

SPRING 2001  
AJ 136, Section 1  
MonWed 10:30-11:45am

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**AJ136**  
**VIOLENCE AND HATE IN THE FAMILY & COMMUNITY**

**Course Description**

Examines abusive relationships and responsive community and justice system policy and preventive interventions. Topics include child abuse, neglect, gang and hate crimes, rape, marital violence and elderly abuse.

**The learning objectives** are for students to:

1. define and differentiate the abuse of power and the use of violence based upon gender, ethnicity, race, religion, class, sexual orientation, disability and age
2. identify how historical, social, psychological, economic and political factors have influenced the recognition of and response to each type of abusive relationship,
3. review current knowledge about the consequences of violence and effects on victims from diverse backgrounds,
4. develop self-awareness about their own prejudicial attitudes and behaviors that tolerate and promote abusive relationships,
5. explore and evaluate ways that individuals from diverse backgrounds and communities can prevent and intervene in each type of abusive and violent relationship,
6. critique the current justice system response and propose ways in which greater equality and justice can be achieved in each type of abusive relationship. This involves reviewing
  - i) statutory laws,
  - ii) role of law enforcement,
  - iii) proceedings within criminal, family and juvenile courts and
  - iv) auxiliary services offered by child protective, victim's advocates and family court agencies.

### **Course Content:**

The topic is divided into five parts that range over the life span:

- infants and children's neglect and psychological maltreatment, physical and sexual abuse
- neighborhood gang violence and hate crimes motivated by religious, racial and sexual orientation discrimination and prejudice during adolescence and young adulthood;
- date rape and sexual violence between intimate partners;
- violence, stalking and psychological terrorizing in dating, cohabiting and marital partnerships;
- abuse of the elderly and handicapped in the family and care institutions.

Reoccurring themes are social discrimination on the basis of gender, religious, racial and ethnic background, socioeconomic status, disability, age and sexual orientation. The dynamics of power and control in relationships and the social and historical processes and institutions that legitimate the abuse of power provides the basic framework for the analysis of all violence and abuse. An understanding of how infants and children's development is compromised by witnessing abuse and being the objects of abuse, provides a complementary developmental understanding (or mechanism) to help explain the intergenerational cycle of abusive relationships.

**3. Prerequisites.** Students should have passed the Writing Skills Test (WST), have upper division standing (56 units), and have completed their CORE GE classes.

**4. Advanced GE Course.** AJ136 has been approved for Area S. of Advanced General Education.

### **Required Reading:**

Wallace, H. (1999). *Family violence: Legal, medical and social perspectives*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Boston, Allyn & Bacon.

Sagatun-Edwards, I.J. & Edwards, L.P. (1995). *Child abuse and the legal system*. Chicago: Nelson Hall.

**Recommended Readings** will be excerpts from the following books. These are available on reserve in the instructor's office.

Barnett, O.W., Miller-Perrin, C.L.; & Perrin, R.D. (1997). *Family violence across the life span*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Curry, C.D., & Decker, S.H. (1998). *Confronting gangs: Crime and community*. L.A.: Roxbury.

Jenness, V. & Broad, K. (1997). *Hate crimes: New social movements and the politics of violence*. N.Y. Aldine de Gruyter.

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

Two take-home written assignments (total 3,000 words) are required during the semester. Each assignment involves viewing a movie or reading a book about child abuse or observing court proceedings, and writing a six-page summary and analysis based on the information covered in the course. (Students are expected to complete at least one of their two written assignments on court proceedings during the semester.) *See separate handouts for instructions on these papers.*

Students may be required to collect newspaper and magazine clippings that illustrate concepts studied in this class. They are also expected to participate in small-group discussions (during class time) on social policy issues and may be asked to give a brief oral report to the whole class. Ungraded writing exercises are also expected in class after viewing video segments from documentary films and small group discussions.

A mid-term and a final exam will be a combination of multiple choice, true/false, fill-ins and short essays. This will be based on assigned readings and lecture material. Grades will be made up of 35% for each exam and 15% for each report. (The academic standards for each grade are provided in a separate handout.)

