

Research Seminar: Newark Rhythms

21:510:490:Q1

Fall 2019

Tuesday, 2:30-5:10

Engelhardt 301

Professor Ruth Feldstein

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Office Hours: 308 Conklin Hall, Tuesday, 12:30-1:30

Summary:

This course examines Newark in the 1940s-1970s, with its rich history of migration, diverse neighborhoods and cultural heritage, vibrant social and cultural networks, activism, and local community engagement. It also looks at the strains that the city faced in those decades. The Rutgers campus represents a pivotal place in this story: in 1959, Rutgers President Mason Gross said that New Jersey was “culturally almost bankrupt,” and that he was going to build a new campus in Newark to help free New Jersey from its cultural dependence on New York and Philadelphia. Like other post-war American cities, Newark faced social and economic problems in these decades that included declining industry and jobs, institutional racism, and middle-class flight into the suburbs. These problems culminated in five days of violent civil unrest in 1967 that set armed troops against local residents.

While our focus is on the post-World War II decades, the history of Newark highlights many of the issues that we still face today: how cities grow and contract; questions of social justice, profiling, discriminatory practices, and institutional racism; how a city can become a sanctuary to a diverse set of social groups; and how community engagement and active citizenship can shape the course of history.

After learning the history of Newark, students will use that background to visit the Newark Collection in Dana Library as a group, during class time. With guidance from the instructor and a research librarian, students will do individual research in this archival collection, handling and analyzing original historical documents. You will produce a research paper 12-15 pages in length, based on a research question of your interest, ranging from themes of social justice, local history, diversity and heritage, community engagement, activism, and Newark’s art or music culture (to name just a few of many possibilities). Students may also wish to consult other local history collections and archives, such as the Institute of Jazz Studies, the Newark Public Library, the Queer Newark Oral History Project, the Krueger-Scott Oral History Collection, or the Newark Museum.

The semester is thus divided into three parts:

- Part I: background context for the subject
 - Part II: archival research in which students research their specific topics
 - Part III: writing the paper, supported by individual conferences with the instructor

Learning Goals:

- Students will learn the history of the community and city in which they study.

- Students will gain familiarity with the library and other primary source collections, on which they will base their research papers. More specifically, as part of the use of the Newark Collection, undertaken as a group with the instructor during class time, students will get the historian's experience of working with authentic, original historical materials, which will act as the core of the material for their research papers.

- Through their experience in researching and writing the paper, students will gain valuable skills in critical evaluation of evidence, data analysis and pattern recognition, and the organization of information into a substantial paper or report.

Grading and Course Requirements:

Participation Grade: 20%. This includes:

- Regular attendance
- Thoughtful and consistent participation in class discussions
- Engaging actively and productively with in-class research at the archives
- Individual conferences

Four Primary source analyses: 25%. This includes:

- Source analysis I, Mason Gross speech exercise, due September 10
- Source analysis II: Carl Van Vechten exercise, due September 24
- Source analysis III: Louis Danzig and reactions exercise, due October 1
- Short essay/source analysis IV: Competing coverage of violence in Newark, 1967, due October 8

Research Paper Preparation: 15%. This includes:

- Research Paper Initial Topic: October 21
- Archive Trip/Progress Reports (3 in total): October 29, November 5, November 19
- Research Paper Preliminary Proposal/Assessment of Evidence: November 12
- Research Update/Proposal: Wednesday November 20

Rough Draft/Extended Outline: 10%: December 2

Final Paper: 30% December 13

Grading Rubric:

A: Outstanding

A-: Outstanding, with one or two areas of improvement

B+: Very good

B: Good

B-: Good overall, with some significant weaknesses

C+: Satisfactory, with some potential for improvement

C: Satisfactory, but needs significant development

C-: Barely satisfactory

D: Poor: overwhelming flaws
F: Failing: doesn't complete assignment

These grades are applied to your work in the class: at the college level, this means the final product of your work—what you hand in to me—not the amount of effort you put into the work. (In other words, students don't get an "A for effort" at the college level.) "Outstanding" is not defined as how the final product compares to your own previous work, but how it compares to other students' work. All of this is a reflection of the real world: in the professional working world, you will succeed based on how effective you are compared to other people. I am happy to talk to you about your assignments, strategies for writing papers, rough drafts, etc. at any time during the semester—but I will only do so in office hours or if you schedule an appointment with me. You can always email me as well to ask a brief question, start a conversation, or to schedule an appointment to meet if you have a scheduling conflict with my regular office hours.

