

AMH 5905, Section 001
**Graduate Readings in U.S. History: Readings in the History of U.S. Crime
and Punishment**

CRN: 96748, 3 Credit Hours

Prerequisites: Admission to graduate history program or permission of instructor

Mondays, 4:00-6:50 p.m.

AH, Rm. 105

Fall 2014

Florida Atlantic University



Instructor: Dr. Talitha LeFlouria

Office Hours: Mondays, 2:00-3:50 p.m., and by appointment

Email: tleflour@fau.edu

Office Location: AL, 153

Phone: (561) 297-2334

Course Description:

This graduate readings course is based on selected topics and problems in United States history, and may be repeated for credit. This particular course specifically assesses historical literature that addresses critical themes and topics relevant to the history of U.S. crime and punishment.

Course Objectives/Student Learning Outcome:

The objective of this course is to introduce graduate students interested in American history to many of the main themes, methodological approaches, questions, and historical interpretations that characterize the study of U.S. crime and punishment. This course will cover significant scholarship and historiography, focusing on the years from the colonial period to the 21st century. Some of the subjects discussed include: colonial rituals of punishment, slave patrols and the incarceration of free blacks in the antebellum South, the rise of convict leasing in the aftermath

of the Civil War, black women and incarceration in the urban North, immigration detention and its carceral features, the treatment of “queer” convicts in prison, as well as issues relevant to the modern day crisis in mass incarceration. At the end of this course, students will be able to critically assess various research methodologies and situate a text within its broader historiographies. You will develop this knowledge through weekly reading and brief writing assignments, the submission of a historiographical essay, and active leadership and participation in class discussions.

Course Structure:

AMH 5905 is a reading and discussion centered course, not a lecture course. The major requirements are, therefore, that each student attend class regularly, complete the required reading assignments, and **actively participate** in class discussions. This means that each student should come to class prepared to raise critical questions for discussion, and be able to add to the intellectual climate of the course.

Course Evaluation:

Reviews/Chapter Summaries	20%
Attendance/Participation	20%
Leadership of Class Discussion	20%
Historiographical Essay	40%

Grading Scale:

Letter grades issued at the conclusion of the course are based upon the following scale:

A	93-100	A-	90-92	B+	87-89
B	83-86	B-	80-82	C+	77-79
C	73-76	C-	70-72	D+	67-69
D	63-66	D-	60-62	F	Below 60

Weekly Expectations:

Each week, you are expected to perform a close reading of the required text(s). A close reading includes an identification and examination of each of the following: “the overarching theoretical framework(s), the core research methodologies, the primary source base, the narrative techniques/structures, and the author’s major historiographical contributions. Rather than simply reading a text, you should be working with it to understand, critique, and appreciate how the author deploys a particular constellation of sources, frameworks, methodologies, and narrative structures to make an innovative and/or analytic claim about the past.”¹ (Do not worry—these skills will be acquired over the duration of the semester, so students should not be overly concerned with the application of these strategies at the outset of the course).

Book Reviews and Chapter Summaries:

Students are expected to complete a minimum one-page, double spaced, review of the required text for each week and submit a separate list of chapter summaries, not to exceed one page, single spaced. Each book review should identify the author’s major analytic and

¹ This definition was provided by Dr. Dierdre Cooper Owens, Assistant Professor of History, University of Mississippi.

historiographical claims and contributions, and explain each of the following: 1) what the book is about (identify the main thesis and major contribution(s)); 2) what evidence the author uses in developing his/her thesis (oral history, government documents, newspaper articles, etc.); 3) what the strengths and weaknesses of the book are (consider how well the thesis is supported, how the argument helps us better understand the history of U.S. crime and punishment, and what issues present themselves in the work—omissions, theoretical assumptions, etc.). These reviews are intended to support and guide each of you as you prepare for the written comprehensive examination. The chapter summaries may also prove useful in writing your historiographical essay and preparing for qualifying exams. **Reviews and summaries are due at the beginning of each class meeting.** Please bring an additional copy to class to serve as a personal discussion guide. The scores for each review/summary assignment range from 2 (highest) to 0 (lowest). **For additional instructions, please refer to the sample book review and criteria in Blackboard.*

Reading/Presentation Readings:

Each student enrolled in this course will be paired up with another member of his/her cohort for the semester. Each pair will, collectively, present a chosen reading set at least one time during the semester. Each week an assigned pair will: 1) lead a portion of the class discussion; and, 2) furnish student colleagues and the professor with a list of 5-7 discussion questions to consider from the required reading. These questions should be emailed to course members and the professor **at least 24 hours** before the class meeting.

