



MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL OF LAW at ANDOVER
Issues Impacting Women – Fall 2025
ASYNCHRONOUS
Professor Diane M. Sullivan

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Course

Materials: 1. MSL Television Series. Access on my faculty page.
Required Books:
2. "Barred From The Bar" by: Hedda Garza
Watts Franklin – ISBN 0-5311-1265-9
3. "An American Story" by: Debra Dickerson
Alfred Aknopf – ISBN 0-38572-028-9
4. "Determined to Win" by: Jean Driscoll
Shaw Waterbrook Press – ISBN 0-87788-418-8
5. "In Defense of Women" by: Judge Nancy Gertner –
ISBN 978-0-8070-1143-0-C2011

**After each class email your thoughts and answer to questions I pose.

Scope: Societal and legal issues impacting women

Purpose: The purpose of this course is to (1) provide some historical background of womens' rights, women lawyers, and other female trailblazers; (2) to provide an understanding of contemporary issues facing women; (3) have students deal with practical considerations for balancing careers & family; (4) assist students in effectively dealing with health, harassment & glass ceiling issues.

**Grading
Criteria:**

Submit All Graded Class Assignments Below Through TWEN Using Student ID Number Only:

	<u>Due Date:</u>	<u>Points</u>
- #1 Paper on the Worldwide Treatment of Women.	09/09/25	20
#2 Book Review - "Barred From the Bar"	09/23/25	5
#3 Paper – Validity of Rape Shield Laws	09/30/25	10
#4 Paper on Recovering From Sexual Abuse & Postpartum Depression	10/28/25	20
#5 Book Review – "An American Story"*	10/21/25	5
#6 Book Review – "Determined to Win"*	11/11/25	5
#7 Paper on How Womens' Sports Stack up Against Mens' sports	11/25/25	20
#8 Book Review – "In Defense of Women"	12/01/25	5
#9 Paper – Separate But Equal	11/20/25	10
* Alternative to Book Review #5, or #6 "Life's Not Always A Day At The Beach"		

NOTE: Watch each class video on your own timetable. Dates of Class are just suggested dates to keep you on track to ensure that all your non-graded paper assignment responses are done by the date due and emailed to me. Late papers are NOT accepted.

These papers should be emailed to: Dianes@mslaw.edu

CLASS DESCRIPTION

- Class 1**
08/19 Educational Forum: Worldwide Treatment of Women (Show #167) (Sexual mutilation, trafficking of women, rape, domestic violence and polygamy).
- Assignment #1: The denial of basic rights to women in third world countries and what can be done about it. (Assignment: write a paper on a major problem for women in third world countries). [Due September 9th].
- Class 2**
08/21 Educational Forum: Strong Women
Why does our culture view strength a masculine trait? What are the benefits of weight training? Discussion of women trailblazers (female activists) belief that women of size and substance were less likely to be dependent. Discuss relationship of size and independence. Email to me.
- Class 3**
08/26 Educational Forum: Fairy Tales
Do fairy tales send young girls the wrong message? [i.eWait for Prince Charming to rescue.] Are fairy tales excessively and offensively violent? Why the prevalence of the evil stepmother? What about books like Danielle Steel? Why the popularity of the Hallmark channel? Email your comments.
- Class 4**
08/28 MSLAWTV Educational Forum – Women’s Fiction
Explain why many women read women’s fiction, the benefits, psychological effects, and whether these books encourage women to dream big or are they a harmful escape that set unrealistic expectations? Are they really just adult fairy tales? Email your response.
- Class 5**
09/02 Educational Forum: Obesity, Anorexia & Bulimia
In a society that worships thin, why has obesity reached alarming proportions? Who and what is to blame for the disparity between the images we worship and the ones we ourselves show the world? Americans are obsessed with thinness and a segment of society, largely composed of bright adolescent females, is caught in a life of starvation or endless purging. Should advertisements that promote unhealthy thin images of women be banned? Email your response.
- Class 6**
09/04 Educational Forum: *Women Making A Difference*. How do you presently make a difference? Future plans to do so? What, if anything, inspired you about these women? Email your response.
- Class 7**
09/09 **Due: Assignment #1:** Paper Due: Worldwide Treatment of Women [Women in Third World Countries]. Write a paper on a pressing issue affecting women in third world countries.
- Class 8**
Topic: Sexual Harassment - What it is and remedies to victims?

