

AMH 3931: Sexual Violence in American History
University of Florida
Department of History
Summer A 2019

Instructor: Kaitlyn Muchnok

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Office Hours: Monday & Wednesdays, 2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., Keene-Flint Room 222

Class Meeting Times: Monday through Friday, Period 4 (12:30 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.)

Section Number: 10298

Room: Keene Flint Room 0117

Course Description: Many people believe the study of history includes memorizing facts and dates. This information is very important, but it is not the discipline's primary goal. The purpose of studying history is to learn about the past, develop skills in critical thinking, analysis, interpretation of evidence, and academic writing. In general, historians ask specific questions about the past including: What happened? Why did it happen? Does it matter? How does our own personal bias shape our answers to these questions? Learning how to pursue the question-answer part of history will be a central goal of this course.

More specifically, the recent onset of the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements has exposed the disturbing and ongoing prevalence of sexual violence---particularly against women---in the United States. To help understand this contemporary problem, this course will explore the historical roots of sexual and gendered violence in America. Beginning with the colonial period and extending into the twenty-first century, students will trace evolving definitions of sexual violence in American society with an emphasis on the intersecting roles played by race, class, and ethnicity. Throughout the semester, students will be asked to consider the ways in which cultural ideas about power and gender relate to sexual practices and beliefs. Questions asked will include: What are the social and cultural origins of America's response to sexual violence?; What role did sexual violence play in southern slavery?; How has age, race, and class influence the response to sexual violence in America?; How did the limitations of women's rights influence America's response to sexual violence?; How has the image of the rapist changed over time?; How have feminist organizing and policy initiatives changed America's approach to sexual violence?

The course will be reading-intensive and class will be discussion-based. While much of the material focuses on the history of male-on-female sexual violence, some attention will be devoted to exploring sexual violence against minors, the LGBTQ community, and men. Moreover, students will also work through a variety of primary sources to help them learn to think and analyze as a historian would. The course will be organized in a loosely chronological fashion, but each unit will center around a specific theme.

Required Readings: The following textbooks are required for this course. I encourage you to buy used when possible. Amazon is a great resource for ordering much more affordable copies.

- Freedman, Estelle B., *Redefining Rape: Sexual Violence in the Era of Suffrage and Segregation*, (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 2013)

- Smith, Merril D. (ed), *Sex without Consent: Rape and Sexual Coercion in America*, (New York University Press: New York, 2001)
- Other assigned works will be available via the course E-learning page*

Course Assignments:

- **Participation** (300 points total, 150 points weeks 1-3/150 points weeks 4-6)
 - Students are expected to arrive to class on time, silence cell phones, and engage proactively with the course lectures and discussions. To get a high participation grade, students should comment, ask questions, or respond to fellow classmates during Friday's discussion sections. Additionally, students should come up with one discussion question twice a week---on Tuesday and Thursday--- in response to the respective readings. These questions should be analytical, rather than content questions.
- **4 Weekly Reading Responses** (200 points total/50 points each)
 - On either Tuesday or Thursday of each week, students will submit a 1-2 page, doubled spaced paper describing that week's readings. Each reading should be addressed and briefly summarized. The last paragraph of the paper should contain the students' responses, thoughts, or connections she or he made after analyzing the material. These will be due weeks 2-5.
- **Comparative Analysis Paper** (200 points total)
 - A 4-5 page paper comparing two articles from the *Consent* anthology (required course book) will be due Monday, June 3rd by 11:50 p.m. Students should select two articles that share similar topics, themes, issues, or questions and then analytically compare their arguments, sources, perspectives, and overall conclusions.
- **Final Research Paper** (300 points total)
 - A 6-8 page research paper on a course related topic will be due on the final day of class, June 21. For this paper, students will select a specific theme/topic examined in this class, including, but not limited to, sexual violence in Early America, prisons, the military, politics and government, the workplace, romantic relationships/dating, marriage, the family, the media, sports, or the criminal justice system. Additionally, students may explore a thematic topic over time, which may include researching the history of statutory rape, child abuse, race and sexual violence, sexual violence in the LGBTQ community, male-on-male sexual abuse, sex trafficking, the porn industry, prostitution, etc. Students must have their topic approved and meet with me during office hours to discuss their progress and research plan. Moreover, students may include research from course readings, but must also seek out additional scholarship on the topic to complete their paper.

