

SOC 417
LAW AND SOCIETY
Spring, 2004
T Th 2:30-3:45 108 Chambers

This syllabus is available online at:
www.personal.psu.edu/faculty/j/t/jtu100/L&SSYL.pdf

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Office Hours: T Th 1:00 - 2:00 and by appointment

REQUIRED READINGS:

- 1) TEXT: *Law and Society: Origins, Interactions, and Change* (2001) by John Sutton.
- 2) TEXT: *Taking Sides: Legal Issues* 10th Edition (2002), edited by Ethan Katsh
- 3) Occasional handouts

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There will be two in-class essay exams (a mid term and an optional final*) during the semester. Each will be worth 100 points.

* - you can choose to take an in-class final, OR write a book review paper at the end of the semester. See below.

Make up exam policy: If you have a **legitimate** reason (illness, required athletic or academic trip, family emergencies), you can schedule a make up exam **within one week** of the missed exam. If possible, you should notify the professor before missing an exam, and schedule the make-up accordingly.

*Book Review: You may choose to do a book review instead of an in-class final. If so, you will be required to read a book and write a review of it, focusing on what the book contributes to our understanding of important issues in law and society. This review will be worth 100 points, should be about 8-10 typed, double spaced pages. A list of suggested books appears at the end of the syllabus. You can choose your own book not on the list, but you must clear it with the professor. **The book review is due 4/30/04.**

Discussion group assignments: There will be seven small group discussion sessions throughout the semester, and each small group will answer a set of questions about the discussion topic. These assignments will be worth ten points each, for a total of 70 points.

Quizzes: There will be nine relatively short multiple choice quizzes, one on each reading/class

lecture section. They will total 90 points.

Grading scale: The total of points from the exams, quizzes, the book review (if chosen), and the discussion group assignments (360) as a percentage of total possible points will determine your grade.

The grading scale is the one recommended by the Penn State College of Liberal Arts: A = 92% and above, A- = 90-91%, B+ = 87-89%, B = 83-86%, B- = 80-82%, C+ = 76-79%, C = 70-75%, D = 60-69%, F = 59% and below.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: Academic dishonesty, as defined by the College of Liberal Arts, includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the professor, or tampering with the work of other students. I will report any acts of academic dishonesty to the University Judicial Affairs office (for more information, see University Policy and Procedures, <http://www.psu.edu/dept/oue/aappm/GAFMAIN.HTML>).

DISABILITY ACCESS: If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course due to a disability, please tell me as soon as possible.

COURSE OUTLINE

Dates are approximate and are subject to change

Sutton textbook: Ch.1, Introduction; 1/15 - 1/22

Quiz 1: 1/22

Katsh book issue # 2: Abortion 1/27

Sutton textbook: Ch. 2, Evolutionary Theories of Law and Society 1/29 - 2/5

Quiz 2: 2/5

Katsh book issue # 8: Do Religious Groups have the Right to Use Public School Facilities After Hours? 2/10

Sutton textbook: Ch. 3, Law, Class, and the Economy 2/5 - 2/17

Quiz 3: 2/17

Katsh book issue # 7: Are Pretextual Stops by Police Constitutional? 2/19

Sutton textbook: Ch.4, Law and the State 2/17 - 2/26

-Max Weber and the founding of sociology of law

Quiz 4: 2/26

Katsh book issue # 6: Should the Insanity Defense be Abolished? 3/2

Mid Term: 3/4

Donald Black's Theory of the Behavior of Law; Law and Social Control: 3/16 - 3/23

Courts, and Sentencing

Capital Punishment

Quiz 5: 3/23

Katsh book issue # 11: Is it Constitutional to Impose the Death Penalty on the Mentally Retarded? 3/25

Sutton textbook: Ch.5, Modern Law and the Activist State 3/23 - 4/1

Quiz 6: 4/1

Sutton textbook: Ch.6, Example of Law, Stratification, and Social Change I: Voting Rights and School Desegregation 4/1 - 4/8

Quiz 7: 4/8

Katsh book issue # 14: Megan's Laws 4/13

Sutton textbook: Ch. 7, Example of Law, Stratification, and Social Change II: Equal Opportunity Law and Affirmative Action 4/8 - 4/20

Quiz 8: 4/20

Katsh book issue # 16: Same Sex Marriage 4/22

Sutton textbook: Ch. 8, The Legal Profession 4/20 - 4/29

Quiz 9: 4/29

Final: To be scheduled

Book Review due: 4/30

Suggested Book Review Books

Fiction/Popular Non-fiction books/Films: (in no particular order)

Films:

The Gangs of New York

Rapa Nui

Books:

Protect and Defend: by Richard North Patterson. A novel about the politics of abortion and the appointment process to the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Trial, by Franz Kafka. A surrealistic and dark story of a man who is arrested, interrogated, and tried, but is never told why.

A Lesson Before Dying: by Ernest J. Gaines. A black schoolteacher in 1950s rural Mississippi struggles with his racial identity and his religious faith as he counsels a former student who is awaiting execution for a murder he did not commit.

