Today, on CU On the Air, we're talking with Mary Dodge, criminology and Law Professor at the University of Colorado Denver School of Public Affairs. Prof. Dodge researches women in the criminal justice system, white-collar crime, policing, prostitution, and courts. Welcome, Prof. Dodge.

Thank you. I'm so happy to be here.

Well, criminology, is a really going concern these days. I mean, of course, it always has been since the days of Cain and Abel, but it seems more to the fore these days. What do you attribute that to?

Well, you refer to one of the first homicides that ever happened, which is interesting historically, but part of this is the industrial complex we have developing in the criminal justice system, so more prisons, more law enforcement, and more job opportunities. Now, unfortunately, many of those job opportunities depend on people committing crimes, so you have both the good and the bad.

What does having that criminal industrial complex, what does it meant for the field? How has it changed recently?

Some of the changes that we're facing have to do with mass shootings. We're seeing an increase there. If you watch the news, yes, we believe that there are far more, but certainly, there are more. I don't know that they're going to go higher, but they're a
huge concern for criminologists and the criminal justice system, especially law enforcement.

Ken: It also seems like it's been a, quite a field in the academic world. Have you seen it grow considerably in your time?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: I have, so I will admit that I'm old, and I've been around for a while.

Ken: I wasn't suggesting that.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: I know that. You're so sweet. You wouldn't do that, but what I've seen happen over the years is that we started as an interdisciplinary study, so criminology was really a mix of psychology, sociology, economics, all kinds of disciplines, and it morphed into its own area of study, especially as we develop more and more theories that helped explain crime. Now, we have a separate field of criminology and criminal justice, which the two are a little bit different. Criminology tends to focus more on theory, where we have criminal justice, which focuses on systems, and policies, and practices.

Ken: Technology has changed everything about life. How has it changed this field?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Technology is crucial in this field. I can speak to policing, so technology changed for policing with the development of the automobile and with phones, so especially with cellphones. They're able to answer calls more quickly. Some officers are willing to give out their cellphone number to residents who may be having problems, so we have that. We have a new technology that is used in situations where an officer may have to make a decision about use of force, where tasers are available now.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: We see technology, rubber bullets, and cameras has changed the way law enforcement works, so not only the body cameras that they can wear to film an incident, but also, we have cameras everywhere. If we walk around campus, we have cameras on the bike racks, we have cameras on the parking areas, so that has helped officers, and they're probably more effective because of that. We could eventually be a lot like Britain and have CCTV everywhere so that if something happens, they can follow a criminal suspect.

Ken: Facial recognition is in the news a lot lately, and they say the average American is caught on camera about 75 times a day. Do you feel like this deters crime, help solve crime, both?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: If somebody has made a decision to commit crime, and they have the opportunity to do that, they're going to do it whether they the camera is on them or not. Let's take for example in Denver, we have a Civic Center Park where there's a lot of drug dealing and drug usage. They have a halo camera there, and when they do stings, the drug dealers know that the police are watching, so they'll go behind a tree, where they can't be seen by the camera. If they're going to commit a crime, they're going to do it anyway, whether we have the cameras or not, so I don't know that they're a huge deterrent, and I would say probably not.

Ken: I'd say most criminals aren't particularly smart, although there certainly are those who are, you study white-collar crime. I think people perceive a white guy in a white shirt with the white collar in the back room embezzling some money, but what is the range of it that you see?
Prof. Mary Dodge...: White-collar crime has expanded the study, in particular exponentially over the years because it’s more than the original definition that we had on white-collar crime, which was offered in 1939 by Edwin Sutherland, who said exactly that. It’s the businessman in the white collar who is in a position of respect and has authority. If we broaden that definition, we have a lot of white-collar crime. We have white-collar crime by corporations, so for example, the Ford Corporation and the exploding Pinto cars was a classic example of white-collar crime. We have professional crime, whether it’s doctors, or lawyers, or nurses.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Those all are considered white-collar crime. We see more women now in white-collar crime for a variety of reasons, and that’s controversial why women are increasing or if they are increasing, their participation in white-collar crime, and political crime, off the charts, and we are experiencing a time period right now where we are seeing a lot of political crime globally, not just in the United States.