Extra Credit: Students may be raise their grades by ½ level by attending an approved family violence conference during the semester, and writing a 3 page paper on what is learned. *The instructor will provide information about availability of such conferences.*

**Teaching Philosophy:** This class combines lectures and video segments to present the conceptual material. Regular small group discussion and group exercises during class time are used for students to critique the readings, lectures and videos. These small group activities and individually written assignments also enable students to examine their own attitudes, cultural and family beliefs about abusive relationships. The focus of these small group discussions is upon developing practical, creative and effective community and justice system ways of preventing and intervening in violence that is respectful of diversity and achieves greater justice and equality.

In accord with departmental policy, make-up exams and acceptance of late reports after the due date will be provided only in extreme cases and only where appropriate documentation is provided. Make-up or re-takes of the mid-term exam can only be done at the time of the final exam.

### **CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READINGS**

- Jan 24 Course overview & diagnostic pretest. (Wallace Chpt 1).
- Jan 29,31 Physical & sexual abuse of children (Wallace, Chpt 2 & 3)
- Feb 5,7 Child neglect & psychological maltreatment (Wallace, Chpt 4)
- Feb 12,14 Response to child abuse and neglect by justice system,  
professionals and community  
(Sagatun & Edwards Chpt 1, 3,4,5; Wallace, Chpt 7)
- Feb 19 Child witness to domestic violence: effects & intervention  
(Barnett Chpt 6)
- Feb 21 Class discussion & of abuse and neglect cases from the book  
*Somebody Else's Children* by Hubner & Wolfson & mock  
Juvenile court hearing.
- Feb 26 First paper on movie or court observation is due!**
- Feb 26,28 Neighborhood gang violence (Curry & Decker Chpts 1,2,3,7)

- Mar 5,7 Hate crimes (Optional Jenness & Broad, Chpt 2)
- Mar 12 Review in preparation for midterm
- Mar 14 **MID-TERM EXAM**
- Mar 19,21 Sexual violence & date rape (Wallace, Chpt 13; Barnett Chpt 7)  
Class discussion on effective prevention & intervention.
- Apr 2,4 Cohabitation & spousal abuse (Wallace, Chpt 8)
- Apr 9 Stalking & psychological terrorizing (Wallace Chpt 14)
- Apr 11 Abuse in homosexual relationships (Wallace Chpt 11)
- Apr 16,18 Justice system and community response to mate abuse  
(Wallace Chpt 9)
- Apr 23 Treatment for Batterers
- Apr 25 Second paper on movie/book or court observation is due!**
- Apr 25,30 Battered women who kill their violent mates  
Class discussion and mock jury.
- May 2,7 Children of domestic violence: Custody and visitation  
decision-making & abduction risk management)
- May 9 Elder abuse (Wallace Chpt 10)
- May 14 Review in preparation for final exam & diagnostic post test.

**FINAL EXAM ON DAY EXAM IS SCHEDULED FOR THIS CLASS:  
WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2001, 9:45-12 NOON.**

### Academic Standards

- A+ grades are received by students who receive full credit for 95% of the objective questions on the examinations, and whose analytical written work are exceptional, providing evidence of conceptual skills and depth of analysis beyond what the instructor has provided to the class.
- A grades are received by students who have 90% correct answers on the objective exam questions and whose written work is excellent, mastering the depth of analysis of what the instructor has provided to the class.
- An A- grade is warranted for those with 85% correct answers on the objective exams and where written work is generally excellent, but might have one area of weakness.
- B + grades are for those with 80% correct answers on objective exams, and where written work is very good but is either weak in one or two areas or tends to be too general, lacking specificity.
- B grades are for those with 75% correct answers on the objective exams, and the written work is good but has two-three points of weakness, or lacks depth or specificity.
- B- grades are for those with 70% correct answers on objective tests, and written work has three-four weaknesses or lacks depth/specificity.
- C+ grades are for 65% correct answers on objective tests, and written work has two-three errors and lacks depth, specificity and clarity.
- C grades are for 60% correct answers on objective tests, and written work that is flawed with four or more errors and lacks depth, specificity, and clarity.
- C- grades are for 55% correct answers and written work that is sufficient to pass the course but is flawed by basic misunderstandings of the material and gaps in knowledge.
- D+ (50% correct answers), D (45% correct answers) and D- (40% correct answers), and written assignments that are completed but flawed by numerous errors and gaps in knowledge.
- F is given to students that do not complete examinations or the written assignments, who receive less than 45% on the objective exams, and who pass in written work, that shows little or no knowledge gleaned from lectures or readings, or show no attempt to correctly address the questions in the assignments.

