

INSTITUTE FOR RETIRED PROFESSIONALS

The Observer, September 21, 2020

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Dear all,

The air is crisp. I find it reassuring to have the change of season as a dependable marker of time. Study groups are in their second week and the **add/drop deadline is this Friday, September 25**. Please email engagement@gc.cuny.edu with any changes to your schedule.

Last week I participated in two Information Sessions for enthusiastic prospective members organized by the Admissions Committee and have also joined the Curriculum Committee in their weekly meetings.

The Fridays@3 Committee has created a fabulous lineup of speakers for the fall term. The kick-off event is this Friday, September 25 at the new time, 3:00 PM. Please register here (<https://holzer.eventbrite.com>) to attend the virtual talk by Harold Holzer, an award-winning Lincoln scholar and director of Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter College. He will discuss his newest book, [*The Presidents vs. The Press: The Endless Battle between the White House and the Media From the Founding Fathers to Fake News*](#). Holzer's presentation will be followed by comments and questions from the audience. The event is open to all; feel free to invite others!

Our General Membership Meeting is today to discuss a number of important updates. As you know, the Observer has been sent to personal email addresses as well as your Graduate Center email addresses the past couple of weeks because we want to make sure everyone is kept up to date with important news and notices. It's important to start using your GC email for connection to the CUNY and GC communities and to take advantage of the benefits of being part of this institution, including email security and safety, tech support, and the various discounts that come along with a "dot-edu" email address.

Ariana, Olena, and I are running a help desk for members to receive one-on-one assistance to access your GC email and set up your account to receive and read your GC email in the same place you read your other email. Please sign up for a 15-minute time slot using the following links:

- [Wednesday, September 23, 10:00AM – 3:45PM](#)
- [Friday, September 25, 9:00AM – 11:45AM](#)

If you would prefer to schedule by phone, please call 212-817-AISI. The help desk sessions will be run on Zoom here: <https://jjay-cuny.zoom.us/j/99741153326?pwd=OC9ZN2hpaUQzZi81NHl4ejlyVDJjQT09> and you will be let into the Zoom room at your designated appointment time.

I also want to share with you the Graduate Center Reactivation Plan ([read more here](#)). The plan applies guidance from New York State Department of Health and The City University of New York to the Graduate Center as a building and a community. Our first priority is to keep all members of our community healthy and safe. The plan is designed to gradually scale up operations with the structure in place to scale back if necessary, based on the containment of the virus on campus, in NYC, and beyond. The Graduate Center is currently in Phase One, with only essential staff going into the building and all coursework being conducted remotely for the Fall 2020 term. In Spring 2021, all work that can be done remotely will remain remote, with only a slight increase in building occupancy for staff to prepare for the next phase of reopening.

In the current plan, the earliest we could consider a return to campus for classes and study groups is Fall 2021, and even then, the Graduate Center is planning for a reduced building occupancy with staggered schedules to allow for social distancing. Dean Peterson and I co-chair and are part of the team of 45 staff, faculty, and students on the Graduate Center Campus Reactivation Committee. It is too early to determine how the pandemic will shape the in-person activities of the IRP program next year, and I am in close communication with IRP leadership including the Advisory Board, Executive Committee, and across committees, to plan for different scenarios as we continue to keep close watch on the context and conditions as they develop. I am also consulting and collaborating with

colleagues at the GC and at other institutions to make remote learning and socializing the best it can be.

To that end, please join us for the events and sessions mentioned above and the other events offered by the Graduate Center listed later in this issue to keep our minds active and our hearts full.

Stay well,
Mariel

TECH TALK

What to DO When Your Zoom Link Doesn't Get You In!

