

**INSTITUTE FOR RETIRED PROFESSIONALS  
OBSERVER  
JULY 27, 2020**

**DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

Dear members,

We want to know more about you and your experience(s) at The Graduate Center, therefore we ask you to take some time to complete [this simple, 18-question survey](#) that will take no more than 10 minutes to complete. The survey asks for your contact information, your history with the IRP, and your demographic information. Please note that our office does not have an alternate email address for many of you since your newschool.edu accounts were closed. Please provide a current preferred email address in the form. Additionally, if your contact information changes in the future, please let us know immediately at [engagement@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:engagement@gc.cuny.edu) so that we can keep you updated and informed. Please note however, that all official Graduate Center emails will continue to go to your GC email address.

Also, it is especially important for IT to have your date of birth on record to verify your identity for security purposes. Once your date of birth information is in the IT database, you can use the self-service password reset system should you forget or lose your email password – please refer to the email sent from [engagement@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:engagement@gc.cuny.edu) on July 9, 2020 with information about your EMPLID and the self-service password reset system.

**The link to access the survey can be found [here](#).** We appreciate and value your participation by **Tuesday, August 4, 2020.**

A few reminders:

- As noted in past Observers, all official correspondence from The Graduate Center (and CUNY) will be directed to your Graduate Center email address. If you have not done so yet, please set it up. We thank you for your patience as our small team responds to your individual queries and redirects the queries that we are not able to solve to the IT team at The Graduate Center.
- Please look out for email messages from “Engagement” in your inbox, these are from our office address: [engagement@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:engagement@gc.cuny.edu)

- If you would like to **add or drop a study group** in Summer Session II or for the Fall 2020 term, please email all requests to [engagement@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:engagement@gc.cuny.edu) so coordinators can be notified accordingly and their rosters are kept up to date.
- If you would like to refer a friend or colleague to join the IRP, please share the following website address: <https://www.gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Provost-s-Office/Office-of-Academic-Initiatives-and-Strategic-Innovation/The-Institute-for-Retired-Professionals/Join-Us> where a calendar of information sessions and application deadlines can be found. Prospective members can enter their contact information to receive details about upcoming information sessions. Additionally, you can also use [www.gc.cuny.edu/IRP](http://www.gc.cuny.edu/IRP) and click “Join Us.”

Thank you,

Maribel and the Office of Academic Initiatives and Strategic Innovation

### **FROM THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

On behalf of the Advisory Board, we write this very well-deserved thank you letter to IRP members for all of your work, understanding, and patience over the past years as we negotiated our departure from The New School to our new home at The Graduate Center (GC), CUNY. We have, obviously, found terrific partners and a welcoming environment at the GC, and are in the midst of concluding what looks to be very favorable financial and other arrangements with The New School (TNS). This could not have been accomplished without the members who suggested potential homes and helped to vet them while also maintaining our cordial relationship with TNS staff. We also would not be in the place we are today without the members who continued to offer study groups as well as chair and serve on the committees that maintained our essential activities—including Curriculum, Admissions, Diversity, Orientation, Mentoring, Community Building, Our Stage of Life, and Marketing. We recognize also the contributions of those who kept vital intellectual and social activities alive and well, fostering our interests in theater, art, music, and just getting together. The IRP was able to continue this full life in a remote environment and more recently in a new system, only because of the skills and generosity of our Tech Committee.

Finally, as members of the EC we appreciated your attention, suggestions, and recommendations as we did our best to keep you informed through the Observer, Town Halls, and General Membership meetings. We always noted and appreciated the support we received from our members, even when (or especially when) times were most uncertain and unsettled. Our accomplishments as a community are truly noteworthy; they deserve a ceremony in person and that is something we can look forward to. So, thank you all very much.

The EC: Harold, Eileen, Michelle, Miriam

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### SPREAD THE WORD: RECRUITING MEMBERS FOR SPRING 2021

The Admissions Committee is gearing up to identify the new members who will become part of the IRP in the Spring of 2021. The first step in the process is the Information Session, which provides basic facts about the IRP and our application procedures to those who may be interested in joining us. Recruitment, which is such a crucial aspect of our commitment to create and maintain a more diverse community, is particularly challenging in our remote environment. So if you know of people who would be good candidates for the IRP, please encourage them to attend one of the following Information Sessions:

- Wednesday, September 16 from 4:00 to 5:30PM **OR**
- Wednesday, October 28 from 4:00 to 5:30PM

For more information, and to register for one of the sessions, please see: <https://www.gc.cuny.edu/About-the-GC/Provost-s-Office/Office-of-Academic-Initiatives-and-Strategic-Innovation/The-Institute-for-Retired-Professionals/Join-Us>

## CALL FOR STUDY GROUPS

Are you thinking about coordinating a study group and have you let the Curriculum Committee know of your interest? The committee will assign one of its members as your contact to help you develop your idea and submit a proposal. Send an email to Curriculum Committee Chair [Jonathan Gaines](#).

