

# LIBERATION ARCHAEOLOGY

Spring 2022

Mondays & Wednesdays, 10-11:20am

Classroom: Hill Hall 201 (when Rutgers returns to on-campus classes--starts as Synchronous Remote Course on Zoom)

Rutgers University-Newark

Course Numbers & Titles (cross-listed): 21:512:227:Q1 Topics in American History  
21:014:400:Q1 Topics in Black Studies

Professor: Dr. Lyra D. Monteiro

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Google Chat: [lm660@scarletmail.rutgers.edu](https://chat.rutgers.edu/join/lyra660)

Drop-In Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-4pm (also by appointment – message me via Google Chat to set up).

Office: 317 Conklin Hall

**Note: This course is *not* based on Canvas (or any other LMS)—check your Rutgers email for all course materials.**

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

How are the oppressive systems we see at work today – in the attack on the Capitol just over a year ago, in the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color, in the endless police murders of Black people, etc. – present in the material world that we inhabit? Where is empire, where is white supremacy in *your* world – in your home, dorm room, pockets, fridges, workplaces; in the language you speak; in the sports you play?

Oppression requires constant reinforcement to persist – and without knowing it, we all contribute to that reinforcement. Liberation Archaeology approaches the study of everyday oppression primarily through investigating the material world – through physical traces of past human and nonhuman action. Some of these traces were intended for us to find and use – the Capitol Building itself is a great example of something that was made by people in the past who intended that we would still be using it now and into the future. Other traces are not designed to be seen or found – think about what's in your trash can right now, and what that says about you, about the people you live with, about supply chains, commerce, international trade, etc. All of these traces can tell us a lot about how we got here – and why “here” looks, functions, and is structured in the way that it is.

This is a writing intensive course, and so the main work between class meetings is to write. Over the course of the semester, each student will write and revise an essay, in three parts. We

will engage in multiple rounds of peer feedback and workshopping. Class meetings will be heavily based on active participation, rather than lecture – so attendance is necessary. That said, due to the circumstances of this moment, if it becomes impossible for a student to participate in class regularly, there will be alternative paths for completing the course.

## **SPECIAL NOTE ON TAKING COLLEGE COURSES DURING THE PANDEMIC & POLITICAL VIOLENCE**

One of the realities of this moment is that each of us is undergoing various degrees of stress, uncertainty, and trauma due to our experiences since the coronavirus crisis began – nearly two full years ago, now. Even if you have been fortunate enough not to have lost a loved one, a job, or a home, your lives have been disrupted in innumerable ways, as have the lives of your professors.

It is an entirely valid choice not to enroll in classes at a time like this – but for those of you who do wish to work towards your college degree this semester, I'd like to address some of the ways that you may find the current learning situation more challenging for you. Many people report difficulty concentrating due to even low-level, background anxiety, and so you may find it easier, for example, to watch a movie than to read an article. Your sense of time may be different, as well – you may find it takes you far longer to complete homework, or that the time between classes passes extremely slowly so you forget what we've already been discussing. This is not even to mention the general challenges that college students face under pre-coronavirus circumstances, in balancing work, family, and school obligations, covering the costs of school, etc.; or those brought on by changing circumstances, such as more complicated living situations, increased hours at work, and other logistical challenges.

All of this is just a reality of this moment, and we can only be realistic and practice acceptance of what is and isn't possible right now. What most definitely is *not* possible is a “normal” college experience – and that, too, is a loss that students are suffering right now.

As you'll see described later in the syllabus, I will be grading using a structure that is based on trauma-informed practices for teaching. Basically, this means that I have built some flexibility into the grading structure of the course, in the hopes that you'll find options which work well with your current learning style and needs. Additionally, I will be designing the assignments for the course based on the results of the Start of Semester Survey (which I sent out via email prior to the start of classes). If, however, you have concerns about earning your desired grade at any point, please do not hesitate to talk to me so we can figure out something else.

The [Start of Semester Survey](#) includes questions about your access to technology and study space while we are remote, as well as your current or anticipated work situation. If this changes at any point in a way that limits your capacity to engage with this course, please do let me know. Additionally, during the required meeting with me during the first three weeks of classes, you'll be able to check in and let me know about any personal circumstances or concerns – related to the pandemic, the political violence, or anything else.

