

CRJ 204 1700: Criminal Justice and the Urban Community

SPRING 2021

Tuesdays & Thursdays from 5:30 – 6:45 pm in Zoom

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Attendance reminder

- **If you do not participate in the Breakout Room, then your name is not recorded for attendance, so please make sure you participate so that your attendance is noted.**

AGENDA: Tuesday, February 23, 2021

- **Complete discussion of How a War on Poverty became a War on the Poor**
 - **READ:** Piven, Frances Fox. "Our Endless War on the Poor." *Progressive.org*, *The Progressive*, 30 Mar. 2020, progressive.org/magazine/our-endless-war-on-poor-fox-piven/.
- **Understanding disparities: Racial and ethnic disparities**
 - **READ:** Hinton, Elizabeth, LeShae Henderson, and Cindy Reed. "An unjust burden: The disparate treatment of black Americans in the criminal justice system." *Vera Institute of Justice*. May (2018).
- **NEIGHBORHOOD RESEARCH ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE in BLACKBOARD by 11:59 pm**
- **Midterm Exam Review questions: Updated**
- **Looking ahead**

Looking ahead (depending on how far we get today)

<p>Class session 8:</p> <p>Th 2/25</p>	<p>Understanding disparities: Gender in neighborhoods</p> <p>READ: Miller, J. (2008). Chapter 2: Gender 'n the 'Hood: Neighborhood violence against women and girls. <i>Getting Played: African American girls, urban inequality, and gendered violence</i> (pp. 32-66). New York, NY: NYU Press.</p>
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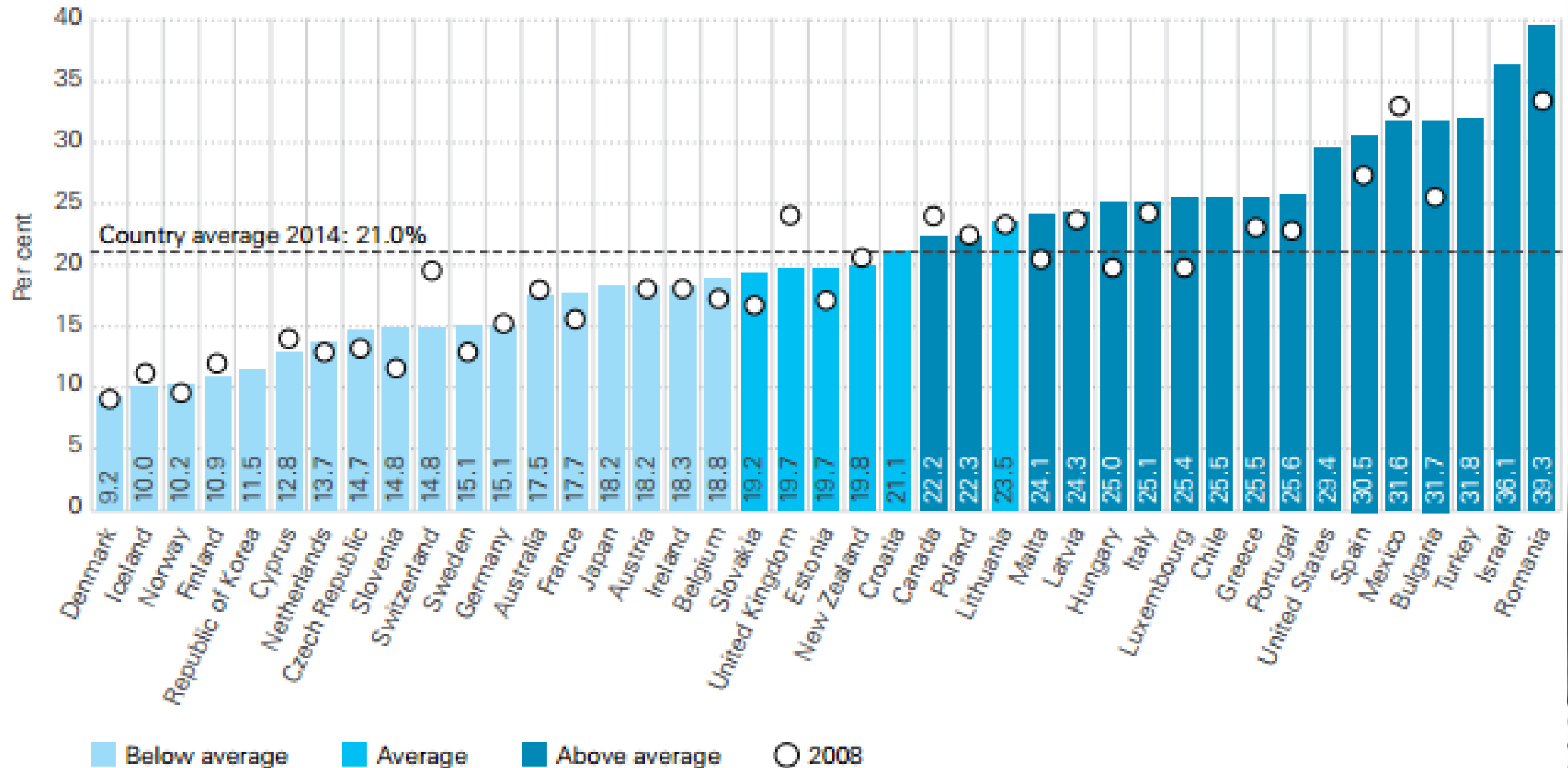
Where were we?

