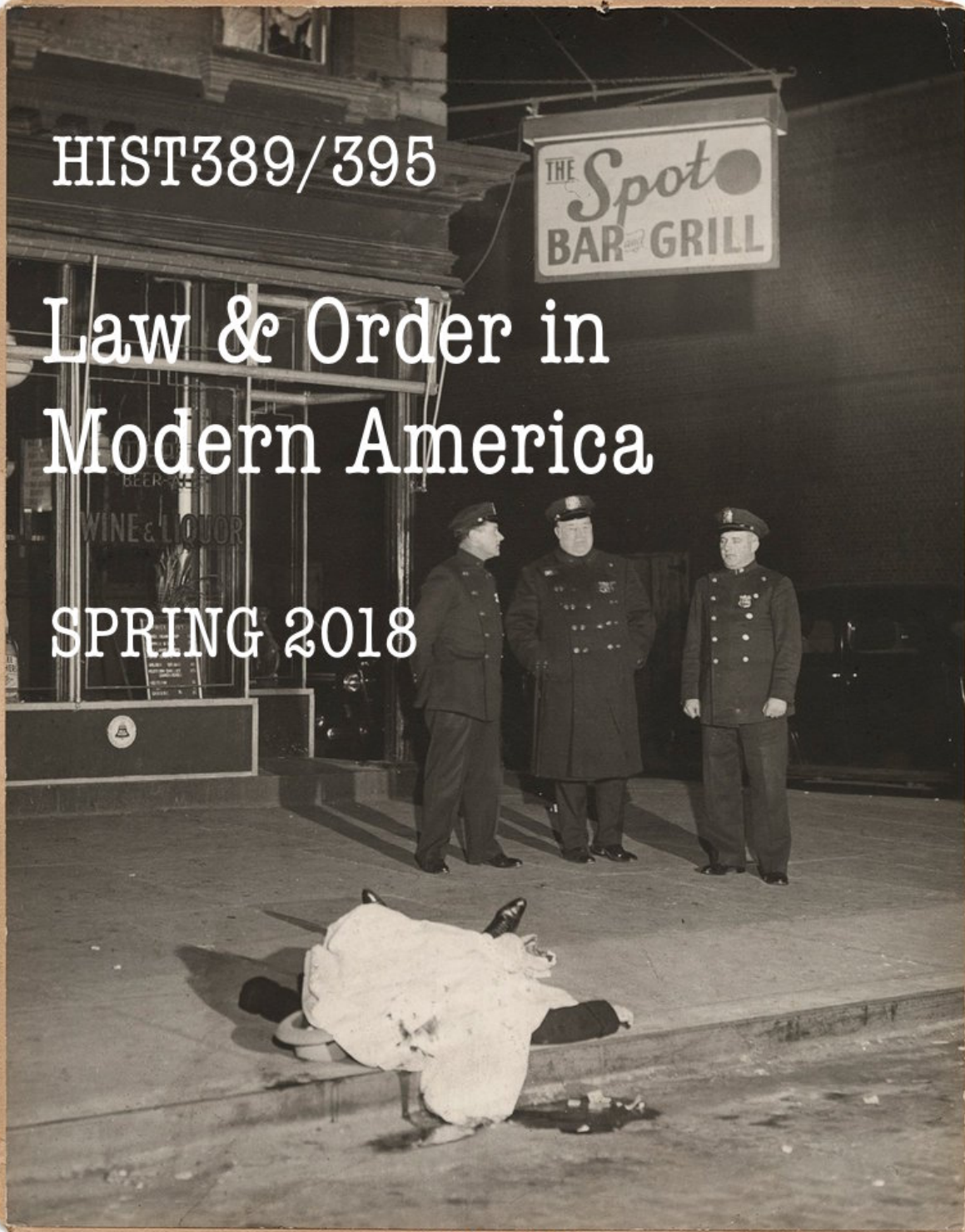


HIST389/395

Law & Order in
Modern America

SPRING 2018



ON THE SPOT

<http://drstephenrobertson.com/hist395>

Tuesday/Thursday, 12.00-1.15, Robinson Hall A111

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course is a thematic examination of the history of crime and its policing and prosecution in the United States from the 1860s to the present. It will consider crime as a feature of modern American life by exploring changes over time in the criminal justice system, and in the incidence, definition, and policing of offenses such as murder, assault, gambling, prostitution, rape, theft, counterfeiting, and robbery. We will also explore the changing nature of crime reporting and newspapers as a source for the history of crime. The major assignment is a digital project using a newspaper in the Library of Congress' *Chronicling America* collection to analyze crime in a particular time and place.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- You will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the history of crime and the criminal justice system in the United States since 1865
- You will identify and interpret written and visual primary sources and secondary materials such as monographs, scholarly articles, and websites.
- You will have an understanding of how new technologies are transforming historical research, writing, and publishing
- You will learn how to do historical research and scholarship using a range of tools and resources that are available on the web
- You will successfully develop and publish historical scholarship on the web

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Prof. Stephen Robertson
- srober30@gmu.edu
- Office: Research Hall 483 -- Office Hours by appointment

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- You need to bring a laptop to every class – you will need a device to do the required work with online materials
- Late work will not be accepted.
- No incompletes will be issued.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Important Dates

Last day to add classes—all individualized section forms due	Mon Jan 29
Last day to drop with no tuition penalty	Mon Jan 29
Last day to drop with a 33% tuition penalty	Mon Feb 12
Final Drop Deadline (67% tuition penalty)	Fri Feb 23

Academic Integrity

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code: "not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, and/or lie in matters related to academic work." If you are uncertain what that policy covers, see the information provided by the Office of Academic Integrity. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review.

If you are copying and pasting text that someone else wrote, you might be plagiarizing. Pasted or manually retyped text is not plagiarized only when all of the following three conditions are true: 1) the pasted text is surrounded by quotation marks or set off as a block quote, and 2) the pasted text is attributed in your text to its author and its source (e.g., "As Jane Smith writes on her blog . . ."), and 3) the pasted text is cited in a footnote, endnote, and/or a bibliography (e.g., "Smith, Jane. Smith Stuff. Blog. Available <http://smithstuff.wordpress.com>. Accessed August 1, 2012.")

Disability Accommodations

