

So 1440

Intimate Violence

Prof. Gregory C. Elliott
Maxcy 202
3-1907

Semester I, 2008-2009
Tu-Th, 9:00-10:20
Gregory_Elliott@Brown.edu

This course will explore sociological perspectives that help us understand acts of violence between people who are involved in or pursuing an intimate relationship. Its purpose is to get beyond the superficial understandings that arise from intuitive approaches to the issue, in order to develop a rigorous analysis of the social and personal factors that facilitate and inhibit violent behavior in intimate relationships. An understanding of the sociological perspective is important for full and effective participation in this lecture course. To that end, any *one* of So 0020, SO 0300-03, So 1230, So 1430, or So 1640 serves as an acceptable prerequisite; under special circumstances, students without the prerequisite will be allowed in the course, if they have received written permission from the instructor.

We will begin with sociological and social-psychological theories of aggression and violence in general, including social learning theory, the frustration-aggression hypothesis, and violence as catharsis. Because intimate violence is so often entangled with issues of gender, we will be focusing on the contributions of gender socialization to the problem. We will explore the facilitative effects of social structure, with a special focus on race and socioeconomic status. We will consider two factors popularly considered to be contributors to intimate violence: pornography and alcohol abuse. Finally, we will investigate specific forms of intimate violence: partner abuse, elderly abuse, child abuse, and sexual aggression (including “date rape”); with each topic, we will examine the empirical studies conducted to date and will interpret the results of this research in light of the theories of intimate violence that guided them.

Because this is a course in the Sociology Department, we will apply distinctly sociological perspectives to discover the personal and social processes that would contribute to a deeper understanding of this phenomenon. Where appropriate, we will borrow from other disciplines (e.g., psychology), to broaden our perspectives, but the essence of our analysis will be founded on the following sociological principles:

- Very little of human nature is innate. One must learn how to be a human being. As a consequence, becoming human is a social process.
- The role is generally stronger than the person.

- In analyzing social phenomena, if you focus on “good guys” and “bad guys,” you miss social process.
- Lasting social change is possible only with meaningful modifications of social structure. Any change effected by replacing people in existing positions will be superficial and will ultimately reinforce the original system.

A note for non-concentrators: In order to do well in this class, it will be necessary to learn how to view things from a sociological perspective. I will be asking you to bring the theories and concepts of sociology to bear on the phenomenon of intimate violence. I am not asking you to “convert” to the sociological perspective; if, when the semester is over, you find the sociological paradigms unsatisfactory, you may continue to look for other ways of understanding this problem. But I am asking you to try on the sociological lens for one semester’s good faith effort at comprehending intimate violence in a new way.

Grades will be determined by your performance on a series of papers. A total of four (4) papers, each 12-15 pages, will be required. Your options for the papers are as follows:

Paper #1: Topics III, IV, or V;

Paper #2: Topics VI or VII;

Paper #3: Topics VIII or IX;

Paper #4: Topics X or XI.

In each paper, you will be asked to extend the sociological perspective presented in the class lectures and the readings to a concrete issue or circumstance relevant to the topic at hand. More details will be given in the information sheets for each topic. Each paper will be worth 25% of the final grade.

A final concern: This course focuses on issues that are deeply disturbing; as a result, it is quite easy to lose one’s analytic frame and adopt an emotional or ideological approach to intimate violence. Although perhaps personally cathartic, such approaches interfere with a thorough understanding of the complex processes that underlie violence in intimate relationships.

For survivors of intimate violence or those otherwise deeply affected by it, we will endeavor to provide a safe learning environment that will be sensitive to and respectful of your experiences. This course is not designed to provide direct therapeutic relief to individual students. However, we recognize the need for a venue to confront the painful personal issues that might arise as a consequence of participating in So 1440; accordingly, we have made arrangements with Psychological Services, the Office of the

Chaplain, and the Office of Student Life to be available for students who may need to discuss their personal experiences of intimate violence and work through questions that remain.

By the same token, this course is not the appropriate arena to advance a particular ideological polemic on the subject of intimate violence. There are other venues for the pursuit of this goal. I expect students in this course to be open to new ways of understanding a very difficult social phenomenon.

In sum, *it is very important for the success of this course that all students maintain an analytic perspective on the issues that we will confront during the semester.* I ask each of you to make a sincere effort in this regard. If you believe that it will be too difficult for you to maintain an analytic perspective, please see me; you may wish to reconsider participating in this course.

