

Fall 2023

## **HSS-404 (047): Literature Seminar: The Brick City, How Newark Became Newark**

Miriam Ascarelli

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## HSS 404:047 -- The Brick City: How Newark became Newark\*

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Office Hours: 10:15-11:15 a.m. Tuesday, 11:30-12:30 on Wednesday, and by appointment

### Course description:

This course is a journey into Newark's rich and complicated history. We'll begin with the year 1666 when Puritans from Connecticut purchased the land that is now Newark from a group of Lenape Indians for a price that included four barrels of beer, 10 pairs of breeches, two ankers of liquor, 10 kettles, 20 axes, 20 coats, 50 double hands of powder, 100 bars of lead, 20 pistols, 10 swords, 40 blankets, 50 knives, 20 hoes, 850 fathoms of wampum, and three troopers' coats.

From there, we will move forward in time, delving into the contrasting world views of the Puritans and the Lenape; the little-known history of slavery in Newark (and New Jersey); 19<sup>th</sup> century industrialization and its impact on the city; and the turmoil that roiled Newark in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, namely deindustrialization, racial inequality, and environmental pollution. Our "methodology" will involve a combination of readings, walking tours within a short distance of campus, and conversations with local experts. This will deepen our understanding of how the past informs the present – and how Newark is charting its way into the future.

\*Our course title was inspired by Brad Tuttle's *How Newark Became Newark: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of an American City*. Notice that the book is on our reading list!

### Course Goals

- Study primary and secondary sources to learn about Newark's rich and complex history.
- Gain an understanding of how Newark's past is impacting the present by engaging in dialogue with today's Newarkers.
- Hone research, writing, and critical thinking skills by evaluating evidence, formulating research questions, synthesizing primary and secondary sources, and generating arguments.
- Reflect on how local history is a window into the history of the United States as a whole.

### Texts

- Selected chapters from Tuttle, Brad. *How Newark Became Newark: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of an American City*. Rivergate Books, New Brunswick, NJ, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8135-4490-8.  
*This book will be available on the reserve shelf in the Van Houten Library, but I strongly recommend you purchase your own copy. It's a great reference.*

- Safian, Gail. *Slavery in New Jersey: a Troubled History*. This short, and easy-to-read booklet was prepared for a 2019 exhibition by the same name at the Durrand-Hedden House and Garden Association in Maplewood. Free PDF can be downloaded [here](#); a hard-copy version can be purchased for \$4 [here](#).
- Selected readings from: Cummings Charles. *Knowing Newark: The Star-Ledger columns*. The Newark Public Library, 2016. (Online & free)
- Other readings will be posted on Canvas. They include short excerpts from:
  - Foner, Eric, Kathleen DuVal and Lisa McGirr. *Give Me Liberty: An American History*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. W.W. Norton, New York, NY, 2023.
  - Bruno, Mary. *An American River: From Paradise to Superfund, Afloat on New Jersey's Passaic*, DeWitt Press, Vashon, WA, 2012.
  - Hodges, Graham Russell Gao. *Black New Jersey: 1664 to Present Day*. Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ, 2019.
  - Gigantino, James. *The Ragged Road to Abolition: Slavery and Freedom in New Jersey, 1775-1865*. University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, PA, 2015.

## Assignments and grading:

- Participation and attendance: 10 percent
- Your Newark journal: **weekly** journal entries responding to class readings and discussions; entries will be ~250-500 words and will be due every Friday at 11: 59 p.m. (Photos of handwritten entries are OK, but the writing must be legible!): 30 percent
- Proposal & Q & A interview for your “Biography of a place” project
  - Proposal: 10 percent
  - Raw audio + edited transcript: 20 percent
- “Biography of a place” (5-7 page multimedia project that will include primary and secondary sources + visuals + your interview): 30 percent

Please note: there is no final exam in this course.

Final grades will be calculated according to the university’s grading scale.