Ken: What kind of white-collar crimes do you find women involved in typically?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: If you include embezzlement in your definition of white-collar crime, for many years, they called it pink-collar crime, which I find is a stereotype that needs to be left behind. Women are as good or better at embezzling than men, so if we look at arrest reports, more women are arrested for embezzlement than men over the course of many years, and that’s because they’re in the position to do that.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: They’re bank tellers, they’re bookkeepers, they’re middle managers, and they’re controlling the money, so they have that opportunity there to, "Let’s just borrow some money. I’ll pay it back." Then, it becomes a very, sometimes complex scheme where they’re stealing millions of dollars.

Ken: You'll notice I wore a blue collar shirt today just specifically-

Prof. Mary Dodge...: So I wouldn’t make fun of you as a white-collar criminal.

Ken: Correct.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Yes, and I did not wear pink today, you’ll notice that.

Ken: How do white-collar criminals get treated by the criminal justice system in general, and understanding every case is different versus your garden-variety of criminal?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Overall, for many years, when we started studying white-collar crime, the sentencing and prosecution of white-collar criminals was rare. It did not happen. The other problem is a corporation is not an individual that you can take to court, so you have to decide, "How do you sue a corporation? Do you sue or press criminal charges, and can we press criminal charges against a certain corporation?" That has been a difficulty that prosecutors face.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: It has happened once and in Illinois with the Ford Pinto case, and they were not successful, but we saw this overall an indifference to white-collar criminals. Then, we had Bernie Madoff, and everybody knew about Bernie Madoff, reacted to Bernie Madoff, realized the seriousness of what he had done to people, because a lot of times, what we miss in white-collar crime are the victims. The victimization is far greater than street crime, if you do comparisons with those two, so we have more victimization. The courts said, "Okay then. We’re going to start setting examples. White-collar criminals are going to get 100 years, or they’re going to get 50 years."
Prof. Mary Dodge...: That was unheard of for a while. Now, we're in a period where we're seeing little or no sentencing of white-collar crime, criminals. And we're seeing these white-collar criminals being pardoned for their crimes, so we're going into a period of, "Ah, if you're a white-collar criminal, who cares? It's not so bad," but when you consider the victims and the number of victims, then it's quite serious.

Ken: Is it a thing where oftentimes people have to pay restitution, is the feeling that, "Okay, we're good"?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Yeah. Unfortunately, a lot, when corporations are ordered to pay restitution, let's say that's the way we solve this white-collar crime, is unfortunately, a lot of the money goes to the lawyers and not to the victims, so in these class action lawsuits, we see very little of the restitution going to victims. The other problem is often, a corporation will, when they've been ordered by the courts to pay high restitution, they will file a bankruptcy. We've seen that with Dow Corning and major corporations, so they filed bankruptcy, then the restitution is not going to come through for victims.

Ken: Do women white-collar criminals typically get treated differently from men?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Indeed, women are treated differently than men. The classic example is Martha Stewart. She herself believed that the prosecutors went after her because she was a successful, dynamic business woman. At the same time that Martha Stewart's case was happening was Ken Lay of Enron, so we have a huge company that defrauded millions of people and defrauded all the employees. They all lost their jobs, their pensions, that they were responsible for rolling blackouts in California, taking over their electricity, and then we have Martha Stewart, who was convicted of perjury. They did not even charge her with insider trading, and she was in the newspaper more than Ken Lay at the same time, so the focus was all on her because it was so unique, first, to see a woman in that kind of a position of power, and then for her to be accused of something like insider trading.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Whether she did that or not, we don't know, but she was convicted of lying to the FBI. The problem is that a woman is in a bad position often when they're in a powerful position, which sometimes is rare, and with a lot of companies, it's rare in the United States, but depending on how she acts as she's aggressive rather than being seen as assertive, she's a bitchy, aggressive woman. Excuse my language, but that's how the way they portray women. Leona Helmsley, who is a classic example of a woman who committed a lot of white-collar crime, wasn't a very nice woman, but she was treated horribly in the media. Our concern with Martha Stewart was what purse she was wearing or what outfit she was wearing when she went to court that day, not what she did.