The following books are used in this course. They are available in the Brown Bookstore and are also on reserve in Rockefeller Library.

REQUIRED:

Barnett, O. W., C. L. Miller-Perrin, and R. D. Perrin. 2005. *Family Violence across the Lifespan: An Introduction* (second edition). Sage.

Beck, A. T. 1999. *Prisoners of Hate: The Cognitive Basis of Anger, Hostility, and Violence*. Perennial.

Straus, M., R. J. Gelles, and S.K. Steinmetz. 2006. *Behind Closed Doors : Violence in the American Family*

Rubin, L. 1983. *Intimate Strangers: Men and Women Together*. HarperCollins.

Sennett, R., and J. Cobb. 1972. *The Hidden Injuries of Class*. Norton.

Straus, M. 2001. *Beating the Devil Out of Them: Corporal Punishment in American Families and Its Effects on Children* (second edition). Transaction.

RECOMMENDED:

Gelles, R. J. 1997. *The Book of David: How Preserving Families Can Cost Children's Lives*. Basic Books.

Lefkowitz, Bernard. 1998. *Our Guys: The Glen Ridge Rape and the Secret Life of the Perfect Suburb*. Vintage.

So 144

Intimate Violence

Course Outline

- I. Introduction (First Class)
- II. Theories of Aggression (One Week)
- III. Structural Antecedents to Violence: Gender (Two Weeks)
- IV. Structural Antecedents to Violence: Race (One Week)
- V. Structural Antecedents to Violence: Socioeconomic Status (One Week)
- VI. The Role of Possible Predispositional Factors: Pornography (One Week)
- VII. The Role of Possible Predispositional Factors: Alcohol Abuse (One Week)
- VIII. Violence between Partners (Two Weeks)
- IX. Violence between Parent and Child (One Week)
- X. Violence against Elders (One Week)
- XI. Sexual Aggression in Intimate Relationships (Two Weeks)

So 144

Intimate Violence

Course Syllabus

Note: All readings on this syllabus that are taken from books are on reserve in Rockefeller Library; books that have been assigned in their entirety are also available for purchase at the Brown Bookstore. Readings originally published in professional journals are marked by an asterisk (*) and are available on OCRA (Online Course Reserve Access).

I. Introduction

Required:

O. W. Barnett, C. L. Miller-Perrin, and R. D. Perrin, *Family Violence across the Lifespan*, (second edition). 2005. Ch. 1: "History and definitions of family violence."

*S. M. Cunningham. 2000. "What we teach when we teach about violence." *The HFG Review*, 4, 4-9.

II. Theories of Aggression

Required:

A. T. Beck. *Prisoners of Hate*, entire book.

III. Structural Antecedents to Violence: Gender

Required:

*C. West and D. H. Zimmerman. 1991. "Doing gender." Pp. 13-37 in J. Lorber and S. A. Farrell (eds.), *The Social Construction of Gender*, Sage.

L. B. Rubin. 1983. *Intimate Strangers*, entire book.

IV. Structural Antecedents to Violence: Race

Required:

*M. Omi and H. Winant. 1994. *Racial Formation in the United States*. Chs. 1-4.

Any *three* (3) of the following:

- *E. Anderson. 1995. "The Black male in public." Pp. 326-336 in S. E. Cahill (Ed.), *Inside Social Life* (fifth edition). Roxbury.
- *M. L. De Uriarte. 1998. "Baiting immigrants: Heartbreak for Latinos" Pp. 118-120 in P. S. Rothenberg (Ed.), *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study* (fourth edition). St. Martin's Press.
- *Tilove, J. 1998. "Asian-American history rises above pitfalls for trail of success: Ups, downs compared to plight of blacks." Pp. 277-284 in P. S. Rothenberg (Ed.), *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study* (fourth edition). St. Martin's Press.
- *C. L. Nakashima. 1992. "An invisible monster: The creation and denial of mixed-race people in America." Pp. 162-178 in M. P. P. Root (Ed.), *Racially Mixed People in America*. Sage.
- *K. B. Sacks. 1998. "How Jews became white" Pp. 100-114 in P. S. Rothenberg (Ed.), *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study* (fourth edition). St. Martin's Press.
- *R. C. Sethi. 1998. "Smells like racism." Pp. 154-164 in P. S. Rothenberg (Ed.), *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study* (fourth edition). St. Martin's Press
- *J. G. Shaheen. 1998. "TV Arabs." Pp. 288-291 in P. S. Rothenberg (Ed.), *Race, Class, and Gender in the United States: An Integrated Study* (fourth edition). St. Martin's Press.

