**SOCL 1256: Violence in the Family**

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**Course Description**

Despite the growing recognition of violence in the home as a significant social problem, rates of abuse by intimate partners or family members remain extremely high. Not only are we flooded with news stories about family violence in the news, but many of the people we know have experienced abuse or neglect. Understanding how places that we often view as safe havens become sites of violence is critical to supporting those who experienced abuse, to making informed public policies, and to preventing family violence. This course offers students the tools to think sociologically about the causes, forms, and costs of violence in the home. Throughout the course, students will be challenged to think critically about their own assumptions and biases around the causes, consequences, and solutions to family violence, to consider how forms of violence outside the home contribute to violence within it, and to identify the opportunities and challenges that currently exist for eradicating family violence. Although this course will not replace a formal certification in domestic violence or sexual assault counseling, we will discuss many of the issues that direct service providers (i.e. advocates, case managers, hotline staff) might face when working with survivors of abuse. This course will be of interest to students who might work with survivors of abuse in the future, or who have a general academic or professional interest in the topic.

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, students should be able to…

1. Identify and describe the main sociological frameworks used to explain violence in the home and critically examine the differences between them;
2. Describe the links between violence within and outside the home;
3. Explain how structural and symbolic violence contribute to family violence;
4. Critically engage with news and social media stories about family violence;
5. Demonstrate in-depth knowledge of one theme related to family violence.

**Readings**

* Textbook: Hattery, Angela, and Earl Smith. *The social dynamics of family violence.* Westview Press, 2012.
* Additional readings will be posted on Blackboard
* Suggested readings available upon request

**Course Policies**

**Classroom etiquette:**

**Family violence is a sensitive topic, and one that some students may have been exposed to in some way. It is critical that all students be respectful and thoughtful about their comments and that personal information shared in class remain confidential. Please speak to me in private if the course triggers any issues, as I will be happy to provide students with suggestions and resources for how to deal with these.**

**While students are highly encouraged to think critically about the information provided in class and to play the “devil’s advocate” when appropriate, they should always do so respectfully. This requires paying attention to the mood in the room and considering how those with different experiences or opinions might react to these comments. Students should focus their comments on “academic” questions (i.e. about the causes, consequences, or solutions of FV) and avoid sharing personal opinions about the morality of an issue.**

**Technology in the classroom:**

**Technology can be a valuable asset to learning when used properly. Students are welcome to use laptops and tablets as long as they remain engaged and are not distracting themselves or others with the content on their screen. Individual students or the entire classroom may be asked to put these away if I feel like this principle is not being respected. Cell phones should be on silent at all times, and students should restrict checking their phones during class.**

**Food and breaks:**

**Remaining engaged in class—alert, attentive, and participative—will make the class more interesting and productive for all of us. Students should arrive on time and come prepared to participate. Students will be given a 15-minute break each class. Students are also welcome to bring food and drinks, as these can be helpful to remaining alert.**

**Assignments:**

**All assignments should be completed by the deadline. Please email me 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE if something comes up that prevents you from completing the assignment. Students who do not get explicit permission from me in advance will be penalized for tardiness (0.5 points per day late for media analyses and 1 point per day late for research assignments).**

**Plagiarism:**

**Plagiarism is considered a serious offense by Northeastern University, and students should take this seriously as well. Northeastern’s Academic Integrity Policy can be found here:** <http://www.northeastern.edu/osccr/academic-integrity-policy/>

**Sources:**

**We now suffer from an over-abundance of information, and it is easy to get overwhelmed by these sources and not know how to find them or which ones are credible. We will discuss this in greater detail in class, but students should be thoughtful about the credibility of each source. As a general rule, these sources are valid: books, scholarly articles, news articles by a mainstream newspaper, and reports issued by the government or major NGOs. You can find many of these on scholar.google.com. Invalid sources include: Wikipedia, blogs, and websites not affiliated with a credible organization.**

**Communication**

**Please email me, stop me after class, or visit my office hours for any questions or concerns or to talk further about the course material. I will be happy to provide you additional ideas and resources relevant to your areas of interest. This is also a good way to demonstrate your engagement and commitment to the class, though it is not required to do well in class.**

**I will make every effort to respond to email within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends. Feel free to email again if I have not responded within that time frame, as sometimes things fall through the cracks.**

**I will hold regular office hours, but I can be available during other times upon request.**

**I will typically return graded assignments with feedback within a week. Please take the time to reflect on these suggestions and incorporate them, when appropriate, into future assignments.**

**Skills Workshops**

**Throughout the course, we will review several academic skills are critical to succeeding in this class and other social science courses. Please incorporate these skills into future writing assignments, as these will be considered in your grade.**

**Assignments and Grading**

**Grading Breakdown:**

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| Social media analyses (4) | 20% |
| In-class writing prompts (5) | 20% |
| Attendance and participation | 20% |
| Research Paper | 40% |
| Total | 100% |

Students will be evaluated on four criteria:

**1. Weekly social medial analyses (4 analyses, 5 points each)**

In order to examine how family violence is discussed in the public eye, you will conduct four analyses of online media sources, 3-4 pages each. You will be expected to find an article on a mainstream news website or other social media platform about one of the types of violence in the class and write a critical analysis of it. Details can be found on Blackboard under “Assignments.”