The summer is a great time to develop ideas, especially when we are either more home-bound than we would like to be or are seeking intellectual stimulation in a bucolic setting. The rewards are well worth the effort! The strength of the IRP depends on the willingness of our members to coordinate study groups. Thanks to those who regularly coordinate and to our many first-timers, we've been able to offer 34-36 study groups on average each semester. Coordinating is always a challenge, which is why curriculum committee members normally visit classrooms at the beginning of the semester to encourage member engagement. The Zoom environment makes it that much more difficult and so we are reaching out to you through this notice. If you are interested in coordinating and have an idea for a study group, please let us know.

In addition, we urge members who don't have experience coordinating or who want help in developing a study group or writing a proposal to look for the Curriculum Committee's announcements in the fall for its *Let's Get Started* and *Developing a Proposal* workshops.

## Study Group Diversity

The IRP is committed to creating and maintaining educational curricula that incorporate the values of a multicultural and diverse community and that reflect the pluralism of the United States and world society. Study groups that focused specifically on subjects of diversity and inclusion have included: *The Warmth of Other Suns*, *James Baldwin*, *North American Indians*, *Hinduism*, *Japanese Literature*, *Latin American Literature*, *Latin American Film*, and *Films by African American Directors*, as well as study groups whose subject matter dealt with instances of discrimination, as Caro's *Robert Moses and the Myth of the Frontier*. We would like to present more such study groups. We encourage you to send us your ideas for future study groups on these subjects *whether or not you would be interested in coordinating them*. Emails should be sent to [Jonathan Gaines](mailto:Jonathan.Gaines).

## **NOW IT'S FRIDAYS@THREE**

We are pleased to announce that Fridays@One--renamed Fridays@Three --will resume in the fall on a Zoom webinar. There will be three Friday programs, open to all IRP members, the CUNY community, and the general public. You will be able to invite your friends and family to attend. We have speaker invitations pending, and we will keep you posted on dates and speakers just as soon as we have them.

Warm regards,  
The Fridays@Three Committee  
Lesley Herrmann, Ruth Mackaman, co-chairs  
Ken Witty  
Ruth Clapper

## **BETWEEN-TERM EVENTS**

Q&A: Waiting for the Vaccine: Until Then?

Thursday, September 10, at 4:00PM

Barry Levine and Steve Kalinsky will lead this discussion via Zoom, addressing some of their questions and as many of yours as possible. Please send them your questions and they will try to find the answers. And then they will proceed from there. Send your questions by August 20 to [Steve Kalinsky](mailto:Steve.Kalinsky). Also email Steve for a Zoom invitation.

## **NEED TECH HELP?**

From IRP: Direct your browser to the [IRP tech stuff webpage](#) for advice on setting up emails and Zoom accounts, among other things. If you want additional help, send an email to [tech@iernyc.org](mailto:tech@iernyc.org).

From GC: Send email to [engagement@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:engagement@gc.cuny.edu).  
Accessing GC Email: Direct your browser to <https://wa.gc.cuny.edu/owa>.

## **OBSERVER SCHEDULE AND DISTRIBUTION**

Please send your items to [Leslie Davis](mailto:Leslie.Davis) at by the end of the day on Friday for inclusion in the Monday issue. Items submitted after Friday will be saved for the following week. The Observer will now be sent only to your GC email address.

## ONLINE ART SHOW

John Becker: Sunset at Rock Harbor on Cape Cod



John writes: “My daughter, her family, and I enjoyed this sunset on Cape Cod last week.”

## REMINDERS

### Calls for Volunteers

Between Term Activities (from August 24 to September 10). Contact [Jan Adler](#).

Advances in Civilization. The organizers of this series seek volunteers to present on any relevant topic during the fall semester. Contact [Steve Kalinsky](#).

### Between Term Events

Special IRP Author Interview with Lucy Kirk and Susanne Yellin  
Monday, August 24, at 1:00PM

Susanne will interview former CIA professional Lucy Kirk about her new suspense spy thriller, *The Poison Factory—Operation Kamera*. Find out what the writing process was like, how Lucy drew on her own experiences, and how she got CIA approval.

Also be in on a preview of the book’s characters and themes. Q&A will follow the interview. To sign up, email Lucy at [llk214@aol.com](mailto:llk214@aol.com) and she will send you a Zoom invitation.

### Book Discussion

*The Professor and the Madman: A Tale of Murder, Insanity and the Making of the Oxford English Dictionary* by Simon Winchester

Monday, August 31, at 1:00PM

Join a lively discussion of the national bestseller—a fascinating, spicy, learned tale. Email [Jane Case Einbender](#) and she will send you a Zoom invitation. Session is limited to the first 25 who sign up.

