FROM THE CUNY GRADUATE CENTER

To members of the IRP:

We are delighted to embark on this new chapter with you, one that we believe will be mutually rewarding for members of the IRP and The Graduate Center on the whole. When our office started exploring the potential of establishing a lifelong learning program nearly two years ago, we looked to the IRP as a model of best practices and sustained success. It was serendipitous that the organization was looking for change as well, and thus began the collaborative work with the creative and dedicated Executive Committee that got us to this day. While we of course wish we were together in person and at 365 Fifth Avenue to introduce you to your new home and The Graduate Center community, we also appreciate the personal touch that working, learning, and teaching from home offers. Our team extends a heartfelt welcome and is excited to get to know each of you as individuals, as intellectuals, and as retired professionals. We look forward to beginning this friendship at the Town Hall this afternoon and please do not hesitate to be in touch with questions. You can reach our office at engagement@gc.cuny.edu.

Our best,
Brian and Mariel

Brian A. Peterson Interim Senior Vice President for Finance and Administration, Dean for the Office of Academic Initiatives and Strategic Innovation

Mariel Villeré Program Development Director, The Office of Academic Initiatives and Strategic Innovation

FROM THE ADVISORY BOARD

Revised Fall 20 Study Group Grid

There are two small changes to the Fall grid. Please note that Ajit Kumar will be co-coordinating Cleopatra - Witnessing the Ebb and Flow of History, along with Meera Kumar. The other modification is that we have expanded the short title of the Friday study group that Frank Carden and Arlene Spiller are coordinating. The title on the grid now reads, The Mystery of the Romani People (aka Gypsies).

The revised Fall 20 Study Group Grid reflects these changes and can be found here: https://bit.ly/2LiiByQ.

Remember that the priority deadline for Fall registration is tomorrow. Here is the registration form: https://bit.ly/3cPHww. Fall classes begin on Monday, September 14th. Membership fees will be paid to the Graduate Center after study group registration is completed.

The Registration Team is currently working on Summer Session 2. Rosters and schedules will be sent out later this week.

Please direct any questions by email to Curriculum Committee Chair Jonathan Gaines at
jegaines@att.net. The office is not receiving phone calls at this time.

Financial assistance will be available for those in need through our own fund-raising arm, the Institute for Retired Professionals (IER). The application procedure will be announced shortly in the Observer.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Our CUNY Emails

Please note that CUNY will send all IRP mail, such as the Observer and class registration information, to our CUNY email. Please check your CUNY email often. You can always access it at https://wa.gc.cuny.edu/owa/. If you prefer to read your CUNY email where you read your other email, there are several options in the document at this link https://bit.ly/3caNQO4.

Make Sure You’re Ready To Vote!! The New York Presidential and State Primary Election is coming up on Tuesday, June 23

All voters registered in NYS will be mailed an application to request an absentee ballot. Your application may have already arrived or it should be coming soon. When you receive it, you must complete and return it in order to receive your ballot. You can return the application in various ways, including by mail or online. See the instructions on the back of the application form. The deadline for submitting a completed application request is June 16 but try to submit as early as you can.

This application will have the Covid-19 language so you may indicate that this is the reason you will be voting absentee this year.

If you haven't received your application yet, please check your voter registration status immediately. To check go to www.vote.org or to your local Board of Elections. If you discover a problem with your registration status, please note that in order to register, your registration form must be submitted online or postmarked by Friday, May 29.

Inter-Term Activities: Past and Future

From Jan Adler: Now that the break is over and we’re about to start the summer sessions, I want, on behalf of the Community Building Initiative, to congratulate all the IRP members who participated in the variety of activities that were assembled to keep us together as a community. They included a very successful telephone outreach program as well as many Zoom activities.

Some of these activities brought together old friends and some were a chance for members who didn’t know each other to get acquainted. This success shows how the IRP as an organization not only adjusts to changing circumstances but gets stronger. We can give ourselves a well-deserved pat on the back.

Speaking of the zoom activities, Jane Case Einbender reports that the 1st Great IRP Read was a big success. On May 20th, more than 45 members gathered in three discussion groups to discuss Kurt Vonnegut’s Slaughterhouse-Five. Arlynn Brody, Jane Case Einbender and Arlyne Le Schack each led one of the discussion groups. Participants gave very positive feedback. We plan to organize more Great IRP Reads in the future. Watch the Observer for announcements and plan to join your colleagues for stimulating discussions and community.

