

SOC 497 H1S: Gun Violence
Spring 2016 – M 12-2pm, SS2129

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Overview

This course will introduce you to sociological ways of thinking about gun violence. This seminar will cover a range of topics connected to contemporary debates about gun violence in North America. From drive-by shootings and stickup robberies in racialized urban communities to rampage shootings in suburban schools, this course will provide you with ways of thinking sociologically about the causes and consequences of gun violence in different contexts. Additionally, we will talk about how we can use good empirical research to design policy ideas for gun control, health care, and other topics linked to both fatal and non-fatal shootings. In addition to stimulating your sociological imagination, I hope that you will leave this course with a more critical understanding of gun violence in contemporary society.

Required Books

Carlson, Jennifer. 2015. *Citizen Protectors: The Everyday Politics of Guns in an Age of Decline*. New York:

Oxford University Press.

Cullen, Dave. 2010. *Columbine*. Hachette Book Group: New York.

Rich, John. 2009. *Wrong Place, Wrong Time: Trauma and Violence in the Lives of Young Black Men*.

Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Shakur, Sanyika. 2004. *Monster: The Autobiography of an L.A. Gang Member*. Grove: New York.

Course Expectations

NOTE: The prerequisite for SOC 497H1 is successful completion of a 300+ level SOC course. Students without this prerequisite will be removed at any time they are discovered.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory.

You are responsible for all material presented in class. Students who are unable to attend class are responsible for obtaining information about any announcements that may have been made in class as well as notes on the material covered from their classmates.

Proper documentation from a University of Toronto Student Medical Certificate or college registrar is required to justify an absence.

Course Webpage

We will have a course website hosted on Blackboard. This website will contain the course syllabus, links to all the readings that are in journal article form, handouts, and course announcements. You are responsible for all the course materials and for all announcements. Please make sure to check your official utoronto.ca email addresses regularly.

Course Twitter Page

Since this is a big course, I will also create a course Twitter page. This is something that you can use to post ideas, questions, and feedback both inside and outside lectures. I encourage you to post ideas from lectures and readings to the course Twitter. Please post under #socofgunviolence. Not only will it encourage critical dialogue with your colleagues, it will also provide me with a sense of what you find interesting, puzzling, and provocative.

Assignments

You will have 5 major grades in this course which add up to 100% of your final grade (the research paper will be discussed in class):

- 1) research proposal (10%)
- 2) 1st Memo (20%)
- 3) 2nd Memo (20%)
- 4) final paper (40%)
- 5) participation (10%)

Plagiarism: Avoid plagiarism. It is a serious academic offense with serious penalties (see the “Code of Behavior on Academic Matters”). If you are using somebody else’s ideas, do not present them as your own, whether you are quoting exact words, paraphrasing or summarizing. Give proper references if you are using somebody else’s ideas, and use quotation marks if you are quoting. When in doubt, it is always safer to over-reference--you are not going to be penalized for that. Go to <http://turnitin.com> to submit your research paper online. “Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.”

Deadlines: Late work will **NOT** be accepted.* I will only make exceptions for students who provide me with email and medical documentation of an emergency **24 hours before** the

deadline to turn in assignments. **Also, the essay must be turned in by YOU; I will not accept papers from friends in or out of the class. Similarly, these papers will not be due at the beginning or end of class. Instead, I will announce sometime in lecture when I will collect essays. I will not accept papers from students who arrive early just to drop off their papers and leave. Similarly, if you are not present when I collect these essays, your paper will be counted as LATE. There are no exceptions to this rule.**

Medical documentation must include the University of Toronto's Student Medical Certificate. I will **NOT** accept any other form of medical documentation. The certificate is available on the University of Toronto's website and may be completed by a Health Services physician or by your physician.

*Late assignments will be penalized 10% for the first week after the original due date and 5% per day afterwards.

Accessibility Services: If you have documentation that you are using accessibility services, please see me as soon as possible to discuss how best to assist you in this course.

Week 1: Introduction—Theoretical Perspectives on Violence

Collins, Randall. 2009. "The micro-sociology of violence." *The British Journal of Sociology* 60(3): 566-576.

Farmer, Paul. 1996. "On Suffering and Structural Violence: A View from Below." *Daedalus* 125(1): 261-283.

Week 2: At-Risk Youth and Gun Violence

Fagan, Jeff and Deanna Wilkinson. 1998. "Guns, Youth Violence, and Identity in Inner Cities." *Crime and Justice* 24: 105-188.

Grady, William; Parnaby, Patrick and Justin Schikschnit. "Guns, Gangs, and the Underclass: A Constructionist Analysis of Gun Violence in a Toronto High School." *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice* 52(1): 55-77.

Week 3: Gang Violence

Anderson, Elijah. 1994. "The Code of the Streets." *The Atlantic*

Introduction – Ch. 6 in *Monster*

Research Proposal Due!

Week 4: Gang Violence

Ch 7 – end in *Monster*

Butters, Jennifer; Sheptycki, James; Brochu, Serge; and Patricia Erickson. 2011. “Guns and Sublethal Violence: A Comparative Study of At-Risk Youth in Two Canadian Cities.” *International Criminal Justice Review* 21(4): 402-426.

Week 5: Victims

Introduction-Chapter 6 in *Wrong Place, Wrong Time*.

Simon, David. 1992. “A Journalist’s View of the Trauma Physician’s Dilemma.” *JAMA* 188: 577-579.

Lee, Jooyoung. 2012. “Wounded: Life After the Shooting.” *ANNALS of the American Political & Social Sciences* 642: 244-257.

Week 6: Victims

Chapter 8-Conclusion in *Wrong Place, Wrong Time*

Herman, Judith. 1992. “Complex PTSD: A syndrome in survivors of prolonged and repeated trauma.” *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 5(3): 377-391.

Lee, Jooyoung. 2013. “The Pill Hustle: Risky Pain Management for a Gunshot Victim.” *Social Science & Medicine*

1st Memo Due!

Week 7: Gun Carriers and the Fear of Urban Crime

Introduction – Ch. 4 in *Citizen Protectors*

Miethe, Terance. 1995. “Fear and Withdrawal from Urban Life.” *ANNALS of the American Political & Social Sciences*

Week 8: Gun Carriers and the Fear of Urban Crime

Lee, Cynthia. 2013. “Making Race Salient: Trayvon Martin and Implicit Bias in a Not Yet Post-Racial Society.” *North Carolina Law Review* 91: 101-157.

Ch. 5 – Conclusion in *Citizen Protectors*

Week 9: School Shootings

Ch. 1-3 in *Columbine*

Katz, Jack. 2015. "A Theory of Intimate Massacres: Steps toward a causal explanation." *Theoretical Criminology* 1-20.

2nd Memo Due!

Week 10: School Shootings

Ch. 4-Conclusion in *Columbine*

Tonso, Karen. 2009. "Violent Masculinities as Tropes for School Shooters: The Montreal Massacre, The Columbine Attack, and Rethinking Schools." *American Behavioral Scientist* 52(9):1266-1285.

Week 11: Police Shootings

Wortley, Scot and Akwasi Owusu-Bempah. 2011. "The Usual Suspects: police stop and search practices in Canada." *Policing & Society* 21(4): 395-407.

Ray, Rashawn. 2015. "Do Police Kill Black Males with Impunity? Applying Public Health Critical Race Praxis (PHCRP) to Address Determinants of Policing Behaviors and "Justifiable Homicides" in the USA" *Journal of Urban Health*

Week 12: Final Presentations

Final Paper Due 1 week after last class!