Course Description
In his essay on “The Usefulness of Crime,” Karl Marx suggested that criminals were a productive force in society: they spurred the creation of new laws, police, the criminal justice system and its bureaucracy, and the morality of the middle classes. Taking Marx’s cue, this course explores the contributions of the European criminal underworld to “legitimate” society. Each lecture develops a case study of a particular crime, criminal, or punishment. The case studies will help us answer questions about the social history of crime and penal institutions: for example, who becomes an armed robber, and why? Furthermore, each case study illustrates how crime has shaped (and been shaped by) major social, economic, and cultural changes in modern Europe: Drug smuggling is a notable example of how consumer tastes and pleasures combined with economic globalization to produce a revolution in the European market for illegal drugs.

The first unit of the course outlines a comparative history of crime and punishment in nineteenth-century Europe, when the specter of the urban “dangerous classes” compelled states to alter their use of capital punishment, criminalize traditional economies, and introduce new forms of police. In the second unit we explore the internal dynamics of the underworld from the late nineteenth to the mid-twentieth century. During this period criminals and detectives became more skilled and professional; they adopted new technologies of transportation, weaponry, and surveillance; and they organized themselves into specialist units. The late twentieth century witnessed the “transnationalization” of criminality and policing. In the final unit of the course, case studies in robbery, soccer hooliganism, and drug trafficking will demonstrate how crime is more than a comparative European phenomenon—indeed, it is a transnational social feature connected by criminal networks and international police forces. The course concludes by looking at patterns of urban revolt and disorder across Europe.

Course Objectives
- To reveal how European states “used” crime to extend their power through institutions such as courts, prisons, and police forces.
- To portray crime as a transnational phenomenon in which men, money, and commodities flow across borders, thereby linking together networks of criminals and police forces in Europe.
- To demonstrate how criminality relates to major themes in European history: urbanization and industrialization, imperialism, technological change, warfare, consumerism, and immigration.
- Students will engage with primary source material—police reports, court records, memoirs—in readings, essays, and presentations.
- To introduce students to the methods of social and cultural history.
Required Textbooks
Course Packet (hereafter CP) available in the Humanities Copy Center

Assignments and Grading
Students will complete two written assignments and one oral presentation. The first written assignment is a three-page research memorandum in which students will briefly discuss three sources relating to a chosen lecture topic. Memoranda may serve as the platform for the students’ second written assignment, an essay of 8-10 pages on one of the lecture topics (or on a topic chosen in consultation with me). The oral presentation is a group project in which 3-4 students will lead discussion (10-15 minutes) on some aspect of crime and popular culture.

Students will write two essay examinations. The midterm exam evaluates knowledge of readings and lectures from Unit I, while the final exam will be an open-ended essay in which students will be expected to integrate the major themes of the course.

Grading: In-class participation (15%), Midterm exam (15%), Research memorandum (10%), Essay (20%), Presentation (20%), Final exam (20%).

Unit I: New Problems and New Solutions in Crime, 1800-1870

Sept. 5-7: Capital Punishment and the Spectacle of State Power
*Reading:* Emsley, Chapter 1 plus pp. 253-267
CP: Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 3-31; *The life of Robert Avery, who was executed at Winchester, for forgery, March 23, 1805*

Sept. 10-14: Industry, Economy, and the Creation of the “Dangerous Classes”
*Reading:* Emsley, Chapters 2-3, 5-6

*Reading:* Emsley, Chapters 9-10

Sept. 24-28: The Criminal Empire: Thugs, Dacoits, and Criminal Tribes in British India
Unit II: The Era of Criminal Sophistication, 1870-1950

Oct. 1-5: The Professionalization of Criminals and Reorganization of Detective Forces
Reading: Emsley, Chapter 7

*Research memorandum due October 5*

Oct. 8-12: Turf Wars: Urban Gangs and Organized Violence
Reading CP: Andrew Davies, “Street Gangs, Crime and Policing in Glasgow during the 1930s: The Case of the Beehive Boys” (1998), pp. 251-267; Film—*Brighton Rock*

Oct. 15-19: Villains into Thieves: Criminality during the Second World War

*Midterm Exam October 19*

Oct. 22-26: Women’s Challenge to Criminology: Shoplifters, Drug Peddlers, and Prostitutes
Reading: Emsley, Chapter 4

Reading CP: Richard J. Evans, “The Many Identities of Franz Ernst,” in *Tales from the German Underworld*, pp. 136-165

Begin student presentations

Nov. 5-9: The Criminal as Hero? Depictions of Crime in Popular Culture

Unit III: Crime without Borders, 1950-2000

Nov. 12-16: The Aristocrats of Crime: Armed Robbers and Criminal Self-Fashioning
Reading CP: Robert Allerton and Tony Parker, *The Courage of His Convictions* (1962), pp. 85-114; Film—*The Italian Job*

Nov. 19-21: Fight Club: The History and Sociology of Soccer Hooliganism
Reading John King, *The Football Factory*
Nov. 26-30: Advanced Disciples of Margaret Thatcher? The Criminal Entrepreneurship of Drug Traffickers

Dec. 3-7: Crime, Ideology, and Popular Respect for the Law
Reading CP: E. Carrabine et al., Crime in Modern Britain, Chapter 3: “Crime and everyday life,” pp. 51-78

*Essays due December 7*

Dec. 10-14: The Empire Strikes Back? Urban Riots in Western Europe

Final Exam TBA