And Steve Kalinsky tells us that the Current Events group, which had its last session on May 20th, successfully achieved its purpose—to engage IRP members during the inter-term period. A hearty thank you to all those who have contributed.

Events This Week

A few events this week mark the end of the inter-term program.

- Thursday, the 28th the Women’s Group meets at 3PM (contact Arlyne LeSchack, arlyneleschack@gmail.com)
- Also on Thursday at 4PM, Advances in Civilization concludes its program with Sophie Balcoff leading a discussion of Tolstoy (contact Steve Kalinsky, stephenkalinsky@gmail.com)
• Pour at Four will meet on Friday in the 24-hour chat room. (contact Susan Rubens, sfarubens@gmail.com)

Events in Coming Weeks

Some of the inter-term activities will continue into the summer.

Short Stories Aloud
Tuesdays at 4PM, starting June 2
These sessions Zoom once a week for an hour and a half to read stories aloud. Please email Sharon Girard at proustmaters@gmail.com for an invitation.

Federalists Forever
Every Other Thursday 4PM, starting June 4
The Federalists, a spin off from the popular Spring study group and the inter-term activity, will continue into the summer. Topics include the continuing relevance of the Constitution and the strengths and weaknesses of the American political system. Contact Howard Miller at howard3195@outlook.com.

Men’s Group, Women’s Group, Pour at Four
During the summer, the Men’s Group will meet every other Wednesday at 12:15PM. The Women’s Group will meet every Thursday at 3PM and Pour at Four meets every Friday.

Other Events

New Possible SIG: Spanish Conversation

Interested in practicing your Spanish? We would meet once a week or every other week in a six-to-eight-member group. Members should be able to read and discuss short newspaper articles, a short story, general information or anything of interest.

Please contact Myriam Bucatinsky at myriambuca@gmail.com.

ONLINE ART SHOW

Phyllis Kriegel provides our twentieth contribution to the online art show.

Title: Goddess
By: Phyllis Kriegel

According to Phyllis: “I have refashioned an ancient goddess for troubled times.”

MEMBER FORUM

Keep your ideas coming to Leslie Davis at ldavis7104@yahoo.com.

Reflections

From David Lerner:
Here’s a shot of the combined pedestrian/bike path on the Brooklyn Bridge a week or two ago. Usually it’s very difficult to ride a bike there, the
tourists overflow the bike path. Now it’s very pleasant. Someone set up a photo shoot with a heart of flowers and left the flowers when they were done.

From Bruce Smith:
Last Wednesday was certainly a very special day for me, and I suspect for others. While I was engaged with 20+ IRP members discussing a favorite play of mine as part of the Theatre SIG, my email was filling up with crucial and wonderful news about our affiliation with the CUNY Graduate Center. Finally, our organization’s future is secure. And we have an extraordinary group of members who have worked for almost two years to bring this relationship to fruition – they deserve our deepest appreciation along with the CUNY administrators who welcomed us.

For me, it was equally amazing how thorough and easy our transition into this new environment was made by all involved. We did not simply get an email from our leaders reporting that we had an agreement (evolving) with CUNY. We received all of the tools we needed to join the CUNY community – email accounts, access to resources, Zoom connections, and an invitation to a Welcome Town Hall Meeting. As someone who spent his career working in academic environments, I was surprised and

gratified that our transition was made so easy and welcoming.

In the middle of the restrictions that our current pandemic imposes upon us, it was uplifting to be welcomed and integrated into our new “other home.” Deep thanks to all involved.

From Nancy Small:
The recent New York Times obituary of Paul Vasquez, “The Double Rainbow Guy,” brought to mind my own double rainbow sighting. In mid-May 2016, as a spring rainstorm was just ending, I went to open my window and was quietly overwhelmed by this extraordinary, double gift from the heavens. Perhaps some IRP friends might, vicariously, enjoy the moment.”

RESOURCES

IRP Zine
- Fall and spring calendars, click here.
- Observer Archive https://www.irpzine.org/irp-observer1-1

CUNY Events
- School of Labor and Urban Studies (SLU) public programming schedule, 2019-2020
- Public programs in Midtown Manhattan