

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY

Sociology 4099-001

Victimology

Winter 2010

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Office Hours: Wed 1-2P.M.

Class Time: Tuesday/Thursday 2:00-3:15 PM

SN-4040

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to a variety of issues relating to victims of crime. Following a general overview of the official data, a fundamental question will be raised: What is a victim of crime? Varying answers to this question, along with social and institutional responses based on them, underlie many of the topics that will be dealt with in this course.

Victimized individuals will first be looked at in unofficial, small-group settings. The potential impact of victimization will be contrasted with data indicating that victimization does not necessarily result in a victim identity - leaving some potentially difficult issues to consider. Next, the social consequences of being defined as a victim by others will be outlined. In this regard, the seemingly absurd issue of victims as deviants will be used to illustrate the frequently negative reaction to crime victims in North American society. The variety and range of reactions to victimized individuals will be reviewed, particularly parallels in the labeling process in relation to their family, friends, and community. Subjects' reactions and responses to these processes will be outlined in detail, with particular emphasis on the various subcultures, self-help organizations, and identities that emerge in response.

In the second part of this course, the role of powerful official agencies in formally processing these individuals will be outlined. Following a review of subjects' encounters with the criminal justice system, various official responses from the civil courts, criminal injuries compensation tribunals, provincial victims services programs, and restorative justice will be reviewed and critiqued. In a similar fashion, subjects' encounters with the psychiatric profession will be outlined and critiqued.

In the final few classes, we will look more closely at two issues that run through much of the above: (i) the influence of gender, particularly with regard to the reactions and coping strategies utilized by victimized individuals; and (ii) the tension between human agency and powerlessness in the victim role. As will be seen, this role often illustrates the interactional paradox of powerlessness and personal efficacy at the same time.

Central to these discussions will be a thorough review of the instructor's data from three research projects: (1) a 1994-98 study of the gendered coping strategies of the families of murder victims; (2) a 1999-2000 study of three distinct support services for victims; and (3) interview and observational data on

restorative justice collected over the past several years.

Students taking this course should have completed Sociology 3290 (Deviance) and Sociology 3395 (Criminal Justice and Corrections) and be willing to undertake an independent research paper relating to the issues discussed in class.

2. CLASS METHOD

The class will be conducted through lectures, readings and discussion. It is important to keep up with the reading and to seek clarification of it in or out of class. As well, my lectures do not always stick to the assigned readings, and will be on the exams, so they should be attended to get the most out of this class.

3. EVALUATION AND REQUIREMENTS

(a) There will be two exams: (1) a mid term to be held February 25 in class; and (2) a final exam to be written during the regular exam period. Each will be worth 30% of the final grade.

(b) Students will be required to write a term paper, based on independent research, which will be worth 40% of the final grade. These papers will be due no later than March 18.

4. TEXT AND REQUIRED READING

The textbook for this class is:

J. Scott Kenney (2010) Canadian Victims of Crime: Critical Insights (Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press)

Additional required readings will be placed on reserve at the QEII Library.

5. WORKS FOR GENERAL REFERENCE

Jerry Amernic (1984) Victims: The Orphans of Justice.

Morton Bard and Dawn Sangrey (1986) The Crime Victim's Book.

Joan Barrett (2000) Balancing Charter Rights: Victims and Third Party Remedies.

Nancy Berns (2004) Framing the Victim: Domestic Violence, Media and Social Problems.

Marion Brienen and Ernestine Hoegen (2000) Victims of Crime in 22 European Criminal Justice Systems.

P. Burns (1980) Criminal Injuries Compensation: Social Remedy or Political Palliative for Victims.

(1983) Canadian Federal-Provincial Task Force: Justice For Victims of Crime.

Denise Gosselin (2000) Heavy Hands: An Introduction to the Crimes of Domestic Violence.

Adam Crawford and Jo Goodey (2000) Integrating a Victim Perspective within Criminal Justice.

Robert Davis, Arthur Lurigio and Susan Herman (2007) Victims of Crime (Third Edition).

Tana Dineen (1996) Manufacturing Victims.

R. Elias (1993) Victims Still.

Ezzat A. Fattah (1991) Understanding Criminal Victimization.

Ezzat A. Fattah (1992) Towards a Critical Victimology

John Hagan (1983) Victims Before the Law

Andrew Karmen (2004) Crime Victims: An Introduction to Victimology (Fifth. Ed.)

Tammy C. Landau (2006) Challenging Notions: Critical Victimology in Canada

R.I. Mawby and S. Walklate (1994) Critical Victimology: International Perspectives.

Anne McGillivray and Brenda Comaskey (1999) Black Eyes All of the Time: Intimate Violence, Aboriginal Women and the Justice System.

Robert Meadows (2004) Understanding Violence and Victimization (Third Ed.)

Robert Meadows and Julie Kuehnel (2005) Evil Minds: Understanding and Responding to Violent Predators.

D. Miers (1990) Compensation for Criminal Injuries.

Kate Riedel (1990) The Victim's Guide to the Canadian Criminal Justice System.

Paul Rock (1994) Victimology.

Leslie Sebba (1996) Third Parties: Victims and the Criminal Justice System.

Judith Sgarzi and Jack McDevitt (2003) Victimology: A Study of Crime Victims and Their Roles.

Mark Totten (2001) Guys, Gangs, and Girlfriend Abuse.

Harvey Wallace (2007) Victimology: Legal, Psychological and Social Perspectives.

Frank Weed (1995) Certainty of Justice: Reform in the Crime Victim Movement.

Brian Williams (2005) Victims of Crime and Community Justice.

International Review of Victimology

6. CLASS SCHEDULE

January 7: Orientation/Introduction

January 12-14: Overview of Victimology

Read:

Fattah 17-43

Kenney ix-x; 1-9

Kennedy & Sacco 93-111

January 19-21: Defining victims of crime: Official Data and its problems

Read: Dauvergne 1-17
Gannon & Mihorean 1-27
Sauve & Hung 1-12
Besserer 1-19
Kennedy & Sacco 75-91
Holstein and Miller 103-122

January 26-28: The impact of victimization:

Read: Kenney 13-34
Bard & Sangrey 32-52
Kennedy & Sacco 163-180
Viano 9-22

February 2-4: Social Reactions to victims of crime: Victims as deviants?

Read: Clark 290-319.
Holman and Silver 318-335.
Kenney 41-52

February 9-11: Victim Subcultures: Some Observations

Read: Weed 101-127
Coates and Winston 169-189
Kenney 150-167

February 16-18: Victims and Criminal Justice 1: Legal Issues and Subjects' Experiences

Read: Kenney 81-104
Hagan 8-13
Marriott-Thorne 2-5
Joutsen 95-124.

February 22-24: * Study Break: No Classes *

February 25: *Mid-Term Exam*

March 2-9: Victims and Criminal Justice 2: Official Responses

Read: Kenney 135-150; 173-201
Elias 213-224
Davis & Smith 269-286

March 11-16: Victims and the Medical/Psychiatric Profession

Read:
Walker 37-45.
Conrad and Schneider 241-260

Dineen 33-59.
Winkel and Renssen 203-17

March 18-23: Victims and Gender

Read: Kenney 52-64
Janoff-Bulman and Frieze 159-84
Strauss 159-176

*** Term Papers Due March 18***

March 25-30: Victims, Coping, and Agency

Read: Attig 385-393
Hagemann 58-67
Kennedy & Sacco 49-74
Kenney 64-76

April 1: The Victim Movement

Read: Kenney 109-129

April 6: International Comparisons/Concluding Remarks

Read: Kenney 205-266

*** Final exam to be written during the regular exam period***