PLEASE NOTE: While we are engaged in this work for the purpose of liberation, many of the topics we cover are frightening, disturbing, and otherwise upsetting. We will be doing work throughout the course to take care of ourselves and ground ourselves emotionally as we move

through this material. However, you know best what is healthy for you – and you are encouraged to skip anything you need to; and to let me know if you would like trigger warnings around certain subject matter. There's absolutely no need to do work that causes you distress; there are plenty of other ways for you to learn what you, personally, need to learn in this course.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### COMMUNICATION

Due to the fact that we are not able to start the semester in person, and the extreme amount of uncertainty we all face this semester, maintaining good communication is absolutely essential to the functioning of this course. This means keeping in touch with me and with your classmates that you are working with in small groups.

There are three main technologies that we will use for communication in this course. It is essential that students are set up with and proficient in each one. The Technology Orientation & Setup that will be sent out next week will guide you through each of this.

NOTE: Your professor has determined that Canvas is an unhelpful complication for a course of this nature. While we may occasionally use its features as a resource, it will *not* serve as the central repository for course info, assignments, submission, etc.

#### Email

Email will primarily be used for homework – not for general questions for Dr. Monteiro, or any other communication (see Google Chat, below). Dr. Monteiro will send you assignment instructions via email, which will include links and attachments, as needed. Unless otherwise indicated in the email with assignment instructions, you will submit your homework by replying to the assignment email and attaching your completed homework, by midnight the night before each class.

In order to make sure that your homework assignments are not easily lost, I will include "LIBERATION ARCHAEOLOGY" at the start of the subject of each message. You can search inside of your email to find the relevant homework. You may also wish to move messages for this course to a folder inside of your email inbox.

#### Google Chat

This will be the primary method of direct, 1:1 communication between you and Dr. Monteiro. If you have questions, want to set up an Office Hours appointment, etc., reach out in this way.

We will also use Google Chat for a group chat/general announcements that I may need to make between classes – including cancellations, clarifications of the homework, etc.

You will need to download the "Google Chat" app on your phone; make sure that you are logged in with your Rutgers email address; then use the "plus" sign to add: [lm660@scarletmail.rutgers.edu](mailto:lm660@scarletmail.rutgers.edu), and send me a message that consists of your full name. After that, you can also use [chat.google.com](https://chat.google.com) to access Google Chat from your computer or other device using a web browser; or download the desktop version of Google Chat.

## Zoom

Until we can return to campus safely, our class meetings will take place on Zoom. [Click here to join our class meetings](#). If you are prompted for a password, it's 123456.

Video Office Hours will also take place on Zoom. You do not need to make an appointment; you can click on the link, which will take you to the "Waiting Room"; I'll welcome you in once I've finished speaking with the previous student. That said, if you want to be sure you can speak to me at a specific time, please send me a message on Google Chat.

You will need to download and install the free Zoom software/app on each of the devices that you plan to use for class. You also need to authorize your Zoom account through Rutgers, [which you can do by clicking here](#).

For our class meetings, please set your display name on Zoom to your first name (or other name you go by), followed by your pronouns in parentheses. For instance, I'll appear on Zoom as: Dr. Monteiro (she/zie).

## TIME COMMITMENT

Please plan to be present for class every Monday and Wednesday from 10am-11:20am, in a setting in that is relatively free of distractions and interruptions. You will need to be on either a computer or a tablet with a keyboard for each class meeting – this is, after all, a writing-intensive course.

Additionally, you will need to set aside 2-4 hours each week, outside of our class meetings, in order to complete the homework, which will include readings, films, fieldwork exploring your own environment, and other activities; as well as brief research and writing exercises.

Other out-of-class time requirements include: one meeting with Dr. Monteiro on Zoom during the first three weeks of the semester; attending a community "event" of your choice that is related to the course material (either online or in person, depending on developing safety conditions, of course); and writing the essay that is the main product of this Writing Intensive course.

