance of Extreme Deviance.
<b>Week 2</b> Thurs Sept 12 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Alien Abduction</b> <b>Readings:</b> (i) Being Abducted by Aliens as a Deviant Belief: An Introduction (ii) Abductions as Mythmaking. (iii) How Do People Come to Believe They Were Abducted by Aliens?
<b>Week 3</b> Thurs Sept 19 <sup>th</sup> <b>Discussion of term paper</b>	<b>Eugenics Movement</b> <b>Readings:</b> (i) The Science of Eugenics: America’s Moral Detour. <b>AVE</b>
<b>Week 4</b> Thurs Sept 26 <sup>th</sup>	<b>White Supremacy</b> <b>Readings:</b> (i) White Supremacy as Deviance: An Introduction (ii) White Supremacy as Extreme Deviance.
<b>Week 5</b> Thurs Oct 3 <sup>rd</sup>	<u><b>EXTREME DEVIANT BEHAVIOURS</b></u> <b>Cannibalism</b> <b>Documentary – The Most Ancient Taboo: Cannibalism Readings:</b> (i) Thinking about cannibalism. <b>AVE</b>
<b>Week 6</b> Thurs Oct 10 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Serial Killing</b> <b>Readings:</b> (i) Serial killers: 1. Subtypes, patterns, and motives. <b>AVE</b>
<b>Week 7</b> Thurs Oct 17 <sup>th</sup>	<b>READING WEEK – NO CLASSES</b>
<b>Week 8</b> Thurs Oct 24 <sup>th</sup>	<b>MIDTERM EXAM</b> <b>CLASSROOM TO BE DETERMINED</b>
<b>Week 9</b> Thurs Oct 31 <sup>st</sup> Fri Nov 1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>SM (Sadomasochism) &amp; Leather Sex</b> <b>Readings:</b> (i) SM: An Introduction (ii) The Pleasure of Pain. (iii) Sexual Spanking
<b>Week 10</b> Thurs Nov 7 <sup>th</sup> Fri Nov 8 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Bestiality &amp; Pedophilia &amp; Children’s Sexuality</b> <b>Readings:</b> (i) Bestiality and Zoophilia: A discussion of sexual conduct with animals. <b>AVE</b> (ii) Adult-Child Sexual Contact: An Introduction (iii) Pedophiles and Child Molesters.

<p><b>Week 11</b> Thurs Nov 14<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b><u>EXTREME DEVIANT BODIES</u></b> <b>The Freak Show</b> <b>Readings:</b> (i) Deviant Bodies and the Rise of the Freak Show in America. Pgs 210 – 218 only <b>AVE</b> (ii) Sick beautiful freak: non-mainstream body modification and the social construction of deviance. <b>AVE</b></p>
<p><b>Week 12</b> Thurs Nov 21<sup>st</sup></p>	<p><b>Extreme Body Modification</b> <b>Readings:</b> (i) Bod Mod to the Max! An Introduction to Body Modification as Deviance. (ii) Tattoos Are Like Potato Chips... You Can't Have Just One...</p>
<p><b>Week 13</b> Thurs Nov 28<sup>th</sup>  Fri Nov 29<sup>th</sup></p>	<p><b>Transabilism &amp; Transhumaism</b> <b>Readings:</b> (i) This limb is mine but I do not want it: from anatomy to body ownership. <b>AVE</b> (i) Longevity Ancient and Modern. <b>AVE</b>  <b>Last Class – Term Papers due beginning of class</b></p>