



THE OBSERVER
DECEMBER 6, 2021

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear members,

Happy December... and it feels like it! *Farmer's Almanac* says it will be a colder, snowier winter early in the season before getting more temperate and "tranquil" in February. I have not delayed breaking out my warmest coat!

This week we have two events – Professor Van Tran speaks this afternoon at 4PM as part of the unmasking bias series organized by the diversity committee. On Friday, we wrap up the semester's Fridays@3 series with gloria Dominguez-Bello. More details are enclosed. Given the grid for the spring, we will move to a 1PM start time for Friday events, returning to "Fridays@1". Details (dates, speakers, topics) will be announced early in the spring term.

Last week, the science seminar series invited Dr. Joshua Brumberg from the graduate center to speak about the sciences on campus and his own research. If you missed it, the recording can be viewed here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fhothbbwouuz57xoynpqbzautla7hoac/view?usp=sharing>. If you joined us on Thursday (or if you watch it later) please complete the survey here: <https://forms.gle/xqo6vbwsljgrwccw8> to share your ideas for future programs.

As communicated last week, registration is now open for the spring term. All the details and relevant links are on the following pages. We are excited to welcome 9 new members in the spring. They will be highlighted individually in coming issues of the observer so you can better get to know them and recognize them in spring study groups. New members should take note of upcoming events (including those this week), register, and consider intersession activities in January, details are enclosed and kept up to date on the zine calendar.

Lastly, I am pleased to welcome a new member to our team who will be working on Ip2 on a part time basis: Monben Mayon started with us on Friday last week with a brief orientation and will be tuning into events this week and participating in meetings as we get her up to speed for the spring term. We will include a brief bio and photo in next week's observer so you can get to know her. We are also in the midst of a search for a new full-time member of our team and expect to onboard that person early in the new calendar year.

Much to look forward to in 2022.

My best for the remainder of 2021,
Mariel

Our office contact information:
engagement@gc.cuny.edu
212-817-2474

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

It's Spring Semester Registration Time*

Click on [the Grid](#) study group name to find a description of the topic, a draft syllabus, whether it will be fully **in-person**, **hyflex** (in-person or Zoom) or **Zoom** only; course duration (12 or 6 weeks) and the 6 week study groups by session,

[The Registration Form for Spring 2022 study groups is here.](#) Please choose and rank your preferences (#1 being your first choice), and note how many study groups in total you would like to enroll in.

*Full details on registration and the calendar for the Spring semester are on the last page of this Observer.

Diversity Outreach Committee Unmasking Bias Series

**Van Tran, *Racial Discrimination during the Covid-19 Pandemic*
Today, 4 - 5:30PM**



Dr. Tran has a Ph.D. in Sociology and Social Policy from Harvard University. An immigration scholar and urban sociologist, his research and teaching are deeply connected to the diversity, history and vibrancy of New York City.

After spending his early years in refugee detention camps in Northern Thailand, Dr. Tran — a native of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam — moved to the Bronx as a teenager when his family was resettled by the International Rescue Committee in 1998. He views the city as a social laboratory for original research and innovative teaching, both of which he recognizes can substantively affect urban social policy. Since 2019, Dr. Tran has helped mobilize research on critical issues facing New York City as the Deputy Director for The Center for Urban Research at the CUNY Graduate Center.

Professor Tran will reveal how the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic not only triggered significant anti-Asian sentiment and a dramatic surge in anti-Asian violence, but also caused Blacks, and non-White Hispanics to report persistently higher levels of discrimination than Whites (including White Hispanics) throughout the pandemic.

Register for this event here: https://gc-cuny.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_8gVTFGHaTxmMaXB3iWYu6w

Fridays@3

Maria Gloria Dominguez-Bello, “A Scientist Gone Wild in the Amazon”

Friday, December 10, 3PM



Maria Gloria Dominguez-Bello is a Venezuelan-born microbiologist educated in Venezuela, Scotland and France, spent sabbaticals in the US and Spain, and has worked in Venezuela, Puerto Rico, and the United States. She is currently at Rutgers University, where she is the Henry Rutgers Professor of Microbiome and Health and the Director of the New Jersey Institute for Food Nutrition and Health. She is a fellow at the American Academy of Microbiology and is on the editorial board of several scientific journals. She was recently awarded the 2021 Research Excellence Award by Rutgers.

Fieldtrips all over the world, but especially in the Amazon, have been an important part of her work: first collecting samples and data, and then beginning the time-consuming process of analyzing and preparing the results for publication; on December 10 she will focus on the human experience of being on the spot. "One fieldtrip, she says, "gives us fuel for years but more importantly, teaches us, opens our eyes to revere nature and value diversity." Dr Dominguez-Bello will share with us some of her work, but mostly, she will share field experiences that never appear in the scientific papers.

