

SOCIOLOGY 2CC3

Constructing Deviance

Winter 2020

Lectures: Tuesdays 9:30 – 11:20 pm

Lecture Hall Location: KTH B135

Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:00 - 2:00pm 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 or non-conforming 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, “made up”) and how “significant and generalized others” interpret and respond to perceived departures from social norms and practices. We will begin with a focus on early and Positivist approaches to the study of deviant behaviour, then moving on to Labeling Theory, Social Problems and Post-Modernist conceptualisations of non-conformity. Finally, we will look at the ways certain aspects of lived experience, namely sexuality and the body, are socially constructed and defined as deviant.

Course Learning Objectives

This course addresses three University Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (see, <http://cll.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 or 1Z03) is a prerequisite for this class.

Required Readings

(i) Courseware Package

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

Evaluation:

1. Tutorial Attendance and Participation (10%)

This component of your total 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, and 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 Week 3.

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 midterm exam will be held in a room yet to be determined, Tuesday February 25th, 2020 in class.**

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 assignment is due at the beginning of class, Tuesday April 7th 2020.**

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. Consult the required writing style guide for information on how to properly cite the work of others.
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.***

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 certain or 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 their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term in order to note any changes.

Sociology Department Policies

The Sociology staff will not date-stamp assignments or monitor the submission or return of papers. Turn in assignments via Avenue to Learn. 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.

Week No.	TOPICS & READINGS
Week 1 Jan 7 th	Introduction & Overview of course
Week 2 Jan 14 th	Early Positivist Theories of Deviant Behaviour – Biological Theories of Deviance Readings: (i) Nassi and Abramowitz. From phrenology to psychosurgery and back again: Biological Studies of Criminality.
Week 3 Jan 21 st Tutorials begin	American Positivist Approaches to Studying Deviant Behaviour The Chicago School (Social Disorganisation) & Structural Functionalism (Anomie) Readings: (i) Downes et al., Chapter 3 The University of Chicago School. Posted on AVE - ignore page 49 on pdf (ii) Downes et al. Chapter 4 Functionalism, Deviance and Control.
Week 4 Jan 28 th	Symbolic Interactionism & Labeling Theory Readings: (i) Deutschmann, L. Chapter 10 – Interaction Theories. (ii) Plummer, K. Labeling Theory.
Week 5 Feb 4 th	Deviant Careers Readings: (i) Becker – Becoming a Marijuana User.
Week 6 Feb 11 th	Deviant Identities – Developing a Deviant Identity Readings: (i) Weinberg, et al. Becoming Bisexual. (ii) Scully & Marolla. Convicted Rapists’ Vocabulary of Motive: Excuses and Justifications.
Week 7 Feb 18 th	READING WEEK – NO CLASSES
Week 8 Feb 25 th	MIDTERM EXAM Room to be determined
Week 9 Mar 3 rd	Deviant Identities – Stigma Readings: (i) Flett. To tell or not to tell. Managing a concealable identity in the workplace.
Week 10 Mar 10 th	Social Constructionism & Social Problems Readings: (i) Best J. The Constructionist Stance. (i) Maratea, R. Online Claims-Making: The NRA and Gun Advocacy in Cyberspace.
Week 11 Mar 17 th	Social Construction of Deviant Sexualities Movie: The Naked Civil Servant This movie is only available to be viewed in class

Week 12 Mar 24 th begin Orgasm Inc. in tutorial	Social Construction of Deviant Sexualities Readings: (i) Bullough, V. Homosexuality and the Medical Model. Orgasm Inc. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yRdn8A1L1e0&t=371s
Week 13 Mar 31 st finish Orgasm Inc. in tutorial	Social Construction of Deviant Bodies Readings: (i) Kleese, C. 'Modern 'Primitivism': Non-mainstream body modification and racialized representation.
Week 14 Apr 7 th Last Class No tutorials this week	Medicalisation of Deviance Readings: (i) Moniyan, R. The making of a disease: female sexual dysfunction. Posted on AVE. Orgasm Inc. Papers due at the beginning of class