

Trends and Issues in Victimology

Trends and Issues in Victimology

Edited by

Natti Ronel, K. Jaishankar and Moshe Bensimon

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P U B L I S H I N G

Trends and Issues in Victimology, Edited by Natti Ronel, K. Jaishankar and Moshe Bensimon

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TO THE VICTIMS OF TERRORISM AND VIOLENCE.
LET US PRAY THAT EXPANDING THE RIGHT KNOWLEDGE
INTO THE RIGHT HANDS WILL CONTRIBUTE
TO THE ATTENUATION OF HUMAN EVIL
AND CONSEQUENT SUFFERING.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	x
<i>Gerd F. Kirchhoff</i>	
Editors' Introduction	1
Between perception and victimization: Trends and issues in victimology	
<i>Natti Ronel, K. Jaishankar & Moshe Bensimon</i>	
Part I: Justice for victims	
Chapter One.....	12
Ideology and the behavior of perpetrators and victims of violence	
<i>Noach (Norman) Milgram</i>	
Chapter Two	32
An informal approach to delinquents and their victims: An alternative	
to standard punishment	
<i>Uri Timor</i>	
Chapter Three	57
Family-group conferencing in Israel: The voices of victims following	
restorative justice proceedings	
<i>Esther Shachaf-Friedman & Uri Timor</i>	
Chapter Four	88
Restitution: A multilateral penal approach	
<i>Sharon Aharoni-Goldenberg and Yael Wilchek-Aviad</i>	
Chapter Five	112
Malimath Committee and crime victims: Resurrecting the forgotten	
voices of the Indian criminal justice system	
<i>K. Jaishankar, P. Madhava Soma Sundaram & Debarati Halder</i>	

Part II: Issues of sexual victimization

Chapter Six	130
Reclaiming power?: Women victims of sexual violence and the civil legal system	
<i>Yifat Bitton</i>	
Chapter Seven.....	150
Sexual assault victims: Empowerment or re-victimization? The need for a therapeutic jurisprudence model	
<i>Hadar Dancig-Rosenberg</i>	
Chapter Eight.....	175
Blaming victims and bystanders in the context of rape	
<i>Inna Levy & Sarah Ben-David</i>	
Chapter Nine.....	192
Victims of sexual harassment in modern work places in India	
<i>P. Madhava Soma Sundaram, K. Jaishankar & Megha Desai</i>	
Chapter Ten	205
The relationship between childhood victimization, drug abuse and PTSD and adult delinquency in a prison population	
<i>Sarah Ben-David & Ili Goldberg</i>	

Part III: Illustrated examples of victimization

Chapter Eleven	222
Alienation and emotional distress among relocated youth following the Gaza Disengagement	
<i>Avital Laufer & Mally Shechory</i>	
Chapter Twelve	242
Criminal victimization and social networks in India	
<i>Nandini Rai</i>	
Chapter Thirteen.....	264
Soldier suicides: A victimological perspective	
<i>Ehud Bodner</i>	

Chapter Fourteen	283
A survey of stalking victims in India	
<i>K. Jaishankar, Megha Desai & P. Madhava Soma Sundaram</i>	
Chapter Fifteen	300
Abused Druze women's strategies of resistance	
<i>Brenda Geiger</i>	
Epilogue.....	319
<i>Leslie Sebba</i>	
Scientific Committee of Reviewers	325
About the Editors.....	327
About the Authors	329
Subject Index	337

FOREWORD

GERD F. KIRCHHOFF

I am very much honored by the editors that they gave me the chance to give some introductory impressions about the reader in front of you.

I have read the articles in this volume with a kind of breathless attention, fascinated by the wind of contemporary diversity in the writing of authors who somehow concentrate all on victims. The freshness of the wind going through the pages of this book, and sometimes the strengths of the arguments are rejuvenating. My thoughts went often back to the first symposium on victimology in Jerusalem (1973). Were these contributions possible thirty five years ago? What has changed since then? While I read the different contributions, I tried to find a connection from the first International Symposium on Victimology (1973) and the intellectual climate of victimology in 2008.