V. Structural Antecedents to Violence: Socioeconomic Status

Required:

- *R. D. Hess and V. C. Shipman. 1965. "Early experience and the socialization of cognitive modes in children." *Child Development*, 36, 869-886.
 - *M. L. Kohn and C. Schooler. 1985. "Job conditions and personality: A longitudinal assessment of their reciprocal effects." *American Journal of Sociology*, 87, 1257-1286.
- Sennett, R., and J. Cobb. 1972 *The Hidden Injuries of Class*, entire book.

VI. The Role of Possible Predispositional Factors: Pornography

Required:

*N. M. Malamuth. 1984. "Aggression against women: Cultural and individual causes." Pp. 19-52 in N. M. Malamuth and E. Donnerstein (eds.), *Pornography and Sexual Aggression*. Academic Press.

*E. Donnerstein. 1984. "Pornography: Its effects on violence against women." Pp. 53-81 in N. M. Malamuth and E. Donnerstein (eds.), *Pornography and Sexual Aggression*. Academic Press.

VII. The Role of Possible Predispositional Factors: Alcohol Abuse

Required:

*D. B. Heath. 1983. "Alcohol and aggression: A 'missing link' in worldwide perspective." Pp. 89-103 in E. Gottheil, K. A. Druley, T. E. Skoloda, and H. M. Waxman (eds.), *Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Aggression*. Charles C. Thomas.

*D. H. Coleman and M. A. Straus. 1983. "Alcohol abuse and family violence." Pp. 104-124 in E. Gottheil, K. A. Druley, T. E. Skoloda, and H. M. Waxman (eds.), *Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Aggression*. Charles C. Thomas.

H. M. Foran and K. D. O'Leary. 2008. "Problem drinking, jealousy, and anger control: Variables predicting physical aggression against a partner." *Journal of Family Violence*, 23, 141-148.

VIII. Violence between Partners

Required:

M. Straus, R. J. Gelles, and S. K. Steinmetz. 2006. *Behind Closed Doors: Violence in the American Family*, entire book.

*N. K. Denzin. 1984. "Toward a phenomenology of domestic family violence." *American Journal of Sociology*, 90, 483-513.

O. W. Barnett, C. L. Miller-Perrin, and R. D. Perrin, *Family Violence across the Lifespan*, Ch. 8: "Marital violence: An Overview."

O. W. Barnett, C. L. Miller-Perrin, and R. D. Perrin, *Family Violence across the Lifespan*, Ch. 9: “Marital violence: Battered Women.”

O. W. Barnett, C. L. Miller-Perrin, and R. D. Perrin, *Family Violence across the Lifespan*, Ch. 10: “Marital violence: Batterers.”

*C. A. Field and R. Caetano. 2005. “Longitudinal model predicting mutual partner violence among white, black, and Hispanic couples in the United States General Population.” *Violence and Victims*, 20, 499-511.

*C. T. Kenney and S. S. McLanahan. 2006. “Why are cohabiting relationships more violent than marriages?” *Demography*, 43, 127-140

Recommended:

R. A. Berk, A. Campbell, R. Klap, and B. Western. 1992. “The deterrent effect of arrest in incidents of domestic violence: A Bayesian analysis of four field experiments.” *American Sociological Review*, 57, 698-708.

K. J. Ferraro and J. M. Johnson. 1983. “How women experience battering: The process of victimization.” *Social Problems*, 30, 325-335.

S. M. Frias and R. J. Angel. 2005. “The risk of partner violence among low-income Hispanic subgroups.” *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, 67, 552-564.

IX. Violence between Parent and Child

Required:

O. W. Barnett, C. L. Miller-Perrin, and R. D. Perrin, *Family Violence across the Lifespan*, Ch. 3: “Physical child abuse.”

*G. C. Elliott, R. Avery, E. Fishman, and B. Hoshiko. 2002. “The encounter with family violence and risky sexual activity among young adolescent females.” *Violence and Victims*, 17, 569-592.

