

CCJ 3032 – Crime and the Media

Course Description:

An examination of the inter-relationship among the mass media, crime and criminal justice. Includes media and the social construction of crime and criminal justice; media effects on attitudes toward crime and justice; and media as a cause of crime. Prerequisite: SYG 2000

Course Competencies:

Competency 1: The student will be introduced to the concepts of the social construction of crime and justice via media by:

- a. comparing Stanford Lyman and Thomas Luckman's concept on media's role in the social construction of reality
- b. comparing Stanford Lyman and Marvin Scott's concepts on sociology of the absurd
- c. describing Stanford Lyman's perspective
- d. reviewing Marvin Scott's sociological views

Competency 2: The student will review crime and justice content in the news and entertainment media by:

- a. examining how perpetrators are portrayed in the movies that involve crime
- b. analyzing how victims and witnesses are characterized in the movies that involve crime
- c. discussing how public attitudes toward crime are shaped
- d. assessing society's attitudes towards crime

Competency 3: The student will review possible effects news media may have on the processing of criminal cases by:

- a. discussing the high profile cases
- b. analyzing the media's reporting of high profile cases
- c. researching the public's attitude toward high profile cases and criminals

Competency 4: The student will analyze the media's influence on the level of violence and crime in society by:

- a. defining media causal mechanism
- b. discussing copy cat syndrome

- c. reviewing the media's influence on high profile cases and its role in preventing or encouraging repeat incidents

Competency 5: The student will analyze the media's influence on public attitudes and perceptions of crime and criminality by:

- a. defining crime and criminality
- b. distinguishing between fact and opinion
- c. identifying stereotypes and myths
- d. understanding the development of imagery

Competency 6: The student will relate media to criminological theory by:

- a. defining criminological theory
- b. examining genetic explanations resulting in the labeling of criminals
- c. analyzing examples within the film industry
- d. investigating family victimization by the media

Competency 7: The student will analyze psychological theory by:

- a. reviewing psychological theories
- b. analyzing examples within the film industry
- c. describing the use of popular media as a basis for the defense

Competency 8: The student will evaluate the role of the media in relation to social- environmental theories by:

- a. analyzing movies and documentaries
- c. exploring poverty's role in crime
- d. defining "underclass"

Competency 9: The student will examine how the criminal justice system is depicted by the media by:

- a. analyzing pre-selected documentaries and docudramas involving crime
- b. analyzing the popularity of the "crime" television shows
- c. comparing dramas to documentaries
- d. debating the interrelationship between the First amendment and the media in the courtroom