

## INSTITUTE FOR RETIRED PROFESSIONALS

The Observer, August 24, 2020

### DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Dear members,

Last week's Advisory Board meeting was celebratory as we welcomed The Graduate Center's outgoing Interim President, James Muyskens, to the IRP as a lifelong honorary member. Also present were Interim Provost Julia Wrigley and the new Graduate Center President, Robin Garrell, to whom I was so pleased to introduce the IRP. Smiles filled the checkerboard on my Zoom screen as we raised our glasses to these new beginnings. We look forward to seeing Jim in study groups this fall!

We hope to welcome more Graduate Center affiliates to the program in the Spring. Alumni received a special newsletter last week with an introduction to the IRP and an invitation to register for the upcoming information sessions being organized by the Admissions Committee. We saw immediate response to that outreach and have fully registered sessions with waitlists, so we will likely be adding sessions to meet the demand.

As you noticed in last week's Observer, the IRP's Voter Registration committee is busy to get out the vote this election cycle. We met with the voter registration liaison in Student Activities at the Graduate Center last week to develop strategies to reach Graduate Center students and assist in absentee ballot requests. I'm inspired by the energy around this initiative and the creative problem solving demonstrated by the group given the remote nature of it all.

Lastly, we have only had about 50% of IRP members respond to our member survey. If you are one of those who has *not* responded, please do so [here](#). Your answers are important for The Graduate Center IT department and University program reporting.

I have included other reminders in the list below for your reference.

All best for the week,

Marisel

## Reminders:

- **Please note that summer fees are due this Friday, August 28.** If you have not yet, please submit payment with your credit card here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/irp-summer-sessions-tickets-108899230530>. If you took one study group this summer, you should pay a total of \$125. If you took two or more study groups this summer, you should pay a total of \$200. **Fall fees are not yet due.**
- 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)

Please direct your requests and questions to our office address, [engagement@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:engagement@gc.cuny.edu), rather than personal addresses for Ariana, Olena, and Mariel. This helps us manage communications with members.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### EXPECT A CALL FROM IRP

The Community Building Initiative will be reaching out to all IRP members. You may expect a call between August 26 and September 10. Your caller will be another IRP member checking in to see how you’re doing. You may also receive an email asking for your preferred phone number.

### FROM THE VOTER REGISTRATION PROJECT

### NEW ABSENTEE BALLOT INFORMATION

Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo signed bills Thursday that impact absentee ballots:

- One explicitly allows voters to request an absentee ballot if they cannot show up at a polling location because of the risk of contracting or spreading an illness, such as Covid.

- Another allows for absentee ballot requests to be honored starting **now** (as opposed to the old rule that requests for absentee ballots must be made no earlier than 30 days before the election).

As many of us have already filed requests for absentee ballots, we checked with the Board of Elections to make certain that we did not have to refile our requests. We have been assured that the earlier requests will be fulfilled even if received before enactment of these bills.

Registered voters who live in the five boroughs can now [request](#) an absentee ballot if they are concerned about COVID; the State Board of Elections will soon be able to offer the same digital service to all New York voters.

Rather than waiting for the online version, we encourage members who have envelopes and stamps at home and can easily mail something, to go to <https://www.vote.org/> [[vote.org](https://www.vote.org/)] to obtain an absentee ballot request form to mail in now. When you do get your ballot, be sure to complete it and mail it ASAP.

### **GET OUT THE VOTE (FROM HOME)**

- Want to Help Get Out the Vote for the Fall Election?
- Don't Want to Leave Your Home?
- Might Enjoy Doing This with Others?

**The Voter Registration Project** is planning weekly IRP **Get Out the Vote** Zoom Socials for IRP members who are sending letters or postcards to potential voters. We thought it might be more fun to do this while visiting with other members who are doing the same. We plan to start on Thursday, September 3, from 4:00 to 5:00PM and continue weekly on Thursdays for as long as there is interest.

To participate you just need to sign up with one of the many Get Out the Vote Initiatives that are organizing Postcard or Letter-writing campaigns to voters nationwide These organizations make it easy to get started: They provide instructions, names and addresses, and some sell supplies. We are suggesting one of the following as good choices for IRP members, but you are free to choose another:

- [Reclaim Our Vote](#) sends you postcards (if you choose) to which you add handwritten content as per instructions. You supply stamps and mail them immediately. Their focus is to increase turnout among rural voters of color in North Carolina, Texas, Arizona, Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia. (See video below for more details)
- [Vote Forward](#) sends you personalized letters to print, to which you add handwritten content as per instructions. You supply envelopes that you address and stamp and hold them for a nation-wide mailing day. You can focus on one of 16 states.
- [Turn PA Blue](#) sends you postcards to which you add handwritten content and address as per instructions. You supply stamps and mail them immediately. Their goal is to flip the PA General Assembly and deliver PA to Joe Biden.

