

ASSIGNMENT

Legal and Social Histories of Reparations

Introduction

For this assignment, you will choose a reparations movement in history or present-day to study in depth. You will demonstrate your learning in a format of your choosing. Options for demonstrating your learning are detailed at the bottom of this document.

Reparations: the making of amends for a wrong one has done, by paying money to or otherwise helping those who have been wronged

You will choose to study only one reparations movement in depth, though you may note connections between different movements. Examples of reparations movements include but are not limited to:

- **Native American Claims:** As a result of settler colonialism, Indigenous populations across the Americas have ongoing claims for land return, compensation for resource extraction, and recognition of sovereignty.
- **Reparations for the enslavement of African Americans in the U.S.:** African Americans in the U.S. have long sought reparations for enslavement, with various proposals including financial compensation, land redistribution, and investments in Black communities.
- **Japanese American Redress in the U.S.:** In the decades following World War II, Japanese Americans sought and received reparations from the U.S. government after being unjustly incarcerated throughout the war.
- **CARICOM Reparations:** Caribbean nations have formed the CARICOM Reparations Commission to seek reparations from European colonial powers for enslavement and its enduring consequences.
- **Herero Genocide Reparations:** The Herero people of Namibia continue to seek reparations from Germany for the genocide they suffered during colonial rule.
- **Holocaust Reparations:** Jewish communities worldwide have sought and received reparations for the Holocaust, including restitution of stolen assets and compensation for forced labor.
- **Another reparations movement of your choosing**

The Assignment

The Legal and Social Histories of Reparations assignment consists of three parts. Within each part, there are 2-3 steps you will take to explore the reparations movement you choose to focus on.

1. In **Part 1: Background Research**, you will learn about the **historical context** and **situate the reparations movement** within its time and place.
2. In **Part 2: Central Inquiry**, you will think about several different elements that contribute to the story of the movement including the **people/beings, systems**, and relevant **types of power**.
3. In **Part 3: Reflection and Analysis**, you will name **connections** you see between the people, systems, and power you explored and consider **your own powers and participation** in relation to what you learned about the movement.

Once you choose the reparations movement you would like to study, you will refer to the instructions in the table below for how to investigate the movement in depth.

Part	Part Title	Main Ideas to Explore	How do I explore this idea? Answer the prompts below. (This is required)
1	Background Research	<i>Uncover the historical context</i>	How did this movement come to be? What events and circumstances led to this particular reparations movement? You might consider historical events, social circumstances, cultural moments, laws, bills, or policies. Did other reparations movements precede this one? If another movement seems relevant, describe its relevance.
		<i>Situate the movement</i>	Where did the movement take place ? What else was happening in that place/those places? What else was happening during the time of this movement? Were there other concurrent, related movements in the U.S.? Were there other concurrent, related movements in other places around the world?
2	Central Inquiry	<i>People: Consider the people/beings involved</i>	Name at least five people or groups of people involved in the reparations movement. Describe their roles. What did they do specifically to participate in the movement? Maybe they participated in big or small ways, or big AND small ways. Maybe they participated in

			positive or negative ways, or positive AND negative ways. What contributions did they make to the reparations movement? Why did you choose to highlight these specific people? What stands out to you about their participation in the movement?
		Systems: Consider the systems involved	Name at least four systems involved in the reparations movement. Describe in detail what was significant about each of these systems. What influence did each of these systems have on the reparations movement? Systems can both create and hinder change. <u>Examples of Systems</u> Some systems are very tangible and practical. Other systems might be ideological or conceptual. Some examples of systems include: systems of government, transportation, language, architecture, communication, media, family, religion, immigration, the economy, manufacturing, land use, and more. There are also systems of oppression like racism, ableism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, heterosexism, classism, and others.
		Power: Consider the types of power involved	Provide an example for each type of power. <u>Types of Power:</u> • Power over—having control, being coercive, repressive, corrupt, etc., e.g. the government might have power over the people • Power to—doing something to shape or change your world e.g. a person might have power to sign a petition or volunteer their time • Power with—finding common ground, building collective strength e.g. people might find power collaborating with one another on a project or shared goal • Power within—being able to imagine or feel hope; having personal resolve e.g. people may find power within to be brave, creative, resilient, confident Where do you see evidence of each of these powers within the reparations movement you chose to study? Describe each type of power. Remember: All systems and people have

			some form of power. Historical documents also have power. What documents, bills, or policies have power in this movement? Which stories, films, or works of art? Remember these documents are connected to the people who wrote and signed them!
3	Reflection and Analysis	Relationships Interactions Connections (RIC)	Name any relationships, interactions, and connections you notice between and across what you have studied about this reparations movement. How do the systems impact the people involved? What impacts do the people have on the systems? What is the role of power? How does power influence the way people interact? How does power impact the systems you named? Thinking back to your background research, what impact does history have on the people involved? What connections do you notice between past events and the different types of power you named?
		Self Reflection	Explore how your life and experiences connect to the reparations movement you studied. Of the systems you named, which ones do you participate in? What are your current role(s) within each of these systems? After considering your roles within the systems you named, reflect on the powers you have within those systems. Who/what has power over you? Who do you have power with? What powers do you have within?
		Sustained Participation	Now that you have analyzed a specific reparations movement and reflected on your powers in relation to the movement you studied, consider how you might shift or expand your participation in the systems you explored. Reflect on the following questions: • How might you change your participation or involvement in one or more of the systems you named?

			• How might you be more intentional with your involvement? • How might you use your power(s) more or differently? • What powers do you have to do something? Reflect on small shifts you could make in your day-to-day experiences, like sharing what you have learned about the movement with family or friends. Reflect on bigger moves you could make, like taking action to support an organization, a cause or an event related to the movement you studied. For example, if you chose to highlight a system of government, you might participate by voting or organizing politically. If you chose to highlight community organizing as a system, you might participate by protesting, marching, volunteering or donating to a cause. Describe the actions you might take or shifts in participation you might make.
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Demonstrate Your Learning

You can choose to illustrate your learning in one (or more!) of the following ways:

- An oral presentation or podcast of 7-10 minutes
- An essay of 5-7 pages
- A video presentation of 7-10 minutes
 - Your video will need to demonstrate your exploration of each of the three parts of the assignment. You might choose to do a screen recording of a slideshow presentation or represent your ideas through a short screenplay.
- A gallery exhibition of 8-10 artifacts with placard descriptions of each artifact and what it represents

How you choose to demonstrate your learning is entirely up to you. You are welcome to get creative! You are welcome to propose another format that is not on the list above.

TEMPLATES

Assignment Templates

Below are blank templates and sentence starters to support students in navigating each section of the assignment.

Part 1: Background Research

- *Uncover the Historical Context:* How did this movement come to be? What events and circumstances led to this particular reparations movement?
- *Situate the Movement:* What else was happening during the time of this movement? Were there other concurrent, related movements? Where did the movement take place? What else was happening in that place/those places?

Part 2: Core Inquiry

- *People:* Who is involved? Individuals and groups
- *Systems:* What systems are involved?
- *Power:* What types of power do you see?

Part 3: Reflection and Analysis

- *Relationships, Interactions, Connections*
- *Self Reflection:* What are my own powers? What systems do I participate in?
- *Sustained Participation:* How might I use my powers more or differently?

Example of a [Completed Assignment](#) for the Japanese American Redress Movement