- 09/11 Question of Law: Sexual Harassment – Part 1
 Question of Law: Sexual Harassment – Part 2
 Address the success of the *Me Too* movement.
 Email your response.
- Class 9**
 09/16 Topic: Women and the Law
Assignment #2: Must have Hedda Garza's Book, *Barred From the Bar* and
 pass in book review by September 23rd of book.
- Discussion of the struggles of women to obtain admission to law schools and
 equality before the bar as well as some of the history of women's rights.
 What surprised you most about this? What is your prediction for the future?
- Question of Law: *Barred From the Bar – The History of Women and The Legal
 Profession.*
- Question of Law: Women Lawyers Then: Women Lawyers Now.
- Question of Law: Women and the Legal Profession – Discrimination,
 harassment and glass ceiling issues in the profession.
- Class 10**
 09/18 Question of Law: Title IX and STEM. Why are there so few women in the
 STEM fields?
 How did and should society change this? What positive changes might result
 with more women in this field? Email your comments.
- Class 11**
 09/23 **Due: Assignment #2** Book Review of Hedda Garza's Book,
Barred From the Bar
- Rape Shield Laws – Question of Law Television show.
- Assignment #3: Validity of Rape Shield Laws (Paper)-What is the status of
 the law? What should the status of the law be? Do our laws favor the victim
 over the accused? [Due September 30th].
- Class 12**
 09/25 Educational Forum: *Letter to the World* (Show #186)
- Discussion of Seven Historical Women:
- Eleanor Roosevelt
 Dorothy Thompson
 Margaret Mead
 Katharine Hepburn
 Babe Didrikson Zaharias
 Martha Graham
 Marian Anderson
- Which woman inspired you most and why? What, if any, are the common
 traits of these women? What have you learnt from their times? Email your
 response.
- Class 13**
 09/30 **Due: Assignment #3** Paper on Rape Shield Laws

Question of Law: Restraining Orders-Has the pendulum swung too far? Are restraining orders being abused? Have the facts become irrelevant? Are judges afraid of not granting a restraining order? Are they effective? Email your comments.

- Class 14**
10/02 Educational Forum: Recovering From Sexual Abuse and Postpartum Depression
Assignment #4: Paper - How can we better prevent violence against women without infringing on Men's Rights. Assess the effectiveness of the laws and criminal justice system in dealing with domestic violence. How should it be improved? [Due October 28th].
- Class 15**
10/07 Educational Forum: *Band of Sisters*
Did any of these women inspire you? If so, who and why? Email your comments.
- Class 16**
10/09 Educational Forum: Female Veterans
Discuss physical/sexual abuse of women in the military. What needs to be done to remedy this? Email your response.
- Class 17**
10/14 Educational Forum: *An American Story* (Show #165). [Due October 21st].
Assignment #5: Book review of Debra Dickerson's book.
- Class 18**
10/16 The History of Women and Space
Discuss your reaction to the injustice revealed in this show. What lessons did you learn from these women? Email your response.
- Class 19**
10/21 **Due: Assignment #5-** *An American Story* book review.
Educational Forum: The Meaning of Wife
How do you define wife? What do you envision for yourself? Email your comments.
- Class 20**
10/23 Educational Forum: *Heroes For My Daughter*
Who is your hero? Why? Discuss which of the heroes discussed you admire and why. Email your response.
- Class 21**
10/28 **Due: Assignment #4** - Recovering From Sexual Abuse and Postpartum Depression
- Class 22**
10/30 Educational Forum: Boston Marathon Memories
Includes interviews with Bill Rodgers, Kathryn Switzer (1st female entrant) and Jean Driscoll (8-time wheelchair champion).
Assignment #6 – Book review "Determined To Win". [Due November 11th]
Assignment #7 – Paper. How Women's Sports Stack Up Against Men's Sports. [Due November 25th].
- Class 23**
11/04 Educational Forum: Wisdom of The Ages
What Lessons did you learn from these women? Email your response.

- Class 24**
11/06 Assignment #8: Book Review "In Defense of Women"
By: Judge Nancy Gertner by December 1st.
- Class 25**
11/11 **Due: Assignment #6** - Book review "Determined To Win".

Educational Forum: Separate But Equal – Gyms, Golf & Sports-Legality of separate facilities
Educational Forum: Separate But Equal-Education-Single gender classrooms

Assignment #9 - Paper: The validity of Separate But Equal-Good or bad? Worth 10 points. [Due November 20th].
- Class 26**
11/13 Educational Forum: *A Day in the Life of the American Woman*
Which stories did you enjoy the most? What life lesson did you learn?
Email your comments.
- Class 27**
11/18 Educational Forum: *When Everything Changed – The Amazing Journey of American Women From 1960 to the Present*
What brought about change? What pressing issues need to still be changed?
Email your response.
- Class 28**
11/20 **Due: Assignment #9** - Separate But Equal

Play Show "In Defense of Women" by: Judge Nancy Gertner
Email Book Review due by December 1st.
- Class 29**
11/25 **Due: Assignment #7**—on How Women's Sports Stack Up Against Men's Sports.
- 11/27 * **THANKSGIVING DAY** *
- 12/01 Educational Forum: Child Care Issues
How do we reconcile the age old practice of families caring for their own with the modern world's actual circumstance of two family professionals? Or the simple economic need for dual incomes? Should a woman give up all she has worked for and stay home with her kid? Have men skated out of this responsibility under guise of being "the breadwinner? Strategies for balance of home and family. Email your comments.

Due: Assignment #8 - Book Review "In Defense of Women"

Final Day of Semester Dec. 1.