

Justice Studies Department
Seminar in Punishment
JS-208 (Section 02) #49241
Fall 2010

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Office Hours:	MON: 12.45pm-3.45pm WED: 7pm-8pm (online)
Class Days/Time:	M: 4.00pm-6.45am
Classroom:	HGH 227

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Examination of a range of penal ideas and practices; includes historical analysis of punishment, overview of theoretical perspectives and empirical social science research on punishment and alternative sanctions and implications for contemporary penal policy.

COURSE OVERVIEW

This seminar provides a critical reconstruction of some recent transformations of punishment and social control in the United States. Since the mid-1970s, a long cycle of “domestic wars” (i.e., war on drugs, war on crime, war on welfare, war on immigration) has reshaped American society, turning the United States into the world’s most punitive democracy. In turn, this “punitive turn” (exemplified, among other things, by mass-incarceration, draconian drug-laws, the resurgence of the death penalty, and increasingly harsh anti-immigration laws), has contributed to consolidate social inequality along the lines of race, class, gender, and ethnicity.

The seminar will analyze these developments not only from a variety of scholarly perspectives, but also from the point of view of those “public enemies” who represent the main targets of the American punitive turn (e.g., drug dealers, gang members, undocumented migrants, ghetto hustlers, street criminals), but whose voices are usually silenced in public and academic discourses about crime and punishment. Therefore, throughout the seminar students will be exposed both to theoretical critiques of the American penal landscape, and to first-hand ethnographic (and cinematographic) narratives of the “underworlds” targeted by the new punitiveness.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this seminar is to help students develop a scholarly informed critical understanding of the inner contradictions of punitive penal policies in the United States. In order to achieve this objective, students will be encouraged to observe the consequences of the American punitive turn particularly from the point of view of the communities and social groups most affected by these trends. This is an interactive seminar based on intensive reading and discussion. Although the instructor will introduce and illustrate the main issues and topics in order to facilitate the debate, the success of this learning experience is heavily dependent on the students' active participation to the seminar. Therefore, all participants should come to class having done the assigned readings, since this is the necessary condition for a productive and meaningful participation.

CLASSROOM PROTOCOL

Attendance: According to University policy F69-24 "Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading". Attendance is taken at each class meeting using sign-in sheets.

Etiquette: While in class please turn your cell phone off. If your laptop has wireless access you may use it to access information relevant to the discussion, but please do not read emails, newspapers or other non-class related material during class. Students are encouraged to speak up with questions and comments, and to respond to points raised by other students. However, the maintenance of an effective discussion space in class requires all of us to act with respect for everyone else in the room.

DROPPING AND ADDING

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. [Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbggen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html](http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbggen/narr/soc-fall/rec-298.html). [Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/](http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/). Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

TEXTBOOKS

- 1) JS-208 *Reader*, available at Maple Press, 481 E San Carlos Street, San José.
- 2) One book chosen from the list of "BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW" (see below).
- 3) Any readings distributed in class or in electronic format.

BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

- Abramski, S. (2007). *American Furies. Crime, Punishment and Vengeance in the Age of Mass-Imprisonment*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Barker, V. (2009). *The Politics of Imprisonment. How the Democratic Process Shapes the Way America Punishes Offenders*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bourgois, P. (2003). *In Search of Respect. Selling Crack in El Barrio*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Brown, M. (2009). *The Culture of Punishment. Prison, Society, and Spectacle*. New York: New York University Press.
- Clear, T. (2007). *Imprisoning Communities. How Mass-Incarceration Makes Disadvantaged Neighborhoods Worse*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Comfort, M. (2008). *Doing Time Together. Love and Family in the Shadow of the Prison*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Garland, D. (2001). *The Culture of Control*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Koulish, R. (2010). *Immigration and American Democracy. Subverting the Rule of Law*. New York: Routledge.
- Lacey, N. (2008). *The Prisoners' Dilemma. Political Economy and Punishment in Contemporary Democracies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Lynch, M.J. (2007). *Big Prisons Big Dreams. Crime and the Failure of America's Penal System*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Lynch, M. (2010). *Sunbelt Justice. Arizona and the Transformation of American Punishment*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Provine, D.M. (2007). *Unequal Under Law. Race in the War on Drugs*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Simon, J. (2007). *Governing Through Crime*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Tonry, M. (2004). *Thinking about Crime. Sense and Sensibility in American Penal Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Wacquant, L. (2009). *Punishing the Poor. The Neoliberal Government of Social Insecurity*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Wacquant, L. (2010). *Prisons of Poverty*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Western, B. (2006). *Punishment and Inequality in America*. New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING POLICY

