



# Victims and Victimhood

*Trudy Govier*

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Who is a victim? Considerations of innocence typically figure in our notions of victimhood, as do judgments about causation, responsibility, and harm. Those identified as victims are sometimes silenced or blamed for their misfortune?responses that are typically mistaken and often damaging. However, other problems arise when we defer too much to victims, being reluctant to criticize their judgments or testimony. Reaching a sensitive and yet critical stand on victims' credibility is a difficult matter.

In this book, Trudy Govier carefully examines the concept of victimhood and considers the practical implications of the various attitudes with which we may respond to victims. These issues are explored with reference to a range of complex examples, including child victims of institutional abuse and the famed Rigoberta Menchú controversy. Further topics include the authority of personal experience, restorative justice, restitution, forgiveness, and closure.

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