

## Hidden victims : the effects of the death penalty on families of the accused

Sharp, Susan F. Rutgers, 2005

224p, 0813535832 \$23.95

In writings on capital punishment, much attention has been paid to the families of murder victims regarding their need for closure and justice. Sharp (Univ. of Oklahoma), whose edited book *The Incarcerated Woman: Rehabilitative Programming in Women's Prisons* (2003) brought attention to feminist criminology, now focuses on the families of those facing execution, reminding readers that while Americans "love to hate offenders," crime victims are not the only ones leaving behind a legacy of grief. Presented as a focused qualitative study of a small sample group of parents, siblings, spouses, extended family members, and "fictive kin" (such as pen pals, spiritual advisers, and spouses who met and married prisoners subsequent to sentencing), Sharp's persuasively written chapters explore families' stages of grief and coping during arrest, prosecution, sentencing, and even the horrors of botched and wrongful executions. The book relies heavily upon family members' own words, while maintaining a thoughtful sociological perspective. Similar to Rachel King's *Capital Consequences* (CH, Jan'06, 43-3095) but with a more scholarly spin, Sharp's book would benefit sociology and criminal justice students, and would serve well as informative reading for anyone formulating an argument against the death penalty.

Summing Up: Recommended. All levels/libraries.

- Reviewer: J. K. Downey, California State University, San Bernardino
- Recommendation: Recommended
- Readership Level: All Readership Levels, General Readers, Lower-division Undergraduates, Upper-division Undergraduates, Graduate Students, Researchers/Faculty, Two-Year Technical Program Students, Professionals/Practitioners
- Interdisciplinary Subjects:
- Subject: Social & Behavioral Sciences - Sociology
- Choice Issue: Jun 2006 vol. 43 no. 10
- Choice Review #: 43-6215
- Review DOI: 10.5860/CHOICE.43-6215