

Sociology 401 – Crime and the Life Course

Fall Quarter 2018

STUDY GUIDE FOR THE FIRST EXAM

The first exam for Sociology 401 will take place on Thursday, October 18 in lecture. Please be sure to bring (a) a scan sheet (the large version, which you may purchase from the bookstore) and (b) a number 2 pencil.

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

The first exam will cover the following topics, including the readings listed plus the lecture material:

I. Life Course Perspective, Crime, Delinquency, and Behavior Problems

- A. Definition of the Life Course
 - 1. Life course event, transition, trajectory, turning point.
 - 2. Age, period, and cohort effects.
- A. Criminal Behavior.
 - 1. Definition
 - 2. Measurement (UCR, Victimization Surveys, Self-Report Surveys)
- B. Juvenile Delinquency.
 - 1. Delinquent acts, status offenses, wards of the juvenile court.
 - 2. Invention of the juvenile court.
- C. Child Behavior Problems.
 - 1. Continuity with delinquency and crime.
 - 2. Achenbach behavioral checklist.
- D. Readings
Bensen (2013), Chapter 1. Pages 1-31.
Elder, Glenn H. 1985. "Perspectives on the Life Course". Pp. 23-48 in *Life Course Dynamics: Trajectories and Transitions, 1968-1980*, edited by G.H. Elder. Ithaca: Cornell,*

II. Age-Crime Curve and Trajectory Groups.

- A. Shape of the Age-Crime Curve
- B. Hirschi and Gottfredson: Invariant Age-Crime Curve
 - 1. No social theory can explain it.
 - 2. Life course perspectives, criminal careers, longitudinal data, selective incapacitation all drawn into question.
- C. Moffitt's Developmental Taxonomy
 - 1. Adolescence-limited offenders.
 - 2. Life course persistent offenders.
- D. Empirical Evidence on Trajectory Groups.
- C. Readings:
Bensen (2013) pp. 84-94 and pp. 96-104.
Caspi, Avshalom, Glen H. Elder, and Daryl J. Bem. 1987. "Moving Against the World: Life-Course Patterns of Explosive Children." *Developmental Psychology* 23:308-313.

III. Low Self Control Theory (Exam includes only material from Oct 16 lecture)

- A. Unobserved Heterogeneity versus State Dependence.
- B. Three Facts Criminological Theories Cannot Explain
 - 1. Stability.
 - 2. Versatility.
 - 3. Age-crime curve.
- C. Characteristics of Crime & Criminals.
- D. Criminal events vs. Criminal Propensity.
- E. Origin of Low Self Control.
- F. Criticisms (Tautology).
- G. Readings
Bensen (2013), pp. 94-104
Gottfredson, Michael R., and Travis Hirschi. 1990. *A General Theory of Crime*. Stanford, CA: Stanford, Chapter 5 (pp. 85-120).

PRACTICE QUESTIONS

For the following questions, select the letter that corresponds to the SINGLE best answer. Multiple answers will be counted wrong..

1. A life course transition is **best** defined as:
 - a. an event that has important implications for the life course.
 - b. a move from one life course state or role to another.
 - c. the effect of unobserved heterogeneity on crime over time.
 - d. all of the above.
 - e. none of the above.

2. In the reading, "Perspectives on the Life Course," Glen Elder discussed a number of important features of the life course, including
 - a. trajectories and transitions.
 - b. the interdependence of the life course.
 - c. the context of lives.
 - d. interlocking trajectories over the life course.
 - e. all of the above.

3. In the reading, "Moving Against the World," Caspi et al. argue that temper tantrums early in life can lead to maladaptive behaviors later in life through interactional continuity. This refers to
 - a. the progressive accumulation of the consequences of maladaptive behavior.
 - b. evoking maintaining responses from other during reciprocal social interaction.
 - c. interacting with the same others repeatedly.
 - d. all of the above.
 - e. none of the above.

4. According to lecture, low self-control is an example of
 - a. state dependence
 - b. life course transition.
 - c. life course turning point.
 - d. unobserved heterogeneity.
 - e. none of the above.

Answers: 1b, 2e, 3b, 4d