Attendance Policy: Attendance is essential to your learning experience. Attendance will be taken every class meeting day. You are permitted **three** unexcused absences without penalty. The fourth unexcused absence will result in a drop of your overall grade by half a letter grade (for example, instead of receiving a B+ you would receive a B). Each additional absence will result in an additional half letter decrease in your grade. Please note that if you plan on using an unexcused absence, you do not need to email me to let me know. However, if your absence fits

with in the university's established acceptable excuses, please communicate with me via email to let me know you will miss class.

Late Assignments: Late assignments will receive a reduced grade. An assignment is considered late as soon as the designated time has passed. For example, if the paper is due at 12pm, the paper is considered late at 12:01 pm. The University policy on make up assignments, lateness, and attendance issues can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>.

Technology Policy: Please put your phone away at the beginning of each class period. You are permitted to use your laptop during lecture periods. During these times, please temporarily disable your WiFi for the entirety of the course period. Getting on non-course related websites is not only a disservice to your own learning experience, but also a distraction to students around you and **especially** the instructor. During discussions, no laptops or phones are permitted on desks. If you need to take notes on the material, please print them out or hand write them for these days. You are also encouraged to bring your own copies of the required reading to class. Feel free to take notes in the books or highlight relevant material to help trigger your memory for classroom discussion.

Communication Policy: Students should communicate with the instructor primarily through email, office hour visits, or appointments made by student requests. Please use kaitlynmuchnok@ufl.edu to contact me during regular business hours. I generally stop checking emails after 7:00pm so please make an effort to reach out to me earlier in the day with urgent questions and issues. Additionally, students must regularly check the course's E-Learning page for assignment updates, links to required readings, and course announcements.

Expectations: The course topic is highly sensitive and students will find much of the material to be disturbing and upsetting. Most of the time, this course will be racially charged, will highlight the gendered dynamics of sexual violence, and focus on how sexual violence tends to affect marginalized people most often. It is expected that students come to class with an open mind, prepared to engage with complicated issues and questions and listen to classmates' perspectives that may differ from their own. Thoughtful, honest, and evidence-based points of view are crucial for productive conversations and learning. To ensure that everyone feels respected, please refrain from personal attacks and offensive remarks. **A goal of this class is to emphasize empathy in historical studies, or the ability to understand the feelings or perspective of others, without necessarily sharing their point of view.**

UF Grading Scale: Grades will be assigned according to the follow university grading scale.

A	93-100	A-	90-92
B+	87-89	B	83-86
C+	77-79	B-	80-82
D+	68-69	C	73-76
F	<64	C-	70-72
		D	66-67
		D-	64-65

Academic Honesty: UF policy requires you to access and use your gatorlink account. Excuses regarding not reading emails will not be accepted. Additionally, academic dishonesty, such as cheating, plagiarism, or submitting someone else's work without citing them will not be tolerated. UF's honor code can be found here: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>.

Disability Information: Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting the accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Student Evaluations: Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students as <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Course Schedule:

Week One

Questions: *What constitutes sexual violence? What forces shift the definition of sexual violence over time? What are the social and cultural origins of American responses to sexual violence? Why study the history of sexual violence?*

- May 13:** Class Introduction
- Syllabus overview, introduction of topic, terms & definition review
- May 14-15:** Understanding the Historical Study of Sexual Violence
- Smith, Introduction
 - Freedman, Introduction
 - Read: https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/womens-long-battle-to-define-rape/2012/08/24/aa960280-ed34-11e1-a80b-9f898562d010_story.html?utm_term=.e5dec24e2e5d
 - Explore sexual violence statistics:
 - <https://www.rainn.org/statistics>
- May 16-17:** Sexual Violence in Colonial America
- Smith, pgs. (Chapter 2)
 - Smith, pgs. (Chapter 3)
 - Freedman pgs. (Chapter 1)