A Gathering of Old Men: by Ernest J. Gaines. A novel about the murder of a white sharecropping overseer by a black tenant, and the racial conflicts that ensue. A group of elderly black men rally around and protect their neighbor who is accused of the killing.

The Runaway Jury, by John Grisham

A Time to Kill, by John Grisham

The Chamber, by John Grisham

A Gathering of Old Men: by Ernest J. Gaines. A novel about the murder of a white sharecropping overseer by a black tenant, and the racial conflicts that ensue. A group of elderly black men rally around and protect their neighbor who is accused of the killing.

To Kill a Mockingbird, by Harper Lee. A classic novel about race relations, family, and law.

Billy Budd, by Herman Melville. A novel about wrongful conviction set in the Royal Navy in the 1700s.

One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest: by Ken Kesey. A novel addressing issues of social control and accountability of medical authorities in mental hospitals. (No fair just seeing the movie--I'll be able to tell).

Donnie Brasco: by Joseph Pistone. A true story of an FBI agent's infiltration into the highest

reaches of a New York La Cosa Nostra family.

Sociology Books: (in no particular order)

Why They Kill: Discoveries of a Maverick Criminologist. By Richard Rhodes (1999). Chronicles the fascinating life and work of criminologist Lonnie Athens, who has conducted pioneering research on violent behavior for over 30 years.

Violent Criminal Acts and Actors Revisited. By Lonnie Athens (1997). Details Athen's (see above) theory of violent acts and self-concepts. Contains interesting and horrifying case studies of heinous violent crimes.

Random Violence, by Joel Best. A study of the social construction of random stranger violence as a feared social problem by the news media and entertainment industry.

The Genesis of Justice, by Alan Dershowitz. A discussion of the evolution of modern ethical foundations of justice in Hebrew history.

Crime and Human Nature: by James Q. Wilson. A biologically based general discussion of crime, its causes, and social policy.

American Gay: by Stephen O. Murray. A comprehensive look at gay and lesbian culture in America, and its relationship to the dominant American culture.

Social Worlds of Sentencing: Court Communities Under Sentencing Guidelines: by Jeffery Ulmer. A qualitative and quantitative study of the social organization of criminal sentencing under contemporary criminal justice policies, and the consequences for reducing race and gender discrimination in sentencing.

Society of Captives: by Gresham Sykes. A classic study of a maximum security prison in the 1950s, emphasizing the prison as a social system that enmeshes captives and captors alike. It is not only an interesting study of prisons, but a valuable examination of social control, power, and its limitations.

Crime, Shame, and Reintegration: by John Braithwaite. A cross-national comparison of social control between countries with punitive and stigmatizing social controls, and countries with social control systems that emphasize social bonds, shaming, and the reintegration of deviants.

Discipline and Punish: by Michel Foucault. A famous French anthropologist/philosopher traces the history of social control and punishment from medieval to modern times, and the implications for all of modern society. A disturbing bombshell of a book.

Female Sexual Slavery: by Kathleen Barry. Discusses large-scale issues of gender and social control, including sexism, rape, and pornography.

Disciplining Reproduction: Modernity, American Life Sciences, and the Problems of Sex: by Adele Clarke. An in-depth discussion of the role of science and medicine in the social control of

sex, abortion, contraception, reproduction, and cloning.

Wayward Puritans: by Kai Erickson. A Durkheimian study of the history of the Salem, Massachusetts witch trials of the 1600s.

I am taking some university courses, many of which have required readings (for example, a book or article that we have to read for the course). How... I am taking some university courses, many of which have required readings (for example, a book or article that we have to read for the course). How would you say "required readings" in Chinese? Thanks! Required reading. What a terrible term it was. It wasn't that I was being forced to read: I could get behind that. The resentment I felt was tied to the fact that I loved reading, but teachers and administrators and whoever else had all conspired against me to keep the books I wanted to consume out of my hands. Required reading wasn't easy anymore. The print was small! The chapters went on forever! This round of Required Reading is dedicated to the place we at Powell's Books call home: the great Pacific Northwest. Whether you're from the area or you simply appreciate the region for its beauty, history, or temperament (or legendary bookstore), these titles will give you a more nuanced understanding of this peculiar corner of the U.S. Also, an entire chapter takes place at a Powell's stand-in called The Blue Dolphin. Jason C. Required Reading. Required Reading: 20 Best All-Around Cookbooks. Required reading definition: If you say that something is required reading for a particular group of people, you mean | Meaning, pronunciation, translations and examples. If you say that something is required reading for a particular group of people, you mean that you think it is essential for them to read it because it will give them information which they should have. It is an important report that should be required reading for every MP. [+ for]. See full dictionary entry for require. COBUILD Advanced English Dictionary. What is the meaning of required reading? How do you use required reading in a sentence? What are synonyms for required reading? Literature which must be read for an educational course or in order to gain an understanding of a subject; specifically reading which is essential for a person in a particular position or occupation. Origin. Late 19th century; earliest use found in Southwestern Christian Advocate (New Orleans).