A = 100-90	B+ = 89=87	B = 86-80	C+ = 79-77	C = 76-70	D = 69-60	F = 59-0
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## Attendance

You may miss *two classes* without penalty. Every subsequent unexcused absence will result in a reduction of half of a letter grade on your final course grade. If you are absent for legitimate reasons (family emergency, illness) you must submit official and verifiable documentation to the Dean of Students related to the absence within two weeks. More than six unexcused absences (three weeks of the course) will result in the automatic failure of the course. (Please note: excessive absences, even for legitimate reasons, can still result in failing the class.)

You are also expected to come to class on time. Chronic tardiness is disrespectful both to me and your fellow students, and it will hurt your grade. (Two lates = one absence).

Per university policy, students who expect to miss class for religious observances must submit to me a written list of dates that will be missed by the end of the second week of classes.

## Late work

Late work will automatically be downgraded by five points for each day past the due date. Assignments that are more than a week late will not be accepted.

## Incomplete grades

In accordance with the provost's directives, an incomplete will only be issued only in **rare instances** where a student, and for **documented (by the Dean of Students) reasons**, could not complete parts of the work of the course.

## Tying up loose ends at the end of the semester

All required work must be submitted prior to the date established for the uploading of final grades. In other words, when the course is over, the course is over. You cannot turn in outstanding work after the semester has ended for a post-semester grade adjustment.

## How to reach me

Email is my preferred method of communication. I will respond to your emails within 24-48 hours. Please remember to maintain an appropriate tone in all school-related correspondence and to include a SUBJECT line and your NAME in all emails.

## Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity is the cornerstone of higher education and is central to the ideals of this course and the university. Cheating is strictly prohibited and devalues the degree that you are working on. As a member of the NJIT community, it is your responsibility to protect your educational investment by knowing and following the academic code of integrity policy that is found

at: <http://www5.njit.edu/policies/sites/policies/files/academic-integrity-code.pdf>.

Please note that it is my professional obligation and responsibility to report any academic misconduct to the Dean of Students Office. **Any student found in violation of the code by cheating, plagiarizing or using any online software inappropriately will result in disciplinary action. This may include a failing grade of F, and/or suspension or dismissal from the university.** If you have any questions about the code of Academic Integrity, please contact the Dean of Students Office at [dos@njit.edu](mailto:dos@njit.edu)"

All assignments submitted shall be considered "graded work" and all aspects of your coursework are covered by the Code on Academic Integrity. All projects and homework assignments are to be completed individually unless otherwise specified.

## ChatGPT:

Unless under direct instruction by me to use an AI tool, the use of any artificial intelligence program (such as ChatGPT, or any related application) to write all, or some, of an assigned piece of writing constitutes an act of plagiarism (turning in work that is not the product of your own thinking, drafting, and revising). When detected, any papers that contain passages imported from an A.I. program will be subject to a failing grade and will be reported to the Dean of Students as an act of academic misconduct.

If you have any questions about AI use, please talk to me.

## Special Needs

Every attempt will be made to accommodate qualified students with disabilities. If you are a student with a documented disability, please see me as early in the semester as possible to discuss the necessary accommodations, and/or contact Student Disability Services at 973-596-3420.

## Resources and local events worth checking out:

- [TapintoNewark.com](https://www.tapintonewark.com) is a hyperlocal news site dedicated to Newark. It's a good window into what's happening in town, and, because it generally only publishes one story a day, it's not overwhelming. Subscriptions are free.
- Tues., Sept. 19 at 6:00pm  
"Black Liberation: Seeking Freedom in 18th and 19th Century Newark"  
Newark Public Library, James Brown African American Room, 2nd floor  
*Presenters: James Amemasor and Noelle Lorraine Williams*
- Wed., Sept. 27- Sun., Oct. 1: Newark Arts Festival;; for full schedule click [here](#); for a list of art galleries in Newark, go to [newarkarts.org](https://www.newarkarts.org) and scroll down to the bottom of the home page.
- Thurs., Nov. 16 at 6:00pm  
"History is Made by You and Me: Voices from the Ironbound Community Corporation Archives"  
Newark Public Library, James Brown African American Room, 2nd floor  
*Panelists: Hazel Applewhite, Ana Baptista, Arnold Cohen, and Joe Della Fave*
- Thurs., Nov. 2 at 6:00pm  
2023 Philip Roth Lecture on "History, Memory and the Weequahic section of Newark."  
Newark Public Library  
Presenter: John Wesley Johnson, Jr.

