Week 4 Discussion SWPS. This week we'll be looking at the construction of social problems in a slightly different way than the way we did last week, where we focused mostly on how different parties to an established political or social controversy seek to FRAME the discussion of the issues involved. This week we turn our focus to the examination of how "social problems" come to be discovered and "known" in the first place. And in so doing, we'll consider the question at the heart of Spectre & Kitsuse's reading: how do social problems come to be seen AS "social problems"? And once we open up that can of worms, we have to ask: "could there be some real and very significant problems some non-trivial number of people in our world/nation/community that never get SEEN by the wider public?" This is what Spectre and Kitsuse study, and it is directly relevant to issues of social justice and institutionalized racism and marginalization. They call it "the CLAIMS MAKING PROCESS." The way a putative social problem becomes "seen" by the public as a social problem that we collectively need to address is by successfully navigating the CLAIMS MAKING PROCESS. So lets talk about that by just asking some very simple questions: What distinguishes a claim? Who is a claims maker? is complaining at the bar about the crappy wages at the oil pump factory claims making? is raising your hand at a public forum and complaining about the lead pipes in your building claims making? is writing your representative in congress claims making? is throwing a garbage can through a store front window claims making? Is a lawsuit against the working conditions of welfare workers in New York state a form of claims making? Is a song a form of claims making? In your post, you can address one or more of the questions above OR you can think about your own life or the lives of people you've known or an issue that was significant in your community at one point in time. Just take any claim that you've once made or a claim that you're aware of (it can be from personal experience or something you've seen in the news. Heck, it can even be an example drawn from a movie, television show or a book or article) and try to "interrogate" how the claims making process unfolded for that claim by tracing it through the analytic grid below. Its ok if this seems confusing right now. We're going to play with this grid in class and get to know how to use it better. Analyzing the Social Significance of Claims Made: Determining/Predicting what will become of claims The Claim By Whom it is Made The Way it is made To Whom it is made In what forum it is made When and under what conditions it is made Expected Outcome