Gearing Up This Week for Online Study Groups

Our goal this week is to become accustomed to participating in online classes. As you know from the email Harold sent on Friday, study groups will meet online at the regularly scheduled times primarily to make sure everyone knows how to join and participate in the classes.

If you have not already done so, check your computer or laptop to make sure you have a webcam and then go to www.zoom.us/test to download the Zoom app and check that your speaker and mic are on. The test will show whether you will be able to hear and see your colleagues in the study group. If the test identifies a problem, the computer may solve it automatically. If not, and you don’t have a clue, here’s what to do: email tech@iernyc.org and a tech committee member will help you.

The process of participating begins when you receive an invitation from the coordinator that will include a link that will bring you to the study group. Just click on the link, that’s all you have to do!

For an annotated sample invitation, as well as instructions about joining your study group with a telephone or smartphone, rather than a computer or laptop, see the text boxes below starting on page 2.

Work of the IRP Tech Committee

In the past week, the Tech Committee has done amazing work preparing all of us—coordinators and participants alike—to continue the intellectual and social life of the study groups online. In a very short time, Denise Waxman, Harold Berkowitz, David Lerner, Ruth Mackaman, and Jerry Vogel have selected ZOOM as the platform for our online activities, sent written instructions about how to host and join online classes to coordinators and members, organized and run multiple sessions teaching coordinators how to implement those instructions, recruited nine other IRPers to join the five of them as Zoomsters to help coordinators lead the study groups, and established an email address to answer questions sent by coordinators and members.

The IRPers joining the Zoomsters to make sure that every coordinator has technical support are: Bernie Belkin, Philip Botwinick, Simon Chung, Jonathan Gaines, Michelle Harris, Michael Hill, Miriam Lawrence, Susan Rauch, and Gerald Reisner.

Thus far, every coordinator who will be leading a class for the rest of the semester has attended one of the tech committee teaching sessions and has been assigned one of the 14 Zoomsters. Many coordinators have already held practice sessions with small groups of participants.
This is a truly amazing job and means that our life in the IRP will continue without interruption as we go forward from in-person to online classes. Many universities with much larger capacities and staffs cannot say as much. And we owe this to the members of the tech committee who stepped up so effectively to this huge challenge.

Here’s a sample invitation to join a study group:

**Your Coordinator is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.**

**Topic:** Great American Reads  
**Time:** Mar 14, 2020 09:00 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

**Join Zoom Meeting**  
[https://NewSchool.zoom.us/j/388372719](https://NewSchool.zoom.us/j/388372719)  
<-- Click this link (URL) to join the meeting with the App on your computer, tablet or phone

**Dial by your location**  
- +1 646 558 8656 US (New York)  
- +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)  
- +1 301 715 8592 US  
- +1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)  
- +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)  
- +1 253 215 8782 US

**Meeting ID: 388 372 719**  
<-- Meeting ID

**How to Join A Zoom Meeting from a Telephone or Smartphone**

The best way to join a Zoom meeting is from a computer, or a tablet like an iPad. However, you can join the audio portion of any Zoom meeting from any telephone, either a land line or a cell phone. Just make a regular phone call to one of the phone numbers shown in the meeting invite and then enter the Meeting ID Number from the invite when prompted. The Meeting ID number is at the end of the URL. For example:

- **URL:** [https://NewSchool.zoom.us/j/388372719](https://NewSchool.zoom.us/j/388372719)  
- **Meeting ID** is 388372719

On the other hand, when you have Wi-Fi, or if you have an unlimited data plan on your smart phone, you can get the full Zoom experience with video, so you can see your classmates and the presentations, and they can see you. We suggest that right now you install the Zoom app on your smart phone and tablet, so you are ready if you need it:

- **On an iPhone or iPad,** click on the App Store icon.  
- **On an Android phone or tablet,** open Google Play store. Search for an app called Zoom.us or Zoom Cloud Meetings and download it. It’s free.
Now, when you want to join a Zoom meeting with the App:
1. If you have an invite with a link (URL) to click, click the link and it will open the Zoom app and take you into the meeting. If you are reading this on your phone, test it now by clicking this link: zoom.us/test.
2. If you don’t have a link, and want to join a meeting, open the Zoom App and tap on Join. You will be prompted to enter the meeting ID. See sample invite above.
3. After clicking a link or entering a meeting number you will get a few prompts:
   a. **Join With Video** or **Join Without Video** (your choice, but it’s best that you join With Video so your classmates can see you)
   b. “To hear others please join audio” — Choose “**Call using Internet audio**” That prompt is poorly worded, you are not going to “call”, you are already there.