When in 1973 for the first time the victimologists of the world assembled in Jerusalem to bring together what was known in the scientific world about the victim, the editors of the proceedings of that symposium called "Victimology" a relatively new development within the study of crime and deviance (Drapkin & Viano, 1974). The notion of victimology was a central issue. The struggle for self definition dominated. It was a necessary attempt to define, and such definitions have a function: the function to attempt to already contain the dynamic field. And what was it? An emerging discipline? A field? A focus? A subtitle? A party of criminology? Was it more?

The symposium looked at society's reaction, at prevention and treatment of victims of crime including restitution and compensation. The position of the victim in the criminal justice system was a main topic, no wonder in a symposium that was largely molded by criminologists and criminal lawyers. Two further volumes of the proceedings deal with special victimizations, characterized by the crimes: homicide, mass violence, genocide, sex offences and rape, white collar crime, traffic offences and related victimization. This all intended the deliberations to be held within a certain discipline, within criminology. In 1973, society's reactions were primarily seen as reactions of the formal system of social

control. Indeed the 1973 symposium was successful in starting a discourse in the international community of scholars. Not equally successful was the attempt to contain victimology in the limits set up by the Conclusions and recommendations of the symposium.

Thirty five years after the 1973 symposium, I look at this edited volume, as a radical contribution to the growth of Victimology in the 21st century. Representatives of a new generation of scholars present their research. Obviously, they are no longer concerned about the debate whether victimology is a science in its own right, whether it is part of criminology or not. Obvious is that the notion of victimology is no longer such a central topic. Victimology has matured, from a relatively new development in criminology to the social science of victims, victimizations and the reactions towards both – with reactions and interactions comprising the most important field: reactions of victims, informal reactions of the social environment leading to secondary victimization on one side, to the criminal justice reaction as one important reaction of the formal system of control on the other side.

No longer is the main arena of the reactions the formal system of social control – victimology studies the field of victim assistance as its own domain. Twenty years ago, in 1988, the General Rapporteur of the 2nd Jerusalem Symposium, Paul C. Friday (1992), asked: “Since when has treatment become a part of victimology?” (p. 8). Analyzing this question with the methodology of Friedemann Schulz von Thun (2006), we recognize its factual content. We look at the self disclosure of the sender, at the relationship to the partner and at the appeal in the communication. Friday’s question included an astonished and somehow unenthusiastic statement – treatment and counseling as one reaction towards victimization had indeed claimed and recovered a prominent place in the field. Victimology was on the move. Therapists and counselors were more and more heard. Almost intolerable for academic scientists, even the victim activists and the volunteer sector took the microphones. For many critical observers, the domination by criminologists seemed to be followed by a domination of the helping professions and volunteer spokesmen and spokeswomanes. This was a time when the consensual façade in victimology broke dissolved, to use a phrase from general social theory (Seidman & Alexander, 2008). Even if this façade is dissolved, it is still clear that the victim is in the center of victimology, not attacks, crimes, or reactions of the criminal justice system. In this framework, reasoning about the characteristics of punishment belongs to our field as long as the victims are in the center. Insofar, Sarah Ben-David’s (2000) “Victim’s Victimology” remains valid. I find that in this collection of chapters, the

disciplinary focus has widely disappeared. The discussion is less closely tied to specific disciplines like criminology or law. That of course means a loss of control at one side and that might be deplored. The disappearance of the disciplinary focus was deplored when the observed separation from victimology and criminology became obvious. This is no longer the case.

Are the authors all victimologists? Not at all. A victimologist is mainly involved in scientific work, in research and in teaching, in rephrasing, remolding and reinforcing the paradigms of victimology. Few authors of this book are full time involved in this endeavor, a consequence of the disappearance of the disciplines. Nevertheless, they all contribute to the knowledge which will be picked up by others, e.g. by victimologists, and which will be brought under the roof of a theoretical construct. It is difficult to see this emerging roof.

