

## HIST 4317: Sex and Violence in the Old South

PROFESSOR: DR. WILLIAMSON

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Office Hours:

Location: Lawrence Hall (LH) 211

<b>Mondays</b>	10am-12pm, <i>or by appointment</i>
<b>Tuesdays</b>	12:30-1:45pm
<b>Wednesdays</b>	10am-12pm, <i>or by appointment</i>
<b>Thursdays</b>	12:30-1:45pm
<b>Fridays</b>	<i>Available by appointment</i>

### Section I. Introduction

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Gentility, civility, and the affair of honor—the duel; the exalted but helplessness position of the “southern belle;” riverboat gamblers; masters raping slaves and “plantation justice;” slave breeding; slave insurrection. This is what many people want in a course on the antebellum South. In fact, there is more and more good scholarship coming out on sex and violence in the Old South. Given their place in a slaveholding society, what were the roles of men and women, white, black, and native American? For English, French, and Spanish women and men? What were the definitions on masculinity and femininity, and how did they change over time, place, and circumstance? How did they compare with the North or western Europe? Why were men/sons/fathers supposed to behave a certain way? Why were women/daughters/mothers supposed to behave a certain way? What happened to those who deviated from the norm? What did slavery do to gender definitions of African American men and women? of free black men and women? Why was the South so violent? How did slavery tie into concepts of honor and manly behavior? and womanly behavior? Did slaves have honor, in their own eyes or in those of whites? These are the sorts of questions we will investigate in this course.

Each week, you will be expected to participate in discussion in detail over the assigned readings for the week. Through this analysis, we will examine the content presented by the authors as well as the evidence upon which they base their arguments. We will also discuss how each work fits within ongoing historical debates about the topic and/or theme of the readings.

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### *Course Content Disclaimer*

At times this semester we will be discussing historical events that may be disturbing, even traumatizing, to some students. If you suspect that specific material is likely to be emotionally challenging for you, I'd be happy to discuss any concerns you may have. Likewise, if you ever wish to discuss your reactions to course material with the class or with me individually afterwards, I welcome such discussions as an appropriate part of our classwork.

### **Section II. Learning Objectives**

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#### **Student Learning Outcomes**

*SLO 1*—The history student will demonstrate historical research skills in a logically organized, written paper that is mechanically correct and supported by relevant documentation of historical content.

*Marketable skills*— Students can identify useful resources from a pool of data.  
Students can select and organize data in a relevant manner.  
Students can make written presentations to various audiences.

*SLO 2*—The history student will demonstrate the ability to write about topics in historiography and how those topics are interpreted.

*Marketable skills*— Students can utilize data to persuade various audiences.  
Students can utilize data to generate and strengthen ideas.  
Students can decipher stances adopted by various individuals.

*SLO 3*—The history student will demonstrate knowledge of historical events, movements, major turning points and personalities of the past.

*Marketable Skills*— Students can meet deadlines in a successful manner.  
Students can discharge responsibilities in an adequate manner.  
Students can manage the absorption of data.

### **Section III. Required Materials**—available as e-books through the SRSU library.

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- Jennifer Morgan, "Some Could Suckle Over Their Shoulder': Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500-1770," *William & Mary Quarterly* (Jan. 1997), 167-92.
- Glover, Lorri. *Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007.
- Wyatt-Brown, Bertram. *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*. Oxford University Press. Any edition.
- Kerrison, Catherine. *Claiming the Pen: Women and Intellectual Life in the Early American South*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015.
- Perdue, Theda. *Mixed Blood Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003.
- Seyda, Barbara. *Celia, a Slave*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2016.
- Elliott J. Gorn, "'Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch': The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry," *American Historical Review*, 90 (Feb.,1985), 18-43.
- Clinton, Catherine and Nina Silber. *Battle Scars: Gender and Sexuality in the American Civil War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

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- **Technology**—This is an online course, which means that you **must** have regular, reliable access to a working computer with internet. Students are responsible for checking email and the Blackboard site on a regular basis to access course materials and information.
- **Accountability**—Think of this course like joining a gym—you get out what you put in. As your professor, it is my responsibility to make sure you know how to use the equipment and to assist you when you need a spotter. Meanwhile, it is your responsibility to engage with the course materials, put in the work, and complete the assignments by the designated due dates. The grade you earn is determined by the quality of your effort, not necessarily the time you spend.