Any student who requires special arrangements in order to meet course requirements should Contact me to make necessary accommodations (before 8/31 please). Students should present appropriate verification from the Office of Disability Services (<http://ods.gmu.edu/distance.php>, 703-993-2474). All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

Diversity Policy

George Mason University is an inclusive community of learners. Your instructor and all classmates should abide by the University's Diversity Policy found at Mason Diversity Statement (<http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement/>).

Student Privacy

Students must use their MasonLive email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See Mason Live (<http://masonlive.gmu.edu>) for more information.

Student Services

- Writing Center < <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu> > (703-993-1200)
- Ask A Librarian < <http://library.gmu.edu/ask> >
- Counseling and Psychological Services < <http://caps.gmu.edu> > (703-993-2380)

Grading Scale

A+	99-100	4.00
A	93-98	4.00
A-	90-92	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.67

C+	77-79	2.33
C	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.67
D	60-69	1.00
F	60 and below	0.00

ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Newspaper Description (10%)**

due by 11.59PM, 2/15

The goal of this assignment is to develop an overview of the paper that you have chosen to research to provide a context for understanding the crime reporting that you will be investigating in the rest of the course. To complete this assignment you'll need to skim a week of issues of the newspaper you have chosen from two different years (1880 & 1900 or 1900 & 1920), and take note of the kind and quantity of stories that typically appear in different parts of the paper

- How many pages and columns are in each issue?
- What kind of content is on each page?
- What style of content? (Melodramatic, Sensational, Objective)
- What format of presentation? (headlines, illustrations, length of stories)
- In what ways was the paper different 20 years later? (1880-1900 or 1900-1920)
- How would you categorize the paper, in terms of the genres of the penny press, yellow journalism, informational press?

2. **Timeline entries (20%)**

due by 11.59PM, 3/6

The goal of this assignment is to use TimelineJS to create a timeline of developments in the criminal justice during the period you are researching in order to create a context for understanding the crimes and legal processes reported in the paper you are researching.

- You need to complete a timeline entry for 5 of 6 classes on 2/6-2/27 focused on the criminal justice system & extra-legal justice.
- You can either complete an entry on a development at the level of the state in which your newspaper is published or, if that is not possible, at a broader level.
- As this is an online project, the information for your entry should come from online sources to which you can link, not just the reading
 - Before each class, identify 2-3 developments discussed in the reading that you think are important to understanding how crimes are defined and handled by the criminal justice system and the community
 - In class we will discuss the topics you have identified and finalize which will be your timeline entry (to make sure you each do a different entry)
 - Each entry consists of a date, title and a short description (2-3 sentences), together with some media (an image, map, Wikipedia entry, or video), and a tag (group) identifying the aspect of criminal justice to which it relates.