Clear seems to me that the attempts to built an overarching theoretical frame have lost its urgency. In this respect this book is a post-foundationalist product (see Seidman & Alexander, 2008, p. 2. who I follow in the next lines). Foundationalism has obviously lost attraction; victimology shares this with other social sciences. Social theory experts observe that many scientists have downshifted scientism – the provision of logical chains of propositions and models that can be empirically tested and will be worked in into systems of knowledge. Instead of research testing theory, post-foundationalist arguments try to explain how social analysis involves a multilevel argumentation. Nowadays, a greater variation of approaches is accepted to a broader extent, than forty years ago. It is not that abstract generalized thinking is no longer required – but we, social scientists, argue from a socially situated point of view. That situation has geographical and philosophical dimensions. There is a much more tolerant rationality at work. Many methodologically quite diverse contributions are worth while to be taken notice of and to be taken into account. In this respect, victimology is not going in different paths that social science generally do. This might be an outcome of the growing awareness that social consequences shape our thinking, that is, our own positions are part of influencing social life. The chain of reasoning moves between analytical philosophical reasoning, empirical data analysis and principal statements. At the same time, social scientists think about the practical social implications.

This edited collection reflects another trend in social science, that is, a decline in the hegemony of what we might call scientist methodology. What does it say about the project of positivism in social science in general? We observe that no longer the methodological statistical considerations are in the foreground of concern. In the scientist period, the

seventies with their enormous gain in insights, the Victim Surveys influenced the scene for the next thirty years, starting from local victim surveys to the grand International Crime Victim Surveys. The methodological intelligence and the scrutiny of empirical science had reached a level that obviously was difficult to maintain, let alone to improve. Cost considerations may play an additional role – obviously research has not always the ability to attract great sums of money to be invested. A consequence is that like in other social sciences, the project of positivistic methodology has lost its hegemonic rule. We find in this book less exalted level of empirical data collections or intense sophisticated statistical manipulation of data. Instead we find much more tolerance towards philosophical excursions. No wonder that we find a higher acceptance of qualitative research and reasoning.

No doubt, the social reaction towards victims is still of crucial importance. Even if we argue from a socially situated position, how far is it possible (and how far is it necessary) to maintain the scientific distance between the observer and the victims? Many authors of this volume are from Israel. They are of course “socially situated”, somehow involved in the great tensions and contradictions in their society. In a very direct way, many authors appear to be bystanders – and bystander become part of the victimizing interaction. The special situation of Israel finds its precipitation in many contributions. Experiential reasoning for most authors is accepted. If we see the authors as observers and bystanders, the position of the observer is clearly included in their constructions of reality – they are the architects and the masons as well and the inhabitants of their house. They communicate with us, the readers, in the same floor or in the neighborhood. In listening, the reader experiences a sharpened awareness of the situated character, whether the authors are from Israel or from India.

What determines the reaction towards victimization? One answer is given: Ideology, not injury determines one’s reaction “to attack”. Attack might not be synonymous with victimization. The statement claims to be true for battered women – a topic that is impressively documented in a small qualitative study on the “liberation” of battered Druze women. What makes the liberation possible? The experience of challenged solidarity of people in the nearest social environment. The statement claims equally to be true for Israelis who are prepared to make great sacrifices and concessions in their search for peace, versus, Israelis who seek, by confrontation and military force, to punish terrorists and regimes that foster and rewards terrorism. Ideology in scientific debates is taken seriously concrete and that opens the possibility to do research on the victims of such ideologies, even if the authors do not loose the contact

with the ground and instead escapes into the heaven of abstract theorizing. That is one of the advantages of the articles in this reader – they are refreshingly concrete, if they want.

Sometimes they are too concrete for my taste – when women are existentially disappointed and feel misunderstood by the criminal justice system – should not the analysis turn to the dimensions which feed these disappointments? What is the role of members in the therapeutic community in exploiting these feelings of the witnesses? Is the time over when dialogues between the helping system and the justice system lead to the invention of the “Child Interrogator”? What happened to the obviously high quality of that dialogue?

Sometimes the theoretical ambition for my taste is too high and I would prefer to see more contact to the ground. The ideas about restorative justice are so much needed for the justice system. I remember the concrete dialogue between lawyers who were informed by victimology and proponents of the traditional system as documented in Judith Karp (1992). The philosophical and theological arguments demonstrate how much mutual understanding is needed to find solutions that are able to bridge the contrasts. In all mutual understanding, the helping system and the judicial system are both parts of the system of social control – but their tasks and means must be different. High theoretical ambition cannot obscure this societal factum.

