

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**

**DEVIANCE, LAW AND SOCIAL CONTROL  
WRITTEN PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION**

January 2001

**PART I. MORNING**

**A. ANSWER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TWO QUESTIONS:**

1. For each of the theoretical perspectives listed below, do the following:

- a) identify the major tenets of the theory
- b) identify the origin and trace the development of the perspective in criminological theory
- c) identify the specific contribution that it makes over related theoretical models
- d) assess the empirical validity of the theory in light of research

Theoretical perspectives:

(i) Agnew's general strain theory, (ii) Hirschi and Gottfredson's general theory of crime, (iii) Laub and Sampson's lifecourse perspective.

2. Discuss your own general perspective on either the sociology of law or criminology.

- a) What is your perspective? How do *you* make sense of the field?
- b) How does your personal perspective relate to the "greats" in the field?
- c) Why have you adopted this perspective? What are its strengths?

There is obviously no right answer to this question. Its point is to show your familiarity with the major thinkers in the field, how they relate [or don't relate] to the perspective you use to understand the sociological world, and why you have adopted your perspective.

**B. ANSWER ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TWO QUESTIONS:**

1. Ethnographies, historical/comparative studies, surveys, and official records have all been used in the analysis of crime and social control.

- a) Pick two of these and compare the relative strengths and weaknesses of each as measures of crime and social control.
- b) Identify the specific important theoretical contributions made with or by the use of each of the two you chose.

(See page 2 for question 2)

2. Select a substantive area within the sociology of crime, deviance, law, or social control that you know well. Identify the methodological approaches (at least two) that have been used in research in this area.

Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of these methodological approaches, using specific examples from the literature. For example, you might argue that your area of choice shows the superiority or deficiency of a particular approach, or that it shows the relative strengths and weakness of various approaches; or, you may make any other type of argument. The point of the question is to show your familiarity with a broad range of methodological approaches and an in-depth knowledge of a definable literature in some area of deviance, law, or social control.