- a. Some of the information you need will be found in the reading for the class, but you will need to search online to find additional information. We will spend some time in each class searching for material
- b. You should include at least one link to an online source in your description
- c. The media needs to be online to be included in TimelineJS. It may not be possible to find media for all of your entries
- d. Add your entry to the class TimelineJS spreadsheet

3. **Search results (25%)**

due by 12 noon on day of class

Search your newspaper for the crime that is the subject of the class in either 1880 & 1900 or 1900 & 1920; complete this assignment for any 10 of the 11 classes focused on crimes.

- a. For each year, begin by searching for the period 6/1 – 6/30
- b. Each set of results should include approximately 15-20 items
 - a. if a search for the whole month produces too many results, search for 6/1 – 6/15; continue to reduce the time frame until you have a manageable set of results
 - b. if a search for the whole month produces too few results, extend the period of the search to include additional months
- c. Check each result to ensure the story relates to a crime (eg is not a fictional story)
- d. For items that are crimes, scroll to the bottom of the page and copy the url
- e. Paste the url into a Google sheet titled with the name of the paper, the term you searched and the dates you searched; add a brief note on the details of the crime
- f. Share the completed sheet with Prof. Robertson: srob4757@gmail.com
- g. Come to class prepared to discuss your search results.
- h. We'll review how much time this task takes; if it is too time-consuming, we'll adjust the requirements

4. **Dataset (15%)**

due by 11.59PM, 4/25

Develop one set of your search results into a data set

- a. Create and complete a Google Sheet modelled on the example provided
- b. Copy the OCR transcription for each story from Chronicling America & correct the OCR
- c. In Google Sheets, create charts showing the patterns in the data in terms of the location in/out of state, nature of the crime, and identities of the participants
- d. Save the Google Sheet as a csv file and import it into Omeka
- e. Create a map of the dataset in Omeka

5. **Online exhibit (30%)**

due by 11.59PM, 5/14

Create an Omeka exhibit interpreting your dataset that outlines the patterns in the data, places it in context, and answers these two questions:

- a. How do these stories fit with historians' accounts of crime reporting?

- b. How do these stories fit with historians' accounts of that crime?
- c. Your exhibit should include the timeline created by the class, a map made with the Omeka Map plugin, charts illustrating other patterns in the data, and visualizations created with Voyant.

SCHEDULE

1/23 - *WHAT IS THE HISTORY OF CRIME? WHAT IS DIGITAL HISTORY?*

1/25 - *UNDERSTANDING TURN-OF-THE-20th-CENTURY NEWSPAPERS & CRIME REPORTING*

Reading: Michael Trotti, *The Body in the Reservoir: Murder and Sensationalism in the South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina press, 2008), chap. 3: "The Disenchantment of Sensational Murder," 80-109.

1/30 - *UNDERSTANDING DIGITAL NEWSPAPERS: Chronicling America, digitization, OCR, & search*

Reading: Ryan Cordell, "What Has the Digital Meant to American Periodicals Scholarship?" *American Periodicals* 26, 1 (2016): 2-7.

*Choose the newspaper that will be the focus of your work in this course

2/1 - *BUILDING DIGITAL COLLECTIONS, EXHIBITS, & TIMELINES*

Reading: [Colored Conventions Project](#)

[Go in' North: Stories from the First Great Migration to Philadelphia](#)

2/6 - *THE SYSTEM (1)*

Reading: William Stuntz, *The Collapse of American Criminal Justice* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011), chap. 5: "Criminal Justice in the Gilded Age," 129-157

2/8 - *THE SYSTEM (2)*

Reading: Elizabeth Dale, *Criminal Justice in the United States, 1789-1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), chap. 5: "Criminal Justice 1900-1936," 97-121.

2/13 - *POLICE*

Reading: Mark Haller, "Historical Roots of Police Behavior: Chicago, 1890-1925," *Law and Society Review* 10, 2 (1976): 303-323

2/15 - NO CLASS; Assignment #1 due by 11.59PM

2/20 - *PRIVATE DETECTIVES*

Reading: John Walton, *The Legendary Detective: The Private Eye in Fact and Fiction*, chap. 3: "Agency Business," 55-76.