Expectations and Rules:

I expect students to behave in a manner that shows respect for the community and for others' needs and desire to learn. Any behavior that might be disruptive to other students, that makes it difficult for others to hear or that distracts them from lectures or discussions, or in any way intimidates other students from participating in class, will be counted against the participation grade.

This means, in concrete terms:

- Absolutely no cell phone use or any other form of texting. Cell phones may not be visible at all during class; you may NOT use them to review assigned readings or anything else related to class.
- No private conversations.
- No use of computers or laptops for any purpose except to take notes or review assigned readings under discussion.
- Arriving at class late or leaving early is disruptive to other students, and is only acceptable in a highly unusual or emergency situation.

If I have to stop the class to address any of these issues more than once, the participation grade for the student/s involved will be lowered by one (A- becomes B- and B+ becomes C+). If these issues recur, the student will receive an F for participation.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance is required. There will be no make-up opportunities for missed classes.

Excused vs. Unexcused absences: The Rutgers-Newark Undergraduate catalog (http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nwk-ug_current/pg576.html) states: "The recognized grounds for absence are illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities

approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions.” If you plan to claim a religious holiday as an excused absence, you must inform me of this fact within the first two weeks of class. If you know you will be absent and want that absence to count as “excused,” please email me in advance if possible.

I will take attendance twice each class; you must be in class in its entirety to be counted as present. If you arrive late, after I have taken attendance, you receive half credit for being in class, as will also be the case if you leave early. This means that two late arrivals or two early exits (or one of each) counts as one unexcused absence.

At the same time, I realize that “life happens” and delays are sometimes inevitable, and I would definitely rather that you come to class late than not at all. To accommodate that, each student has two “free” passes – at the **third late arrival or early departure**, the policy as stated above will kick in, with no exceptions. If you have particular circumstances that you think are relevant and may cause you to be late, you must inform me of this fact (in an email containing specifics) within the first two weeks of class.

After two unexcused absences, your overall course grade will be lowered by a partial grade (from B+ to B, for example) for every further unexcused absence.

Any student who misses FOUR or more full-class sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will have missed more than a quarter of the class time and will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw from the course to avoid an F.

Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism):

Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. Cheating is both a moral and an ethical offense. It violates both your own integrity and the ethics of group commitment: when you cut corners and cheat, you undermine those students who took the time to work on the assignment honestly. As a standard **minimum penalty**, students who are suspected of cheating or plagiarism are reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Pending investigation, further penalties can include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University.

All students are required to sign the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge. To receive credit, every assignment must have your signature under the following phrase: “*On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.*”

Please learn to resist the urge to cut and paste, either literally or figuratively, by using other people’s ideas. If I find that you have used other people’s ideas (e.g., Wikipedia, Amazon reviews, book jacket descriptions, etc.), I will not accept the assignment because I will not be able to consider it your own work. You will get a failing grade for that assignment and will not be able to make it up.

Names and Pronouns:

An important part of creating a respectful learning environment is knowing and using the name you use, which may differ from your legal name, as well as the gendered pronouns you use (for example, I go by she/her/hers). Please feel free to let me know your name and/or the pronouns you use at any time.

Disabilities:

I welcome students with different learning styles, and Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation:

<https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, the campus disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with me and discuss the accommodations you need as early as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information, please the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or contact odsnewark@rutgers.edu.

Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance

Rutgers faculty are committed to helping create a safe learning environment for all students and for the university as a whole. If you have experienced any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking, know that help and support are available. Rutgers has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, and more. The University strongly encourages all students to report any such incidents to the University. Please be aware that all Rutgers employees (other than those designated as confidential resources such as advocates, counselors, clergy and healthcare providers as listed in Appendix A to [Policy 10.3.12](#)) are required to report information about such discrimination and harassment to the University. This means that if you tell a faculty member about a situation of sexual harassment or sexual violence, or other related misconduct, the faculty member must share that information with the University's Title IX Coordinator. If you wish to speak with a staff member who is confidential and does **not** have this reporting responsibility, you may contact the Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance at (973)-353-1918, or at run.vpva@rutgers.edu. Learn more about the office here: <http://counseling.newark.rutgers.edu/vpva>

Required Readings:

There is one required book to be purchased:

Brad R. Tuttle, *How Newark Became Newark: The Rise, Fall, and Rebirth of an American City* (Rivergate Books, 2009), ISBN 978-0813544908

The book can be purchased from on-line sellers and at the RU-N bookstore. It is also on reserve in Dana Library.

