AHIS305: Crime and Punishment in the Atlantic World

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Office Hours: MW(10-11), W (4-5)

Course Description: Crime and Punishment in the urban Atlantic World explores the history of crime and punishment in the context of the Atlantic World to 1860. This seminar examines how what might be defined as a crime and how a perpetrator might be punished is influenced by a set of social, cultural and economic factors. Using a comparative approach, the course focuses on how residents and local authorities construct urban crime (from thievery to murder) and punishment (from public whipping to execution) in New York City and London, England.

Teaching: This is a reading, discussion and research seminar. As such, its main objective is to familiarize students with crime and punishment as a subject of historical inquiry.

Required Readings (available the Dragon Bookstore):

Unit II:
A. Durston, Victims & Viragos (Abramis, paperback).
B. Moore, Con Men and Cutpurses (Penguin, paperback).
C. Shesgreen, eds., Engravings by Hogarth (Dover, paperback).

Unit III:
A. Block, Rape and Power in Early America (Univ of North Carolina, paperback).
B. Cohen, Murder of Helen Jewett (Vintage, paperback).
C. Lyons, Sex Among the Rabble (Univ of North Carolina, paperback).

Reserves: The instructor has placed a number of books and articles, defined as “required reading” for the course on 2-hour reserve or Electronic Reserve (on Angel System).

Evaluation (Unit I):
Response Papers = 05%
Class Participation = 05%

Evaluation Unit II:
Response Papers =05%
Research Essay =30%
Research Essay Presentation =05%
Class Participation =05%

Evaluation Unit III:
Response Papers =05%
Research Essay =30%
Research Essay Presentation =05%
Class Participation =05%

Unit I: Requirements:

Response Papers (05%): On 31 August 2011 and 7 September 2011, History 305 students will submit a one-page, single-spaced response paper (based on any two of the day’s Required Reading). The response paper should both summarize content and analyze the historical significance of the issues discussed.
Unit I: Requirements (continued):

Class Participation (05%): On 31 August 2011 and 7 September 2011, History 305 students will participate in a class discussion on the day’s Required Reading.

Unit II: Requirements

Response Papers (05%): On either 14 or 21 September 2011, History 305 students will submit a one-page, single-spaced response paper (based on any one of the readings due that day. The response paper should both summarize content and analyze the historical significance of the issues discussed.

Research Essay (30%): On 12 October 2011, History 305 students will submit an eight (8) to ten (10) page research paper (based on a topic of their choice using the Old Bailey database). Students will make a class presentation (05%) to the class, based on their Research Essay.

Class Participation (05%): Between 14 September and 5 October 2011, History 305 students will participate in a class discussion on the day’s Required Reading / Required Activity.

Unit III: Requirements

Response Papers (05%): Between 19 October and 9 November 2011, History 305 students will submit two (2) one-page, single-spaced response paper (based on any one of the readings). The response paper should both summarize content and analyze the historical significance of the issues discussed.

Research Essay (30%): On 14 December 2011, History 305 students will submit an eight (8) to ten (10) page research paper (based on a topic of their choice using the New York City Microfilm Archives – 2-hour Reserve, Milne Library (Circulation Desk). Students will make a class presentation (05%) to the class, based on their Research Essay.

Class Participation (05%): Between 19 October and 14 December 2011, History 305 students will participate in a class discussion on the day’s Required Reading / Required Activity.

Course Outline: Fall 2011

Unit I: Introduction to the Study of Crime and Punishment

24 August 2011: Introduction to History 294: Crime and Punishment in the Atlantic World
31 August 2011: Some Historiographical Perspectives on the History of Crime

**Required Reading:**
2. John Murrin, “Things Fearful to Name” (Electronic Reserve).

7 September 2011: A Comparative Survey of Urban Violence

**Required Reading for Discussion:**
1. Ute Frevert, “The Taming of the Noble Ruffian: Male Violence and Dueling in ... Germany.”

**Note:** All of the above articles are part of Ohio State University Press’s Open Access Publications. To access the above, go to [www.ohiostatepress.org/](http://www.ohiostatepress.org/). Once there click on “Open Access” in the sidebar (shaded red, left side of the page). This will take you to a list of books that Ohio State University Press provides free of charge. Scroll down to the book entitled *Men and Violence: Gender, Honor, and Rituals in Modern Europe and America*, edited by Pieter Spierenburg. Click on the book’s title and this will allow you to access the above articles which are chapters in the Spierenburg collection.