## COURSE MATERIALS

There is no textbook to purchase for this course. Instead, Dr. Monteiro will email you the homework for each class, either as attachments or links.

All readings, films, websites, etc. for this class will be provided for free (with the exception of any films or TV shows that are only on streaming services – in that case, we will coordinate to make sure everyone can access them).

When the readings are provided in PDF format, you may find that it is helpful to print them out in order to annotate them as you read. If you don't have a printer, you could send them to print at your local Staples or FedEx/Kinkos.

Finally, you will need a physical notebook to use for certain activities during class and for taking notes on your fieldwork. You're also encouraged to use it to take notes on class, readings, etc.

## TECHNOLOGY

Because we are starting the semester remote and all of our initial interactions will be online, it is essential that you are fully set up and have the technological capacity to complete the course.

The required equipment is a computer or tablet with a keyboard; and a smartphone with a camera. During class, you may wish to use one for joining the Zoom call, and the other to view course materials, collaborate on group-work, etc. If you do not have a computer or a tablet with a keyboard that you can use during our class meetings and complete assignments on, please let Dr. Monteiro know ASAP to arrange for an equipment loan from Rutgers.

Students will need to have a reliable internet connection, sufficient to stream video (for instance, if you can watch YouTube or Netflix you should be fine) and also participate in class meetings on Zoom. Dr. Monteiro will be on video; students are expected to be on video as well, whenever possible.

If you are not sure if your connection will work for Zoom, contact Dr. Monteiro to run a practice session to test it. If you do not have a strong internet connection in the location where you will be during our class meetings and where you will complete assignments, please let Dr. Monteiro know ASAP to arrange for a discounted or free connection to be installed.

## GRADING

Each of you has made the choice to take classes this semester with an awareness of the challenges you, personally, are currently facing; and of the uncertainty that exists for the world in general, with respect to the coming months. Nobody knows exactly what to expect of the semester ahead, but it's realistic to anticipate that every person in our virtual classroom – including your professor – will be faced with new challenges, related to COVID-19, job loss, evictions, public school closures, white supremacist violence, etc.

I want to make sure that it remains possible for every student in this course to earn the grade they desire, regardless of any such disruptions and daily challenges.

This means that, if for any reason you have to step away from your work for this course for a time, there will be opportunities available for you to catch up.

## Components of Overall Grade in Course:

### 15% Attendance and Participation

Class meetings take place on every Monday and Wednesday from 10am-11:20am.

- Attendance is expected, especially as you will spend a lot of our class time workshopping each other's written work, and engaged in other collaborative work. That said, some absences may be unavoidable – and we can find ways for you to complete the course even if you end up not being able to attend class regularly.

- Each student is expected to contribute during each class, and engage in small group activities. While it is perfectly normal and legitimate to have “peaks and valleys” of participation, total silence and lack of engagement will be taken into account for this portion of the grade. You will receive fair warning from me about any lack of participation on your part.
- Students get points for each class attended; and half-credit for joining late or leaving early.
- Getting properly set up for class in terms of technology, and your required 1-on-1 meeting with Dr. Monteiro are essential for full participation.
- When we are meeting remotely, students are expected to be on camera, and to keep their mic on, unless there is substantial and unavoidable background noise.
- ***Do not join class while driving.*** You will not receive credit for attendance. If you cannot avoid driving during class time, you are better off staying safe on the road and then checking in with classmates at a later time to get caught up. Students who are driving—or engaged in other activities that demand their full attention during class—will be asked to leave.

### 35% **Homework**

The regular homework for this course will usually consist of engaging with some assigned material or activity and submitting a brief writing exercise related to it. These assignments are due before each class at midnight. They are learning exercises, so it is more important that you submit them on time and clearly make an effort to complete them to the best of your ability, than that you do everything perfectly.

