

Core Course Information:

Juvenile Delinquency

SOC 3562-090

Summer 2019, online

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Course Description

Are children today more violent than in the past? What are the current trends and patterns in the delinquency committed by juveniles today? In this course we will explore the formation of adolescence as a separate developmental stage of life; the creation of a separate juvenile justice system; various theories explaining why juvenile delinquency occurs; the nature, extent, and various forms of juvenile delinquency; and the current state of the juvenile justice system. We will take a child-centered approach to this issue, as suggested by cutting-edge research, not assuming a deficit or problem in children and youth, but looking more closely at how primary groups and institutions in our society affect youth.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- **Explain** adolescence as a developmental stage and the creation of a separate juvenile justice system
- **Compare and contrast** sociological theories of juvenile delinquency
- **Describe** specific forms of juvenile delinquency such as gangs, school violence, and gender differences in the causes and manifestations of delinquency
- **Apply** theories of juvenile delinquency to real-world scenarios and **critique** their usefulness in explaining such cases

Expectations

What are our responsibilities to each other during class? Here is what I expect from you:

- **Be prepared.** Stay caught up with the schedule and deadlines. This is extremely important, as some of the requirements utilize class-wide or group discussions. Be prepared to engage in the activities and assignments, which means having watched the lectures and completed the readings.
- **Be “present”** in this class. This is especially important in this online environment. Be active in the discussions and engage with your peers and with me.
- **Be respectful.** We will be dealing with some sensitive topics and issues in this class, so make sure that your communication with your peers and with me is respectful. Even if you disagree with me or a fellow student, make sure that your comments are not attacking an individual – you can critique ideas but not individuals. Also realize that everyone comes from different backgrounds and we all have different experiences – you may not understand someone else’s situation, but be respectful and make an effort to see things from another perspective. More on this under “Rapport” in the Policies, Guidelines, & Resources section.

Course Materials

Critical Analysis Books:

1. Torey Hayden. 1980/2016. *One Child: The True Story of a Tormented Six-Year-Old and the Brilliant Teacher Who Reached Out*. New York: William Morrow. ISBN: 978-0062564436
2. Alex Kotlowitz. 1991. *There Are No Children Here: The Story of Two Boys Growing Up in the Other America*. New York: Anchor. ISBN: 978-0385265560
3. Individual articles for each module are uploaded to Canvas.

Activities

In each module/section there will be required activities and/or discussions. This is to help ensure that you are engaging with and understanding the material. Activities provide moments of self-reflection and opportunities to explore your understanding of material in a low-stakes manner. Discussions will allow you to engage with other students in the class, to ask questions, and push your thinking forward. Each module will include a few of these activities. Activities cannot be submitted past their due dates. Think of activities as akin to in-class participation – you have to be there and caught up in order to receive credit.

Assignments

You will complete at least one (possibly more) assignment in each module. Most assignments are tied to the required readings. The assignments vary, and will be detailed in the specific assignment description. Late assignments are not eligible for full credit, but may receive partial credit.

Tests

You will take four multiple-choice tests through Canvas. The tests are not cumulative, so they will only consist of material covered since the last test. Each test consists of 25 questions, and you will be given 30 minutes to complete the test once you have opened it. The tests are meant to evaluate what you have learned in class, so use your notes and readings as your reference materials during the tests. Tests cannot be taken late.

Critical Analysis Paper

You will write a critical analysis paper on one of the required books: *One Child* or *There Are No Children Here*. Your paper should be 5-6 pages, double-spaced, and include the following sections:

1. A **thesis** section (no more than 1 page) that introduces the book and theories you will use in your paper.
2. An **analysis** section (at least 4 pages). Briefly describe the theory in your own words, and then choose an aspect, character, or scene from the book that clearly illustrates the theory. Feel free to use multiple examples from the book. After each example, explain how it illustrates the theory (pretend you are writing this for someone who may not be as familiar with the theories, so make a convincing argument about how/why it applies). You must use at least one **sociological** theory presented in class, and may use up to two sociological theories. Do not use more than two theories, so that you can fully develop your arguments. Do not use outside theories that were not covered in class.
3. A **critique, evaluation, or summary** section (1 paragraph) where you give your opinion of the book or the assignment, or a brief summary of your paper.

Grading

Activities	100 points
Assignments	100 points
Tests	100 points
Critical Analysis Paper	<u>100 points</u>
Total:	400 points

Course Schedule

Dates	Topics & Readings	Quizzes, Tests, Papers
Week 1:	Introduction Definitions, Measures, & Scope of Juvenile Delinquency	
Week 2:	Emergence of Childhood & Formation of the Juvenile Justice System Privilege Race/Ethnicity & Delinquency	
Week 3:	Early Theories of Juvenile Delinquency: Classical, Biological/Positivist, Psychological	Test 1
Week 4:	Sociological Theories of Juvenile Delinquency	
Week 5:	Sociological Theories, continued	Test 2
Week 6:	Gender & Delinquency	Quiz: <i>One Child</i>
Week 7:	Education & School Violence	
Week 8:	Education & School Violence, continued	Test 3
Week 9:	Gangs	
Week 10:	Gangs, continued	Quiz: <i>There Are No Children Here</i>
Week 11:	Police & Juvenile Justice System	
Week 12:	Wrap Up & Final Paper	Test 4 Critical Analysis Paper

Note: This syllabus is meant to serve as an outline and guide for our course. Please note that I may modify it with reasonable notice to you. I may also modify the Course Schedule to accommodate the needs of our class. Any changes will be announced through Canvas.

As the only institution in the state classified in the highest research category (R1), at the University of Utah you will have access to state-of-the-art research facilities and be able to be part of the knowledge creation process. You will have the opportunity to do research of your own with faculty who are leading experts in their field, engaging in programs that match your research interests. Further, you will interact with and often take classes with graduate students that provide an advanced understanding of the knowledge in your field.