Unit II: Crime and Urban Culture in Georgian London

14 September 2011: Sex, Love and Violence in London, England

**Required Reading for Discussion:**
1. Log on to [http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/static/History.jsp](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/static/History.jsp). We will use this website extensively in Unit I. Click on and read as much as you can about the “Historical Background” of the Old Bailey. This is your only opportunity to familiarize yourself with this material!
2. Moore, *Con Men and Cutpurses*, Chapter, 1 (pages 1-21), Chapter 2, Chapter 3, Chapter 4, Chapter 6, Chapter 7.
21 September 2011: Crime and Urban Culture in Georgian London

**Required Reading for Discussion:**
1. Gregory Durston, *Victims and Viragos*, 1-80, 174-224

28 September 2011: Crime and Urban Culture in Georgian London: Research

**Project Description:** On 28 Sept 2011 students will meet in the James Milne Library’s Computer Classroom (305). We will spend the class period exploring The Proceedings of the Old Bailey: a database of court related documents from London’s central criminal court. This begins the research phase for Unit I.

**Old Bailey Database:** The Proceedings of the Old Bailey may be explored at [http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/](http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/)

5 October 2011: Crime and Urban Culture in Georgian London: Research

**Project Research / Writing:** 5 Oct 2011 students will meet in the James Milne Library’s Computer Classroom (305). We will spend the class period exploring The Proceedings of the Old Bailey: a database of court related documents from London’s central criminal court. This is a continuation of the research phase of Unit II.

12 October 2011: Research Presentations:

**Presentations of Research Projects for Unit II:** On 12 October 2011, History 305 Students will present a 7-10 minute presentation based on their Unit II research project.

**Research Paper Due:** On 12 October 2011, History 305 students will submit their Unit II research paper to the instructor at the end of the class.

**Unit III: Crime and Punishment in Early American and New York City**

19 October 2011: Rape and Power in Early America and New York City

**Required Reading for Discussion:**

**Read rape trial reports:**
1. *Trial of Nathaniel Price for Committing a Rape on the Body of Unice Williamson* (Electronic Reserve).
2. *Report of the Trial of Richard Croucher, On and Indictment for a Rape on Margaret Miller* (Electronic Reserve)
3. *Trial of Captain James Dunn, For an Assault with an Intent to Seduce Sylvia Patterson,*
26 October 2011: Fighting Men and Baby Killers in Early America and New York City

Required Reading for Discussion:
3. Paul A. Gilje, “Infant Abandonment in Early Nineteenth-Century New York City: Three Cases” *Signs* 8:3 (1983), 580-590 [this article is available on JSTOR]

2 November 2011: Race, Sex and Crime in Early America and New York City

Required Reading for Discussion:
1. Cohen, *Murder of Helen Jewett*, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and “Epilogue.”

9 November 2011: Sex and Crime in Early America and New York City

Required Reading for Discussion:
1 Clare Lyons, *Sex Among the Rabble*, Pages 183-185, Chapter 4, Chapter 5, Chapter 6, and “Conclusion and Reflection.”

16 November 2011: Research Essay Workshop

Required Activity: On 16 November 2011, History 305 students will meet in the *Milne Library Computer Lab (Room # 305)*. Students will begin the process of researching their Unit III topic. Students –if they have appropriately narrowed their topic—may meet and work with Ms. Ariel Wilber (Teaching Assistant) on their research topic (using court documents from early New York City) in the Periodicals Room (Basement, Milne Library)

23 November 2011: Turkey Days: No Class.

30 November 2011: Research Workshop

Required Activity: On 30 November 2011, Students will gather in the *Milne Library Periodicals Room* to continue the process of research. Students will be grouped (by crime category) to work on the available microfilm (there are only 3 microfilm readers), therefore, we will have to work together to make these productive research hours.
7 December 2011: Research Workshop

**Required Activity:** On 7 December 2011, Students will gather in the **Milne Library Periodicals Room** to continue the process of research. Students will be grouped (by crime category) to work on the available microfilm (there are only 3 microfilm readers), therefore, we will have to work together to make these productive research hours.

14 December 2011: Unit III Research Presentations

**Required Activity:** On 14 December 2011, History 305 students will make an in-class presentation based on their Unit III research topic.

**Research Paper Due:** On 14 December 2011, History 305 students will submit their Unit III research paper to the instructor at the end of the class.