Analyses will be due by Tuesday (midnight) of each week.

**2. In-class writing prompts (5 prompts, 4 points each)**

Please ensure that you do all the readings before each class. You will be asked to produce a short writing prompt on five different occasions. You may do this on either a computer/tablet or on notebook paper (computer preferred). In each promt, you will respond to a question that brings together the main themes in the readings and be asked to provide some examples. You may look at the readings during this time, but you should demonstrate in the assignment that you completed the readings ahead of time.

**3. Research Paper (40 points total)**

The goal of a research paper is to examine a specific issue in greater depth than we were able to cover in class and to reflect critically on what the literature says, what is missing, and what implications this has for addressing the issue. The assignment will be divided into four components:

**A. Proposal** (5 points, 2-3 pages): Students will identify a particular topic of interest (i.e. statutory rape, dating violence among teens, violence in an immigrant community, etc) and will briefly describe the issue, the population, and some relevant current statistics. You will also propose a *research question* that will frame the rest of your paper. Questions that begin with “how,” “why,” or “under what conditions,” tend to make the best research questions. Please email me in advance if you’d like some suggestions for how to frame your question.

Due Date: Wednesday, July 20th

**B. Review of the literature** (15 points, 5-7 pages): Students will provide an overview of how other scholars have answered your research question. This section should have a clear and logical structure (with headings). Although there are many ways to structure this, you might consider dividing it based on (a) the various theoretical frameworks used to explain the problem; (b) the different methodologies used to study it; (c) the major debates among scholars/policy-makers; (d) the different populations affected by your issue; etc. A minimum of 15 peer-reviewed journal articles and 5 books should be referenced.

Due Date: Wednesday, August 3rd

**C. Implications for policy and practice** (10 points, 4-5 pages): Building upon the literature, students will put together a set of suggestions for how to address the issue. This section should include (a) programs or policies already in place to address the problem; (b) an analysis of how the benefits and limitations of these efforts; and (c) some suggestions for how they might be improved.

Due Date: Monday, August 15th

**D. Final presentation** (10 points): Students will prepare a presentation (10-20 minutes, depending on the size of the class) highlighting their key findings for each section. It is recommended that you follow this structure: (a) Presentation of the problem (with some key stats); (b) Presentation of the research question; (c) Presentation of major theoretical/empirical findings; (d) Presentation of major policies or programs and some ideas for potential improvement of these. At the end, the class and the instructor will ask questions, and students will also be graded on their ability to respond thoughtfully to these questions.

Due Date: Monday, August 22nd (or whenever the final exam is listed)

**4. Attendance and Participation (20 points)**

Students are expected to attend every class. Please email me IN ADVANCE if you will not be able to attend class. I will work with students who have demonstrated a strong effort to attend every class to make up missed time and work. After one missed class, students will be required to provide documentation to excuse future absences.

Participation is a critical part of learning. While the course involves some lecturing, it is largely based on large and small group discussions of the readings and class material. I will make every effort to make the course as engaging and interactive as possible, and will count on you to ask questions and put forth your opinions and reflections on the course material.

Please note that sleeping in class or being distracted by technology is disrespectful to your peers and your instructor. Students will be penalized for these activities.

**Course Reading List**

Note: Readings may be subject to change. Please read the articles posted in Blackboard (even if they don’t match the syllabus), as well as the assigned book chapters before each class.