Piven: Endless War on the Poor

- Fear that resources would weaken motivation to work drives ruling groups to punitive approaches to relief for poverty
- In the pandemic in the US, poor people are more likely to be in more dangerous work roles
- The US has the [second-highest poverty rate](#) among developed countries
- The US also has a [high child poverty](#) rate
- Wages do not keep up with rising prices of necessities
- The US encourages “rituals of degradation”
- We inherited the principle of “less eligibility”
 - no one who survives on “welfare” should be as well-off as even the lowest paid laborer.

Figure 1.1 An average of one in five children in rich countries lives in relative income poverty

Percentage of children aged 0–17 living in a household with income lower than 60 per cent of the median, 2014 and 2008



Piven: Endless war on the poor, continued

- American poverty policy denigrates the poor and our political culture seems to worship the affluent
- People are believed to be poor because of their personal failings, but research shows that as household income increases, other problems, like poor school performance or drug use, tend to diminish
- When poverty is ascribed to dysfunctional behaviors, the recommended interventions will tend toward efforts to discipline the poor; if the behaviors considered dysfunctional are the **RESULT** rather than the **CAUSE** of poverty, there is a strong argument for more generous support.
- Almost all contemporary American poverty policies were initiated in response to disturbances caused by protesting poor in 1930s and 1960s.

Endless War on the Poor

<https://forms.gle/gfFEcD4F211h8YJS8>

An unjust burden: The disparate treatment of Black Americans in the criminal justice system

What is [Racial Disparity](#)?

- ...exists when the proportion of a racial or ethnic group within the control of the system is greater than the proportion of such groups in the general population.
- ...causes include differing levels of criminal activity, law enforcement emphasis on particular communities, legislative policies, and/or decision making by criminal justice practitioners who exercise broad discretion in the justice process at one or more stages in the system.
- Illegitimate or unwarranted racial disparity results from the dissimilar treatment of similarly situated people based on race.
- This may involve overt racial bias or the influence of factors that are only indirectly associated with race.
- Structural racism, derived from the longstanding differential treatment of those with characteristics highly correlated with race (e.g., poverty) can cause or aggravate racial disparity as well.

Laws and policies that produce disparate outcomes by race

- Drug-free zone laws
 - Residential segregation and high-density urban neighborhoods
- Habitual offender and “three strikes” laws
 - Disproportionate numbers of people of color already in the system
- Hot spots, Zero-tolerance and broken windows policing
 - Bias in policing especially by location, focus on high poverty means focus on people of color
- Drug laws like “[Rockefeller drug laws](#)”
 - Laws written in “race-neutral” terms are not actually neutral in their impact

100 to 1 sentencing (now 18 to 1)

Type of drug	Five Year Sentence Without Parole	Ten Year Sentence Without Parole
LSD	1 gram	10 grams
Marijuana	100 plants/100 kilos	1000 plants/1000 kilos
Crack cocaine	5 grams	50 grams
Powder cocaine	500 grams	5 kilos
Heroin	100 grams	1 kilo
Methamphetamine	10 grams	100 grams

Looking ahead

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