

SOCI 470A 001
Sociology of Crime and Justice: Current Issues in Crime, Society and the Law
Professor Janelle R. Belter E-mail: jrbelter@mail.ubc.ca
Office Hours T ANSO 2213 4:30-5:30
T1 T 6-9pm September 3-Nov 26, 2013 BUCH B 218

Social pressure and legal challenges over the last few years have had a major impact on crimes that are commonly defined as constituting 'social problems.' Many of these issues are also closely tied to human rights. This course will examine select issues in the study of society and law, crime and justice in the current Canadian context. Issues selected for study will be scrutinized within the cultural framework of ethics, morality, and social justice.

Required Readings:

- Larson Burtch, 2010. *Law in Society: Canadian Readings* (3rd Ed.). Toronto: Nelson Education.
- Various articles and ancillary material noted below. *All additional material is posted on our course Connect website under Articles, Weblinks or Library Resources.*

Sept 3 | **Introduction** to the course

Morality and Law

Sept 10 | **Drug Policy**

Legislating public order crimes; decriminalization of controlled substances; lessons from history and other countries; changing public opinion; intersection of law and health in modern society. Insight Injection Site: recent ruling on supervised injection site; health and the *Charter*; criminalization of disadvantage and disease?

Guest Speaker: Scott Bernstein, Pivot Legal Society

Readings:

Scott E. Bernstein and Darcie Bennett (2013), Zoned Out: "NIMBYism", Addiction Services and Municipal Governance in British Columbia, *International Journal of Drug Policy*

Ehsan Jozaghi and Martin A Andresen (2013), Should North America's first and only supervised injection facility (InSite) be expanded in British Columbia, Canada? *Harm Reduction Journal*, 10:1

Joan MacNeil and Bernadette Pauly (2010), Impact: a case study examining the closure of a large urban fixed site needle exchange in Canada, *Harm Reduction Journal*, 7:11

Sign up for presentation topics tonight

Sept 17 | **Drugs Policy**

Documentary on Drug Policy: *Damage Done: A Drug War Odyssey*, National Film Board of Canada

Readings and Presentation: Chapter 2: *Just Say No to the War on Drugs*, Barney Sneiderman

Presentation topics confirmed and distributed

Sept 24 | **Sex Work**: sociology of sex work; evolution of prostitution law and its enforcement; the findings and recommendations of various Committees, Commissions and Task Forces examining prostitution in Canada; current legal challenges

Guest Speaker: Kerry Porth, Pivot Legal Society

Readings:

<http://www.chezstella.org/docs/StellaInfoSheetBedford.pdf>

<http://www.chezstella.org/docs/StellaInfoSheetCharter.pdf>

<http://www.chezstella.org/docs/StellaInfoSheetTheBasic.pdf>

Weitzer, Ronald (2009). "Sociology of Sex Work," *Annual Review of Sociology*, v. 35

Documentary: *Buying Sex*, National Film Board of Canada, 2013

Minorities, Women & The Law

Oct 1 | **Aboriginal People and the Canadian Justice System & Equality Rights**: Aboriginal over-representation; social roots of crime; socio-economic status; systematic discrimination

Readings and Presentations: Chapter 7: *First Nations of Canada and the Legal and Illegal Attacks on Their Existence*, Laura Westran. Chapter 11: *The Charter, Equality Rights, and Women: Equivocation and Celebration*, Diana Majury.

Recommended: *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, posted online

Oct 8 | **Missing & Murdered Women**: addressing concerns of marginalized women; procedural concerns; critique; perspectives of human rights organizations

Guest Speaker: Dave Dickson, Former VPD Constable (TBC)

Readings and Presentations: B.C. Civil Liberties Association, West Coast Women's Legal Education and Action Fund, Pivot Legal Society, *Blueprint for an Inquiry: Learning from the Failures of the Missing Women Commission of Inquiry, 2012* (posted online)

Oct 15 | **Abusive Policing and Aboriginal Peoples**

Documentary: Finding Dawn, National Film Board of Canada, 2006, 73min

Readings and Presentations: Those Who Take Us Away: Abusive Policing and Failures in Protection of Indigenous Women and Girls in Northern British Columbia, Canada, February 2013. Online: <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2013/02/13/those-who-take-us-away-o>

Oct 22 | **Policing Concerns (continued)**

Dialogue Circles

Oct 29 | **Employment Equity and Racial Discrimination**

Readings and Presentations: Chapter Five: "Bitterly Disappointed" at the Spread of "Colour-Bar Tactics": Viola Desmond's Challenge to Racial Segregation, Nova Scotia, 1946, Constance Backhouse. Chapter Six: Affirmative Action and Employment Equity: Policy, Ideology, and Backlash in Canadian Context, Abigail B. Bakan and Audrey Kobayashi.