I have read this book with a kind of breathless tension and with an intellectual joy. Its contributions triggered many theoretical questions. This book not only reflects the current intellectual climate in social science, but it has also posed certain challenges. It is a challenge to understand victimology again in the context of social science in general. It is certainly worth to find its way into the hands not only of victimologists but of many other people, scientists and the representatives of concerned publics. The practical implications of the articles of this book call for intense study and efforts. I am grateful to the editors that they gave me the honor to introduce this book but even more that they challenged me to think about contemporary victimological contributions of such diverse character and high quality.

Mito, Japan, October 2008
Gerd Ferdinand Kirchhoff
Professor of Victimology

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EDITORS' INTRODUCTION

BETWEEN PERCEPTION AND VICTIMIZATION: TRENDS AND ISSUES IN VICTIMOLOGY

NATTI RONEL, K. JAISHANKAR
AND MOSHE BENSIMON

It is late in the morning. Sally, a young woman, who works as a secretary, leaves her office in a rush, without notice, and finds shelter in a near-by office of another department of the same firm. Her face reveals her fear and anxiety. She cries uncontrollably, but her tears give her no relief. She calms down slowly, but says nothing. The woman, whose office she fled to, knows what has happened. "Is he still there?" Sally nods her head in affirmation. The loud voice of a grown man calling out again for "his friend" elicits more tears. She tries to calm down again. She drinks the coffee that is offered, waits a bit, looks at a small mirror on the wall to check that there are no more signs of crying, and heads back to her office. This isn't the first time and she knows that he is already gone, because he never stays long. Now she is back at her desk and ignores the stare of the other secretary in the room who wants to know why and where Sally disappeared. She relaxes for a moment, but she was wrong: he has not left. He comes out of the office of the director of Sally's department. He is a well-dressed man in his early sixties, a high ranking director of another firm that her department deals with. He hurries towards her: "Here you are, my friend. I couldn't leave without a kiss. Kiss me!" The demand is clear. Sally is unable to move, speak, or resist. She drops her eyes in surrender. The man hugs her in a seemingly friendly manner, but holds her tight against his long frame to feel her soft body, and kisses both her cheeks. Satisfied, he leaves the room.

The director who accompanied him as he came out of her inner office, the other secretary who is sitting next to Sally, and another woman who looked in when she heard the man's boisterous shouts – all three women smile, as if what they have witnessed was an amusing, harmless

interaction. For Sally it is no smiling matter, she says nothing, but gazes motionless.

Hours later, in her therapist's office, she explains why she continues to act the way she does when this man harasses her sexually. For Sally these episodes are a nightmare. First, because she is unable to resist him and gives in. Second, because the other women, who witness these recurrent episodes of sexual harassment, say nothing and do nothing to protect her. They have no reason to do so because they think there is nothing wrong, only harmless horseplay. For Sally these episodes elicit memories of the rape she experienced as a young adolescent. She doesn't want to be touched by this man. Her body tells it clearly. Her face cries it loudly, but not her voice. And the people around do nothing but ignore. Even worse, they smile, maybe because they don't see, maybe because the man is an important client. He is, therefore, much more important than Sally, a mere secretary. No, Sally will not complain to the woman in charge of sexual harassment issues in the firm. She will continue to do what she done before – to avoid him as possible, to suffer in silence, and to cry afterwards with friends and her therapist. For how long? It is too early to know. Let us hope that with the aid of her therapist and friends, Sally will change something. Even if Sally changes, what about other members of her department? Will they come to see things differently and do something about it? What about the harassing man, will he change his behavior? What about us? Do we recognize when someone is being victimized and are we prepared to do something about it? This story, taken from clinical practice, is one example of many in which bystanders fail to perceive that someone is being victimized.

A colleague victimologist asserted: "Victimization is perception" (Andzenge, 2005). Examples are widespread. From individual level to group or cultural level, the subjective perceptions of those involved as "victims" has significant impact upon the degree of their victimization. Furthermore, the subjective perceptions of others involved also affect the experience and the subsequent behavior of victims. The number of "the others" is legion: Friends, relatives, bystanders or citizens who become aware of the event(s), parties with a vested interest (e.g., law enforcement agencies and voluntary organizations), and the perpetrators themselves. They all bring to the "objective" episode their subjective perception of the event (Hulsmann, 2006). Sally's story taken from real-life, reminds one of *Rashomon*, the famous Akira Kurosawa film of 1950: The rapist, the raped women, her helpless husband, and a forth party. Each perceives the event differently. The variety of perceptions, including that of the direct victim, works together to continue this victimization and like episodes.