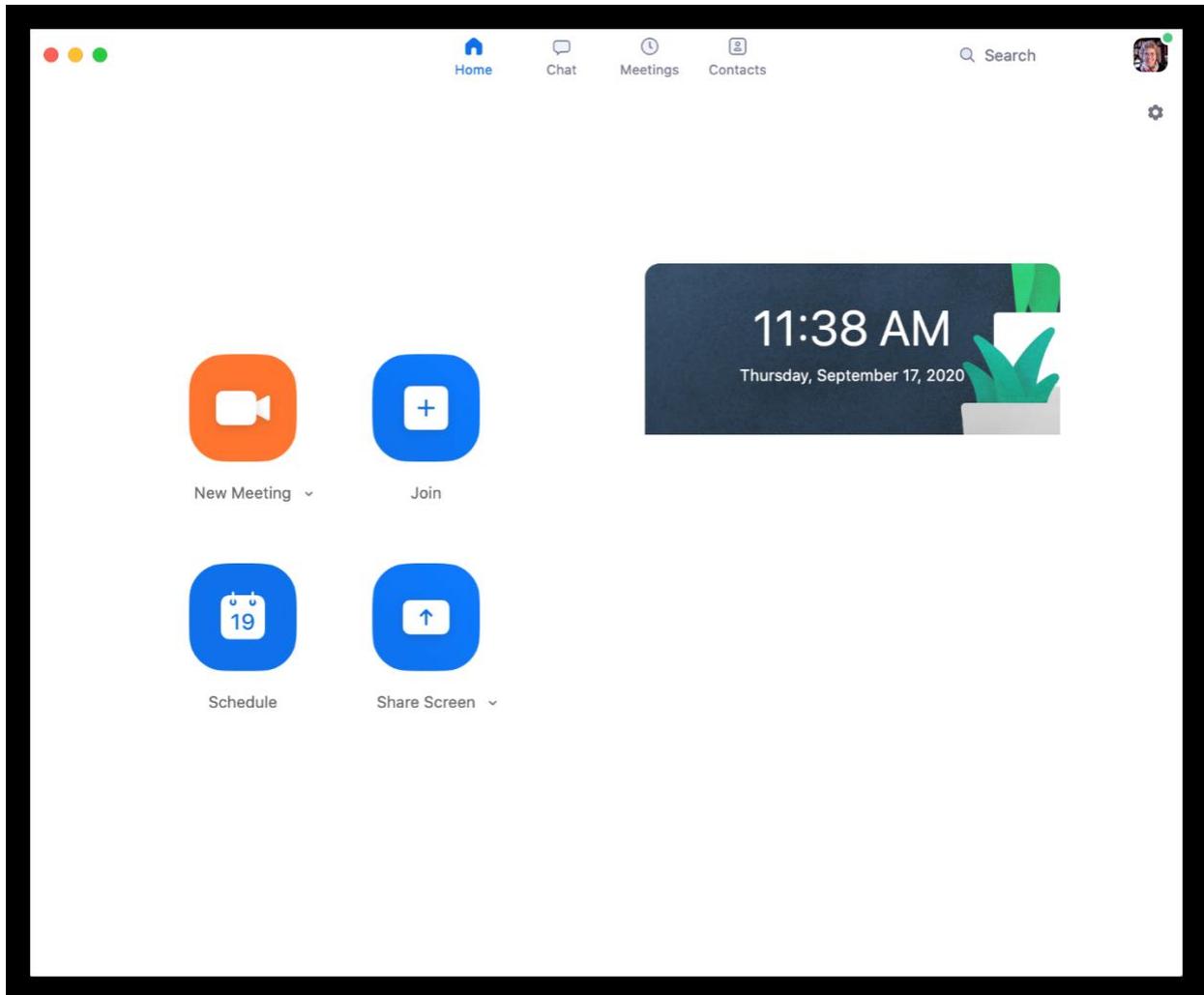
Some IRP members have found that clicking on a Zoom meeting link doesn't always work. This may not happen to you, but if it does, there's an easy solution:

Open up the email invite from your coordinator so you can see and access the Meeting ID number and the Passcode number for Zoom meeting you want to enter.

Click your Zoom desktop icon:



Click on JOIN (the upper right of the four icons on the Zoom Desktop App home page).



A Join Meeting box will open and you will be prompted to type in the Meeting ID number. Then you will be prompted to enter the Passcode number. These numbers are in the email from your Study Group Coordinator with the Zoom invite. They are directly below the Zoom link.

To avoid typos, it is best to copy and paste each of these from the email into the Zoom Join Meeting Box and the Passcode Box.

Highlight, copy and paste the Meeting ID number in the Join Meeting Box

Highlight, copy and paste the Passcode number in the Passcode Box.

Alternatively, you can type the Meeting ID number and the Passcode number in yourself if that is easier for you. Just be accurate!

IRP'S ZINE

Now that we've finished the first week of study groups, we may be wondering just who are these unfamiliar folks we're seeing for the first time, thanks to Zoom. Some of them are new; others may have been around for years. We usually showcase the new members at the beginning of the term, but this year we were so glad to see them, we put them in our July 6 issue.

In case you missed them, you can find the new members on the IRP Zine, along with a lot of other valuable information. Just look for the links to current and past issues of the Observer. If you look under Members, you will find the IRP Directory of names, addresses and phone numbers; pictures of IRP members and an archive of current and past thumbnail biographies that have appeared in the Observer, going back to 2008.