- You can skip two assignments in each third of the semester without penalty and without asking Dr. Monteiro for permission (see the Essay draft due dates in the schedule below for a sense of how the term breaks down into thirds). If you need to skip more than that, however, be sure to reach out via Google Chat to make arrangements to get caught up.
- *There are a range of levels of engagement possible with each homework assignment--Extra Credit will be awarded for work that goes much deeper.*

### 10% **Building and Supporting Community**

This portion of the grade is about applying liberatory, community-building practices as we move through our study of often-traumatic (and usually intense) topics in the midst of the alienating experience of varying degrees of social distancing during a pandemic. We may not be able to share space together in person, so we must be intentional about building a sense of community within this class, and supporting each other. This can take a number of forms, including (but not at all limited to):

- Engaging with classmates in the online components of this class
- Volunteering to guide classmates who are unfamiliar with the technology we are using
- Setting up study groups
- Sharing your access to streaming services with another student
- Taking notes for classmates who may be unable to attend class due to illness or family responsibilities, etc.
- Creating a WhatsApp group for your classmates to keep in touch during the week
- Proposing changes to the course that can build & support community

**40% Personal Essay: Liberation Archaeology [Required]**

You will write this essay in three stages over the course of the semester, refining your writing and your ideas as we go. The end product will be a well-researched, properly cited, and engaging account of your personal liberation archaeology story – whether it be related to your family, to the structure of your hometown, to the university, etc.

**Extra Credit:**

One extra credit opportunity is described above: Going extra deep on the homework assignments.

The following is also available to you for extra credit – and can potentially boost your grade substantially, and even replace some of the course requirements listed above.

**Journal: up to 30% boost on Final Grade**

Each student has the opportunity to boost their final grade substantially by keeping a journal throughout the semester. Each journal entry will be worth a 1% increase on your final grade, up to a 30% boost to your final grade. This means that if you find journaling to be a better way for you to engage with the course than some of the components that are a regular part of the grade, you can opt to do it instead. Journal entries (maximum 1 per day) track your personal experiences throughout the semester – including the course in whatever ways it might seem relevant, but certainly not prioritizing it. Each student will receive a link with a private space for them to journal – where it can only be viewed by themselves and Dr. Monteiro. During the first two weeks of class, all students will be required to complete at least 2 journal entries (you will get extra credit for these).

**POLICIES****Academic Integrity**

As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community. The entire Academic Integrity Policy can be found here: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

**Attendance**

Regular attendance in class is expected. While we are meeting remotely, this means joining our Zoom sessions with your camera on and with the ability to contribute by voice, especially when you are in your small groups. In general, no notes are required for absences – and you do not need to ask permission or let Dr. Monteiro know before class; you're adults and I trust that you're making the right choices for you. If you need to miss a large number of classes, please meet with Dr. Monteiro so that we can find alternative ways for you to earn the grade you desire in the course.

**Communication**

The best way to communicate with me outside of class is via Google Chat. You can message me privately, and I will get back to you as soon as I am able (within 24 hours on weekdays; possibly

longer on weekends.) Also, realistically, I may miss your message if it arrives just before or during class or Office Hours, as there is such a flurry of activity around those times (Mondays 10am-12pm; Wednesdays 10am-9pm). If you've messaged me then and don't hear back, please do send another message to make sure I saw your message!

I also encourage you to come to my drop-in Office Hours, which are Wednesdays 2-4pm. If you're unable to come at those times, message me to set up an appointment.

If you have a general question about the course, I encourage you to use the all-class group chat that will be set up on Google Chat, or to check in with the other members of your small group.

### **"Life Happens" Policy**

Even before the pandemic, unexpected and severe life challenges came up for as many as a third of my students every semester. You might become sick or injured; have an illness in the family which requires you to take on extra hours at work; lose a family member, etc. If you should be unfortunate enough as to have this happen to you this term, please know that, as your professor, I care far more about your wellbeing than I do about your completing the course exactly as outlined on this syllabus. *Instead of just disappearing, I encourage you to let me know as soon as you are able to about what is going on – just as you would let your supervisor at work know if you couldn't come to work.* Together, when you are ready, we can work out a plan for you to complete the work for the course in a way that is realistic given your changing situation; and, if need be, connect you with resources at the university that can offer you additional support (to which you are entitled as a Rutgers student!).