Sally regards the man's behavior as abusing and humiliating. Despite her repeated traumatization and perceived public humiliation, she sees no other option except submission, dissociation from what is happening, and emotional numbness. The perpetrator apparently enjoys his encounters with Sally, probably never thinks about the misery he is inflicting on her, and may even assume that she enjoys these episodes as much as he does. His rank and his gender-based permit, if not legitimize his use and abuse of Sally's body. As long as he thinks that he can continue with the same behavior, he would not stop it (Ronel, in press). The behavior of the women, who witness assaults on Sally's body, dignity, and well being, exacerbate Sally's sense of loneliness during and following the harassment, creating a form of learned helplessness. These women are all aware of the widespread phenomenon of sexual harassment, its legal implications, and the social opprobrium attached to it. If they fail to recognize the phenomenon when it is occurring before their eyes, they are themselves accomplices to these actions and their recurrence. To conclude, victimization is perception, but certain perceptions may cause or support further victimization. Perception determines whether what took place is an aggressive act vented upon another or not. The failure of others to identify perpetrator and victim reinforces the perpetrator's behavior and intensifies the sense of helplessness and abandonment of the victim. Therefore, at times perception is victimization.

The centrality of perception in victimology thinking, research, and intervention is manifest when we examine the process of victimization in social conflicts. For example, a recent study of settlers Jews in Gaza Strip during their forced evacuation by the Israeli authorities (The "Disengagement" process), relates development of victimization and changes in perception by victims and aggressors in the course of this process, as manifested in the corresponding changes in the collective singing of the evacuated and the responses it evoked (Bensimon, 2008). Likewise, during therapy, change in victims' perceptions and their emotional responses is central to the progress of recovery (e.g. Ronel, 2008; Winkel, 2007). Moreover, the term "victimization" itself comes to be perceived as a negative label. People who were victimized reject this label and prefer terms that stress their ability to master adversity (van Dijk, 2006, 2008). An example of change in terminology is the way Jews caught up in the Holocaust came to be described following their immigration to Israel. At the end of the Second World War, Jews who survived were called Holocaust Rescued, implying that they remained alive because of the efforts of others. More recently, many wish to be called Holocaust

Survivors. The new term reflects a change of status from passive victims to active resisters who remained alive because of their own efforts.

Ben-David (2000) introduces "Victim's Victimology", a need-based orientation in victimology research and practice. This orientation focuses on the perceptions of victims and calls for a scientific methodology for victims' expressing their needs and interests. This orientation is a paradigm shift (Zehr, 1995) in which the self-perceived needs of victims become the primary focus rather than their rights, as determined by society (Sebba, 2000). Admittedly giving voice to victims' needs also gives voice to victims' rights, the former adds a new dimension.

The old paradigm that emphasizes the rights of victims may be regarded as an instance of a just morality, while the new paradigm emphasizes a caring moral ethic (Gilligan, 1993). Caring includes not only the protection of victims' rights and interests, but also creating opportunities for their needs to be met. Current theory in victimology expresses this paradigm emphasizing both an action-oriented field, as well as a scholarly and scientific one (van Dijk, 1997). A major action targets a transformation of perceptions in any level, from individual to institutional to cultural and societal.

Trudging behind the progress of victimology, modern societies show signs of approximate transformation. From ones that consciously or by ignorance, fostered victimization by mistreatment, maltreatment and even re-abuse of former victims, modern societies move towards declaring the well caring for victims and their attempt to reduce and prevent various types of victimization (Balloni & Bisi, 2004; Kirchhoff, 2004; Waller, 2005). Central to the change process of societies is a change process of perceptions of various agents within those societies. Albeit the declaration of victims' prone policy and the inclusion of procedures within the criminal justice system that attempt to keep victims' legal rights, the implementation still meets victims' needs only partially (Sebba, 2000; Svensson, 2007). Therefore, the perceptions of society's agents are still in a need for transformation, as current victimology suggests. Some of the chapters of this edited volume indeed call for such a change.

