

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY**

**MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY**

**Sociology 4099-001**

**Victimology**

**Fall 2021**

**Instructor: Prof. J. Scott Kenney**

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**Office: AA-4049C**

**Office Hours: Office Hours:  
Wednesdays 9:00-11:00 AM  
(online)**

**Class Time: Tues/Thur 3:30-4:45 PM**

**(Distance)**

**Website: <http://jscottkenney.yolasite.com/course-materials.php>**

## **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 history of victimology and official data on victimization, 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 labelling 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 in the past decades.

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**

### **1. Mid-Term Assignment (30%)**

The mid-term assignment will cover both lectures and readings. It will consist of a choice of different types of questions and be due on **Tuesday, October 19**. Details will be distributed in class.

### **2. Term Paper (40%)**

A 10 page term paper on a select topic will be due in class on **Thursday, October 28**. Details will be distributed in class.

### **3. Take-Home Assignment (30%)**

This assignment will be handed out on **Thursday, November 4** and be due on **Thursday, December 2**. It will consist of a choice of essay questions in which

you must demonstrate your understanding of both the material covered in class and your own additional research on select victimology topics.

#### **4. LATE AND MISSED ASSIGNMENTS:**

- A student is, at times, prevented from completing a part of the evaluation by illness or medical conditions of less than five calendar days' duration. In such cases, a student may apply for an alternate evaluation by declaring to me that he or she has experienced such an illness or medical condition. This declaration should be made via telephone or in writing through the student's @mun.ca e-mail account. This declaration should be made in advance of the original date on which an in-class part of the evaluation is to be held or a take-home part of the evaluation is due, wherever possible, but no later than 48 hours after the original date of the part of the evaluation. If the declaration is made by telephone, written confirmation must then be received by the relevant instructor within seven calendar days of the original date of the part of the evaluation.
- A student who is prevented from completing a part of the evaluation by illness of at least five calendar days' duration, bereavement or other acceptable cause, duly authenticated in writing, may apply for an alternate evaluation. This application should be made in advance of the original date on which an in-class part of the evaluation is to be held or a take-home part of the evaluation is due, wherever possible, but no later than 48 hours after the original date of the part of the evaluation. If application is made by telephone, written confirmation must then be received by the head of the appropriate academic unit within seven calendar days of the original date of the part of the evaluation. The following supporting documentation is required:
  - For illness or medical conditions, medical documentation from a health professional is required. Students should provide the health professional with a copy of the Student Medical Certificate: [www.mun.ca/regoff/STUDENT\\_MEDICAL\\_CERTIFICATE.pdf](http://www.mun.ca/regoff/STUDENT_MEDICAL_CERTIFICATE.pdf)
  - For bereavement or other acceptable cause, official documents or letters that support the reason for the request (e.g. death certificate, letter from employer, etc.) are required.

#### **5. ACCOMMODATIONS:**

I am committed to facilitating and promoting an accessible, inclusive, and mutually respectful learning environment based on the principles of equity, accessibility, and collaboration. Accommodations are provided within the scope of the University Policies for the Accommodation for Students with Disabilities ([www.mun.ca/policy.php?id=323](http://www.mun.ca/policy.php?id=323)). Students who may need an academic accommodation are asked to initiate the request with the Glenn Roy Blundon Centre ([www.mun.ca/blundon](http://www.mun.ca/blundon)) at the earliest opportunity.

University policies and procedures pertaining to accommodations for students with disabilities can be found at [www.mun.ca/policy/site/policy.php?id=239](http://www.mun.ca/policy/site/policy.php?id=239)

## **6. ACADEMIC HONESTY AND PLAGIARISM:**

Students are expected to adhere to those principles which constitute proper academic conduct. A student has the responsibility to know which actions, as described under Academic Offenses in the University Regulations, could be construed as dishonest or improper. Students found guilty of an academic offense may be subject to a number of penalties commensurate with the offense including reprimand, reduction of grade, probation, suspension, or expulsion from the university. For more information regarding this policy, students should refer to the University Regulations for Academic Misconduct (Section 6.12) in the University Calendar.

In particular, I want to draw attention to section 6.12.4: “Plagiarism is the act of presenting the ideas or works of another as one’s own. This applies to all material such as essays, laboratory assignments, laboratory reports, work term reports, design projects, seminar presentations, statistical data, computer programs, research results, and theses. The properly acknowledged use of resources is an accepted and important part of scholarship. Use of such material without acknowledgement is contrary to accepted norms of academic behavior. Information regarding acceptable writing practices is available through the Writing Centre at [www.mun.ca/writingcentre](http://www.mun.ca/writingcentre).

## **7. TEXT AND REQUIRED READING**

The required textbook for this class is:

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

Supplementary readings will be placed on reserve at the QEII Library.

## **8. 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 Brien 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 (2019) Understanding Violence and Victimization (Seventh 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.

Hannah Scott (2011) 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.

Victims of Violence (2014) An Exploration of the Victims' Movement in Canada.

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

## **9. CLASS SCHEDULE**

**Sept 9-16:** Overview of Victimology

Read: Fattah 17-43  
Kenney ix-x; 1-9  
Victims of Violence 47-59  
Wallace 9-14

**Sept 21-23:** Defining victims of crime: Official Data and its problems

Read: Landau 41-72  
Kennedy & Sacco 75-91  
Holstein and Miller 103-122

**Sept 28:** The impact of victimization:

Read: Kenney 13-34  
Wallace 77-96  
Viano 9-22

**Sept. 30: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation: No class**

**Oct 5-7:** Social Reactions to victims of crime: Victims as deviants?

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

Kenney 41-52

**Oct 12: Fall Term Break: No Class**

**Oct 14-19:** Victim Subcultures: Some Observations

Read: Weed 101-127  
Kenney 150-167

**\*\* MID-TERM ASSIGNMENT DUE OCTOBER 19 \*\***

**Oct 21-26:** Victims and Criminal Justice 1: Legal Issues and Subjects' Experiences

Read: Kenney 81-104

**Oct 28-Nov 4:** Victims and Criminal Justice 2: Official Responses

Read: Kenney 135-201  
Landau 117-128  
Victims of Violence 33-46; 61-187

**\*\* TERM PAPERS DUE OCTOBER 28 \*\***

**\*\* TAKE HOME ASSIGNMENTS DISTRIBUTED NOVEMBER 4 \*\***

**Nov 11: Remembrance Day: No Classes**

**Nov 9-16:** Victims and the Medical/Psychiatric Profession

Read: Conrad and Schneider 241-260  
Dineen 33-59.  
Winkel and Renssen 203-17

**Nov 18-25:** Victims and Gender

Read: Kenney 52-64  
Davies, Francis, and Greer 142-201

**Nov 30-Dec 2:** Victims, Coping, and Agency

Read: Kennedy & Sacco 49-74  
Kenney 64-76

**\*\*TAKE HOME ASSIGNMENTS DUE DECEMBER 2\*\***