The Study Groups heading includes information about current study groups and Curriculum activities but also a list of all study groups for the last six years. There's a list of who's on what committee and an archive of Advisory Board minutes. You can also read current and former issues of Voices Online.

It's easy to find the Zine. Just go to irpzine.org. The website is public, but the parts relating to members and the Advisory Board minutes are password protected. We will be sending out the password to members in a separate email.

NEED TECH HELP?

From IRP: Direct your browser to the IRP tech stuff webpage -- <https://sites.google.com/view/irptechstuff> -- for advice on setting up emails and Zoom accounts, among other things. If you want additional help, send an email to tech@iernyc.org.

From GC: Send email to engagement@gc.cuny.edu.

Accessing GC Email: Direct your browser to <https://wa.gc.cuny.edu/owa>

GRADUATE CENTER EMAIL ASSISTANCE

If you find that you still need help, the Office of Academic Initiatives and Strategic Innovation along with support from IRP volunteers, **Live Virtual Helpdesk Sessions**. The individual live virtual helpdesk sessions are limited appointment times of 15 minutes, you may sign-up for a live virtual help session on any of the following dates below:

- [Wednesday, September 23, 10:00 – 3:45PM](#)
- [Friday, September 25, 9:00AM – 11:45PM](#)

The link to join your respective **live virtual appointment** time can be found [here](#). *Note, you will be let into the zoom at your designated appointment time.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The General Membership Meeting will take place on September, 21, 4:00PM. Come to hear about the Fall semester: study groups, events, and Advisory Board elections as well as options and plans for the future: CUNY reactivation, IRP admissions, and setting diversity goals

To join the meeting, please follow this [link](#).

FRIDAYS@3 WITH HAROLD HOLZER



The first of the lecture series will be on Friday, September 25, at 3:00PM. featuring Harold Holzer, an award-winning Lincoln scholar and director of Roosevelt House Public Policy Institute at Hunter

College. He will discuss his newest book, *The Presidents vs. the Press: The Endless Battle between the White House and the Media, from the Founding Fathers to Fake News*. The Zoom talk will be open to an unlimited audience, so feel free to invite others. Holzer's presentation will be followed by comments and questions from the audience. To register please click [here](#).

IRP MEMBER SURVEY – GETTING TO KNOW YOU!

Tell us about yourself by taking the IRP member survey, please follow this [link](#) to complete it.

UPCOMING HOLIDAYS

There will be no IRP study groups on Monday, September 28, Yom Kippur; Monday, October 12, Columbus Day, and Wednesday through Friday, November 25-27, for Thanksgiving. The last day of 13-week classes will be Monday, Dec. 21. End dates will vary depending on the day of the week.

ADVISORY BOARD ELECTION

All 15 positions on the Advisory Board will up for election in November.

The positions will be open to all members of the IRP community, without exception, who have been members for at least one year. For this election only, in order to create a staggered cycle, positions will be divided into 1-year, 2-year and 3-year terms, and one position will be reserved for a newer member, that is, someone in the second or third year of membership in the IRP. All members are eligible to vote in the election. Announcements about the opening of nominations and the dates for the election will be placed in the Observer with links to the nominating form. Please think of running for this important body!

STUDY GROUPS

Call for Proposals

Are you thinking about coordinating a study group, and if so, have you let the Curriculum Committee know of your interest? The committee will assign one of its members to help you develop your idea and submit a proposal; click [here](#), or send an email to Curriculum Committee Chair Jonathan Gaines (jgaines@gc.cuny.edu).

The strength of the IRP and its curriculum depend upon members coordinating study groups. Thanks to the many members who regularly coordinate and to our many first-time coordinators, we've been able to offer 34-36 study groups regularly. Each semester, though, is a separate challenge, which is why committee members are visiting study groups this week to solicit your engagement in coordinating and to answer questions. If you are concerned about coordinating on Zoom, there will continue to be Curriculum and Tech Committees coordinator skill workshops, based now on six months of Zoom experience.

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

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, and as well as study groups whose subject matter dealt with instances of discrimination, as the study groups on 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.

Thinking About Coordinating but Want Assistance?

Bring your ideas to the Curriculum Committee's **LET'S GET STARTED** Workshop on Monday, October 5, 3:45-5:00PM, or Wednesday, October 7, 3:45-5PM.