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| **7/6** | **Introduction**  *Activity: Conceptual Mapping: Where do we derive our beliefs and assumptions about violence in the family?*  **Suggested Readings**   * Hattery & Smith (2012): Chp 1 |
| **7/11** | **History and Theory**  *Skills workshop: Designing a good research question*  **Readings:**   * Hattery & Smith (2012): Chp 2-3 * Anderson, Kristin L. 2013. “Why Do We Fail to Ask ‘Why’ About Gender and Intimate Partner Violence?” *Journal of Marriage and Family* 75(2):314–18. * Johnson, Michael P. 2005. “Domestic Violence: It’s Not About Gender—Or Is It?” *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67(5):1126–30. |
| **7/13** | **Methods: How do we know what we know?**  *Activity: Design your own research project*  *Skills workshop: Locating sources, citations, plagiarism*  **Readings:**   * Hattery & Smith (2012): Chp 4 * Finkelhor, David, Richard K. Ormrod, and Heather A. Turner. 2009. “Lifetime Assessment of Poly-Victimization in a National Sample of Children and Youth.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 33(7):403–11. * Band-Winterstein, Tova. 2014. “The Impact of Lifelong Exposure to IPV on Adult Children and Their Aging Parents.” *Journal of Family Issues* 35(4):439–61. * Burton, Linda, Diane Purvin, and Raymond Garrett-Peters. 2015. “Longitudinal Ethnography: Uncovering Domestic Abuse in Low-Income Women’s Lives.” in *Female Students and Cultures of Violence in Cities*, edited by J. Hall. Routledge. |