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Due</i>	<i>Percent of total grade</i>
1) IN-CLASS PRESENTATIONS/DEBATE	<i>Ongoing</i> (in class)	20%
2) IN-CLASS TEST (3 short-answer questions)	10/25/2010 (in class)	30%
3) BOOK REVIEW	11/22/2010 (at home)	30%
4) MOVIE COMMENTARY	12/6/2010 (at home)	20%

SPECIFICATIONS ON COURSEWORK

1) IN CLASS PRESENTATIONS/DEBATE (max 20 points / 20% of total grade)

Each week, one participant will give a 20 min. presentation in class, based on the relevant reading for that week. Depending on the total number of participants, presentations will be given *individually* or *in couples* (the calendar of presentations will be made available by the second week of class). In their presentations, students are required to summarize the reading, but also to elaborate some meaningful critique of its arguments, and to introduce three questions to be debated in class. At the end of each presentation there will be a debate moderated by the instructor. Students will be graded both on their presentations and on their contribution to the ensuing debate.

2) IN-CLASS TEST (max 30 points / 30% of total grade)

This tests will be done in class, and will consist of 3 questions about any of the topics/readings discussed in class. Each question will receive a grade ranging between 0 and 10 (for a maximum of 30 points). You are kindly requested to *come to class with your own blue-book* on the date the test is due (**10/25/2010**).

PLEASE NOTE: during the tests *no notes, books, or laptops* will be allowed. If the test is missed due to family/health/work problems, there is the possibility of a makeup test, reserved only to the students who adequately certify the reasons for their absence (e.g. doctor's certificate, employer's statement, etc.).

3) BOOK REVIEW (max 30 points / 30% of total grade):

In order to complete this assignment, students will have to write a 5-8 pages long review of one book of their choice among the ones listed under the section "BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW" (see above). In order to be accepted, the book review should include the following:

- INTRODUCTION describing the book's topic and its relevance;
- ANALYSIS of the books main arguments and of its contribution to the debate;
- CRITIQUE considering such elements as: clarity/originality/coherence/argumentation;

Further guidelines about the book review will be provided in class. *The deadline for submitting this assignment is 11/22/2010.*

PLEASE NOTE: The book review should be submitted in *printed form*, together with a *certificate of originality* from: www.turnitin.com (CLASS ID: **3334943**; PASSWORD: **fall**).

4) MOVIE COMMENTARY (max 20 points / 20% of total grade):

This will be done at home. Students will write a 3 pages, double spaced commentary on one of the movies/documentaries shown in class. In their commentary, students are requested to make use of at least two readings discussed in class: *The deadline for submitting the this assignment is 12/6/2010.*

PLEASE NOTE: The movie commentary should be submitted in *printed form*, together with a *certificate of originality* from www.turnitin.com (CLASS ID: **3334943**; PASSWORD: **fall**).

GRADING SYSTEM

<i>Grading System</i>	<i>Grade</i>
98-100	A+
94-97	A
91-93	A-
88-90	B+
84-87	B
81-83	B-
78-80	C+
74-77	C
71-73	C-
68-70	D+
64-67	D
61-63	D-
<60	F

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students should know that the University's [Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf).

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University's integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for [Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html). Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

CAMPUS POLICY IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

STUDENT TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

LEARNING ASSISTANCE RESOURCE CENTER

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. [The LARC website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/).