Cohort members should, responsibly, delegate tasks among one another to ensure an effective delivery of the combined presentation.

Guidelines for Discussion Leaders:

For the weeks 4 through 12, two students will, intermittently, serve as discussion leaders for each of the scheduled class meetings. When it is your turn to be discussion leader, you will need to do the following:

1. Read the required book for the week (which all students will read), and skim the suggested reading for the week. Discussion leaders are also required to read several book reviews pertaining to the required and suggested readings for the week, and to illuminate for his/her student colleagues what reviewers have identified as the books' strengths and weaknesses. The book reviews will assist you in placing the scholarship within a historiographical context.
2. As you prepare your discussion, be sure to consider the following questions: What are the major questions/problems that historians have deliberated about the specific issue brought forward in the week's readings? What is the state of the field? How do these particular works fit into the historiography on the subject?

Historiographical Essays:

At the end of the semester, students will be required to submit a 10-15 page historiographical essay that surveys the literature (with an emphasis on recent scholarship and foundational works produced within the last thirty years) of a sub-field of carceral studies. The essay should assess the contributions of at least ten staple books and/or articles to the field, identify trends in the

literature (how did this sub-field emerge?), what schools of thought have defined it, and explore future directions (by identifying problems and holes in the literature). This assignment is due on **Monday, December 8, 2014**. *All historiographical essays MUST be submitted to safe-assign via Blackboard to receive credit.*

Absenteeism:

Excessive absences will negatively impact your grade. Since the course only meets once a week, it is imperative that students regularly attend class. You will be permitted one unexcused absence for the semester. Each additional unexcused absence will result in the lowering of your grade by one letter for each missed class. For example, two unexcused absences will result in a maximum grade of a B. Any grade below a B- is considered a failing grade.

Punctuality:

Please try to arrive to class **ON TIME**. The productivity of this course is largely contingent upon your timely attendance. It is, thereby, strongly encouraged that you arrive to class as promptly as possible. Also, important announcements are shared at the beginning of all class meetings. It is the student's responsibility to ascertain what vital information he/she may have missed during this crucial period.

Students with Disabilities:

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require special accommodations due to a disability to properly execute course work must register with the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)—in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, MOD 1 (954-236-1222); in Jupiter, SR 117 (561-799-8585); or at the Treasure Coast, CO 128 (772-873-3305)—and follow all OSD procedures.

Regulation 4.001 Code of Academic Integrity

University Honor Code:

“Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards because it interferes with the University mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the University community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty.” Students who plagiarize will automatically receive an F in the course, and will be subject to harsh disciplinary action. For more information, see the Code of Academic Integrity in the University Regulations at http://www.fau.edu/regulations/chapter4/4.001_Code_of_Academic_Integrity.pdf.

Required Texts:

- Alexander, Michelle. *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (New York: The New Press, 2010).
- Dow, Mark. *American Gulag: Inside U.S. Immigration Prisons* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005).
- Gross, Kali N. *Colored Amazons: Crime, Violence, and Black Women in the City of Brotherly Love, 1880-1910* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006).
- Hadden, Sally E. *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003).
- Holloway, Pippa. *Living in Infamy: Felon Disenfranchisement and the History of American Citizenship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014).
- Mogul, Joey, Andrea Ritchie, Kay Whitlock. *Queer (In)justice: The Criminalization of LGBT People in the United States* (Boston: Beacon, 2011).
- Shakur, Assata. *Assata: An Autobiography* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 1999).
- Tarter, Michele Lise and Richard Bell, eds. *Buried Lives: Incarcerated in Early America* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2012).
- Ward, Geoff K. *The Black Child-Savers: Racial Democracy & Juvenile Justice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012).