Whether you have just the germ of an idea or one that is almost fully developed, this workshop is for you. We will work together to support the development of your

ideas, suggest resources, help you to find a co-coordinator (if you want one) and answer your questions about the Study Group proposal process.

RSVP to Linda Anstendig, lanstendig@gmail.com by Friday, October 2; Zoom invitation will follow.

WANTED: VOLUNTEERS FOR TWO IER COMMITTEES

The Board of Directors of the Institute for Education in Retirement (IER), the IRP's fund-raising arm, seeks qualified IRP members to join the Finance and Investment Committees.

The responsibilities of the Finance Committee include:

Develop and maintain the organization's budgeting and financial planning,

Monitor the organization's internal controls,

Prepare and distribute to the board timely, accurate and user-friendly financial reports.

Prepare and file financial documents as necessary.

The responsibilities of the Investment Committee include:

Find and recommend to the board a qualified investment advisor, who will recommend for board approval the best investment strategy for IER's assets.

Monitor the performance of the investment advisor and investments over time,

Work with the advisor to develop policies, in accordance with applicable laws and regulations, regarding the IER's Investment objectives, risk tolerance, and reporting.

We are looking for people with investment experience for the Investment Committee and financial, budgeting or accounting experience for the Finance Committee. Nonprofit experience is helpful but not essential.

Please send letter of interest and brief statement of your experience and qualifications to Colette Siegel at treasurer@iernyc.org.

OBSERVER SCHEDULE

Please submit your items to Leslie Davis at ldavis1@gc.cuny.edu by the end of the day on Friday for inclusion in Monday's issue. Items submitted after Friday will be saved for the following week.

VOTER REGISTRATION PROJECT UPDATE

Important Information for New Yorkers from Gov. Cuomo. New York has taken a host of measures to make voting safer and easier during the pandemic. For the first time in NY, all registered voters can request an absentee ballot (under the "temporary illness" excuse). If you choose to vote by absentee ballot, there are several ways you can cast your completed, signed ballot.

- Put it in the mail ensuring it receives a postmark no later than November 3.
- Drop it off at an Early Voting poll site between October 24 and November 1.
- Drop it off at a poll site on November 3 by 9:00PM. Drop it off at your county Board of Elections Office starting September 8 through no later than November 3 by 9:00PM

The City Board of Elections Launches Tracking System So Absentee Ballots Don't Get Lost in the Void. Once an absentee ballot is requested, the system generates a tracking number. Once the absentee ballot application is sent, and a ballot is filled out and placed in the mail, the system will use "Intelligence Mail barcode" technology, allowing a voter to track the status of their ballot. A "valid" ballot will be counted in the tally. If a ballot is considered invalid, election officials will be able to provide directions on "curing" the ballot, offering a voter extra time to fix any issues on the ballot to ensure it's re-validated. The curing process involves the voter having to go to their borough BOE office and correcting the error, such as a missing date or signature. <https://nysballot.elections.ny.gov/TrackMyBallot/Search>

ONLINE ART SHOW

Jerri Sherman, Hot Pink Cable Coat



Jerri says: Knitting is a Zen experience. As the yarn passes through your fingers, it gives a pleasing and comforting feeling. And at the end you have something lovely forever.

**Calling All Painters,
Photographers, Block
Printers, Textile Artists,
Collagists, and Sculptors**

Did you spend the lockdown making art? Show us what you did by displaying it in the Observer's Online Art Show. Take a photograph of your work, add a title, and a sentence or two about how you made it -- or why or where.

Send to Carol Millsom
carolmillsom35@gmail.com.

Artwork is published in the order in which it is received.

CHANGES IN ONGOING EVENTS

Pour at Four returns on Friday, October 9. Susan is excited to bring the Pour back from vacation. Join her from 4 to 5PM for an end-of-the-week gathering on Fridays in the 24-hour chat room at: <https://sites.google.com/view/irptechstuff> Want to co-host? Contact Susan at srubens@gc.cuny.edu

The Women's Group meets at 3:45PM on Thursdays. Email Arlyne LeSchack at aleschack@gc.cuny.edu.

The Men's Group meets every Wednesday at 3:30PM. Email Jay Fleishman at efleishman@gc.cuny.edu.

Reading Stories Aloud with Sharon Girard and Helene Schiffman will not take place on regular class days. We will meet again during breaks and holidays and will let you know the specific dates. Email Sharon Girard at sgirard@gc.cuny.edu.