**AJ136: WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS AND SEMESTER PROJECTS.**

**ASSIGNMENT No 1: DUE FEBRUARY 26, 2001**

**Report on book or movie about child abuse  
or  
Court observation in dependency court**

You may choose to review a book or movie about **child physical abuse, molest, or neglect**. Examples of such books include *A Child Called It*, or *The Lost Boy* by David Pelzer, Health Communications; *The Liars Club*, by M. Karr, Penquin; *White Oleander*, by J. Fitch's Little Brown:Time-Warner, and *Prince of Tides* by Patrick Conroy. Movies include *THE COLOR PURPLE*, *NUTS*, *SLEEPERS*, *PRINCE OF TIDES*, *SYBIL*. With the instructors approval you may substitute another book or movie for those above.

**OR**

You can register with the instructor to attend hearings of child abuse and endangerment cases in Dependency (Juvenile) Court. A letter of introduction will be provided for you to attend a confidential hearing.

*See instructions for completing assignment on the next page!*

**AJ136: ASSIGNMENT No 2. DUE APRIL 25<sup>TH</sup>, 2001.**

**Review of a film or book about spousal/ partner abuse or hate crimes.  
or  
Court observation of family violence proceedings in family court**

Specifically, you may review and comment on **one** of following movies about spousal or partner abuse or hate crimes available on videotape: *ONCE WERE WARRIORS*, *WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT*, *THE BURNING BED*, *SLEEPING WITH THE ENEMY*, *THE GREAT SANTINI*, *AFFLICTION*, *BOYS DON'T CRY*. Reading the book "The Great Santini" by Patrick Conroy is an alternative, as is "The Woman Who Walked into Doors" by Roddy Doyle.

**OR**

Report on your observation of court proceedings in a case of partner or spouse abuse. This can be at either the domestic relations court, criminal court, or on Court TV. The domestic violence calendar is held each Tuesday and Friday mornings beginning at 9am in Department 117, at the Superior Court of Santa Clara County, 170 Park Center Plaza. Tuesdays involve family cases where children are involved; Fridays involves adults only.

If you need more information about the cases that you are observing, you can request the court file (identified by the case number from the County Clerk's office). This may not be available to you on the day of the hearing.

*See instructions for completing assignment on the next page!*

**INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING BOTH ASSIGNMENTS:**

For each assignment, students have a choice of reviewing a movie/book or observing family violence cases in court. However, students should complete both exercises i.e. if a movie/book is reviewed for the first assignment, then a court observation is expected for the second assignment, and vice versa. If court observations are not possible, the student should seek the instructor's permission to undertake both assignments as movie/book reviews.

The total length of each papers should be about 6 double-spaced typed pages, 12 font. It should address each of the items (a - d) below in essay form.

a) Write a brief synopsis of the movie/book that you have chosen to review OR the cases that you observed in court ( in no more than one page).

b) Identify the types of family violence that were illustrated (e.g. child abuse, neglect, psychological maltreatment, sexual molestation, marital or date rape, spouse abuse, elderly abuse etc.). Explain whether the behavior met the definition of each type of abuse and whether it was reportable to any authority e.g. Child Protective Services, police etc. (about one page)

c) Discuss the precursors, correlates or causal factors that you consider are associated with or contributed to the abuse (about 2 pages). If you have insufficient information about the family situations, suggest the kind of information you would gather from the family members that would address this question.

d) Discuss the response of different parts of the justice system to each type of violence (i.e. the actions of police, DA, judges, attorney for defendant or for child etc.). How effective were the actions of the justice system? What could have been done differently? If the justice system was involved with any of the different kinds of abuse that you identified, discuss the background family, social and cultural factors that contributed to keeping this abuse hidden from the scrutiny of the justice system. If the justice system did not respond, discuss the historical, social and familial reasons for this lack of response. What kinds of legal and social interventions are currently available to help this kind of situation? (about 2 pages).