Week Two

Questions: *What role did rape play in the growth and survival of slavery? What agency did enslaved people use in response to slavery's institutionalization of rape? How did the institution of marriage help protect perpetrators of sexual assault?*

- May 20-22:** Sexual Violence & Slavery
- Slave Narratives (Primary Source)
 - <http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/pds/maai/enslavement/txt6/mastersslavesexualabuse.pdf>
 - Dig a History Podcast “Rape & Race in Early America,” March 17th 2019 (Podcast)
 - Foster, Thomas A., The Sexual Abuse of Black Men under Slavery, *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, Vol. 2, No. 3, pgs. 445-465
 - https://www.jstor.org/stable/41305880?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

- May 23-24:** Rape & Marriage
- Smith, Ch. 9
 - *Teen Vogue* article: <https://www.teenvogue.com/story/child-marriage-in-the-united-states-explained>
 - *Women's News* article : <https://womensenews.org/2009/07/spousal-rape-laws-continue-evolve/>

Week Three

Questions: *How did age influence the response to sexual violence in America? What factors motivated reformers to campaign for raising the age of consent? What difference did race make in in statutory rape and anti-prostitution reforms?*

- May 28-29** Age of Consent, Statutory Rape & Incest
- Freedman Ch. 7
 - Smith Ch. 4
 - Stephen Robertson article: <https://tif.ssrc.org/2012/07/13/placing-childhood-sexual-abuse-in-historical-perspective/> Sex Crime
 - *In Class Film Screening, Amir Bar Lev (director), “Happy Valley.”

- May 30-31:** Prostitution & Sex Trafficking
- Jessica Pliley, *Policing Sexuality: The Mann Act and the Making of the FBI*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014) Chapter 7-8 selections (see Canvas)
 - History of sex trafficking article: <https://warinternational.org/us-history-of-sexual-exploitation-of-children-news/>

Week Four

Questions: *How did the criminal justice system's treatment of rape depend upon race? How did this help uphold Jim Crow and black inequality?*

June 3-5: Sexual Coercion & Violence in the Era of Segregation

- Freedman Ch. 5 & 12
- Smith, Ch. 11
- Danielle L. McGuire, "It Was Like We Had All Been Raped: Sexual Violence, Community Mobilization, and the African American Freedom Struggle," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 91, No. 3, (December 2004), pp. 906-931.
 - https://www.jstor.org/stable/3662860?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents

June 6-7:

- Smith, Ch. 8 & 10
- Freedman, Ch. 9

Week Five

Questions: *How has sexual violence become systematic in many public institutions? Have Americans responded to revelations of sexual violence in society? How does political, economic, and social power protect perpetrators?*

June 10-11: Sexual Assault & Public Institutions

- Prison reading
- Military
 - Reading: See Canvas

June 12-14: In the Public/Government

- In class film screening *Anita*
- Reading TBD

Week Six

Questions: *How have colleges handled sexual assault on campuses? How has a victim's reputation affected society's response to sexual violence? What are the limitations of women's rights in the twentieth and twentieth-first centuries?*

June 17-18: Sexual Assault on College Campuses

- Smith, Ch. 13
- <https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2014/11/30/366348383/the-history-of-campus-sexual-assault>

June 19-21: Date Rape & Street Harassment

- Freedman, Ch. 10

- Smith, Ch. 12*
- Lisa Lindquist Dorr, “The Perils of the Back Seat: Dating, Race, and Gender in 1950s America, *Gender & History*, Vol.20 No.1, April 2—8, pp. 27-47.
 - <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/epdf/10.1111/j.1468-0424.2007.00506.x>
- <https://www.vogue.com/article/street-harassment-universal-age-old>
- Eleanor Gates, “The Girl Who Travels Alone,” *Cosmopolitan Magazine* XLII (1906), page 163-172
 - <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=hvd.hnycie;view=1up;seq=165>