All other required readings are on Blackboard under Course Documents, organized by date at which they are assigned.

Schedule of Classes (subject to change)

Tuesday, September 3

Introductions

Optional reading:

Tuttle, *How Newark Became Newark*, Prologue and chapter 3.

Tuesday, September 10

The Campus and the Neighborhoods

Required reading:

- Mason Gross speech
- *Newark Commerce*, Pts. 1-3 (September 1961),
 - Louis Danzig, “Newark’s Urban Renewal Problems,” Pt. 1 and Pt. 3.
(where it is continued);
 - George Oberlander, “What Our Ten Year Plan Means to Newark,” Pt. 2.

Required Writing: (submit on BB by **Tuesday at 10 am**, and bring hard copy to class)

- Primary source analysis I, based on Mason Gross’s speech. See bb for assignment.

Guest Speaker: Professor Eva Giloi

Tuesday, September 17

Migration and Immigration-- Across Borders and Decades

Required reading:

- Tuttle, chapter 3, “Greater Newark: A Metropolis Blooms with the Dawn of the Twentieth Century,” pp. 63-86, and chapter 4, “Dead Weight,” pp. 89-106.
- Clem Price, “The Beleaguered City as Promised Land: Blacks in Newark, 1917-1947,” in Maxine Lurie, ed., *A New Jersey Anthology* (2010; 1994), pp. 433-462.
- TBD.

- Queer Newark Oral History Project. Listen to/read **one** of the following interviews:

- Marina Carreira, first 5-10 pages of transcript (and/or listen):
<https://queer.newark.rutgers.edu/interviews/marina-carreira>
- Aleix Martinez, first 13 pages or so of transcript (and/or listen):
<https://queer.newark.rutgers.edu/interviews/aleix-martinez>

Tuesday, September 24:
Newark Cultures

Required reading:

- Barbara Kukla, *Swing City: Newark Nightlife, 1925-1950* (2002), Introduction, pp. 1-10, and Chapter 1, “A Jazzy Age- 1925 and Beyond,” pp. 13-19.
- Carl Van Vechten, “Negro Blues Singers: An Appreciation of Three Coloured Artists Who Excel in an Unusual and Native Medium,” in Shana Golden coordinator, *Music of the Harlem Renaissance: Arts Integrated Lesson Plans for Student* (Boston Symphony Orchestra Dept of Education, 2006), pp. 24-27; originally in *Vanity Fair* 25, no. 1 (1926): 67, 106, 108.

Required Listening:

- Music by Bessie Smith, TBA.

Required Writing: (submit on BB by **Tuesday at 10 am**, and bring hard copy to class)

- Primary source analysis II, based on Van Vechten’s essay. See bb for assignment.

Optional Reading:

- “Preliminary Timeline: History of Queer Club Spaces in Newark,” Queer Newark Oral History Project, <https://queer.newark.rutgers.edu/resources/history-queer-club-spaces-newark>

We will be spending half of this class at the Institute of Jazz Studies to learn about archival sources there.

Tuesday, October 1:
Urban Renewal, I: Competing Voices/Competing Visions

Required reading:

- Tuttle, *How Newark Became Newark*, chapter 5, “The Slums of Ten Years from Now: A City Transformed through Postwar Urban Renewal,” pp 119-141.
- Marc A. Weiss, “The Origins and Legacy of Urban Renewal”
- FOUR primary sources (NOTE: you’ll be re-reading Danzig and Oberlander):
 1. *Newark Commerce*, Pts. 1-3 (September 1961). This includes:
 - Louis Danzig, “Newark’s Urban Renewal Problems,” in Pt. 1 and Pt. 3 (where it is continued);
 - All of Pt. 2: James Scheuer, “Redeveloping Enhance Our Way of Life”;
 - “How is Newark Doing?”; Dorothy Cronheim, “As Code Enforcement Goes, So Goes the

Neighborhood”; Alfred J. Walker, “Newark is Showing the Nation... It Can Be Done”; George Oberlander, “What Our Ten Year Plans Means to Newark.”