**All books are available at the Florida Atlantic University bookstore, and can also be purchased through the Amazon.com website (www.amazon.com). All assigned essays will be available in Blackboard.*

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1 (8/18): Introduction

- Review Syllabus
- Sign-up for dates to lead discussion

WEEK 2 (8/25): The Practice of History: Historicizing the Carceral State

WEEK 3 (9/1): NO CLASS MEETING (*Labor Day*)

WEEK 4 (9/8): Gallows, Stocks, and Ear Crops: Criminal Justice in Colonial America

Required:

- Michele Lise Tarter and Richard Bell, eds., *Buried Lives: Incarcerated in Early America* (read all essays except "Universities of Social and Political Change" and "The Floor was Stained with the Blood of a Slave")

Suggested Reading:

- Louis P. Masur, *Rites of Execution: Capital Punishment and the Transformation of American Culture, 1776-1865*

WEEK 5 (9/15): Slave as Prisoner: (In)Justice in the Old South

Required:

- Sally E. Hadden, *Slave Patrols: Law and Violence in Virginia and the Carolinas*
Glenn McNair, "Slave Women, Capital Crime, and Criminal Justice in Georgia"

Suggested Reading:

- "Universities of Social and Political Change" and "The Floor was Stained with the Blood of a Slave" in *Buried Lives: Incarcerated in Early America*

WEEK 6 (9/22): "Slavery by Another Name": Convict Leasing in the New South

Required:

- Talitha LeFlouria, "The Hand that Rocks the Cradle Cuts Cordwood"; Mary Ellen Curtin, "Female Prisoners"; Jeffrey A. Drobney, "Where Palm and Pine are Blowing"; Heather Ann Thompson, "Blinded by a 'Barbaric' South"; Kelly Lytle Hernandez, "Hobos in Heaven"

WEEK 7 (9/29): NO IN-CLASS MEETING

(Work on finalizing historiographical essay topic and constructing working bibliography. Professor will be available to meet with students on an individual basis between 4-6:50 p.m.)

WEEK 8 (10/6): Gender & Juvenile (In)justice in American History

(Working bibliography for historiographical essay due in class)

Required:

- Geoff K. Ward, *The Black Child-Savers: Racial Democracy & Juvenile Justice*

Suggested Reading:

- Michael Rembis, *Defining Deviance: Sex, Science, and Delinquent Girls, 1890-1960*

WEEK 9 (10/13): Black Women, Crime, and Violence in the Age of Freedom

Required:

- Kali N. Gross, *Colored Amazons: Crime, Violence, and Black Women in the City of Brotherly Love, 1880-1910*
- LaShawn Harris, "'The Commonwealth of Virginia vs. Virginia Christian': Southern Black Women, Crime, & Punishment in Progressive Era Virginia."

Suggested Reading:

- Cheryl Hicks, *Talk with You Like a Woman: African American Women, Justice, and Reform in New York, 1890-1935*

WEEK 10 (10/20): Black Political Prisoners: A Female Perspective

Required:

- Assata Shakur, *Assata: An Autobiography*

Suggested Reading:

- Safiya Bukhari, *The War Before: The True Life Story of Becoming a Black Panther, Keeping the Faith in Prison, and Fighting for Those Left Behind*

WEEK 11 (10/27): Felon Disenfranchisement in a Historical Context

Required:

- Pippa Holloway, *Living in Infamy: Felon Disenfranchisement and the History of American Citizenship*

Suggested Reading:

- Heather Ann Thompson, "Why Mass Incarceration Matters: Rethinking Crisis, Decline, and Transformation in Postwar American History"

WEEK 12 (11/3): NO CLASS MEETING (*Work on historiographical essays. Professor will be available to meet with students on an individual basis between 4-6:50 p.m.*)

WEEK 13 (11/10): The New Jim and Jane Crow: Mass Incarceration Today

Required:

- Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*

Suggested Reading:

- Julia Sudbury, "Celling Black Bodies: Black Women in the Global Prison Industrial Complex"
- Sandra Enos, "Mass Incarceration: Triple Jeopardy for Women in a 'Color Blind' and Gender-Neutral Justice System"

WEEK 14 (11/17): Queering the Carceral State: The Untold Plight of LGBTQ Prisoners

Required:

- Joey Mogul, Andrea Ritchie, and Kay Whitlock, *Queer (In)justice: The Criminalization of LGBT People in the United States*

Suggested Reading:

- Eric A. Stanley and Nat Smith, *Captive Genders: Trans embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex*

WEEK 15 (11/24): The New Face of Mass Incarceration: Immigration Detention

Required:

- Mark Dow, *American Gulag: Inside U.S. Immigration Prisons*

Suggested Reading:

- Kelly Lytle Hernandez, *Migra! A History of the U.S. Border Patrol*

WEEK 16 (12/1): NO CLASS MEETING (*Reading Period*)

WEEK 17 (12/8): SUBMIT HISTORIOGRAPHICAL ESSAYS

(*Final class meeting*)