CRJ 204-1900:
Criminal Justice and the Urban Community
(Writing Intensive)

M & W | 7-8:15 PM

Fiterman 302

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W 1/29/20 AGENDA

- Finish sociological imagination group work

- Discuss sociological imagination

- Intro to social research methods: How do you know what you know?

READING DUE:

Schwalbe, M. (2009). Finding out how the social world works. In J. Ferguson (ed.), *Mapping the Social Landscape* (6th ed.) (pp. 32-42). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, Inc.

Thinking about PRIVATE troubles that are better understood as PUBLIC issues

- Get in a group of 3-5 people

- Introduce yourselves to each other

- Follow the instructions on the sheets

- You will be asked to report back to the class

Where were we? Sociological Imagination

- The sociological imagination: a **skill** and a **perspective** that permits us to understand our own biography by understanding history and the social structure (or social forces that impact our lives)

- It also offers a way to seek solutions to the public issues we face and often experience as private troubles

- PRIVATE troubles: within the character of the individual

- PUBLIC issues: involves a crisis in institutional arrangements

How do we know what we know? Introduction to social research methods.

- "The best way to learn about research is through hands-on experience gained by conducting a study." Schwalbe

- Begins with example of confusion between rates (percentages) and actual numbers of people living below the poverty line

Poverty by the numbers, 2016

Title: Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity (Numbers)				

Timeframe: 2016

Location	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Total
United States	17,494,800	8,719,100	11,251,700	3,611,900	41,077,500
California	1,438,100	496,800	2,836,400	708,900	5,480,200
Louisiana	384,800	444,300	57,400	42,000	928,500
Mississippi	185,100	387,900	N/A	N/A	626,800
New Jersey	311,800	188,700	261,700	81,200	843,300
New York	875,600	461,200	668,200	332,300	2,337,300
Pennsylvania	811,600	250,300	268,700	97,700	1,428,300
Texas	897,900	698,200	2,068,500	161,900	3,826,500

From the Keiser Family Foundation (www.kff.org)

Poverty by percentage, 2016

Title: Poverty Rate by Race/Ethnicity (Percentage)				

Timeframe: 2016

Location	White	Black	Hispanic	Other	Total
United States	9%	22%	20%	13%	13%
California	10%	23%	19%	10%	14%
Louisiana	14%	30%	24%	24%	20%
Mississippi	11%	36%	44%	N/A	21%
New Jersey	6%	17%	17%	8%	10%
New York	8%	17%	19%	15%	12%
Pennsylvania	8%	18%	31%	13%	11%
Texas	8%	21%	20%	9%	14%

Finding out how the social world works

Schwalbe says that these are some of ways we can know things. What are the problems with these ways of knowing?

- Logical deduction

- Straight from others

- Personal experience or observation

- Systematic research

- Mystical revelation

- Instinctively

So what is valid and reliable knowledge?

- In science and statistics, **validity** is the extent to which a concept, conclusion or measurement is well-founded and corresponds accurately to the real world. The word "valid" is derived from the Latin *validus*, meaning strong.

- **Reliable** knowledge is knowledge that demonstrates consistency over time or attempts.

- Consider the bathroom scale:

- If you weigh 180 pounds, and step on the scale 5 times

  - 15, 40, 190, 180, 200: Is this valid? Is it reliable?

  - 120, 120, 120, 120, 120: Is this valid? Is it reliable?

  - 180, 180, 180, 180, 180: Is this valid? Is it reliable?

Questions we can ask: Defining

- Empirical questions:

- Aesthetic questions:

- Moral questions:

- Interpretation:

What kind of question is this, following Schwalbe's definitions?

Empirical, aesthetic, moral, or interpretive?

- What percentage of college students get 7 hours of sleep a day?

- What is the average percentage of people who play video games as a stress-reliever?

- Are Protestants more likely to get into heaven?

- How many dog owners live in Brooklyn?

- Should people who are not virgins be permitted to marry in religious institutions?

- Should people be arrested for selling marijuana?

- What are the factors that contribute to school shootings?

- Is curly hair more attractive than straight hair?

Why systematic research?

- **What did Schwalbe say are the 3 advantages of systematic research?**

- **Which questions does he say that systematic research is best suited to answer?**

Empirical and interpretation questions

- Consider these data on "rampage" school shootings in the US

- These shootings are defined by several factors, including the involvement of current or former students; and multiple victims, which often appear to have been chosen at random.

- Empirical: measuring, counting, looking to see…

- Interpretation: what does this mean, or how do we interpret the patterns?

Location	Date	Perpetrator (age, race)	Number of Victims
Moses Lake, WA	February 2, 1996	Barry Loukaits (14, white)	3 dead, one wounded
Bethel, AK	February 19, 1997	Evan Ramsey (16, white)	2 dead, 2 wounded
Pearl, MS	October 1, 1997	Luke Woodham (16, white)	2 dead, 7 wounded
West Paducah, KY	December 1, 1997	Michael Carneal (14, white)	3 dead, 5 wounded
Stamps, AR	December 15, 1997	Colt Todd (14, white)	2 wounded
Jonesboro, AR	March 24, 1998	Mitchell Johnson (13, white); Andrew Golden (14, white)	5 dead, 10 wounded
Edinboro, PA	April 24, 1998	Andrew Wurst (14, white)	1 dead, 2 wounded
Springfield, OR	May 21, 1998	Kip Kinkel (15, white)	2 dead, 22 wounded
Littleton, CO	April 20, 1999	Eric Harris (18, white); Dylan Klebold (17, white)	15 dead, 23 wounded
Conyers, GA	May 20, 1999	Thomas Soloman (15, white)	6 wounded
Fort Gibson, OK	December 6, 1999	Seth Trickey (13, white)	4 wounded
Santee, CA	March 5, 2001	Charles Williams (15, white)	2 dead, 13 wounded
El Cajon, CA	March 22, 2001	Jason Hoffman (18, unknown)	5 wounded
New York, NY	January, 15, 2002	Unknown	2 wounded
Red Lion, PA	April 24, 2003	James Sheets (14, white)	2 dead
Cold Spring, MN	September 24, 2003	John McLaughlin (15, white)	2 dead
Red Lake, MN	March 21, 2005	Jeffrey Weise (16, Native American)	8 dead
Jacksboro, TN	November 8, 2005	Kenneth Bartley (15, white)	1 dead, 2 wounded
Blacksburg, VA	April 16, 2007	Cho Seung-Hui (23, Asian)	33 dead
Dover, Del.	September 21, 2007	Loyer Brandon (18, black)	2 wounded
Cleveland, OH	October 10, 2007	Asa Coon (14, white)	1 dead, 4 wounded
Baton, Rouge, LA	February 8, 2008	Latina Williams (23, black)	3 dead

Table A.1: Description of select school rampage shootings (1996–2008; US).
Note: sources include Newman et al. (2004); Infoplease.com; Columbine-Angels.com. Incidents chosen for selection: 1996–2008.
Criteria: Perpetrator(s) must be a student at the school and more than one victim was involved.