

**Rutgers University**

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**Freehold Campus**

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**Office hours upon request**

**Criminological Controversies Past and present**

**Texts:**

The Mythology of Crime and Criminal Justice Victor E. Kappeler, Gary W. Potter  
Fifth Edition 2018  
Waveland Press, Inc.

ISBN 10: 1-4786-0260-0  
ISBN 13: 978-1-4786-0260-6

The Punishment Imperative: The Rise and Failure of Mass Incarceration in America  
Todd Clear and Natasha Frost  
2014 New York University Press  
 ISBN-10: 1479851698  
 ISBN-13: 978-1479851690

Suggested readings: *Convict Criminology* (Jeff Ross and Stephen Richards)

**Syllabus**

Introduction

Criminological controversies are widespread, at times pervasive, and often confusing because of input from criminologists (the theoretical perspectives and empirical and qualitative), criminal Justice practitioners (which includes law enforcement and corrections to dispute the operational necessities), politicians, the media (who generally promote the most extreme, extraordinary and the unusual without recognizing the presence of the ordinary and common. Controversy, Myth and Misunderstanding are also spread by the public who either lack first-hand information or are heavily weighted with information from one aspect of criminal justice or another.

The criminology/criminal justice student is critical to establishing a base from which to dispel myth and controversy and achieve a dialogue which will establish a ground swell of support for finding solutions which will benefit not only the three components of criminal justice but also the three sides of the justice triangle: Offender, Victim, and Society.

Defining crime is no longer the province of legal wrangling, but includes input from the sources named above to also attempt to determine the nature of crime and its prevention. Among the questions this course seeks to address is the “what”, “Why”, “How”, and the “consequences” of what becomes criminalized and its impact on society. The challenge for this course is to understand the effort to control deviant/criminal behavior, and the effort to delineate what is fair and whether the moral high ground is attained.

Recognizing controversy and the myths which confuse and confound the criminal justice process are somewhat difficult to not only identify but to dispel to achieve a workable truth. These take work and specifically research to understand their impact on criminal justice. The research must minimally achieve two outcomes. The first is to understand the history and development of controversy and myth. The second is maintain a flow of research which if made available to all parties affected by criminal justice will help them make informed decisions.

A goal of this course is not to persuade you alter your belief systems. The goal is to help you determine the veracity of positions you assume and to determine what you need to do to keep you on firm footing.

Discussion Leads: Each class section following Day One will have a student led discussion of a topic to be assigned

Topics:

**Day One: criminology, controversy and confusion**

Discuss the following, research the author

For in class – write a critique (Grading #1-1) to the following

- "Justice shrivels up, prison corrupts, and society has the criminals it deserves. Alexander Lascavage

Short lectures

- a. Defining Criminology
- b. Defining Controversy

### **Lecture Due Process vs Crime Control Model**

Assignment: Read Chapter One The Mythology of Crime (For Day One and Day Two)

Assignment: Read Introduction and Chapter one in The Punishment Imperative– be prepared to discuss in class

### **Day Two: The Shift from a Due Process Model to a Crime Control Model - The failure of the War on Crime and the War on Drugs and the path to mass Incarceration**

Assignment: Read Chapter two in Mythology – be prepared to discuss in class

Question for Journal: What is our reality of Crime? Write a critique (Grading #1-2)

Discuss in class Day three

### **Lecture: A criminological conundrum – President Nixon, George Bush and Willie Horton, and Robert Martinson**

### **Day Three: Mass Incarceration**

Assignment Read Chapter two in Punishment Imperative

Assignment Read Chapter two in The Mythology of Crime (For Day Three and Day Four)

Write a critique (Grading #1-3) p. 62 Conclusion “The popular image of crime is a myth, There is not crime wave.”

The role of the Supreme Court as examined through *Pervear v Massachusetts*, *Miranda V Arizona*

### **Day Four: Prison ethics**

Part One – Medical Experiments Write a critique (Grading #1-4)

Assignment: Read Chapter 9 The Mythology of Crime For Days Four and Five

Assignment: PP: 451-453 The Mythology of Crime

### **Day Five: Prison Ethics**

Part Two - Prison Violence Write a critique (Grading #1-5)

Assignment: Read Chapter Three Punishment Imperative

**Day Six: The conundrum of understanding rehabilitation in the context of prison operations** – The Martinson Story: A criminological Tragedy for all Write a critique (Grading #1-6)

Lecture: Corrections and its role – meeting the needs of society

Assignment: Read Chapter 10 The Mythology of Crime

\*\*\*\*Book Critique due

### **Day Seven**

Lecture: Myths of Criminal Justice

Assignment: Read Chapter Four Punishment Imperative

Lecture The goals of a sentence -- Punishment, Public safety, Fairness to Victim and offender

### **Day Eight**

Police Subculture through the eyes of Serpico (Grading #1-7)

### **Day Nine**

Assignment: Read Chapter Five Punishment Imperative(Grading #1-8)

Assignment: Read Chapter 12 The Mythology of Crime

### **Day Ten**

The Good Court (Community/Special/Problem Solving (Grading #1-9)

### **Day Eleven**

Assignment: Read Chapter Six Punishment Imperative

Assignment Masking Social Problems with Myth (Grading #1-10)

\*\*\*\*Final paper due

### **Day Twelve**

Lecture: Restorative Justice – A different approach to Justice

### **Day Thirteen**

Assignment: Read Chapter Seven Punishment Imperative

Assignment: Read Chapter 14 The Mythology of Crime (For days 13 and 14)

### **Day Fourteen**

Lecture: The input from the New School of Convict Criminology

The existence and importance of Prison Ethnography an ignored and almost unknown resource

\*\*\*\*Submit Journals and final reaction

### **Day Fifteen Final Responses**

Subtopics: The goals of a sentence -- Punishment, Public safety, Fairness to Victim and offender

Grading

1. Each week students will submit a 2- 3 page critique of the topic based on lecture, text and supplementary readings (20 points)
2. A final paper of no less than 20 pages will be submitted on a topic agree upon by the professor and the student (40 Points)
3. A book critique of a minimum of 5 pages based on a prison ethnography which will be agreed upon by the professor and the student (20 points)
4. A class led response to a topic chosen by the student and agreed upon between the student and the professor. The response shall include a discussion of the chosen prison ethnography. (10 points)
5. Maintain a journal of 30 entries (each weekly response shall count toward one journal entry) (10 points). The final journal entry #30 will be a reaction (3 pages typed How have you grown, your thinking changed, and where do you go next