### **THE 5 C'S OF HISTORICAL REASONING**

1. **Change and Continuity:** Historians are required to debate what has changed over time and what has remained the same. Change can be a dramatic pivot or a slow shift.
2. **Causation:** Historians debate the causes of historical events. It would be more accurate to say that we often discuss about causality, sometimes passionately. Few events have only one cause (monocausal), so we debate with one another about which cause should be considered the most important.
3. **Context:** Historians insist that the past must be understood on its own terms. Any historical event, person, idea must be placed in the context of its historical era to be interpreted. The historian's goal is to discover how people in the past understood their own lives, which is often quite different from how we may react to their situation.
4. **Contingency and Connections:** Historians are aware that events happen for a variety of reasons, which are often interconnected. Change one factor, and the event might not have happened at all. This idea helps us to remember that historical events are not inevitable.
5. **Complexity:** Historical reasoning is not about memorizing dates and names. It is about making sense of the messiness of the past, in all its complexity. That often means recognizing that different historical groups experienced events in different ways.

### **Section IV. Grades**

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**A** 90-100%    **B** 80-89%    **C** 70-79%    **D** 60-69%    **F** 59% or lower

- **Discussion Participation** (30%): Students are expected to read the assigned materials before the start of class and contribute to discussions of course materials on the course Blackboard page. Participation is required of each individual student.
- **Four Book Reviews** (10% each, 40% of the semester grade): Students will write and submit précis, or scholarly reviews, over assigned reading.
  - Précis should be 2-3 full, double-spaced page, in 12-point Times New Roman font, with one-inch margins on all sides. For examples of a scholarly review (otherwise known as a précis), see: [www.h-net.org/reviews/](http://www.h-net.org/reviews/)
  - A précis should summarize a given book or article's argument, scope, and methodology as clearly and concisely as possible. Some reviews may require students to write a comparative analysis of multiple readings. Your review should evaluate the effectiveness of the book or article(s) as well as its limitations.

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- The purpose of a scholarly review is to both summarize the books or article's contents and, more importantly, to critically evaluate its contribution to knowledge, both factual and historiographical. The reviewer's priority is to critically appraise each book; to analyze it on its own terms, to discuss what it did and did not do, what sort of evidence the author used and how well, what its strengths and weaknesses were. Be sure to point out the thesis of each book and whether the author presented a supported a persuasive argument. Try to ascertain what kind of historiographical context (if any) the author provided—in other words, how did the author's work fit into a broader body of historical literature? If the author did not do this, hold them to task. For examples of scholarly book reviews, see: [www.h-net.org/reviews](http://www.h-net.org/reviews)
- **Final Paper** (30%): To measure the success of student acquisition of these mandated skills, one assignment during the semester will require critical analysis of an historical event in nineteenth-century American history. Each student will utilize a selection of primary and/or secondary sources to interpret and evaluate, place in historical context, and utilize to construct an analytical essay. The essay will require that students think critically about the sources, examine how individual choices and decisions influenced the course of history, and consider the ways in which individuals engage with regional, national, and/or global communities.
  - You must consult with your professor about potential research topics prior to making your final decision. You may choose *any* subject relevant to the theme and chronology of this course. This essay must have a strong, coherent thesis statement, which will be supported by a minimum 10 scholarly sources, at least 7 of which must be scholarly books. These may include works from the required, supplemental, and/or recommended reading lists.
  - Essays must be typed or word-processed in 12-point fonts (Times New Roman, Arial, or Calibri), double-spaced, with one-inch margins all around.
  - All papers should be a minimum 8-12 full pages (not including a cover page and works cited) and will be evaluated on style and content; therefore, they should be well-written and free of grammatical errors. Papers that are not formatted according to guidelines and requirements will be dropped one letter grade automatically.
  - Papers will be evaluated on the following:
    - strength of your historical arguments and content
    - how well you have used historical evidence to support your argument(s)—the 5C's of Historical Reasoning (see above)
    - composition (i.e., spelling, grammar, sentence structure)
    - form (i.e., correct citation, Chicago Manual of Style or Turabian format)