MEMBER FORUM

Unnatural Disasters

Jim Gould's screenplay, *Unnatural Disasters*, placed in the top 20 percent and advanced to the second round in the prestigious Austin Film Festival writing competition. Here's how Jim describes it: A widower and his teen daughter and a divorcee and her teen son, use their wits and what they can scrounge or improvise to thwart terrorists creating earthquakes by fracking, a superstorm by cloud seeding a hurricane and a mega volcano by detonating a hydrogen bomb on Yellowstone's lava bulge. Amidst the mayhem, the adults confront their pasts and the teens come of age, as romance buds all around.

UPCOMING & ONGOING CUNY EVENTS AND RESOURCES

The Graduate Center Presents Music from Copland House, September 21, 12:00 – 1:00PM. "Music from Copland House has become our paramount keeper of Copland's flame." American Record Guide.

The internationally-acclaimed Music from Copland House ensemble plays this remarkable work, with a pre-performance discussion among the artists, and a live, post-performance Q&A between viewers and ensemble members.

Six Featured Music from Graduate Center and Copland House artists: Derek Bermel, clarinet; Magdalena Filipczak* and Pala Garcia*, violinists; Danielle Farina, violist; Alexis Pia Gerlach, cellist; Michael Boriskin, pianist.* Member of the Graduate Center Doctoral program Register [here](#) to attend this free event.

Latinx Art: Artists, Markets and Politics with Arlene Davila and Patricia Banks September 21, 6:30 PM

For information see their webpage [here](#).

(Zoom webinar info to come— check back on the event page)

[Fall 2020 Seminar in Applied Economics: Julapa Jagtiani](#)

Tuesday, September 22, 11:45 AM

[Abolition as Method: Fieldwork at the End of the World](#)

Tuesday, September 22, 6:00 PM

[Judith Thurman Delivers Annual Leon Levy Lecture on Biography](#)

Tuesday, September 22, 6:00 PM

[Responding to the Tragedies of Our Time \(Nicole Hassoun\)](#)

Wednesday, September 23, 4:15 PM

Join us for GC Virtual Trivia Night on Wednesday, September 23rd at 6:30 PM! RSVP with Eric Brown ebrown2@gc.cuny.edu to get the Zoom link for the event. Additionally, please download the app Kahoot! to your smartphone device (no profile creation necessary).

[CHANGE: Work in 2020 and Beyond](#)

Wednesday, September 23, 7:30 PM

[Special Event: Alan Kraut: "Immigration and the Lessons of the 1918-19 Pandemic"](#)

Thursday, September 24, 4:00 PM

[Carl Rollyson on William Faulkner, with Anne Heller](#)

Thursday, September 24, 6:00 PM

[Democracy and Translation](#)

Thursday, September 24, 7:00 PM

Stone Center on Socio-Economic Inequality [Conference on Coalitional Democracy](#)

October 2, 12:00 PM to 5:45 PM

The Reacher Guy: The Authorised Biography of Lee Child by Heather Martin on October 8, 2020 at 7:30PM.

Heather Martin and Lee Child will have a lively discussion about Ms. Martin's book and a Q&A with the audience will follow. This event is by registration only, to register please click [here](#).

NON-CUNY ONLINE RESOURCES AND EVENTS:

Center for an Urban Future (CUF) program: "Encouraging and Supporting Low-Income Entrepreneurship in the Bronx," policy symposium. The first in CUF's five-borough forum series on encouraging and supporting low-income entrepreneurship, this event will focus on what's needed to support low-income entrepreneurs in the Bronx, and examine how to ensure that more of the New Yorkers from low-income backgrounds who do turn to entrepreneurship have the tools and resources to succeed.

Our forum will shine a light on that opportunity, featuring an in-depth discussion with Council Member Ritchie Torres and a panel of dynamic Bronx-based entrepreneurs from low-income backgrounds in conversation with local and national entrepreneurship experts. Registration is required. Please RSVP via [this link](#).

Details

Thursday, September 24th

10:00am - 11:30am

Streaming live online ([RSVP here for link](#))

El Museo del Barrio has published numerous [exhibition catalogues and brochures](#) to enjoy from home.

Jazz at Lincoln Center is offering [free weekly online programs](#).

The Jewish Museum has made their [audio tours](#) available online.

MoMA is offering free online [courses and specializations](#).

The Whitney Museum of American Art is offering from artist talks to art history courses, webinars and creative projects for everyone, see what's coming up [here](#). Explore exhibitions online [here](#).

BRIC Rotunda Gallery is offering free Media Education Courses. More information [here](#).