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| **7/18** | **Domestic Violence: Dynamics, Patterns, Consequences**  “The Color Purple” with Whoopie Goldberg (first half)  *Skills workshop: Writing academic papers*  *Students share their research questions, get feedback*  **Readings:**   * Hattery & Smith (2012): Chp 8 * Menjívar, Cecilia and Olivia Salcido. 2002. “Immigrant Women and Domestic Violence Common Experiences in Different Countries.” *Gender & Society* 16(6):898–920. * Crenshaw, Kimberle. 1991. “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color.” *Stanford Law Review* 43(6):1241. |
| **7/20** | **IPV and the Challenges to Safety**   * Culture, race, class * Intersectionality * Homelessness (maybe Desmond article?) * Interactions with police   “The Color Purple” with Whoopie Goldberg (second half)  *Proposal due 7/20 by midnight*  **Readings:**   * Hattery & Smith (2012): Chp 9 * Desmond, Matthew. 2012. “Eviction and the Reproduction of Urban Poverty.” *American Journal of Sociology* 118(1):88–133. * Hays, Sharon. 2003. *Flat Broke with Children: Women in the Age of Welfare Reform*. Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press. Chp 5: “Invisibility and Exclusion.” |
| **7/25** | **Child Abuse**  *Skills workshop: Writing a literature review*  **Readings:**   * Hattery & Smith (2012): Chp 6-7 * Whiting, Jason B. and Robert E. Lee. 2003. “Voices from the System: A Qualitative Study of Foster Children’s Stories.” *Family Relations* 52(3):288. * Backett-Milburn, Kathryn, Sarah Wilson, Angus Bancroft, and Sarah Cunningham-Burley. 2008. “Challenging Childhoods Young People’s Accounts of ‘Getting by’ in Families with Substance Use Problems.” *Childhood* 15(4):461–79. * Gershoff, Elizabeth T. and Susan H. Bitensky. 2007. “The Case against Corporal Punishment of Children: Converging Evidence from Social Science Research and International Human Rights Law and Implications for U.S. Public Policy.” *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* 13(4):231–72. |
| **7/27** | **Abuse by, from and between adolescents**  Guest Speaker: Carlos Cuevas, Criminology, *“Dating violence among Latino adolescents”*  **Readings:**   * Miller, Jody. 2008. Getting Played: African American Girls, Urban Inequality, and Gendered Violence. NYU Press. Chp 5. * Reed, Elizabeth, Jay G. Silverman, Anita Raj, Michele R. Decker, and Elizabeth Miller. 2011. “Male Perpetration of Teen Dating Violence: Associations with Neighborhood Violence Involvement, Gender Attitudes, and Perceived Peer and Neighborhood Norms.” *Journal of Urban Health* 88(2):226–39. * Sabina, Chiara, Carlos A. Cuevas, and Heather M. Cotignola-Pickens. 2016. “Longitudinal Dating Violence Victimization among Latino Teens: Rates, Risk Factors, and Cultural Influences.” *Journal of Adolescence* 47:5–15. |
| **8/1** | **Sexual Violence**  Documentary: “The Hunting Ground”  *Small group session to discuss progress on literature review*  **Readings:**   * Statement by Stanford Survivor (15 pages) * Miller, Jody. 2008. *Getting Played: African American Girls, Urban Inequality, and Gendered Violence*. NYU Press. Chp 4. * London, Kamala, Maggie Bruck, Stephen J. Ceci, and Daniel W. Shuman. 2005. “Disclosure of Child Sexual Abuse: What Does the Research Tell Us About the Ways That Children Tell?” *Psychology, Public Policy, and Law* 11(1):194–226. * Hodge, David R. 2008. “Sexual Trafficking in the United States: A Domestic Problem with Transnational Dimensions.” *Social Work* 53(2):143–52. |
| **8/3** | **Abuse against Elderly/People with Disabilities**  *Literature Review due 8/3 by midnight*  *Guest speaker: Jack Levin*  **Readings:**   * Hattery & Smith (2012): Chp 5 * Weeks, Lori E. and Kristal LeBlanc. 2011. “An Ecological Synthesis of Research on Older Women’s Experiences of Intimate Partner Violence.” *Journal of Women & Aging* 23(4):283–304. * World Health Organization. 2002. *Missing Voices: Views of Older Persons on Elder Abuse*. WHO; INPEA. * Dow, Briony and Melanie Joosten. 2012. “Understanding Elder Abuse: A Social Rights Perspective.” *International Psychogeriatrics* 24(6):853–55. * Ballan, Michelle S. et al. 2014. “Looking Beyond Prevalence A Demographic Profile of Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence With Disabilities.” *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 29(17):3167–79. * Hollomotz, Andrea. 2009. “Beyond ‘Vulnerability’: An Ecological Model Approach to Conceptualizing Risk of Sexual Violence against People with Learning Difficulties.” *British Journal of Social Work* 39(1):99–112. |
| **8/8** | **Abuse in LGBT communities**  *Skills workshop: What is public policy?*  *Guest Speaker: Kirsten Lewis*  **Readings:**   * Hattery & Smith (2012): Chp 5 * Donovan, Catherine and Marianne Hester. 2010. “‘I Hate the Word “Victim”’: An Exploration of Recognition of Domestic Violence in Same Sex Relationships.” *Social Policy and Society* 9(2):279. * Cruz, J.Michael. 2003. “‘Why Doesn’t He Just Leave?’ Gay Male Domestic Violence and the Reasons Victims Stay.” *Journal of Men’s Studies* 11(3):309. * Singh, Anneliese A. and Vel S. McKleroy. 2011. “‘Just Getting Out of Bed Is a Revolutionary Act’ The Resilience of Transgender People of Color Who Have Survived Traumatic Life Events.” *Traumatology* 17(2):34–44. |
| **8/10** | **Why do they do it? Understanding Perpetration of Abuse**  Documentary: “The Mask you Live In”  **Readings:**   * Kimmel, Michael. 2009. *Guyland*. Harper Collins. * “Confessions of a Date Rapist.” Manhattan Spirit. * Durfee, Alesha. 2011. “‘I’m Not a Victim, She’s an Abuser’ Masculinity, Victimization, and Protection Orders.” *Gender & Society* 25(3):316–34. * Bourgois, Philippe. 2003. *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*. Cambridge University Press. |
| **8/15** | **Addressing the issue: Direct services for survivors**  Guest Speakers: Margo Lindauer, Jennifer Howard, Domestic Violence Institute, Northeastern University,*“Working with DV survivors”*  *Implications for policy and practice due 8/15 by midnight*  **Readings:**   * Hattery & Smith (2012): Chp 5 * Dumbrill, Gary C. 2006. “Parental Experience of Child Protection Intervention: A Qualitative Study.” *Child Abuse & Neglect* 30(1):27–37. * Kuosmanen, Jari and Mikaela Starke. 2013. “Identifying the Invisible: The Experiences of Prostitution among Persons with Intellectual Disabilities: Implications for Social Work.” *Journal of Social Work* 13(2):123–40. * Herman, Judith L. 2015. *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Violence--From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*. Basic Books. Chps 7-8. |
| **8/17** | **Addressing the issue: Policy, advocacy, and education**  Guest Speaker: Dan Lebowitz, Center for Sports in Society, Northeastern University  *“Policy and education to prevent violence”*  *http://www.safehorizon.org/page/ariels-huffington-post-blog-282/news/31-of-the-most-powerful-domestic-violence-moments-in-the-last-year-318.html*  *Activity: Reflections and edits on concept maps*  **Readings:**   * Roe-Sepowitz, Dominique E., Kristine E. Hickle, Jaime Dahlstedt, and James Gallagher. 2014. “Victim or Whore: The Similarities and Differences between Victim’s Experiences of Domestic Violence and Sex Trafficking.” *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment* 24(8):883–98. * Goodmark, Leigh. 2009. “Autonomy Feminism: An Anti-Essentialist Critique of Mandatory Interventions in Domestic Violence Cases.” *Fla. St. UL Rev.* 37:1. |
| **8/23** | **3:30-5:30pm Final Presentations**  Enjoy the rest of the summer! |