*Coronavirus policy:* If you or someone you are close to has the misfortune to contract COVID-19, please do what you need to do to take care of yourself/your loved one. There is no need whatsoever to worry about this course – no matter how much time you need to take off, we can discuss approaches to completing the course with the grade you desire whenever you are able to return.

*Insurrection policy:* In the event of further attacks on the government, no one will be required to come to class that day. Instead of a regular class, I aim to hold space for anyone who would like to connect for mutual support during our regular class time.

*Anti-Black Violence policy:* In the event of attacks on Black people by police or vigilantes, or there are any other acts of racist violence, or of such perpetrators being cleared of responsibility for their murders, no one will be required to come to class that day. Instead, I aim to make our class Zoom space available for anyone who would like to connect for mutual support.

### **Office Hours**

My Office Hours are the times that I set aside every week specifically to meet with students. In other words, those times are for *you*, so please do not be shy about using them. Many students come to ask questions related to the course and assignments; others have questions about majors, grad school, navigating college as a member of a marginalized group, etc. – which are only some of many great ways to use Office Hours. No appointment is necessary; however, you are welcome to make an appointment if you need to come at a specific time during my Office Hours, and I will reserve it for you. Also, my regular Office Hours are *not* the only times I can meet with students – you can message me on Google Chat me for an appointment at a time that works for your schedule.

You can join Office Hours on Zoom, every Wednesday from 2-4pm. If I am already meeting with a student, you will be in the "Waiting Room" until I finish – aside from students who made appointments in advance, Office Hours are first come, first served.

## Homework

All assignments must be submitted in the manner indicated on the weekly homework email – this will change from class to class. For papers, I prefer basic 12-point font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins. Page and/or word limits must be adhered to – if you've written too much, it is important to learn how to edit your work down to the appropriate length.

## RUTGERS ACCOMMODATION AND SUPPORT SERVICES

**Note: these policies apply to all of your courses here at Rutgers-Newark**

### Accommodation and Support Statement

Rutgers University Newark (RU-N) is committed to the creation of an inclusive and safe learning environment for all students and the University as a whole. RU-N has identified the following resources to further the mission of access and support:

**For Individuals with Disabilities:** The Office of Disability Services (ODS) is responsible for the determination of appropriate accommodations for students who encounter barriers due to disability. Once a student has completed the ODS process (registration, initial appointment, and submitted documentation) and reasonable accommodations are determined to be necessary and appropriate, a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) will be provided. The LOA must be given to each course instructor by the student and followed up with a discussion. This should be done as early in the semester as possible as accommodations are not retroactive. More information can be found at [ods.rutgers.edu](https://ods.rutgers.edu). Contact ODS at (973)353-5375 or via email at [ods@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:ods@newark.rutgers.edu).

**For Individuals who are Pregnant:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance is available to assist with any concerns or potential accommodations related to pregnancy. Students may contact the Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance at (973) 353-1906 or via email at [TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu).

**For Absence Verification:** The Office of the Dean of Students can provide assistance for absences related to religious observance, emergency or unavoidable conflict (e.g., illness, personal or family emergency, etc.). Students should refer to [University Policy 10.2.7](#) for information about expectations and responsibilities. The Office of the Dean of Students can be contacted by calling (973) 353-5063 or emailing [deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@newark.rutgers.edu).

**For Individuals with temporary conditions/injuries:** The Office of the Dean of Students can assist students who are experiencing a temporary condition or injury (e.g., broken or sprained limbs, concussions, or recovery from surgery). Students experiencing a temporary condition or injury should submit a request using the following link: <https://temporaryconditions.rutgers.edu>.

**For English as a Second Language (ESL):** The Program in American Language Studies (PALS) can support students experiencing difficulty in courses due to English as a Second Language (ESL) and can be reached by emailing [PALS@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:PALS@newark.rutgers.edu) to discuss potential supports.