2/22 - *EXTRA-LEGAL JUSTICE: LYNCHING*

Reading: Christopher Waldrep, *The Many Faces of Judge Lynch* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), chap. 6: "'Threadbare Lies': Making Lynching Racial," 109-126

2/27 – EXTRA-LEGAL JUSTICE: THE UNWRITTEN LAW

Reading: Hendrik Hartog, "Lawyering, Husbands' Rights, and "the Unwritten Law" in Nineteenth-Century America," *Journal of American History* 84, 1 (1997): 67-96.

3/1 - CRIME AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: ALAMEDA COUNTY

Reading: Lawrence Friedman and Robert Percival, *The Roots of Justice: Crime and Punishment in Alameda County, California, 1870-1910* (University of North Carolina Press, 1981), chap.4: "Petty Crime, Police, and the Basement of Justice," 67-134 (skim)

3/6 - NO CLASS; Assignment #2 due by 11.59PM

3/8 – MURDER BY THE NUMBERS

Resource: Eric Monkkonen, "Homicide: Explaining America's Exceptionalism," *American Historical Review* (2006): 76-94

Search term: Murder

3/12-3/16 - SPRING BREAK

3/20 – MURDER – CASE STUDIES

Resource: Martha Merrill Umphrey, "Media Melodrama! Sensationalism and the 1907 Trial of Harry Thaw," *New York Law School Law Review* 43 (1999): 715-739

Search: Harry Thaw

3/22 – MURDER –IMAGES

Resource: Michael Trotti, "Murder Made Real: The Visual Revolution of the Halftone," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 111, 4 (2003): 379-410

Search: Assault

3/27 - MORALS OFFENSES: GAMBLING

Resource: Shane White et al, *Playing the Numbers: Gambling in Harlem Between the Wars* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010), chap.5: "Numbers Lore," 126-146.

Search: Gambling

3/29 – MORALS OFFENSES: PROSTITUTION

Resource: Joel Best, "Looking Evil in the Face, Being an Examination of Vice and Respectability in St. Paul as Seen in the City's Press, 1865-83," *Minnesota History* 50, 6 (1987): 241-251

Search: prostitute, prostitution, brothel

4/3 – MORALS OFFENSES: PROHIBITION

Resource: Lisa McGirr, *The War on Alcohol: Prohibition and the Rise of the American State*, chap. 3: "Selective Enforcement," 67-102

Search: liquor

4/5 - *SEX OFFENSES: RAPE*

Resource: Estelle Freedman, "'Crimes which startle and horrify': Gender, Age, and the Racialization of Sexual Violence in White American Newspapers, 1870-1900," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 20, 3 (2011): 465-497

Search: criminal assault

4/10 - *SEX OFFENSES: SODOMY*

Resource: Stephen Robertson, "Shifting the Scene of the Crime: Sodomy and the American History of Sexual Violence," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 19, 2 (May 2010): 223-242

Search: sodomy; crime against nature

4/12 - *PROPERTY CRIME: THEFT & WHITE COLLAR CRIME*

Resource: Katherine Unterman, "Boodle over the Border: Embezzlement and the Crisis of International Mobility, 1880-1890," *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 11, 2 (2012): 151-189

Search: Embezzlement or Theft

4/17 - *PROPERTY CRIME: COUNTERFEITING*

Resource: David Johnson, *Illegal Tender: Counterfeiting and the Secret Service in Nineteenth-Century America*, chap. 2: 37-64; & chap. 7: Crime and Power, 171-180

Search: counterfeit

4/19 - *PROPERTY CRIME: BANK ROBBERY*

Resource: Claire Potter, *War on Crime: Bandits, G-Men, and the Politics of Mass Culture* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1998), chap. 3: "People No Longer Respect Respectability": The Making of a Crime Wave," 57-74.

4/24 - *EXHIBIT BUILDING IN OMEKA*

4/25 - Assignment #4 due by 11.59PM

4/26 - *MINING CRIME WITH VOYANT*

5/1 - *WORKSHOP*

5/3 - *WORKSHOP*

5/14 - Assignment #5 due by 11.59PM