Guest Speaker: Kathleen Smith, BC Human Rights Coalition

Nov 5 | **Gambling & Euthenasia**: impact on society; evaluating harm to society at large; the right to die; the Carter Case

Guest Speaker: Grace Pastine, Litigation Director, BC Civil Liberties Association

Reading & Presentations: Chapter 1: The Legalization of Gambling in Canada, Colin S. Campbell, Timothy F. Hartnagel, and Garry J. Smith. Chapter 3: Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide in the Post-Rodriguez Era: Lessons from Foreign Jurisdictions, Michael Cormack

Nov 12 | **Lesbian and Gay Rights, Women and Religious Arbitration**

Readings and Presentations: Chapter 8: Law, Homophobia, and Violence: Legislating against Hate, Douglas Victor Janoff and Chapter 10: Religious Arbitration in Canada: Protecting Women by Protecting Them from Religion, Natasha Bakht

Future Directions in Law & Society

Addressing Bullying in Schools

Readings and Presentations: Chapter 13: "Teachers Don't Hear the Word 'Fag'": Homophobia and Transphobia in Canadian Schools, Rebecca Haskell and Brian Burtch.

Reflection Papers Due

Nov 19 | **Corporate Crime, Environmental Crime**

Readings and Presentations: Chapter 4: Lost Lives at Westray: Official Discourse, Public Truth and Controversial Death, John McMullan. Chapter 15: Excerpts from Unnatural Law: Rethinking Canadian Environmental Law and Policy Systemic Weaknesses Obstacles to Further Progress, David R. Boyd

Terrorism

Reading and Presentation: Chapter 14: Keeping Up with the Neighbours? Canadian Responses to 9/11 in Historical and Comparative Context, Reg Whitaker

Nov 26 | **Wrap-Up Discussion**

Final Papers Due

Methods of Evaluation

Class Participation – 10%

This course is designed to be dialogue driven. While the course will include lectures and guest speakers, student discussion remains the foundation of learning in this class. As a result, participation is essential. Students are expected to have completed the readings assigned for the lecture and come to class prepared to discuss issues raised by the material. Students are also expected to be present, engaged and active participants in all peer presentations throughout this course.

Reflection Paper – 15% - Due on or before November 12, 2013

The cognitive process of reflecting on one's authentic knowledge, practice, and beliefs/attitudes is an important tool to all professionals. Throughout this course, we will hear from guest speakers and watch documentaries that provide context and practical insight to issues discussed in class. In approximately three pages, double-spaced, you will provide a brief reflection paper on the speaker or documentary of your choice.

The paper should be based around self-reflection - identifying issues, stating your opinion, inferences, and predictions, and expressing feelings, beliefs, and attitudes. Please make sure to support your comments by inclusion of relevant content presented.

By asking the following questions prior to writing the self-reflection piece, students are likely to more effectively integrate relevant content:

- How has the speaker/work either supported or changed your knowledge, attitudes, and/or beliefs?
- What trends are apparent and how do these trends either support or negate your inferences and/or predictions?
- What new knowledge or new understanding of previous knowledge have you acquired that will influence you?
- Do you disagree with the position taken? If yes, what is your counter argument? Why?

These questions are provided to give context to the reflection piece; however, the piece does not need to focus directly on these questions. We will also spend time in class discussing these questions in small groups after films and speakers when possible.

Students must submit hard copy papers directly to the professor in class on or before the date due. E-mail copies will not be accepted. Students should retain a copy of their paper until course grades for the term are made official. Late papers will be deducted 10% per day.

Presentation/Class Facilitation (35%) – Dates ongoing

Most classes will be a combination of lecture, discussion and presentations by student teams of 2-3 persons. Each presentation should be 35-40 minutes in length, including facilitated class discussion. In our second class, you should be prepared to sign up for a topic of interest from those listed on the syllabus. Topics will be selected on a first come first serve basis. Students must be able to present their topic on the date it is assigned. It will not be possible to move topics to different dates. Presentations will begin promptly on September 17. Once the schedule of presentations and topics is confirmed, an updated group and topic list will be posted online. In the event that student does not sign up, they will be assigned a topic and are responsible for presenting on the date assigned.

Student presentations should be based around issues emanating from the article assigned, but need not focus exclusively on the article. In the presentation, you are encouraged to lead class and present material using any format you think is most likely to further your classmates understanding given the time available to you. I will be happy to assist you in choosing a methodology that will make the presentation most meaningful to you and the class if you need assistance. We can also arrange for a variety of technological presentation aids should you wish to use them. You will be evaluated on the quality and engagement of your presentation, substantive content and ability to facilitate discussion. All group participants will receive the same grade.

Failure to be present for your presentation may result in a zero for this assignment.

Final Research Paper (40%) – Due on or before November 26, 2013

Students are required to write a final, positional research paper exploring in-depth one of the issues discussed in class. The research paper will be 10-12 pages in length. The title page and

references are in addition to this page requirement. The paper will analyze any issue discussed in class and should take a clear position.

Papers will be graded on quality of writing, organization, and intellectual quality of the overall paper and analysis. Students are encouraged, but not required, to submit a topic proposal and outline to the professor well in advance of the due date for feedback.

Students should retain a copy of their paper. Late papers will be deducted 10% per day.

General Research Paper Guidelines:

- 10-12 page typed, double-spaced pages of text using normal margins and font sizes
- Title sheet with paper title, name, student number and e-mail address
- Reference page with at least five references, at least two of which should be research journal or periodical references
- Complete citations and references using ASA or APA format
- A hard copy of the paper must be submitted to the instructor on or before the start of class on November 26, 2013. Electronic copies will not be accepted.
- www.turnitin.com instructions may be provided