The following chapters are grouped in three sections: Justice for victims, issues of sexual victimization, and illustrated examples of victimization. Most of the chapters are based on presentations in an International Conference "Victimology and Law", May 8-9, 2007, at Bar-Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Israel.

The first section targets perception and the process of change in perception as they affect victimology and justice for victims. In Chapter One, **Noach Milgram** postulated that ideology is inherent in perception

and critical in understanding the mind set of victims. Ideology, whether manifest or below awareness, contributes to the construction of perceptions and proactive and reactive behavior. Noach provides innovative and provocative illustrations of the power of ideology in his studies on battered women and victims of Palestinian terrorism. **Uri Timor** proposes in Chapter Two a different view by challenging the perceptions that underlie retributive punishment. Uri presents an alternative solution to the conflict between offender and victim that is based on Jewish theoretical formulations and restorative approaches. He advocates transferring at least partial responsibility for the offender-victim conflict to the prevailing social order; this recommendation is consistent with Jewish tradition attributing to the community some degree of responsibility for the transgressions that take place within its confines. **Esther Shachaf-Friedman and Uri Timor** present in Chapter Three, findings from a study of victims' perceptions in family-group conferences with juvenile delinquents. Based on the analysis of these perceptions, Esthi and Uri suggest practical guidelines to prepare and implement restorative justice processes in victim-focused intervention. The same pragmatic victim-needs and rights approach was presented by **Sharon Aharoni-Goldenberg and Yael Wilchek-Aviad** in Chapter Four on restitution to victims of property offences. Victim-focused restitution is contrasted with the prevalent legal procedures applied to property offenders that do not help the direct victims, according to Sharon and Yael. In the fifth and final chapter in this section, **K. Jaishankar, P. Madhava Soma Sundaram and Debarati Halder** describe and discuss the position of the victim in ancient, medieval, British and modern India; the authors analyze the role of Malimath Committee in restoring the forgotten voices of crime victims in the Indian criminal justice system. Jai, Madhavan and Debarati illustrate the process of change that a developing society goes through when attempting to adopt the thought of modern victimology, and at the same time, to integrate it with ancient Indian wisdom.

Sexual harm and offences usually leave distinctive mark on individuals who were sexually victimized. The sexual violation of intrapersonal intimacy calls for particular understanding and intervention. The second section addresses this issue specifically. **Yifat Bitton** offers in Chapter Six a feminist perception of the treatment of women victims of sexual violence in the justice system that is needed to prevent further victimization and to overcome the consequences of the initial victimization. Yifat calls for re-orientation of tort litigation to enable women victims of sexual violence to reclaim the power that was brutally taken from them. **Hadar Dancig-Rosenberg** highlights the gap between therapeutic dialogue and legal

dialogue in Chapter Seven and calls for accommodating existing judicial processes to the unique needs of sexual assault victims. Hadar suggests that while the adversarial system of judicial procedures is likely to remain, it must undergo reforms that will advance therapeutic goals in behalf of the victims. **Inna Levy and Sarah Ben-David** broadens in Chapter Eight the discussion on sexual victimization by focusing on a neglected group, the “innocent” bystanders. Reviewing theoretical and empirical literature, Inna and Sarah address the way bystanders are perceived and offer models of bystander blaming. In Chapter Nine, **P. Madhava Soma Sundaram, K. Jaishankar and Megha Desai** address sexual harassment in the modern work places in India. In their empirical pilot research, Madhavan, Jai and Megha describe the prevalence and characteristics of sexual harassment in a major Indian city, Mumbai. In the final chapter of this section, Chapter Ten, **Sarah Ben-David and Ili Goldberg** present the results of a study of male prisoners. Their study establishes the relationship of past traumatizing experiences in sexual offenders, their PTSD symptoms and drug dependency, and their own perpetration of sexual crimes. Sarah and Ili found that prisoners who were sexually abused in the past and who developed a cognitive avoidance style tended to become sexual offenders as adults, while those who developed drug dependency tend to exhibit non-specific criminal behavior.