To register for this event, go to: https://gc-cuny.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Hays-bbyT0Cj6jHywr8zEw

ArtSig Visit
Salon 94, 3 E. 89th St.,
Wednesday, December 15 at 10:15AM

We have a unique opportunity to visit Salon 94 owned by Jeanne Greenberg Rohatyn, listed by [Artnet](#) as one of the 25 leading women in the art field. Located in a landmark historic building recently renovated by Raphael Vinoly, the gallery features work by an international roster of contemporary artists installed on three floors. Our tour, scheduled before the gallery opens to the public, will be led by the gallery manager, Andrew Blackley. Join us for coffee afterward at another historic building, The Church of Heavenly Rest, listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

For information about Salon 94: <https://salon94.com/about>

To register, contact Dick Kossoff (chemkos@aol.com)
For questions about the event, contact Nancy Small (nasmall7@gmail.com)

Ethnic Dining at Restaurant Buenos Aires on Friday, December 17, is Full.

We have reached our capacity of 20 members attending this event. To be on the waiting list, please contact Myriam Bucatinsky at myriambuca@gmail.com.

Intersession Break Activities

Mondays, January 3 & 17 at 3PM:

Stories Aloud with Sharon Girard and Helene Schiffman

We invite you to the pleasures of reading aloud. The stories are emailed to you in advance. A panel of readers reads the story aloud - sprinkling its reading with interjections, questions, one-liners, insights wise and dumb and short digressions. During pauses, the entire group joins in for comments and questions. The panel changes from session to session - giving an opportunity to read to all who wish to do so.

We're considering stories by Elif Batumen, Italo Calvino, Deborah Eisenberg, Gogol, Nicole Krauss, Grace Paley, Eudora Welty, Saramago, de Maupassant. We welcome your suggestions too.

We'll Zoom for about an hour and a half each Monday.

Email Sharon at sgirard@gc.cuny.edu for the Zoom link. Please indicate if you would like to be a reader.

Thursday, January 6 at PM

Reflections On Making Decisions as NYC opens with Jan Adler

It looks like much of what makes NYC special has opened up again. Now each of us is grappling with what we personally feel comfortable doing. This workshop will be a chance to share your thoughts and strategies on how you are making decisions and hear what others are thinking. If you are interested contact Jan Adler at jadler@gc.cuny.edu and you will receive a Zoom invite the week before.

Monday, January 10 at 11AM

A Virtual Walk in the Woods at the New York Botanical Garden with Carolyn Grossner

In the year prior to the pandemic Carolyn kept a journal outlining her experiences monitoring designated trees for seasonal changes in the forest at the NYBG. She will first give us an overview of the garden and its mission and then take us on a journey lasting from February through November. We will learn about the science of Phenology which measures climate change, visit the forest and see trees, plants, fungi, birds, insects, and even an adorable snake named Slinky. It will be A Walk in the Woods not usually possible in January.

Email Carolyn at cgrossner@gc.cuny.edu anytime between now and January 8th and she will make sure you get a reminder and the link.

Wednesday, January 12 at 2PM

LP² Weighs in on *The New York Times* Readers' Selection of the Best Books of the Last 125 years with Steve Kalinsky

To celebrate the 125th anniversary of the Book Review, *The New York Times* has invited readers to select the "Best Book" published in the last 125 years. Thousands of nominees have been submitted and the Times has selected the 25 top contenders (+/-) and scheduled a run-off election. Which books made the cut and which did not...and the 1600+ comments on [NYT.Com](https://www.nytimes.com) have morphed into the great polarizing (literary) "food fight" of the 21st century. Please join Steve (on Zoom) for a look at the *Times* contest and a no holds barred discussion of just what constitutes a "Best Book."

Please email Steve at skalinsky@gc.cuny.edu for a Zoom invite.

Thursday, January 20 at 2PM

THE GREAT LP² READ: *The Mystery of Mrs. Christie* by Marie Benedict

Join with your colleagues for our fourth Great LP² Read.

"A stunning story... The ending is ingenious, and it's possible that Benedict has brought to life the most plausible explanation for why Christie disappeared for 11 days in 1926."—The Washington Post.

Agatha Christie disappeared for 11 days in December 1926 and it is hotly contested what occurred during that time. Marie Benedict draws on this true story for a historical fiction book that incorporates the elements of a suspense novel.

To participate, email Jane Case Einbender jeinbender@gc.cuny.edu, obtain the book and read it on your own. You'll receive a Zoom invite before the session.

