

(video) This is Law & Order: SVU? SVU is an American crime drama TV series created by Dick Wolf. It's part of the original Law & Order franchise where some episodes have been ripped from the headlines of real-life crimes.

Crime procedural, police crime drama, otherwise known as cop shows has been on air since the early years of tv where cops are usually seen as heroes and the criminals are always bad. These portrayals reflecting the current times and prejudices of society set the precedent for every cop show. There have been tons of cop shows through the years ranging from comedy to drama to reality, and back to comedy-drama. From the Wild West sheriffs to the 21st-century forensic experts, crime shows are the majority of scripted shows on network television. But what makes Law & Order: SVU stand out from the rest? Could it be the quality of the storylines, the great character development, its informativeness, not to mention it's ironically comforting? Continue watching to find out.

SVU has a memorable cast of characters whose lives are revealed in and out of the station, showing the balance of work and personal time. Each character is given their own episodes where the case is always the most important thing but the audience also gets a chance to get more backstory and see the inner individual strength. And like any show, SVU has the same overdone character tropes; the bad boys, the strong female leads, the strict boss, and the sassy but witty characters. But the writers manage to go beyond the obvious tv tropes and make us love these characters and connect with them. Characters like...Odafin "Fin" Tutuola played by Ice-T joined the show in its 2nd season in 2000. When I saw my first episode of SVU and saw Ice-T, I thought it was so ironic that a rapper who hates cops plays a cop. I thought that it couldn't work. But the more episodes I watched, the more I thought how perfect he was for the role. Dick Wolf and the writers were able to create a character that was relatable to Ice-T's background but also

someone who could help show audiences what it's like being a black detective in the NYPD. And while that's a challenge for some, for Ice-T it's simple. In a recent interview, Ice-T gave his thoughts on *Fin*. **(video)**

Just being a show discussing rape makes it stand out on its own when rape was so taboo in the early 2000s, especially when every cop show ever aired always handles homicide investigations more bizarre than real cops actually see. Every cop show has its own episode formula that they usually don't stray away from even *SVU*. Most *SVU* episodes follow the same structure- the discovery of the crime, in which the characters & situations are introduced. The plot development includes major turning points. And the aftermath where the audience sees the results of the perp's actions. With some recurring details such as the dramatic looks between characters before commercials and the special guest stars who are often the suspects. But this enables viewers to make educated guesses of the episode's perp without it being predictable. But *SVU* is different, they're not afraid to break structure. There are episodes that start off with one storyline and abruptly go into another completely different storyline that either is or isn't connected to each other, but still maintains a good plot. It remains captivating and suspenseful but without being overwhelming or over the top. Even the new episodes are still open to experimenting with different structures that can still make viewers talk.

But the very best thing to come out of the show is how comforting it is. The routine process of solving a case from start to finish gives viewers a sense of stability. It's a known entity with familiar characters and a pretty great formula where you can jump in and out of the episode, but you're still able to understand what's happening. It's a good way to distract ourselves from our worries without asking too much from us. The main cast is always really well acted and I like the idea of watching a cop show that's not a fantasy show with unrealistic action shots, but

one about justice and healing. As mentioned in an article by the NYT, “SVU takes sex crimes seriously, but the show isn't a grueling, depressing experience.”¹ Honestly, It's a twisted subject matter, but it's well acted and the idea that the justice system can and should help all kinds of victims is nice to see. Victims are taken seriously and they're more likely to get justice in the show than in real life, which usually doesn't happen. Corrupt politicians and Cops are actually held accountable for their actions and oftentimes are arrested. It brings a little satisfaction of seeing evil people brought to justice, like an escape from reality with reality.

The comedian Jena Friedman had said it best (**Video**) , “Women, we don't watch true crime, we study it to make sure we don't end up on it.” The reason I continued watching Law & Order despite all else is because it's a great show. [They incorporate controversial issues into each and every episode], its characters are always entertaining but relatable, and honestly I've learned a lot from watching this show. I mean there's a reason they've been on air for 2 decades, but I'll just let you guys find out on your own. Thanks for watching.

¹ James, C. 1999. Television Review; Sex Crimes Featured In a Spinoff Of Top Series. New York Times.