

**SOCIOLOGY 462/AJ 462: VICTIMS OF CRIME/FALL SEMESTER 2009
MWF 1-1:50, Parkinson 202**

Jen Dunn 3428 Faner Hall 453-7625 e-mail: jldunn@siu.edu
Office Hours: Mon 10-11:30, Tu 10:30-11:30, Wed 10-11,
Th 10:30-11:30, Fri 10-11:30, and by appointment

Content and Objectives of the Course

This course will introduce you to the definition and study of criminal victimization. We will learn and take a sociological, analytical approach to social scientific and popular theories of victimization, including its extent, nature, causes and effects. We will consider the lived experience of victims from an interactionist perspective, examining interactions between victims and victimizers and between victims and criminal justice system actors. We will study the emergence and course of the victims' rights movement and of selected forms of victimization, and alternate ways of defining and responding to victimization. How do various actors come to define people as victims and their experience as victimization? We will explore the claims-making and other strategies that take place in these definitional processes, and the outcomes of these processes for specific cases. How is it that a social phenomenon comes to be seen as victimization? How do people decide what is or is not victimization, and how do they organize to get others to agree? What is at stake in this process? We will examine and learn to apply sociological concepts to contemporary exemplars of victimization, and students will have the opportunity to analyze the special issues associated with selected, specific forms of victimization, such as intimate partner abuse, white collar crime, and hate crimes. By the end of the semester you should be able to meet the following objectives:

- identify and analyze social scientific and popular theories of victimization.
- understand how victimization is constructed in everyday life and some consequences of this for victims and the victims' rights movement
- critically assess claims about victimization
- use course concepts to analyze the emergence, course, and social construction of a selected form of victimization, using data you have collected
- see improvements in your critical thinking and expository writing skills

NOTE: This course meets the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) requirement for graduation. To learn more about WAC criteria, go to this website:
<http://cola.siu.edu/WritingAcrosstheCurriculum.html>

Required Texts

Dunn, Jennifer. 2002. *Courting Disaster: Intimate Stalking, Culture, and Criminal Justice*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter

Course Reader: Articles on electronic reserve [ER] and available through database searching [e.g., JSTOR, EBSCO] in Morris Library

Requirements and Grading

Participation and Attendance:

I expect students to attend class every day and to come to class on Mondays having reviewed the assigned readings for that week, which we will discuss with greater specificity as the week progresses. Obviously, students often have other priorities or circumstances that interfere with meeting these expectations. I keep track of attendance, participation in classroom discussions, and visits to my office, all of which I take into consideration if your final grade is borderline. The more often you are here, participate, and come see me if needed, the more likely I am to raise a borderline grade. The more frequently you are absent without telling me why, you come in late, or your cell phone rings, the less likely I am to raise a borderline grade.

Annotated Bibliography: (15%)

In addition to reading the book I wrote, each of you will construct an annotated bibliography based on the five (5) of the articles in the Electronic Reader. Each week that these are due, you will choose one of the articles read up to that point and construct a bibliography entry for it, due on FRIDAY of that week. Instructions for the annotated bibliography entries are attached. Entries for specific readings are only accepted during the weeks we are reading them; after an entry is due you must select from the next set of readings for the next entry. All entries must be paper copies turned in during class; I do not accept assignments electronically. Late entries will be accepted in extraordinary circumstances, but can only receive up to half-credit. Length: **250-300 words each, 1250-1500 words total.**

DUE: Fridays 9/11, 9/25, 10/2, 10/16, and 11/6

Historical Analysis: (20%)

This is a short paper in which you describe the emergence, legitimation, and mobilization processes that resulted in the victimization you have selected/been assigned (the class will research victims of priest abuse, wife abuse, rape, hate crimes, crimes against men and boys, and false accusations, individually and in groups). Instructions for the historical analysis are attached. No late papers will be accepted. Length: **750-900 words total**.

DUE: Friday October 23rd.

Data Analyses: (20%)

During the course of the semester, you will be collecting data illustrating the victimization you have selected/been assigned. These data are CLAIMS about its causes, extent, nature and effects. These are typically found in media representations, such as newspaper articles, editorials, and letters to the editor, magazine articles, documentaries, brochures, web sites, or *anything that makes a claim* about this particular victimization. Instructions for the data analyses are attached. No late analyses will be accepted. Length: **750-900 words total**.

DUE: Friday November 13th.

Research presentation: (5%)

In November and December, you will present your preliminary findings to the class in panel discussions. The grade for this requirement is an INDIVIDUAL grade, not a group grade. 60% of this grade is based on your attendance and participation during the dates you are NOT assigned to present (i.e., on your performance as a member of the audience). 40% of this grade is based on how closely you adhere to the assignment guidelines (Instructions are attached). You cannot get credit for this assignment if you are absent the day you are scheduled to present. Length: **7-10 minutes**.