### Encore: China & the U.S.

Thursday, September 3, at 1:00PM

In this follow-up to the summer session I study group coordinated by Tom Hardy, participants will continue the discussion of the challenge the U.S. faces in “getting its act together”—both domestically and internationally. Former class members will automatically be signed up to receive a Zoom invitation; others should email [Tom Hardy](#).

### Book Discussion

*White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo

Wednesday, September 9, at 1:00PM

This groundbreaking bestseller by a prominent antiracist educator will be the subject of a timely discussion. To sign up, contact [Joy Schulman](#) and she will send you the invitation.

### Short Stories Aloud

Tuesdays, at 4:00PM

Contact [Sharon Girard](#). No preparation, no homework, no books to buy. Sharon and Helene will email the stories to you.

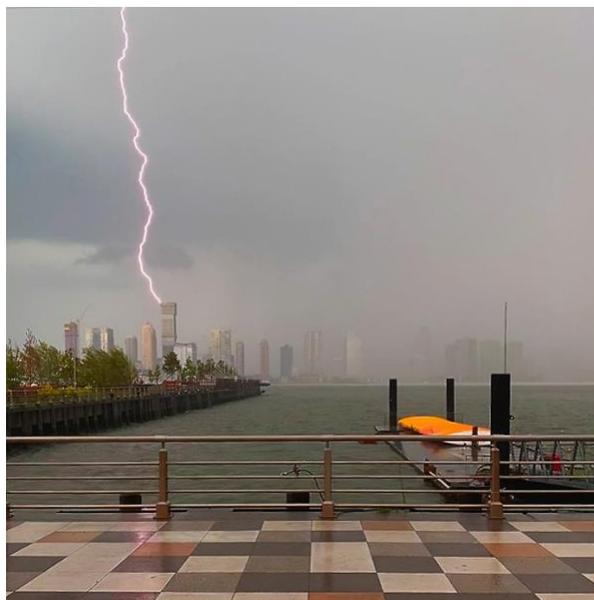
**Men's Group**, Wednesdays, at 12:15PM, contact [Jay Fleishman](#)

**Women's Group**, Thursdays, at 3:00PM, contact [Arlyne LeSchack](#)

**Pour at Four**, Fridays, at 4:00PM, hosted by Susan Rubens in the 24-hour chat room at <https://sites.google.com/view/irptechstuff>

**MEMBER FORUM** (keep your ideas coming to Leslie Davis at [Ldavis1@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:Ldavis1@gc.cuny.edu))

From David Lerner: Pier 26, NYC, Wednesday night, looking toward New Jersey



## CUNY EVENTS THIS WEEK

**The Mina Rees Library Conversation Series** is a lively showcase of ideas, research and active scholarship, from across the CUNY system and beyond.

Join the conversation on **Thursday, July 30, at 4:00PM to hear from Benjamin Saunders** (Long Island University) with **Kate Angell** (Adjunct Reference Librarian) and **Elvis Bakaitis** (Interim Head of Reference) about Saunders' work on the topic of right-wing authoritarianism and public perceptions of the "Stop, Question, & Frisk" policy of the New York City Police Department. Register [here](#).

And on **Friday, July 31, at 2:00PM**, Teachers College features Graduate Center student and faculty member in a panel titled **Promoting Equity and Inspiring Student Agency, in Our Schools, Communities, and Educational Institutions**: A Zoom Fireside Chat with Anindya Kundu, Alexis McLean, Michelle Fine, and Mary Howard, as part of The Power of Student Agency book tour. Register [here](#).

**A few reminders**: On July 29, from 6:00-7:00PM, The Leon Levy Center for Biography presents **Julian Zelizer on Newt Gingrich, with Michael Tomasky**. In *Burning Down the House*, historian Julian Zelizer pinpoints the moment when our country was set on a path toward an era of bitterly partisan and ruthless politics, an era that was ignited by Newt Gingrich and his allies. Julian E. Zelizer is Professor of History and Public Affairs at Princeton University.

Zelizer is the author and editor of numerous books on U.S. political history and a well-known commentator in the media. Michael Tomasky is a Special Correspondent for The Daily Beast, the Editor of Democracy: A Journal of Ideas, and a contributing opinion writer for The New York Times. His book *If We Can Keep It: How the Republic Collapsed, and How It Might Be Saved* was published in paperback in June 2020. Register [here](#).

## **ONGOING CUNY EVENTS AND RESOURCES**

See the [GC CUNY Calendar](#) for the most centralized GC events calendar. Center for Humanities and Segal Theatre Center events are listed; you can also subscribe to newsletter. The Graduate Center News