**Zoom Guide Soon Available on Zine**
We will be posting a Zoom Guide on the Zine, including all instructions sent so far—for study group participants and, specifically, for coordinators and meeting hosts. Check the Zine.

**Meetings with The New School and CUNY Graduate Center**
Thanks to ZOOM, these meetings are continuing. TNS postponed the meeting on our finances because they were dealing with coronavirus issues but have re-scheduled it for Tuesday, when we will consider the disposition of our annual appeal, bequest, and gift funds. The meetings with the GC will resume on Friday March 20, focused on identifying rooms for classes and committees.

**MEMBER FORUM**

**Staying in Touch**
As we proceed with the semester, we will use this Member Forum section of the Observer as another way to stay in touch with one another so that the physical distance we must maintain will not amount to social isolation.

Most important, please let the office know if you want to be contacted by telephone, email, or text during this period and/or whether you would be willing to call or email members who want to be contacted.

We also have some ideas about ways to communicate and are eager to hear your suggestions for others.

**How’re We Doing?**
Here’s your chance to send along short items about life in virtual reality or social distance. It could be something funny or unexpected that has happened or tips on how to negotiate our current situation. So if you have experienced or simply seen something interesting, amusing, or challenging, send a couple of paragraphs to Leslie Davis at ldavis7104@yahoo.com by Friday and we will put together a weekly look at how we’re doing for Monday’s issue. It doesn’t have to be anything profound, just the kind of things we normally share while we’re waiting for a class to start. Here’s a first story from Leslie followed by some thoughts from Laini Gerald.

“I have neighbors with two small children,
and Saturday they decamped for Chicago, where family support will help take care of their baby and toddler whose school has closed, and allow them to get back to work. There will be someone occupying their apartment while they are gone, and they told me to call on her for help if I need it. And Sunday another resident sent out an email blast to the whole building offering to do grocery or drugstore shopping for anyone. I’m fine now, but it’s really reassuring to know these good neighbors are primed to lend a hand.” Leslie

From Laini: What An Amazing Week!
1) My refrigerator is full.
2) I’m cooking.
3) Zoom has become a household word.
4) My kids are calling me.
5) My neighbors are saying hello.
6) My husband is home AND sharing the computer.
7) My gym is closed so 3 times around the apartment seems like a workout.
8) I’m praying a bit..but I don’t know why or to whom
9) At times like this I feel really proud to be a New Yorker.
10) I miss seeing my friends at IRP.

STAY SAFE DEAR FRIENDS! ONWARD

Ideas and Suggestions
• Once the study group is off and running, schedule the session 15 minutes before the official start time for a chat among the participants—or do the same for 15 minutes after the end time.
• Use ZOOM for social purposes—arrange a visit while you eat lunch or have a glass of wine at home.
• Check the directory on the Zine to see who your neighbors are;

arrange to go for a walk on a beautiful day.

More ideas? Send to Leslie at: ldavis7104@yahoo.com.

Online Art Show
Iz Greenwald provides our eleventh contribution to the online art show.

According to Iz:
“My painting is a copy of a picture I saw in a science fiction book. I was taken with the grandeur of the mountains.”

EVENTS

Travel: Morocco Sahara Odyssey
• When: January 10-25, 2021
The Travel Committee has made a reservation with Overseas Adventure Travel (OAT) for a trip to Morocco in January, 2021 for a small group of 16 people, including at this time only IRP members
and their friends. The price per person is $2,995 plus round trip airfare of $900.

For more detail, visit http://www.oattravel.com/TPP or http://www.oattravel.com/MSO21. To reserve, call Overseas Adventure Travel Reservations at 800-955-1925 and mention Group Code: G1-29177. Say you want to reserve for the Morocco trip in 2021 with the Institute for Retired Professionals. The deposit is $350 per person. If you have questions, contact Myriam Bucatinsky at myriambuca@gmail.com.

Postponed or Cancelled Events

- Admissions Committee second Information Session
- Civil Rights Journey planned by the Travel and Diversity Committees
- Orientation Committee Happy Hour
- Artsig tours of the Shed at Hudson Yards

RESOURCES

IRP Zine

- To access the Zine, go to www.irpzine.org. To view the directory or IRP Faces, you must login with these credentials:
  - Username: IRPNewSchool
  - Password: Fall2018
  - For the fall and spring calendars, click here.
  - Member bios: https://www.irpzine.org/news/new-member-bios-fall-2016/
  - Observer Archive: https://www.irpzine.org/irp-observer-2/