SCHEDULED: Monday November 30th through Friday December 11th.

Research Paper (30%)

This is a take-home exam, in which you will be given a list of questions to answer. Your answers to the question will formalize the analysis you practiced in your presentation, drawing upon all the work you have done for the course (your reading, discussions, bibliography, historical analysis, and data analysis). The finished product will look exactly like a sociological research paper, including an introduction, literature review and theoretical framework, data analysis, and conclusion. Length: **3000-3750 pages, sent electronically to jldunn@siu.edu.**

DUE: Thursday Dec 17 at 12:50 (start of final exam period)

Comprehensive Final Exam: (10%)

The final exam is multiple choice and true/false questions based on the readings (the text and the articles on electronic reserve and from the databases).

Thursday Dec 17 from 12:50-2:50

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

8/24-8/28 Introduction to Victimology, Claims-Making, and this Course

8/31-9/4 Claims-makers I: Victimologists

"Victims and Criminological Theory" from Crime Victims in Context [ER]

Preliminary topic selection.

9/9-9/11 Claims-makers II: Victimologists (cont.)

- Amir, Menachim. 1967. "Victims Precipitate Forcible Rape." Journal of Criminal Law, Criminology, and Police Science 58:493-502. [ER]
- Cohen, Lawrence E. and Marcus Felson. 1979. "Social Change and Crime Rate Trends: A Routine Activities Approach." American Sociological Review 44:588-608. [ER]

(First Bibliography Entry due 9/11)

9/14-9/18 Claims-makers III: Cultural and Structural Explanations

- "Women and Children at Risk" from Violence Against Women [ER]
- *Courting Disaster* Chapter 4

9/21-9/25

Claims-makers IV: Interactionist Explanations

- Luckenbill, David. 1977. "Criminal Homicide as a Situated Transaction." Social Problems 25:176-186. [ER]
- *Courting Disaster* Chapter 2

(Second Bibliography Entry due 9/25)

9/28-10/2

Social Constructionist Approaches

- Holstein, James A. and Gale Miller. 1990. "Rethinking Victimization: An Interactional Approach to Victimology." Symbolic Interaction 13(1):103-122. [ER]
- Dunn, Jennifer L. 2008. "Accounting for Victimization: Social Constructionist Perspectives" [ER]

(Third Bibliography Entry due 10/2)

10/5-10/9

Historical Analyses I: Victim Reform Movements

- Weed, Frank J. 1995. "Reform Politics for Crime Victims: Government, Grass Roots, and Grievance" from Certainty of Justice: Reform in the Crime Victims Movement. [ER]
- *Courting Disaster* Chapter 1

10/12-10/16

Historical Analyses II: New Victims and Victimization

- Jenness, V. (1995). "Social Movement Growth, Domain Expansion, and Framing Processes: The Gay/Lesbian Movement and Violence Against Gays and Lesbians as a Social Problem." Social Problems 42:145-170. [ER]
- "Stalking Strangers and Lovers" from Images of Issues, 2nd Ed. [ER]

(Fourth Bibliography Entry due 10/16)

10/19-10/23

Social Problems Work I: Typifications of Victims and Victimization

- "Horror Stories and the Construction of Child Abuse" from Images of Issues, 2nd Ed. [ER].
- "Random Violence" from Random Violence [ER].

(Historical Analysis due 10/23)

10/26-10/30

Social Problems Work II: Accomplishing Victimization

- *Courting Disaster* Chapter 3
- "I Wanted There to Be No Question" from Taking the Stand. [ER]

11/22-11/6

Responding to Victims I: Revictimization

- Lisa Frohmann. 1998. "Constituting Power in Sexual Assault Cases: Prosecutorial Strategies for Victim Management." Social Problems Vol. 45, No. 3 pp. 393-407.
- Campbell, Rebecca and Sheela Raja. 2005. "The Sexual Assault And Secondary Victimization Of Female Veterans: Help-Seeking Experiences With Military And Civilian Social Systems." Psychology of Women Quarterly 29 (1), pp. 97-106. [Wiley-Blackwell, EBSCO]

(Fifth Bibliography due 11/6)

11/9-11/13

Responding to Victims II: Alternatives

- "Moving Toward More Justice" in *Taking the Stand*. [ER]
- Weissman, Deborah. 2006. "Crawford v. Washington": Implications for Public Health Policy and Practice in a Domestic Violence Context. Public Health Reports (1974-), Vol. 121, No. 4, Intimate Partner Violence (Jul. - Aug., 2006), pp. 464-467. [JSTOR]

(Claims Analysis due 11/13)

11/16-11/20

Coming to Conclusions: Presenting Victims and

Victimization

- *Courting Disaster* Chapter 5

11/30-12/11

Selected Victims: Panel Presentations

12/16

Final Exam 10:10-12:10, Parkinson 202

(Research Paper due 12/16, submit electronically)