2. Lee Johnson, “Danzig makes bid for total housing power,” *New Jersey Afro-American*, Nov. 17, 1962.

3. Arthur M. Louis, “The Worst American City,” *Harpers*, January 1975.

4. Ken Gibson, response to “The Worst American City,” December 1974.

Required writing: (submit on BB by **Tuesday at 10 am**, and bring hard copy to class)

• Primary source analysis III based on *Newark Commerce* and other source readings. See bb for assignment.

Tuesday, October 8

Combustible Newark

Required Reading:

- Tuttle, chapter 6, “Bound to Explode,” pp. 142-17.
- Mark Krasovic, “Interlude,” from *The Newark Frontier*, pp. 115-124.
- *Life Magazine*, July 28, 1967, (coverage of Newark)
- *Jet Magazine*, August 3, 1967, (coverage of Newark)
- “Summer of 1967: The Newark Riots,” primary sources about violence in Newark, (including excerpts from Amiri Baraka, *The Autobiography LeROI Jones*; Report for Action, *Rebellion in Newark: Official Violence and Ghetto Response*; Tom Hayden, *Road to Anarchy*; Findings of the Riot Study, 1968), pp. 262-269.

Required Writing: (submit on BB by **Tuesday at 10 am**, and bring hard copy to class)

- Short essay/primary source analysis IV, based on *Jet* and *Life*. See bb for assignment.

Tuesday, October 15

Another Look at Black Power in Newark

Required Reading

- LeROI Jones/Amiri Baraka, “Newark-Before Black Men Conquered” (1967), in *Raise Race Rays Raze*.
- Robert Curvin, “The Arrival of Black Power,” *Inside Newark* (2014), *An Interdisciplinary Journal Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal New Jersey Studies: New Jersey*.
- Nicole Torres, “Newark’s 1974 Puerto Rican Riots Through Oral Histories,” *NJS: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 4.2 (2018): 212-229.
- Lauren O'Brien “¡Venceremos! Harambee!: A Black & Puerto Rican Union?” *NJS: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 4.1 (2018): 130-146.

Required Viewing:

With No One to Help Us (Eugene and Carol Marner, 1967), 22-minute film available at <https://archive.org/details/WithNoOneToH>

Tuesday, October 21:
Newark's "Rebirths"

Required Reading:

- Tuttle, chapters 7-9 (areas to focus on TBA).
- Julia Rabig, "Fixers for the 1970s? The Stella Wright Rent Strike and the Transformation of Public Housing," *The Fixers: Devolution, Development, and Civil Society in Newark, 1960-1990* (2016).
- "The Battle of Newark, Starring Cory Booker," Raab, Scott, *Esquire*, 2008
- Cory Booker's Response to *Esquire*, 2008
 - Gentrification Fuels Rift Among Newark's Local Artists," Adarlo, Sharon, *Aljazeera America*, 2014
- Rick Rojas, "A Revival Comes to Newark, but Some Worry It's 'Not for Us,'" *New York Times*, 2017.

Required Writing:

Research paper initial topics.

Tuesday, October 29

Archives, I
Meetings
More TBA

Required Writing: (submit on BB, by Wed. Oct 30 at 7 pm)

- Archive Trip Report, I

Tuesday, November 5:

Archives, II

Required Writing: (submit on BB, by Wed. Nov. 6 at 7 pm)

- Archive Trip Report, II

Tuesday, November 12:

Archives, III.

Required Writing: (submit on BB, by Wed. Nov. 13 at 7 pm)

PRELIMINARY Proposal

Tuesday, November 19

Archives IV and Writing
Meetings

Required Writing: (submit on BB, by Wed. Nov 20 at 7 pm.)

- Research update/Proposal

Tuesday, November 26: Thanksgiving week

- No class
- Writing

Tuesday, December 3:

- Writing
- Archives, V
- Meetings

Required Writing: (submit on BB, by Tuesday December 2 at NOON)

- First Draft/Extended Outline

Tuesday, December 10:

Required Reading:

- TBA

- Writing/Revising
- Archives, V
- Meetings

FINAL ESSAY: Submit on BB, Friday December 13, by noon.