

FW22 AP/HIST 4515 6.0A Murder in the Archives: Researching the social history of homicides in Ontario, 1815-1982

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Expanded Course Description (expanded from course calendar description):

This course is principally concerned with using primary source materials to investigate the social and legal history of Ontario in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. We will, however, also read two secondary texts in the first term to provide students with an understanding of the criminal justice system. In the first term, we will meet weekly and will discuss readings. This will sometimes also involve reading primary texts. The second term will be entirely devoted to researching and writing essays. This process will be of use for those students thinking of doing graduate work or working in the criminal justice system.

Required Course Text/Readings:

TENTATIVE

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

Robert J. Sharpe. *The Lazier Murder: Prince Edward County, 1884*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press 2011.

Weighting of Course:

TENTATIVE Grade Breakdown

First term archival Assignment (due early November): 20%

Discussion Questions (first term only and for five weeks): 10%

Tutorial (first term only): 10%

Second Term Assignment: 50%

Oral Presentation (second term): 10%

Organization of the Course:

During the first term, we will meet weekly to discuss the required readings and to examine various original documents.

During the second term, students will be divided into pairs and be required to examine a homicide case in Ontario. This case will be found at the Archives of Ontario. The archives are located on York's campus, near the Research Tower. During the first half of the second term, we will be meeting there. From reading various case files located at the archives, students will select one homicide case. Based on their research, students will then write an essay, with each student in each pairing assuming a different viewpoint of the homicide. One student will be the prosecutor, and the other student the defense lawyer. Their essays will reflect each of their respective positions. To write their essays, students will use

some of the source materials examined in the first term. This might include some, or all, of the following:

Federal censuses

Newspapers

Fire insurance maps

City Directories

Files of the Attorney-General of Ontario

And of course, the criminal case files which are the basis of their essays.