## The Writing Center

The Writing Center (115 Cullimore Hall) is available for 45-minute individual and group appointment with professional writing tutors online. This resource is indented to help you improve your communication and writing skills. Tutors and help with planning assignments, improving your writing, refining an essay or multimedia project, or other communication-based needs. For more information, please visit <https://www5.njit.edu/writingcenter/>.

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### TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

This course meets Tuesdays and Thursdays at 8:30 a.m. in CKB 214

*NOTE: The class schedule is my best guess for how things will unfold over the course of the semester. By definition, it is subject to change—always check Canvas for the most up-to-date info on what is happening in class.*

<p>Week 1</p> <p>Day 1: Sept. 5 Day 2: Sept. 7</p>	<p><b>Course intro</b></p> <p>Day 1: Class intro and short in-class writing: What brought you to this class? What do you know about Newark? What do you want to learn about Newark?</p> <p>HW: Read brief bio of <a href="#">Charles Cummings on the home page</a> of the Newark Public Library’s Knowing Newark collection + “<a href="#">Rollercoaster of City’s History Rumbles On</a>”(Cummings) from the Knowing Newark collection</p> <p>Day 2: Walking tour of Downtown</p> <p>HW: Read pages 64-71, “The New England Way: The Rise of Puritanism” (excerpt from <i>Give Me Liberty</i>) + Stanford History Group readings from John Winthrop and John Cotton</p>
<p>Week 2</p> <p>Day 1: Sept. 12 Day 2: Sept. 14</p>	<p><b>Who were the Puritans and what did they believe? Who were the Lenape and what did they value?</b></p> <p>Day 1: In-class work on the Puritan world view using Stanford History Group docs HW: Read Stanford History Group readings on King Philip’s War</p> <p>Day 2: In-class work on King Philip’s War using Stanford History Group’s Documents</p> <p>HW: Read “Land Acknowledgements are just moral exhibitionism” by Graem Wood, an article published in <i>The Atlantic</i> 28 Nov. 2021.</p>

<p>Week 3</p> <p>Day 1: Sept. 19 Day 2: Sept. 21</p>	<p><b>The written record: What do we know about the purchase of the land that is now known as Newark?</b></p> <p>Day 1: A conversation with Tim Crist, president of the Newark History Society, about the Newark’s Puritan settlers and the purchase of the land that became Newark</p> <p>Day 2: A conversation with Vincent Mann, Turtle Clan Chief of the Ramapough Lenape Nation, about the fate of this region’s Native Americans</p> <p>HW: Read the introduction (pages 1-17) to James Gigantino’s book, <i>The Ragged Road to Abolition: Slavery and Freedom in New Jersey, 1775-1865</i> (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015) + read booklet: <i>Slavery in New Jersey: a Troubled History</i> (Safian). Free PDF of Safian’s booklet can be downloaded <a href="#">here</a>.</p>
<p>Week 4</p> <p>Day 1: Sept. 26 Day 2: Sept. 28</p>	<p><b>The little-known history of slavery in Newark (and New Jersey)</b></p> <p>Day 1: Wrap-up discussion about previous week’s speakers &amp; begin discussion of Gigantino and Safian readings for an overview of the little-known history of slavery in Newark (and New Jersey)</p> <p>Day 2: Continue discussion of Gigantino and Safian readings (overview of the little-known history of slavery in Newark (and New Jersey)</p> <p>HW: Read Cummings, <i>Knowing Newark</i> column, <a href="#">“Blacks in New Jersey: The Journey Toward Economic Freedom   February 17, 2000</a></p>
<p>Week 5</p> <p>Day 1: Oct. 3 Day 2: Oct. 5</p>	<p><b>What do we know about the slaveholding families of Newark? What do we know about abolitionism and anti-slavery activism in Newark? What don’t we know?</b></p> <p>Day 1: A conversation with Rick Geffken, historian and author of <i>Stories of Slavery in New Jersey</i> (The History Press, 2021).</p> <p>Day 2: Resistance and activism in Newark’s Black community (w/possible walking tour and/or guest speakers)</p>
<p>Week 6</p> <p>Day 1: Oct. 10 Day 2: Oct. 12</p>	<p><b>Immigration and industrialization in Newark</b></p> <p>Day 1: slavery and abolition continued; introduce “Biography of a Place assignment”</p>

