

FW22 AP/HIST 3850 6.0A Murder and Other Crimes: Law and Justice in 19th & 20th Century North America

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Expanded Course Description (expanded from course calendar description):

This course examines the history of the criminal justice system in Canada and the United States from the late 19th century to the present. For the most part, the course uses the issue of homicide to examine how the accused is treated within the criminal justice system. Given the importance of two recent US Supreme Court decisions and how the majority used history to support their decisions, we will be examining two issues that are currently germane to our understanding of American jurisprudence: *Dobbs v. Jackson* (2022) which overturned *Roe v. Wade* (1973), and *New York State Rifle and Pistol Association v. Bruen*, which expanded Second Amendment rights.

Required Course Text/Readings:

TENTATIVE

Selected: This list will be supplemented with articles from various journals and books.

Griswold, Eliza. *Amity and Prosperity: One Family and Fracturing of America*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 2018.

Radforth, Ian. *Jennie's Demise: Abortion on Trial in Victorian Toronto*. Toronto: Between the Lines 2020.

Reagan, Leslie J. *When Abortion was a Crime: Women, Medicine, and Law in the United States, 1867-1973*. New edition, University of California Press, 2022.

United States Supreme Court, *Dobbs v. Jackson* (2022).

United States Supreme Court, *New York State Rifle and Pistol Association v. Bruen* (2022).

Weighting of Course:

TENTATIVE Grade Breakdown

First term essay: 15%

Tutorials (full year): 15%

Weekly multiple-choice quizzes based on lectures and readings (10 each term): 20%

Second term essay: 20%

Christmas Take-home exam: 10% (short essay)

April Final sit-down exam: 20% (short answers plus one essay question)

Organization of the Course:

The course is organized around lectures and tutorials. Lectures are two hours long and are held every week. Tutorials will be held eight times each semester.

Essays are done each term.

In the first semester, students will be given a transcript of a criminal trial which took place in Canada in the early 20th century. Students will be asked to argue as though they were lawyers, either for the prosecution or for the defense. Their essays will be based on the information contained in the trial transcript and through the relevant articles of the Criminal Code.

In the second semester, students will be given an excel spreadsheet containing data about men and women jailed for various crimes. Using the data, students will be asked to make some logical conclusions about the incarcerated.