Ken: In addition to being a Professor of criminology, you also do some policing of the police, and some of our listeners may have seen your name in new stories. What's that experience been like for you?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: I became interested in policing because of the discrepancy or discrimination or whatever we might call it, between policewomen and policemen, and so a lot of my research has focused on that. There was one area that particularly fascinated me, was because we have a hypermasculine atmosphere and job, that women were not on SWAT teams, so I was really interested in why women were not on SWAT. This is certainly hypermasculine and part of the problem, they have different positions such as negotiator or snipers, where women would be a good fit, but it's a boys' club, and they don't want women there because they'd have to change the behavior, and women don't want to be there because of what would happen and how they might be ostracized from the SWAT team. The other thing is that, for SWAT in particular, what I
found out from the officers, women do have less upper body strength, so if you’re on a SWAT team, and women can develop that strength, but most of them do not have it.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: The other thing, that policing is such a tough job, and most of what we hear and most of, when I was starting now, most of what we saw were negative things about police officers. We didn’t look or study what was good. The literature focused on, oh, how they kill people, and how terrible they are, and how they profile, and we weren’t saying anything about, "This is a hard job, and no wonder they get cynical with what they face every day," so let’s maybe look at some of the positive things happening in policing, and positive having women in policing.

Ken: Yeah. I think it's an incredibly difficult job and people don't really ... People focus on it often either when they need it or when something goes wrong.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: An officer is spending his or her whole day dealing with people who have problems. We call them because we have a problem, and that’s what they’re dealing with. The advantage to community policing was to allow the officers to do something that was proactive and helpful, and let the community interact with them on a more positive basis, so what can we do to help prevent crime? How can we help you? How can you help us?

Ken: I think we’ve seen many examples in recent years about police brutality, things like that, but what are some of the other areas where as you’re looking to "Police the police," what are some of the other areas you’re looking at?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Well, I think one of the things that needs to be looked at, and my colleague, Paul Taylor and I have talked about this, and he’s doing research, but police shootings certainly get the media attention. There’s a police shooting, and suddenly, the entire law enforcement world is bad, and it reflects badly on everyone, it reflects badly on the community. People become distrustful, and that’s what the news is going to focus on. Police shootings are rare. No police officer goes out there and wants to pull their gun that day and shoot someone.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: The other thing is that we do not have a database to know nationally how many police shootings have occurred and what the consequences of those were, "Did the person die? Were they just wounded? What happened there?" The other thing is we don’t have a good database on police officers who were killed.

Ken: It’s really surprising that that data isn’t readily available, whether it’s police shooting or police officers dying in the line of duty.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Yeah. Certainly, the best available data from what I can understand right now is what *The Washington Post* is gathering, but why are we not gathering that through the FBI? We gather uniform crime reports, national-based NIBRS, which is a National Incident Based Reporting System. We have the ability, but the resources, I think are shrinking for gathering data.

Ken: One of the areas you study is prostitution and some people would say victimless crime, but I think there’s probably always victims involved. What are some of the things you find in that study?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Well, my prostitution study was a little bit different, and I’ll tell you why, but I tell my students there is no such thing as a victimless crime. So a man goes to see a prostitute, he comes home and passes off syphilis or gonorrhea or some disease to his wife.
There’s a victim. Even the fact that he was involved with a prostitute, the wife becomes a victim, the family becomes victimized. There was a gentleman looking for a prostitute in his car with his two young children in the back of the car, and unfortunately for him, the prostitute he tried to pick up was a decoy officer. It was a police officer, they made a hotel deal, and so all the police are in the hotel room waiting to arrest him, and he brought his two children with him up to that room so he could get a quick, whatever.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: I won’t go into graphic detail, but think about ... These kids were absolutely traumatized, and this was a huge John sting, so in the hotel room, there were probably, oh, at least five to eight Johns in there in handcuffs and these two kids with the police not even knowing what to do with them.

Ken: How old were the kids?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: I think the little girl was 7 or 8, and the little boy was about four, and so just to top the story off, I took the kids and put them into a bathroom in this seedy hotel on Colfax Avenue, and tried to keep them calm because they’re still arresting. I looked at the little girl and I knew she was about to cry, and that would be bad, and I said, "It’s going to be okay. Your dad will be home probably this afternoon." She was so precocious and she looked at me, shook her head and said, "No, you don’t understand," and I said, "What?", and she said, "My mother will never let him come back home," and I had tears in my eyes.

