

Urban Crime Patterns / 3404/3025 / Fall 2011
PAPER ASSIGNMENT – version 20111006
Structure, Crime, and a Turning Point in One Criminal Career

ONLINE AT: http://www.rbtaylor.net/3404_fa11_paper.pdf

Purpose

You will learn to **integrate** three different types of information: narrative, social science theory, and ecological data, being clear how they support or contradict one another. For narrative, you will focus on the fictional criminal career of one character from Season 2 of “The Wire.” You can choose Nick, Zig, or Frank Sabotka. You **must** choose one of these three. For theory you will focus on Wilson’s model presented in *When Work Disappears*. For ecological data, you will use some Baltimore/Maryland ecological data which you will either (not sure yet) be presented in class or developed by you in an in-class exercise.

What your paper does [hints are in brackets]

PART I (a) Describe a specific action or choice that your character makes during the season that is pivotal to his criminal career, and tell us why it is important. Include a short snippet of dialogue from the scene. A strong paper will highlight a scene where the character makes a clear choice or acts decisively.

[The quoted dialogue and scene will be properly referenced with an in-line citation and a full reference. Use “Son of citation machine” (SOCM), online at: <http://www.citationmachine.net/index2.php> ; → click on **APA** ; → click on **Television or Radio Program**, and fill in appropriate information for your episode. Consult either Alvarez text, or HBO episode synopses (http://www.rbtaylor.net/3404_wire_s2_episodes.html) to be sure you have the right information. After you have entered the info, paste what SOCM puts in the box into your reference list.]

(b) Tell us why what is happening/said is significant in your character’s career. What led up to or followed from this scene that makes it so pivotal?

PART II (a) Decide if Wilson’s theory described in *When Work Disappears* is **helpful or not** in understanding this pivotal decision or action.

[A clear yes or no is needed here. You can go either way. Really!]

(b) Explain **why** you think Wilson is **helpful or not** in understanding this decision or action.

[This section is critical, and counts for a lot of points. I am not looking for you to summarize Wilson’s theory in your own words, or to include lots of Wilson quotes. I am looking for you to explain how **specific key structural and key cultural elements** in his model are or are not relevant. You can quote a *bit* from his book, but I would rather you tell me in your own terms what **specific** features of his theory are relevant. **Beware of oversimplifying his theory!** Remember it is about how structural change → cultural change → changes in crime.]

Part III Back up your argument with relevant ecological data. (a) Be specific about what data source you are using. (b) Be specific about how it supports **your** argument.

PART IV Properly formatted reference list with corresponding in-line citations.

Parameters

- **Draft Due. 10/24.** You **must** upload your draft, via Safe Assign, by this date, in order to receive the corresponding course credit for draft submission (5% of course grade). You lose 1 point for each day late, so zero credit after 5 days.

- **Revision Due. 11/21.** You will receive a grade, within **about** a week, on your draft paper. If you are happy with your grade, that stands as your final grade for the paper (30% of course grade). If you wish to submit a revision REVISED PAPER DUE 11/21 via Safe Assign upload. **If a revised paper is not received by 11/23 COB via Safe Assign or email tuclasses at gmail.com your draft grade stands as your final paper grade, barring really exceptional circumstances.**
- 3 pages text, double spaced, 12 pitch font, 1 inch margins all around. Reference list extra. I will read a 4th page but only if it is extremely interesting and well organized.
- No names.
- No title page.
- Put your TUID in upper right corner of every page as a header.
- **Name your file as your tuid number** when you upload it.
- Send either pdf or word doc(x).
- Organize this as an integrated paper, not as a list.
- Remember to check for grammar and spelling.

Scoring Rubric

PART Ia	6		Full credit if: * specific action of choice clearly described; * importance clearly stated; * dialogue quote included.
PART Ib	6		Full credit if: specific action or choice clearly placed in context of what character does/what happens to character following this action or choice; consequences clear
PART IIa	2		Full credit if: you clearly state whether Wilson theory is helpful or not
PART IIb	12		Full credit if you: * clearly explain your reasoning about why theory is helpful, or not; * you reference at least one specific portion of the theory; * and your reasoning about how that portion of the theory applies here is cogent and correct
PART III	9		Full credit if you: * correctly describe key data point(s); * clearly understand what these data represent; * make it clear how these data are relevant to the argument you are making
PART IV	5		All references correctly accounted for in in-line citations, and in the full reference list, with proper formatting throughout.
Grammar / spelling	5		Lose up to 5 points for poor grammar, spelling, organization and/or not following directions
Quote problem?			Lose points depending on seriousness (see syllabus)
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Total possible	45		