### Section IV. Classroom & Teaching Philosophy

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#### *A Climate of Mutual Respect*

Importantly, this class will foster free expression, critical investigation, and the open discussion of ideas. This means that all of us must help create and sustain an atmosphere of tolerance, civility, and respect for the viewpoints of others. Similarly, we must all learn how to probe, oppose, and disagree without resorting to tactics of intimidation, harassment, or personal attack. No one is entitled to harass, belittle, or discriminate against another on the basis of race, religion,

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ethnicity, age, gender, national origin, or sexual preference. Still, we will not be silenced by the difficulty of fruitfully discussing politically sensitive issues.

### *Student Support*

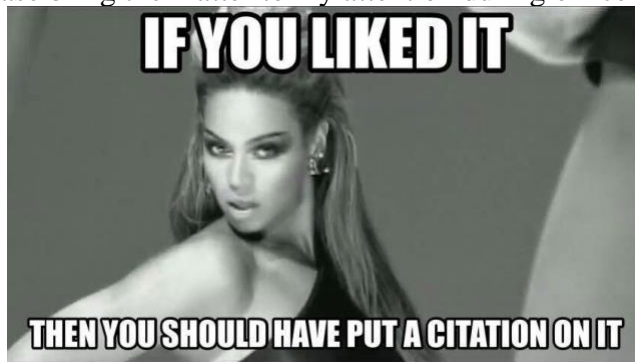
I aim to create a learning environment for my students that supports various perspectives and experiences. I understand that the recent pandemic, economic disparity, and health concerns, or even unexpected life events may impact the conditions necessary for you to succeed. My commitment is to be there for you and help you meet the learning objectives of this course. I do this to demonstrate my commitment to you and to the mission of Sul Ross State University to create an inclusive environment and care for the whole student as part of the Sul Ross Familia. If you feel like your performance in the class is being impacted by your experiences outside of class, please don't hesitate to come and talk with me. I want to be a resource for you.

## Section V. Policies

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### *Grading*

While I am always happy to discuss ways to improve your writing and performance on exams, I am not in the business of haggling over grades. Grades in this class are the product of careful deliberation and are not negotiable. If you find that the instructor—who is human—made a mathematical error, please bring the matter to my attention during office hours.



### *Academic Integrity*

Students in this class are expected to demonstrate scholarly behavior and academic honesty in the use of intellectual property. Students should submit work that is their own and avoid the temptation to engage in behaviors that violate academic integrity, such as turning in work as original that was used in whole or part for another course and/or professor; turning in another person's work as one's own; copying from professional works or internet sites without citation; collaborating on a course assignment, examination, or quiz when collaboration is forbidden. Students should also avoid using open AI sources *unless permission is expressly given* for an assignment or course. Violations of academic integrity can result in failing assignments, failing a class, and/or more serious university consequences. These behaviors also erode the value of college degrees and higher education overall.

Please read the complete policy at

[http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/stulife/student\\_conduct\\_discipline.pdf](http://www.sulross.edu/sites/default/files/sites/default/files/users/docs/stulife/student_conduct_discipline.pdf)

## Section VI. University Programs and Services

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- ***SRSU Library Services:*** The Sul Ross Library offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, [library.sulross.edu](http://library.sulross.edu). Off-campus access requires your LoboID and password. Check out materials using your photo ID. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email ([srsulibrary@sulross.edu](mailto:srsulibrary@sulross.edu)), or by phone (432-837-8123).
- **Academic Success Center:** The 1<sup>st</sup> Floor of the Wildenthal Library offers tutoring for many subjects, holds numerous workshops on developing better notetaking, reading, and study skills as well as assisting students with writing and test taking strategies.
- **Academic Center for Excellence (ACE):** The University offers tutoring for many subjects, holds numerous workshops on developing better notetaking, reading, and study skills as well as assisting students with writing and test taking strategies through ACE.  
Location: FH 214. Web: <http://www.sulross.edu/academic-center-excellence>
- ***Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA):*** Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services.