Ken: Well, mom is probably right there. What is dad thinking? You co-wrote a book called Stealing Dreams: A Fertility Clinic Scandal. It was about a 1985 discovery that a prominent clinic was taking eggs from some women, implanting them into others without their consent. Tell us about that story.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: That is research that stays with me. It has been over 20 years, and it pops up a lot. This was at the University of California, Irvine. It was a reproductive clinic at the hospital in Orange County, and these three doctors were accused of numerous misdeeds, white-collar crime as we would call them, but the stealing of, I’m going to say alleged stealing of the eggs was a shock, a front page news in The Los Angeles Times. It was horrible.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Of course, the University of California did not want anything that would destroy the reputation, so they tried to bury it for years. There were lawsuits before this became public that they had hidden and paid off the patients, and so allegedly, two of the doctors would, they would run women through series and there’d be lots of eggs taken out. At the time that they were doing this, they were not freezing embryos or eggs, so there were extra eggs everywhere. Two of the doctors fled the country, and I followed them around. I stalked them, and so I went to Chile to talk to one of the doctors, and he said, "Mary, we had so many eggs that we just used them."

Prof. Mary Dodge...: He said, "As soon as we had the technology to freeze embryos ..." That came first, and then later, now they’re freezing eggs, "As soon as we have the technology, I quit. I moved into my own separate clinic." Now, the other doctor who was in charge of the clinic, Ricardo Asch, he fled to Mexico, and he denies any involvement in the scandal, and always has, always will. Over the years, we have become colleagues of some sort.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: The other thing was there was no law against stealing a woman’s egg, and stealing, borrowing, using. I’m not sure what the correct word is. In California at the time, there was a law that you could not steal a cow egg, but not a human egg, so as soon as the scandal emerged in and came to light, they passed laws, but we still see fraud in reproductive medicine. You hear about the doctor who used his own sperm for 10, 20
patients. The famous case is Cecil Jacobson who used his sperm, then they made a movie out of it. All the little kids had the same eye problem, genetic eye problem that he did, and he was sent to prison, but when asked why he did it, he said, "Well, I'm smart. I know my sperm is clean and safe, and that's why I did it."

Ken: All but the eye problem.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Oh, yes, so a little bit of a genetic defect there.

Ken: Is DNA science the kind of game-changer that people would imagine in criminology?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Well, certainly, it has a huge impact on rape and sexual assault, that it is one of the greatest advantages of DNA. They're using DNA now and really successfully to solve burglaries. I'm going to say I was a little naive when I said, "That just doesn't make sense to me. Why is there DNA when there's a burglary?", but according to law enforcement, burglars do some really terrible things in houses and leave a lot of DNA, whether they use the bathroom in the house or they sit down and eat food, have a little lunch before they finish off with the burglary, but DNA has been extremely helpful in solving those cases. In reproductive medicine, if I go back to the fertility clinic, DNA is a little scary, so there's a downside, a negative side that you have children who are biologically belonged to someone else, but you've got a 5-year old, and then suddenly, the DNA testing will show that there's another biological parent.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Some of the couples involved in the fertility scandal, of course, had no children and wanted a custody. Fortunately, the courts, I think, I'm not sure how they thought it through, but I'm glad they did, and decided that they would not test these children from the fertility clinic in Orange County. I talked to victims of the fertility scandal, and these were college professors at the University of California, Irvine, who remain anonymous, but both of them had kids about 3 years old, 4 years old, and looked and told me and said, "Look, I have this child who has blue eyes and blonde hair, and my husband and I are both Jewish, so I have to wonder if I received somebody else's egg." That's scary.

Ken: Yes it is.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: DNA testing in that regard could be quite harmful to families, but as far as crime goes, it's a blessing.

Ken: Yeah. Is there a growing number of women, such as yourself who were in the field of criminology these days?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Yeah. We've seen a huge increase in feminist criminology. In 1975, there were very few women criminologists. Freda Adler and Rita James Simon were the two leading criminologists, and the two too finally write something about something reasonable about women in crime before we had men writing about women in crime.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: A woman-committed crime is an aberration. It was a male-like tendency coming out, so unusual, and then 1975 is the marker for, "Okay, we're really seeing some serious work done and ideas coming out," and since then, the field has blossomed. There are probably as many women criminologists now as there are men, and feminist criminology looks at everything from women in prison to women as victims. That's an important part of it, and yeah, it's wonderful to see.