SJSU WRITING CENTER

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. [The Writing Center website is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/).

PEER MENTOR CENTER

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop –in basis, no reservation required. [Website of Peer Mentor Center is located at http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/](http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/).

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COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK	DATE	TOPICS, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS, DEADLINES
1	M: 8/30	INTRODUCTION: SYLLABUS/REQUIREMENTS/DEADLINES
2	M: 9/6	NO CLASS (Labor Day: campus closed)
3	M: 9/13	THE AMERICAN PUNITIVE TURN: AN INTRODUCTION <u>Reading:</u> Mauer, <i>The Incarceration Experiment</i> , JS-208 Reader NATURALISM AND ETHNOGRAPHIC RESEARCH <u>Reading:</u> Matza, <i>Becoming Deviant</i> , JS-208 Reader
4	M: 9/20	RACIAL DIMENSIONS OF THE AMERICAN PUNITIVE TURN <u>Reading:</u> Wacquant, <i>Deadly Symbiosis</i> , JS-208 Reader DOCUMENTARY: L. Garbus, <i>The Farm, Angola</i> (USA 1998, 88 min.)
5	M: 9/27	CLASS DIMENSIONS OF THE AMERICAN PUNITIVE TURN <u>Reading:</u> Western, <i>The Labor Market After Prison</i> , JS-208 Reader DOCUMENTARY: K. Epps, <i>Straight Outta Hunter's Point</i> (USA 2005, 75 min.)
6	M: 10/4	MANAGING THE POOR: FROM WELFARE STATE TO PENAL STATE? <u>Reading:</u> Wacquant, <i>The Place of the Prison</i> , JS-208 Reader
7	M: 10/11	URBAN SEGREGATION AND PENAL POLITICS <u>Reading:</u> Lynch, <i>From Punitive City to Gated Community</i> , JS-208 Reader MOVIE: P. Haggis, <i>Crash</i> (USA 2004, 112 min.)
8	M: 10/18	ETHNOGRAPHIES FROM THE "UNDERWORLD" (I) <u>Reading:</u> Bourgois, <i>In Search of Masculinity</i> , JS-208 Reader
9	M: 10/25 IN-CLASS TEST: 30%	IN-CLASS TEST (30% of total grade)
10	M: 11/1	ETHNOGRAPHIES FROM THE "UNDERWORLD" (II) <u>Reading:</u> Comfort, <i>Papa's House</i> , JS-208 Reader DOCUMENTARY: N. Cousino, <i>Concrete and Sunshine</i> (USA 2002, 56 min.)
11	M: 11/8	ETHNOGRAPHIES FROM THE "UNDERWORLD" (III) <u>Reading:</u> Bourgois, <i>Just Another Night in a Shooting Gallery</i> , JS-208 Reader

WEEK	DATE	TOPICS, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS, DEADLINES
12	M: 11/15	THE WAR AGAINST "ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION" <u>Reading:</u> Cornelius, <i>Controlling "Unwanted" Immigration</i> , JS-208 Reader DOCUMENTARY: T. Dirdamal, <i>De Nadie. Morir Cruzando</i> (Mexico 2005, 84 min.)
13	M: 11/22 BOOK REVIEW DUE: 30%	ETHNOGRAPHIES FROM THE UNDERWORLD (IV) <u>Reading:</u> Hill-Maher, <i>Workers and Strangers</i> , JS-208 Reader BOOK REVIEW DUE
14	M: 11/29	NOTES FROM THE "KILLING STATE" <u>Reading:</u> Lynch, <i>The Disposal of Inmate #85271</i> , JS-208 Reader DOCUMENTARY: K. Chevigny – K. Johnson, <i>Deadline</i> (USA 2004, 90 min.)
15	M: 12/6 MOVIE COMMENT. DUE: 20%	LAST DAY OF CLASS FEEDBACK ON BOOK REVIEW MOVIE COMMENTARY DUE