

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

Sociology 3395-01/02
Criminal Justice & Corrections
Winter 2009

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TERM PAPER INFORMATION

This paper is designed to test your ability to research and then cogently and coherently organize an argument for or against a particular policy initiative. You will be asked to imagine that you have been hired as an expert consultant by the department of justice or other government agency to resolve a controversial issue by conducting a careful review of the literature on a particular criminal justice matter.

Format:

The text of your paper should be no more than ten pages double-spaced (references may go beyond this). I would advise you to divide your paper into sub-headings. This encourages you to logically organize your essay and focus your arguments in a concise fashion. The following sequence is suggested:

- (1) *Introductory Paragraph (Introduce topic and describe how paper will be laid out);*
- (2) *Introduce the background literature, identify controversies, and select a key issue to emerge;*
- (3) *Frame this key issue in terms of a thesis statement (i.e. the position you will be taking)*
- (4) *A data section where you critically consider the arguments and research data on both sides of this issue*
- (5) *A reasoned conclusion that relates to your discussion of your thesis statement in (3) and (4).*

I require you to use endnotes as your form of citation (see attached citation guide). If reference is being made to my lecture notes, simply

indicate this by stating: "Prof. Kenney, Lecture notes, Memorial University, Winter 2009, at p.#_." Ensure that you include a full bibliography of sources at the end of your paper.

Make sure that you indicate your e-mail address on the front of your paper.

I should point out that, for anything higher than an average grade, it goes without saying that you will have to do some library research over and above the course materials that have been provided. I will particularly welcome papers that discuss the issues with reference to original research. In addition to your understanding and *critical analysis* of the topics above, please be aware that *I mark for spelling, grammar, and overall clarity of presentation.*

As stated in the course outline, this essay is worth 40 percent of your final grade. **It is due in class no later than March 23, 2009.** You must hand your paper in to me personally in class. *After that time, I will deduct 10 percent of the grade per day that the paper is late, unless you produce a doctor's note or give other satisfactory evidence for the lateness of your work.*

Suggested Topics:

While I **strongly encourage** specific requests by students wishing to pursue their particular criminological interests, **and will give a 10% bonus mark to students writing on a novel and interesting topic NOT listed below**, other possible paper topics might include:

1. Boyd argues that some crimes are considered "evil in themselves," while others such as Schur, consider them "victimless" crimes. Many of these have been the subject of considerable public policy debate. Take a position on decriminalizing (or increasingly criminalizing) one of the following offences:

Simple possession of marijuana	Prostitution
Simple possession of other drugs	Gambling

2. Gun control has been a hot issue in Canada for the last decade and more. Take one aspect of the current federal gun control law, and argue for or against it. Examples include:

National Firearms Registry
Increased penalties for crimes involving firearms

3. Restorative Justice has been touted as a solution to many of the problems posed by our current criminal justice system. Take a position on this initiative with respect to one of the following issues:

Recidivism	Community satisfaction
Victim satisfaction	Service provision

4. Recent years have seen a proliferation of services for victims. However, some argue that such services merely pay political lip service to victims' concerns. Take a position on this with regard to one of the following:

Victim Service Programs	Criminal Injuries Compensation
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5. Critically evaluate the available statistics on a particular type of crime (e.g. child abuse). Given your analysis, are these likely to underestimate or overestimate the incidence of this crime? What public policies should follow?

6. Critically discuss the victims' traditional role in the criminal justice system in relation

to a particular stage in or aspect of the criminal justice process (e.g. bail, evidence, legal standing, cross-examination, sentencing, parole, etc.)

Examine the victims' legal position in this regard vis-a-vis the offender, and discuss any recent changes in this area. In your opinion, have these significantly changed the victims' rights? Give reasons.

7. Critically discuss, with reference to the various stages of the criminal justice process, the traditional response of the Canadian criminal justice system to a particular type of crime (e.g. domestic abuse, child abuse, violent vs. property crime, etc.). Have there been any recent changes that significantly change your opinion in this regard? Should there be? Explain.

8. Starting in the 1980's, Canadian courts began to admit expert defense testimony that

women accused of murder suffered from "Battered Woman Syndrome."

Argue for or

against this practice.

9. Discuss the admission of expert testimony regarding "false memory syndrome" in

criminal cases. Take a position for or against.

10. It has been observed that Canadian prisons contain a disproportionate number of

Aboriginal inmates. Argue whether or not special programs should address

this imbalance.

11. Given recent terrorist attacks, give your reasoned opinion regarding tighter immigration policies and criminal sanctions in relation to the case law under a particular section of the Charter.