O. W. Barnett, C. L. Miller-Perrin, and R. D. Perrin, *Family Violence across the Lifespan*, Ch. 5: “Child neglect and psychological maltreatment.”

M. A. Straus, *Beating the Devil Out of Them*, entire book.

- *L. Margolin. 1992. "Beyond maternal blame: Physical child abuse as a phenomenon of gender." *Journal of Family Issues*, 13, 410-423.
- *C. L. Chapple, K. A. Tyler, and B. E. Bersani. 2005. "Child neglect and adolescent violence: Examining the effects of self-control and peer rejection." *Violence and Victims*, 20, 39-53.
- *D. T. Wilcox, F. Richards, and Z. C. O'Keefe. 2004. "Resilience and risk factors associated with experiencing child sexual abuse." *Child Abuse Review*, 13, 338-352.
- *R. L. Hampton. 1987. "Race, class, and child maltreatment." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 18, 113-126.

Recommended:

- O. W. Barnett, C. L. Miller-Perrin, and R. D. Perrin, *Family Violence across the Lifespan*, Ch. 6: "Children exposed to marital violence."
- O. W. Barnett, C. L. Miller-Perrin, and R. D. Perrin, *Family Violence across the Lifespan*, Ch. 4: "Child sexual abuse."
- L. A. Fontes (Ed.) 1995. *Sexual Abuse in Nine North American Cultures: Treatment and Prevention*. Sage.
- J. A. Hunter, D. W. Goodwin, and R. J. Wilson. 1992. "Attributions of blame in child sexual abuse victims: An analysis of age and gender influences." *Journal of Child Sexual Abuse*, 1, 75-89.
- G. Young and T. Gately. 1988. "Neighborhood impoverishment and child maltreatment: An analysis from an ecological perspective." *Journal of Family Issues*, 9, 240-254.
- L. H. Pelton. 1978. "Child abuse and neglect: The myth of classlessness." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 48, 608-617.

X. Violence against Elders

Required:

- O. W. Barnett, C. L. Miller-Perrin, and R. D. Perrin, *Family Violence across the Lifespan*, Ch. 11: "Elder abuse."

- *M. C. Sengstock. 1991. "Sex and gender implications in cases of elder abuse." *Journal of Women and Aging*, 3, 25-43.
- *A. Moon and O. Williams. 1993. "Perceptions of elder abuse and help-seeking patterns among African-American, Caucasian American, and Korean-American elderly women." *Gerontologist*, 33, 386-395.

XI. Sexual Aggression in Intimate Relationships

Required:

- O. W. Barnett, C. L. Miller-Perrin, and R. D. Perrin, *Family Violence across the Lifespan*, Ch. 6: "Courtship violence and date rape."
- *W. Celis, III. 1990. "Date rape and a list at Brown." *New York Times*, Nov. 18, 1990, Section 1, p. 26, col. 1.
- *H. T. Littleton, C. R. Breitkopf, and A. Berenson. 2008. "Beyond the campus: Unacknowledged rape among low-income women." *Violence against Women*, 14, 269-286.
- *T. W. Maurer, and D. W. Robinson. 2007. "Effects of attire, alcohol, and gender on perceptions of date rape." *Sex Roles*, 58, 423-434.
- *S. K. Murnen and M. H. Kohlman. 2007. "Athletic participation, fraternity membership, and sexual aggression among college men: A meta-analytic review." *Sex Roles*, 57, 145-157.
- *S. Razack. 1994. "What is to be gained by looking White people in the eye? Culture, race, and gender in cases of sexual violence." *Signs*, 19, 894-923.

Recommended:

- P. J. Burke, J. E. Stets, and M. A. Pirog-Good. 1988. "Gender identity, self-esteem, and physical and sexual abuse in dating relationships." *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 51, 272-285.
- Emerson, R. M., K. O. Ferris, and C. B. Gardner. 1998. "On being stalked." *Social Problems*, 45, 289-314.
- C. L. Muehlenhard and L. C. Hollabaugh. 1988. "Do women sometimes say no when they mean yes? The prevalence and correlates of

women's token resistance to sex." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54, 872- 879.

- R. D. Peterson and W. C. Bailey. 1992. "Rape and dimensions of gender socioeconomic inequality in U. S. metropolitan areas." *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 29, 162-177.
- R. L. Shotland and J. M. Craig. 1988. "Can men and women differentiate between friendly and sexually interested behavior?" *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 51, 66-73.