

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
DEVIANCE, LAW AND SOCIAL CONTROL
WRITTEN PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

August 2001

PART II. AFTERNOON

A. ANSWER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TWO QUESTIONS:

1. There is a substantial literature on the relationship between race and crime in the United States. A number of scholars argue that the relationship between race and crime is linked to class.
 - a. What theoretical implications does this position have for the analysis of the race-crime relationship?
 - b. What methodological implications does this position have for the empirical study of the race-crime relationship? Discuss the major elements that a study designed to assess the race-crime relationship would have to incorporate in order to control for class effects.

2. Some theorists argue that law passively reflects normative consensus, while others assert that law is a tool that can be employed to shape values, norms and perceptions. Review these perspectives, and address the question of whether they can be reconciled. Whatever else your essay does, it should:
 - a. Identify the key concepts on all side of the debate, linking them wherever possible with specific proponents or intellectual predecessors.
 - b. Discuss the types of empirical/historical evidence supporting the various positions.
 - c. Explain the importance of the debate in the larger project of the sociology of law.
 - d. State your own view as to the relative merits of the various perspectives, as well as your view of the prospects for integrating or adjudicating between perspectives.

(See page 2 for question 2)

B. ANSWER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TWO QUESTIONS:

1. Compare and contrast the perspectives of criminology, deviance, and the sociology of law on any **one** of the following phenomena. You may focus on only a single aspect of this phenomenon, if you wish; however, your subject should be broad enough to allow a thorough exploration of the key differences and similarities among the three traditions. Among other things, your answer should review the types of theoretical propositions and empirical studies that characterize each tradition, and you should draw explicit comparisons and pursue explicit syntheses among the traditions whenever possible. (If you feel that one of the traditions has failed to attend to your focal phenomenon, say so -- but then **ALSO** describe the type of analysis that you would expect this tradition to produce, if researchers were to turn their attention to the phenomenon on a more consistent basis.)

For your answer, please select a phenomenon from the following list:

- a. Homosexuality
- b. Corporate crime
- c. Drug use/abuse
- d. Computer hacking
- e. Gun control
- f. Sexual harassment
- g. Illegal immigration
- h. The "militia" movement
- i. International terrorism
- j. The encounter between indigenous peoples and European settlers

2. There is a great deal of interest in gender differences in criminal/deviant behavior. Choose one of the following: violent personal crime (assault, sexual assault, murder), or depression or delinquency.

- a. Describe gender differences in this domain. Cite specific relevant research.
- b. What are two distinct ways in which these differences may be theoretically understood?
- c. Which theoretical understanding do you believe to be best? Cite particular research and theory in justifying your choice.