12. Given the increased attention to sexual abuse over the last decade or so, give your opinion of proposals for a national sex offender registry.

13. Give your opinion of the 1993 legislation on criminal harassment (“stalking”). Should anything further be done?

14. Give your opinion on the repeal of the Young Offender’s Act and the new Youth Criminal Justice Act that replaces it. Zero in on a particular feature for comparison.

15. Consider current laws on money laundering in Canada. Should these be tightened? Why?

16. There are a variety of defences to criminal charges in Canadian criminal law. Argue for or against the retention of one of the following defences:

Mistake of fact	Duress
Drunkenness	Provocation
Insanity	Self-Defence

17. Argue for a criminal justice policy that you feel justifies the government overriding the Charter of Rights through the “Notwithstanding Clause.” Give reasons.

18. Do you feel that it is fair to the accused to ban cross-examination of sexual assault victims on their past sexual history? Carefully considering the history of this policy, give your reasoned opinion one way or the other.

Again, the above are *suggested topics only*, and I would welcome papers on other relevant topics after discussion with interested students.

Sociology 3395

Citation Guide

In preparing your assignments, the following are examples for how to cite sources.

1. Books by one or more authors:

Becker, Howard

1963 *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. Glencoe: The Free Press.

Glaser, Barney, and Strauss, Anselm L.

1967 *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*.

Chicago: Aldine

2. Academic Journals:

Blanchard, GERALD

1987 "Male Victims of Child Sexual Abuse: A Portent of Things to Come." *Journal of Independent Social Work*, 1(1) Fall: 19-27.

Broussard, Sylvia D., and Wagner, William G.

1988 "Child Sexual Abuse: Who Is to Blame?" *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 12: 563-69.

3. Articles in Edited Books:

Clark, Candace

1990 "Emotions and Micropolitics in Everyday Life: Some Patterns and Paradoxes of a Place." In *Research Agendas in the Sociology of Emotions*, ed. Theodore D. Kemper. New York: SUNY Press.

Wortman, Camille B., and Lehman, Darrin R.

1983 "Reactions to Victims of Life Crises: Support Attempts that Fail" In *Social Support: Theory, Research and Applications*, ed. Irwin G. Sarason and Barbara R. Sarason, Boston: Martinus Nijhoff.

4. Cases, Statutes, and other legal materials:

Look at:

Chin-Shih Tang: Guide to Legal Citation
(1983) Toronto: DeBoo Publishers

J.A. Yogis and I.M. Christie: Legal Research and Writing Manual
(1974) Toronto: Butterworths

Martins Annual Criminal Code (various years)

As I noted, **I would like you to use *endnotes* as your form of citation.** If you are using Word or Wordperfect, go to the “insert” bar, pull down the menu and you will find this option under “footnote/endnote.” Endnotes are basically like footnotes, but appear consecutively on a separate page at the end of your paper. They should look something like this:

References:

1. Stephen J. Pfohl, Images of Deviance and Social Control: A Sociological History (2nd ed.) (New York: McGraw-Hill Inc., 1994). at p.350-60.
2. Edwin M. Schur, Labeling Deviant Behavior (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), at p.10.
3. Ibid, p.11.
4. Pfohl (Supra), at p.370.

The first two citations above represent initial references to a particular book and page. The third reflects a subsequent citation to the book immediately above. The fourth is an example of what you should do when you refer to a book you cited earlier, but not immediately before this citation.

Note: I am looking for at least 7 separate sources for each paper.

Finally, at the very end of your paper, I expect a *separate* bibliography where all of the sources you list in your paper (books, journals, and edited texts) are to be repeated, in alphabetical order by the last name of the author(s). This is to begin on a separate page following your endnotes. The following is an example:

Bibliography:

Becker, Howard

1963 *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance*. Glencoe: The Free Press.

Berg, Bruce L.

1995 *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. (2nd ed.)
Needham Heights, Mass: Allyn & Bacon.

Blanchard, GERALD

1987 "Male Victims of Child Sexual Abuse: A Portent of Things to
Come."

Journal of Independent Social Work, 1(1) Fall: 19-27.

Broussard, Sylvia D., and Wagner, William G.

1988 "Child Sexual Abuse: Who Is to Blame?" *Child Abuse and
Neglect*,

12: 563-69.

- and so on -

P.S. Internet sources are to be cited by giving the author (if available),
year, title, and www address. Be careful about using too many internet
sources. Some (i.e. Wikipedia) are **NOT** valid academic references; others
are often suspect. Any paper with more than half of its sources from the
internet will receive a less than favourable reception.