The third section of the book illustrates and analyses several examples of victimization. In an empirical research design, **Avital Laufer and Mally Shechory** investigated in Chapter Eleven distress levels in Israeli youth, 18 months after they were forced to leave their homes during the Israeli government mandated disengagement from the Gaza Strip. Avital and Mally found direct relationships between perception of the traumatic experience, feelings of alienation, and distress level. In Chapter Twelve, **Nandini Rai** presents a novel focus on known phenomena. She offers a socio-geographical analysis of the distribution of criminal victimization from the perspective of places with specific identities. Nandini asserts that reduced social interaction and a decline in mutual trust in the society make the places of interaction unsafe. In Chapter Thirteen, **Ehud Bodner** reviews the major factors in the etiology of suicide among soldiers and in the failure of professional authorities to provide help to soldiers at risk. Soldiers who attempt suicide may be perceived and consequently treated as disturbed youth who are trying to manipulate others rather than as victims of their own suffering. Ehud presents some practical suggestions for the prevention of suicidal behaviors in soldiers. **K. Jaishankar, Megha Desai and P. Madhava Soma Sundaram** target in Chapter Fourteen the stalking phenomenon in India and relate this form of

victimization to a transformation in social-cultural perception of this phenomenon. Jai, Megha and Madhavan present results from a survey of college students that indicate patterns of repeated intrusions and harassment techniques. They document victim reluctance to report this behavior, and effects of stalking on the victims. In the closing chapter in this section, Chapter Fifteen, **Brenda Geiger** presents a qualitative research of domestically abused Druze women, a group whose voice is rarely heard. These women have to struggle on two fronts: (a) to content with their abusive spouses; and (b) to contend with the context-relevant ideology, norms and perceptions of their extended families. Their family attempts to force them to reconcile with the abusive spouse and to reconcile themselves to continued abuse. As Noach Milgram indicated in the opening chapter of this book, ideology may deny the natural human rights of victims. Brenda presents, however, an optimistic picture of the struggle of abused Druze women and their successful claim for rights and power.

When one types in the word 'victimology', the automatic spelling correction in the word processor indicates that the term does not exist. More than 60 years after Beniamin Mendelsohn coined this term (Dussich, 2006), one may ask, is the field a discipline and a profession manned by only a few experts? Is victimology the private "playground" of victimologists and a few others who show some interest? Are we still in the early stage of this field? We strongly believe that the answer is in the negative. Victimology is an established field with growing international impact. Therefore, the current volume reflects the current status of the field. It is not an introductory text to the field but, on the contrary, it treats victimology as a mature field of study and practice with many achievements to its credit and many challenges.

While working on this book, we received enormous assistance from many friends and colleagues and our pleasant duty is to thank them all. First to be mentioned is **Keren Cohen-Louck**, the devoted coordinator of the international conference that preceded the book and with the same breath, our colleagues who served as members of the Conference Steering Committee: **Sarah Ben David, Ruth Kannai, Simha Landau, Stephen Levin, Ron Shapira** and **Mally Shechory**. We also would like to thank **Malka Or-Chen, Hadas Elharar, Sylvie Lipsker and Liron Maor** who provided the Conference with the necessary administrative assistance. We thank those organizations that sponsored the Conference: **Bar-Ilan University's – Faculty of Law and Department of Criminology; The Ariel University Center of Samaria and its Multidisciplinary Social Sciences Department and Department of Criminology; and The Israeli Society of Criminology**. We are grateful to our colleagues, members of

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PART I:
JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS

CHAPTER ONE

IDEOLOGY AND THE BEHAVIOR OF PERPETRATORS AND VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE

NOACH (NORMAN) MILGRAM

Abstract

This chapter makes general and specific assertions about ideology: (a) ideology is ubiquitous in human deliberations and subsequent actions; (b) ideology determines definition of victim and victimizer in violent encounters; (c) ideology affects decisions by battered women whether to remain with abusive partners or to separate and seek legal recourse; (d) Western ideology favors acts of forgiveness and condemns feelings and acts of retribution, thereby restricting the emotion and behavioral repertoire of battered women; (e) ideology affects endorsement by Israeli civilians of lenient versus harsh retaliation against the Palestinian Authority, its armed militias, and citizenry in response to terrorist attacks; (f) ideology affects corresponding endorsements by Israeli combat soldiers as well as their readiness for conciliatory relations with Israeli Arabs. Assertions (b-e) were amenable to empirical confirmation and were confirmed both by findings in the research literature and by the author's own research findings.

