

# SOC 363: FINAL INTERVIEW ESSAY

## SKILLS

- Writing with original research
- Merging qualitative fieldwork with preexisting research on the criminal justice system
- Public sociology

## ASSIGNMENT

Earlier in the semester you conducted an interview with someone with intimate knowledge of the criminal justice system. For your final essay, I would like you to draw from that same interview by placing it in context alongside preexisting research. The goal for this assignment is to use existing research and your interview to write a short essay (1,000-1,500 words) about an issue related to the criminal justice system. In your final essay, you will want to focus on a particular theme. Here are a few themes to help generate ideas:

- The War on Drugs
- Juvenile sentencing and courts
- Gender and sentencing differences amongst youth offenders
- The role of private prisons in the criminal justice system
- Delinquency and education
- Youth and crime in the age of the security state
- The school to prison pipeline
- Etc.

The basic idea is to write an empirically-grounded article that draws on primary research (i.e., your interview), and addresses a particular theme. You'll want to make a clear argument toward the beginning of your article and then, in the space that remains, draw on your interview and preexisting research to demonstrate the validity of your argument.

Here's a link to an article I wrote for *The Conversation* that models this type of writing:

[When migrants go home, they bring back money, skills and ideas that can change a country](#)

## ASSESSMENT

- Makes a clear argument: 25%
- Draws on at least 5 peer-reviewed sources: 25%
- Maintains a common thread throughout: 25%
- Clarity of writing: 25%