Check them all out before deciding which is right for you. But act soon as it can take some time to register and get set up with supplies. Watch this [Reclaim Our Vote video](#) to get a general idea about this type of initiative. If you want to join our IRP Get Out the Vote Zoom Socials, [sign up here](#). We will send you invites and reminders for Zoom sessions.

Ettie, Lisa, Rita and Denise

**REFLECTIONS ON VIRTUAL LIFE**  
**Jan Adler Thursday, August 27,**  
**2:00PM**

We've just completed months of Zooming and other new experiences and would like to offer all members an opportunity to share thoughts and feelings about how it has affected our communal and private lives. Let's share experiences and also strategies to survive and even thrive. If you are interested, contact Jan Adler at [jadler@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:jadler@gc.cuny.edu), and he will send you an invitation.

**OBSERVER SCHEDULE**

Please submit your items to Leslie Davis at [ldavis1@gc.cuny.edu](mailto: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.

**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](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>.

**ONLINE ART SHOW**

Carol Sterling, *At Idlewild Island*



Carol says: "At the request of his parents, I painted this watercolor to honor the arrival of my great-grandson. The scene, a treasured family vacation spot in the Thousand Islands, will hang in his room."

## **BETWEEN-TERM EVENTS (August 24-September 4)**

**Special IRP Author Interview with Lucy Kirk and Susanne Yellin Monday, August 24, 1:00PM.** Susanne will interview former CIA professional Lucy Kirk about her new suspense spy thriller, *The Poison Factory—Operation Kamera*. Q&A will follow. To sign up, email Lucy Kirk at [llk214@aol.com](mailto:llk214@aol.com) or [lkirk@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:lkirk@gc.cuny.edu).

**Reflections on Virtual Life with Jan Adler, Thursday, August 27, 2:00PM.** Contact Jan Adler at [jadler@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:jadler@gc.cuny.edu) for an invitation.

**Book Discussion: *The Professor and the Madman: A Tale of Murder, Insanity and the Making of the Oxford English Dictionary*, Monday, August 31, 1:00PM.** Join a lively discussion of the national bestseller. Email Jane Case Einbender at [jeinbender@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:jeinbender@gc.cuny.edu); limited to the first 25 who sign up.

**Special Lecture: A Walk Through the Met With Carolyn Grossner, Tuesday, September 1, 1:00PM.** We spend just over an hour looking at important works from the Met's 17 curatorial departments. This tour is new; it will not repeat the summer session guided tour. The tour is now open to an unlimited audience, [Register Here](#)

**Encore: China & the U.S. with Tom Hardy, Thursday, September 3, 1:00PM.** Discuss the challenge the U.S. faces in "getting its act together"—both domestically and internationally. If new to the group, email Tom Hardy at [thardy@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:thardy@gc.cuny.edu).

**Book Discussion: *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo with Joy Schulman, Wednesday, September 9, 1:00PM.**

Join this timely discussion of the groundbreaking bestseller by a prominent antiracist educator, email Joy Schulman at [jschulman1@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:jschulman1@gc.cuny.edu).

**Discussion/Q&A: *Waiting for the Vaccine: Until Then?* Thursday, September 10, 4:00PM,** Barry Levine and Steve Kalinsky will lead this discussion, addressing some of their questions and as many of yours as possible. Please send your questions to Steve Kalinsky at [skalinsky@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:skalinsky@gc.cuny.edu) and ask for a Zoom invitation.

## **ONGOING EVENTS**

**Men's Group, Wednesdays, 12:15PM,** email Jay Fleishman at [efleishman@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:efleishman@gc.cuny.edu).

**Women's Group, Thursdays, 3:00PM,** email Arlyne LeSchack at [aleschack@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:aleschack@gc.cuny.edu).

**Short Stories Aloud: With Sharon Girard and Helene Schiffman, Tuesdays, 4:00PM.** No preparation, no homework, no books to buy; leaders will email the stories to you, email Sharon Girard at [sgirard@gc.cuny.edu](mailto:sgirard@gc.cuny.edu).

## UPCOMING CUNY EVENTS

### ***PICTURE A SCIENTIST* Virtual Film Screening** **August 28 - August 30**

Join the CUNY ASRC and CUNY Office of Research for a virtual screening of [\*PICTURE A SCIENTIST\*](#), a film that chronicles the groundswell of researchers who are writing a new chapter for women scientists. Biologist Nancy Hopkins, chemist Raychelle Burks, and geologist Jane Willenbring lead viewers on a journey deep into their own experiences in the sciences, ranging from brutal harassment to years of subtle slights. Along the way, from cramped laboratories to spectacular field stations, we encounter scientific luminaries - including social scientists, neuroscientists, and psychologists - who provide new perspectives on how to make science itself more diverse, equitable, and open to all. [Register here](#)

## ONGOING CUNY EVENTS AND RESOURCES

See the [GC CUNY Calendar](#) for the most centralized GC events calendar.

### **NON-CUNY ONLINE RESOURCES AND EVENTS:**

**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](#).