	<p>HW: Read the following selections from <i>How Newark Became Newark</i> (Tuttle): “Rise” (pages 13 &amp; 14) + chapter 3 “A Metropolis Blooms with the Dawn of the Twentieth Century” (pages 63-86).</p> <p>Day 2: Discuss industrialization of Newark</p> <p>Reading: Cummings: <a href="#">Leather Industry Branded the City with a Fine Reputation</a> + <a href="#">In a Glass Darkly: Beer Marks City’s History Brewers Benefited from Workers, Water</a> + NYT: <a href="#">In Newark, wresting a fatal fire from oblivion</a></p>
<p>Week 7</p> <p>Day 1: Oct 17 Day 2: Oct. 19</p>	<p><b>Immigration and industrialization in Newark, continued</b></p> <p>Day 1: How does NJIT fit into the story of industrialization in Newark?</p> <p>HW: Read pages 35-43 in <i>An American River: From Paradise to Superfund, afloat on New Jersey’s Passaic</i> (Bruno)</p> <p>Day 2: Possible conversation with Nathaly Agosto Filón, deputy climate resilience officer for the NJ Dept. of Environmental Protection and former chief sustainability officer for the City of Newark.</p> <p>Part I of “Biography of a Place” assignment”” Proposal + draft of email to send to your potential interviewee due by 11:59 p.m. Friday</p> <p>Hw: Read the following selections from <i>How Newark Became Newark</i> (Tuttle): “Fall” (pages 87 &amp; 88) + chapter 5 “The Slums of Ten Years from Now: A City Transformed through Urban Renewal” (pages 119-143)</p>
<p>Week 8</p> <p>Day 1: Oct. 24 Day 2: Oct 26</p>	<p><b>The turmoil of the 20<sup>th</sup> century</b></p> <p>Day 1 &amp; 2: In-class screening of the documentary, “Revolution ‘67”</p> <p>HW: Reading the following pages from <i>Blacks in New Jersey</i> (Hodges): introduction (pages 1-11) and part of chapter 5: “Black New Jersey Battles Jim Crow” (pages 159-180)</p>
<p>Week 9</p> <p>Day 1: Oct, 31 Day 2: Nov. 2</p>	<p>Days 1 &amp; 2: Discussion of film + work on “Biography of a Place project</p>
<p>Week 10</p> <p>Day 1: Nov, 7 Day 2: Nov. 9</p>	<p>Library workshop?</p>



<p>Week 11</p> <p>Day 1: Nov. 14 Day 2: Nov. 16</p>	<p>Q &amp; A "Biography of a Place" interview due</p> <p><b>The Legacy of the past meets the present</b></p> <p>Details to come</p>
<p>Week 12</p> <p>Day 1: Nov, 21 Day 2: Thanksgiving</p>	<p>Conferences (come with thesis &amp; outline)</p>
<p>Week 13</p> <p>Day 1: Nov, 28 Day 2: Nov. 30</p>	<p>Day 1: Conferences (come with thesis &amp; outline)</p> <p>Day 2: Possible special tour of newly reopened Ballantine House exhibition at the Newark Museum of Art</p>
<p>Week 14</p> <p>Day 1: Dec. 5 Day 2: Dec, 7</p>	<p>TBA</p>
<p>Week 15</p> <p>Day 1: Dec. 12 (Last day of classes!)</p>	<p>"Biography of a Place" paper due</p>