**Students seeking accessibility services must contact:**

Counseling and Accessibility Services

Location: Ferguson Hall 112

Telephone: 432-837-8691

Mailing Address: P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832

- ***Counseling and Psychological Services:*** Sul Ross has partnered with TimelyCare where all SR students will have access to nine free counseling sessions. You can learn more about this 24/7/356 support by visiting [Timelycare/SRSU](http://Timelycare/SRSU). The SR Counseling and Accessibility Services office will continue to offer in-person counseling in Ferguson Hall room 112 (Alpine campus), and telehealth Zoom sessions for remote students and RGC students.

Location: Ferguson Hall 112

Hours: M-F 8am-12pm and 1pm-5pm

Phone: (432) 837-8203

Web: <http://www.sulross.edu/section/2408/counseling-accessibility-services>

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### Section VII. Spring 2024 Schedule

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**Week 1 (Wednesday, January 17<sup>th</sup>-Sunday, 21<sup>st</sup>):** Introductions, in Blackboard

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**Week 2 (January 22<sup>nd</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>):** First Contacts: Europeans, Americans, & Africans

Read: Jennifer Morgan, "'Some Could Suckle Over Their Shoulder': Male Travelers, Female Bodies, and the Gendering of Racial Ideology, 1500-1770," *William & Mary Quarterly* (Jan. 1997), 167-92.

Discussion post due to Bb by 11:59pm Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup>

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**Week 3 (January 29<sup>th</sup>-February 4<sup>th</sup>):** Gender in Colonial America

Read: Glover, Lorri. *Southern Sons: Becoming Men in the New Nation*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007.

Discussion post due to Bb by 11:59pm Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup>

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**Week 4 (February 5<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>):** Honor

Read: Wyatt-Brown, Bertram. *Southern Honor: Ethics and Behavior in the Old South*. Oxford University Press. Any edition.

Review due to Bb by 11:59pm Sunday, February 11<sup>th</sup>

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**Week 5 (February 12<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup>):** Violence

Read: Elliott J. Gorn, "'Gouge and Bite, Pull Hair and Scratch': The Social Significance of Fighting in the Southern Backcountry," *American Historical Review*, 90 (Feb.,1985), 18-43.

Discussion post due to Bb by 11:59pm Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup>

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**Week 6 (February 19<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>):** Women

Read: Kerrison, Catherine. *Claiming the Pen: Women and Intellectual Life in the Early American South*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015.

Discussion post due to Bb by 11:59pm Sunday, February 25<sup>th</sup>

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**Week 7 (February 26<sup>th</sup>-March 3<sup>rd</sup>):** Constructing Race

Read: Perdue, Theda. *Mixed Blood Indians: Racial Construction in the Early South*. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 2003.

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Review due to Bb by 11:59pm Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>

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### Week 8 (March 4<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>): Final Paper Topic Selection

Your research statement should explain your 1) topic overview, 2) methods (approach, what types of sources will you use), 3) tentative thesis/argument, questions you intend to answer 4) what you think you will find, and 5) a tentative source list.

2-pg research statement/proposal, due to Bb by 11:59pm Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup>

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### Week 9 (March 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>): Spring Break

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### Week 10 (March 18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>): Sexual Violence

Read: Seyda, Barbara. *Celia, a Slave*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2016.

Review due to Bb by 11:59pm Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup>

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### Week 11 (March 25<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>): Revolutions in Statehood, Labor, and Families

Read: Rothman, Joshua D. *Notorious in the Neighborhood: Sex and Families Across the Color Line in Virginia, 1787-1861*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003.

Discussion post due to Bb by 11:59pm Sunday, March 31<sup>st</sup>

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### Week 12 (April 1<sup>st</sup>-7<sup>th</sup>): The Civil War

Read: Clinton, Catherine, and Nina Silber. *Battle Scars: Gender and Sexuality in the American Civil War*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Review due to Bb by 11:59pm Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup>

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### Week 13 (April 8<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup>): Research & Writing Days

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### Week 14 (April 15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>): Research & Writing Days

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### Week 15 (April 22<sup>nd</sup>-28<sup>th</sup>): Research & Writing Days

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**Week 16 (April 29<sup>th</sup>-May 5<sup>th</sup>): FINAL PAPERS DUE BY 11:59PM Sunday, May 5<sup>th</sup>**

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