Introduction

This chapter is both a theoretical essay on a number of related topics and a summary of empirical research including research conducted by the author. As such, the chapter makes general and situation-specific assertions about ideology defined as attitudes, beliefs, values, and assumptions about important issues in life and then provides empirical evidence in their support. The assertions are as follows:

- (a) Ideology is inherent in all human deliberations and subsequent actions.
- (b) Ideology is a crucial variable in the responsibility attribution patterns

of individuals and groups and determines the target individuals and groups whom the former hold responsible for past and anticipated actions. As such, it determines the personal and societal definition of victim and victimizer both for observers and for participants in violent encounters.

(c) Ideology in the form of beliefs and assumptions about interpersonal violence affects the decisions reached by victims of domestic violence, with some battered women choosing to remain with their abusive, unrepentant partners and others separating from their partners and even initiating legal procedures to prosecute them.

(d) The overwhelming support in Western society for acts of forgiveness, forbearance, and letting go versus actions associated with the desire for retribution, restitution, and taking revenge place restrictions on the emotional and behavioral response repertoire of battered women in particular and victims of violence in general.

(4) Ideology affects the response intentions of Israeli civilians who become victims of persistent, unpredictable terrorist attacks, with some attempting to mollify their attackers and others endorsing retaliation.

(5) Ideology also affects the response intentions of Israeli combat soldiers to attacks upon their person and their comrades, families, friends, and neighbors, with some endorsing lenient versus harsh retaliation against Palestinians in the Palestinian Authority on the one hand and readiness for conciliatory versus non-conciliatory social relations with Israeli Arab citizens on the other.

The authoritarian personality

Assertions about the primacy of ideology run counter to (a) pronouncements by social and political scientists following World War II that ideology had become irrelevant, and to (b) the widely held assumption that poverty, racial discrimination, and exploitation are necessary, if not sufficient, causes of violence and conflict (Jost, 2006). There was considerable research on the psychosocial antecedents and tragic consequences of virulent ideologies, fascism and communism, following World War Two. The motivation behind the research of a group of psychologists at Berkeley (Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, Levinson, & Sanford, 1950) was to identify the familial and cultural variables that accounted for the unquestioning obedience and moral disengagement of citizens of an enlightened Western democracy-turned totalitarian regime in committing crimes against humanity. Following the collapse of both Nazi and Communist ideologies in the aftermath of World War II and the Cold War, social scientists drew the conclusion that the age of ideology was

over. Some claimed that there were no longer differences in ideological content between the Left and Right (Apter, 1964); and if there were substantive differences, most people were unable or poorly motivated to apply the logical analysis that would demonstrate to them inherent distinctions between ideologies (Converse, 1964). Others claimed that the so-called major ideological constructs, liberal and conservative, did not differ in content and if they were, in fact, different, these differences did not exercise a systematic effect on behavior, including political behavior (Lane, 1962).

Jost¹ (2006) has written an extensive, authoritative summary of these claims and provides convincing evidence to the contrary. He focuses on the growing cleavage in public opinion in the United States and in Western Europe between the liberal Left and the conservative Right as evidence of political ideological conflict. He documents the influence of liberal versus conservative ideology on presidential elections over the past three decades. He also notes the rise of religious fundamentalism in the United States, India and other countries, and most prominently throughout the Muslim world, and concludes that religious ideology with imperialistic political overtones as well as the more secular political ideology are alive and well, for better and for worse, in the world today.

The ubiquity of ideology

Some researchers (e.g., Baumeister, 1991; Jost, 2006) have taken the position that human beings have a built-in program to find meaning in their lives by adopting and/or adapting existing ideological belief systems. When we consider that “an ideology is an organization of beliefs and attitudes – religious, political, or philosophical in nature... institutionalized or shared with others” (Rokeach, 1969, pp. 123-124); that “ideologies unify thought and action” (Kerlinger, 1984, p. 13); and finally that *political* ideology is an interrelated constellation of moral and political attitudes that possess cognitive, affective, and motivational components (Tedin, 1987, p. 65), it is difficult to understand why ideology was ever declared extinct or why it is not prominent in all research on behavior in general and in research on the behavior of people exposed to stressful and violent life events in particular. Ideology may permeate a society without its members giving it much attention in placid times and places, but it

¹ This section draws heavily on a comprehensive review of this issue by Jost (2006).