**For Gender or Sex-Based Discrimination or Harassment:** The Office of Title IX and ADA Compliance can assist students who are experiencing any form of gender or sex-based discrimination or harassment, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, relationship violence, or stalking. Students can report an incident to the Office of Title IX and ADA

Compliance by calling (973) 353-1906 or emailing [TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:TitleIX@newark.rutgers.edu). Incidents may also be reported by using the following link: [tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm](https://tinyurl.com/RUNReportingForm). For more information, students should refer to the University's Student Policy Prohibiting Sexual Harassment, Sexual Violence, Relationship Violence, Stalking and Related Misconduct located at <http://compliance.rutgers.edu/title-ix/about-title-ix/title-ix-policies/>.

**For support related to interpersonal violence:** The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance can provide any student with confidential support. The office is a **confidential resource** and does *not* have an obligation to report information to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Students can contact the office by calling (973) 353-1918 or emailing [run.vpva@rutgers.edu](mailto:run.vpva@rutgers.edu). There is also a confidential text-based line available to students; students can text (973) 339-0734 for support.

**For Crisis and Concerns:** The Campus Awareness Response and Education (CARE) Team works with students in crisis to develop a support plan to address personal situations that might impact their academic performance. Students, faculty and staff may contact the CARE Team by using the following link: [tinyurl.com/RUNCARE](https://tinyurl.com/RUNCARE) or emailing [careteam@rutgers.edu](mailto:careteam@rutgers.edu).

**For Stress, Worry, or Concerns about Well-being:** The Counseling Center has confidential therapists available to support students. Students should reach out to the Counseling Center to schedule an appointment: [counseling@newark.rutgers.edu](mailto:counseling@newark.rutgers.edu) or (973) 353-5805. If you are not quite ready to make an appointment with a therapist but are interested in self-help, check out *TAO at Rutgers-Newark* for an easy, web-based approach to self-care and support: <https://tinyurl.com/RUN-TAO>.

**For Emergencies:** Call 911 or contact Rutgers University Police Department (RUPD) by calling (973) 353-5111.

## CLASS TOPICS & MAJOR DUE DATES

The topics for each class are subject to change, as are the due dates listed below. In addition to these due dates, there is a homework due at midnight the night before each class.

All course materials – including links to readings, films, podcasts, etc., and to all assignment instructions and submission links – will be sent out via email, with “LIBERATION ARCHAEOLOGY” in the subject line.

### Week 1: January 19

Introductions:

- What is Liberation Archaeology?
- Who is in the class?
- Why do we write?

**DUE BY JANUARY 25: Required Extra Credit journal entry**

### Week 2: January 24 & 26

Empire:

- Looking for empire
- What imperial histories do we carry?
- Empire in space

**DUE BY FEBRUARY 1: Required Extra Credit journal entry**

### Week 3: January 31 & February 2

Oppression:

- Dominant and Subordinate Identities in our class
- Community Agreements

**DUE BY FEBRUARY 9: Individual meeting with Dr. Monteiro**

### Week 4: February 7 & 9

History, Archaeology, and the Past

- Origin stories
- Silencing the Past
- America's Founding Myths

**DUE FEBRUARY 13: Essay Part 1**

### Week 5: February 14 & 16

Essay Part 1

- Workshop Essay Part 1
- Brainstorming: what do we need to learn for Essay Part 2?

### Weeks 6-7, February 21 to March 2

Topics to be determined based on results of February 16 brainstorming.

**DUE MARCH 6: Essay Part 1 (revised) & Part 2**

### Week 8: March 7 & 9

Essay Parts 1 & 2

- Workshop Essay Parts 1 & 2
- Brainstorming: what do we need to learn for Essay Part 3?

**SPRING BREAK: NO CLASS ON MARCH 14 or 16**

**Weeks 9 & 10, March 21 to March 30**

Topics to be determined based on results of March 9 brainstorming.

**DUE APRIL 3: Essay Parts 1, 2, & 3**

**Week 11: April 4 & 6**

Paper Parts 1, 2, & 3

- Workshop full essay

**Weeks 12 & 13: April 11 to 20**

Small group guided writing sessions

**Week 14: April 25 & 27**

(Flexible time – can be used in the manner that makes the most sense when we get there)

**Week 15: May 2**

Closing Session

- Liberation Archaeology beyond the end of the semester

**DUE MAY 6: Final Essay**