Ken: What is the most popular area you see women in criminology these days?
Prof. Mary Dodge...: One has been to look at women in prison. Women have a different prison experience. The initial research shows that they tend to form families, a family group compared to a male prison where they have gangs, and it's a different atmosphere. The mental health for women in prison is being explored more and more, which is an important thing because a lot of the women come in with drug addiction and mental health problems that need to be addressed. The way women who go into prison pregnant is now being addressed.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: We cannot, hopefully and will not shackle them anymore while they're giving birth. That's important, so prison, the other area is, of course, that has improved so much is domestic violence. We recognize not only are women the victims of domestic violence, but they also engage in domestic violence. The problem is sorting through all that, but we have made great strides in keeping women safer.

Ken: Who are your students? What kind of students would come to you and where are they going?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Well, I have great students. I love my students, and they do all kinds of amazing things. Just thinking of some recent students, one, after she graduated from our master's program, went to law school, so some of my students go to law school, I encourage that. I think that's a great avenue, and she just passed the bar in Texas, and is really happy and working for a big firm in civil litigation. One of my students is now a crime scene investigator, so when she graduated, she was able to get a position with Denver Police Department.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: I have a student who amazingly enough went through the academy and became a police officer in San Francisco. I have students who have now work for judicial in the court system and in all kinds of positions, and they go to probation. That's the beauty of a criminology, criminal justice degree, is that you have so many options for what to do with it. If you want to work with juveniles, many students will ... You have to be tough to be able to do that one, but they will work with juveniles, they'll work in correctional facilities. It just is amazing when I look at our alumni and how diverse the employment opportunities are for students.

Ken: You said at the outset that criminology, criminal justice are growing concerns. You expect that trend to continue?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: I do expect it to continue. I think that we're facing a big question with the mass shootings. This is a serious concern that criminals have weapons, and then they're going in and committing mass shootings. I think we will probably see more of those unfortunately. The other thing that, we're going to see a complete ... The rollback on regulatory agencies is going to result in good or bad.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Good for me to study, but bad for the country, is huge increase in white-collar crime. We have roll backs on the EPA, we have it on OSHA, and that leaves corporations and companies open to polluting the environment, introducing unsafe drugs, unsafe medical devices, and political crime. I think we're going to see a huge spike there.

Ken: How did you get interested in the field?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: It was a serendipity for me to become a criminologist. I did my master's degree at the University of Colorado Colorado Springs many years ago in psychology, so my goal was to do psychology and law. I found it fascinating to look at that, be an expert witness, do mock juries, help lawyers. When I went to Irvine, the program I was
accepted to for my PhD was Social Ecology. Part of the problem for Irvine was there are graduate students or PhD students, nobody knew what Social Ecology was in the field.

Ken: What is it?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: What is that? Well, even the PhD students were going, "I don't know what it is," but it was a brilliant idea, and one of the first schools to have a program in Social Ecology, where we take the concepts from ecology and how plants work together, and how the animals, and how they grow and thrive and do things, and then we take that and apply that to humans, and the structures that we live with and how we interact with each other, but they realized that this wasn't quite working. We kept the school of Social Ecology at Irvine, but they departmentalized, so at the time they departmentalized, I had to pick between psychology or criminology, and I had taken classes and loved the subject of criminology. Then, I had the good fortune of meeting Gilbert Geis, who has since passed away, but he was probably one of the most brilliant minds in white-collar crime internationally, and he became my mentor for my dissertation, and literally changed my life.

Ken: That's what you hope college is about, right?

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Well, and for me, the lessons I learned from Gil Geis, I try and pass onto my students. I mean, having a mentor and being able to work with someone, do research, have someone care about how you think and what you think, that's what I tried to pass on to my students that, "I really do care about you, and I want you to do well, and I want you to do research, and I want you to get excited about the subject and have fun with it, but take it seriously." Gil gave me all that from his position as my mentor. I hope that I'm helping next generations of students become passionate about this subject and excited about the subject.

Ken: Paying it forward.

Prof. Mary Dodge ...: I am trying to pay it forward. I hope I'm doing a good job.

Ken: Seems like it to me.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: Thank you.

Ken: Well, Prof. Mary Dodge, we appreciate you being here today with us on CU On the Air.

Prof. Mary Dodge...: This has been fun. Thank you.