Wednesday, January 26 at 1PM

Book and Film Discussion with Robert Sholiton
BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN: Story to Screenplay

We follow the path from Annie Proulx's 28-page 1997 New Yorker story to Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana's 97-page Oscar-winning screenplay that Ang Lee turned into a masterful 2 1/4-hour film that won him the best director Oscar. The story, screenplay and three very brief essays by the author and screenwriters are all included in our text. We'll also screen a few key scenes from the film, which I suggest that you view or review. Our text is *Brokeback Mountain: Story to Screenplay*, Annie Proulx, Larry McMurtry and Diana Ossana, available as either a 151-page Scribner paperback or on Kindle. The film is available on Amazon Prime or Vudu. To participate email Bob at rsholiton@gc.cuny.edu. You'll receive a Zoom invite before the session.

Thursday, January 27 at 2PM

Stand your Ground Laws — Help or Harm?
with Joy Schulman

The state of Florida passed a "Stand Your Ground" law in 2005. Prior to that, for hundreds of years, the general concept in most laws governing lawful behavior, when attacked, was "Duty to Retreat" except for in your own home. This Stand Your Ground law has impacted the very recent Kyle Rittenhouse case in Kenosha, as well as the Trayvon Martin case. These laws are meant as a deterrent to crime. The statistical result has been inconclusive; and at worst they have encouraged vigilante behavior. Most controversial in using the plea, when carrying a gun, is what provokes the initial attack. Joy will send out links to current articles a week before (no more than 90 min. of reading) to lay the basis for a lively discussion. To participate email Joy jschulman1@gc.cuny.edu. You'll receive a Zoom invite before the session.

Call for More Break Activities between Semesters

The Community Building Initiative seeks volunteers to lead activities during the break from January 3rd to January 28th. Your activity can meet once,

twice or multiple times and can be a book or movie discussion, a current events discussion, a travel adventure or art presentation or something else. Current and past coordinators can offer a one-session encore presentation selected from a prior study group. Tech help is available to set up and assist you in running the Zoom session. We provide the Zoom link to send to participants.

Contact Jane Case Einbender at jeinbender@gc.cuny.edu to propose your activity.

HELP WANTED!



NEW Website Committee Needs Web-Savvy Users (not techies!)

We are seeking two members to join a new Website Committee that will evaluate suggested changes and improvements to the content, images, and functionality of the LP² website from both leadership and members. This role requires familiarity with LP²'s functions and membership needs. It also requires comfort and ease with broad use of the internet and websites. It does NOT require knowledge of how the LP² Wordpress website works (although some familiarity with Wordpress would be an asset). We anticipate meeting biweekly during the Spring as members begin using the new site. Ultimately, we expect to move to monthly meetings. The Committee will be led by Denise Waxman and Bruce Smith (as the Advisory Board's EC representative).

If you are interested, contact Denise at dwxman1@cuny.gc.edu.

The Marketing Committee Needs You! Desirable Skills and Experience for Members:

Background in media, marketing, writers, and creative thinkers. The Committee wants members who will tell our story, create programs to promote LP²'s mission and history, as well as publicize current activities and plan future events.

If you're interested, contact Tom Ashley at thisdayin@aol.com and/or Lisa Cristal at lisa.e.cristal@gmail.com.

ONLINE ART SHOW

From: Iz Greenwald

Title: Old Homestead, a pen and ink drawing



Calling All Painters, Sculptors, Photographers, Block Printers, Ceramicists
and Textile Artists!

Display the creative work you have been doing this summer in the Online Art Show. Send a photograph of your work with a title and a brief statement about it to Carol Millsom at cmillsom@gc.cuny.edu. Art works appear in The Observer in the order in which they are received.

MEMBER FORUM

ONGOING LP² EVENTS

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

The Men's Group meets at 3:45PM on Wednesdays. Contact Jay Fleishman at efleishman@gc.cuny.edu.

Stitch Away Stress meets at 4PM Tuesdays. Members share skills and enjoy the meditative benefits of handwork. Contact Michelle Harris at mharris@gc.cuny.edu.

Observer Submissions Send items for the next week's Observer to Micky Josephs at mjosephs@gc.cuny.edu by 5PM on Friday. Send Online Art Show entries and suggestions for virtual tours to Carol Millsom at cmillsom@gc.cuny.edu.

Member Forum If you have something to share with the LP² community, e.g., a photo, an article, a book or a web site that you've discovered and think would be interesting to members, send it to Micky at mjosephs@gc.cuny.edu for inclusion in the Member Forum.

Registration Procedure for the Spring Semester

The format for each study group is listed on [the Grid](#). Click on any study group name to find a description of the topic, a draft syllabus, and course duration (12 or 6 weeks). The full list of study group offerings is also below, organized by modality: fully **in-person**, **hyflex** (in-person or Zoom), or **Zoom** only; and the 6 week study groups by session.

The registration deadline is Friday, December 17, 2021.

- The semester begins on Monday, January 31.
- The final day of study group meetings is Friday, May 8.
- Please note that Friday study groups meet 11:00am-12:30pm.
- If space allows, we will open registration for the second part 6-week classes starting on March 15.

[The Registration Form for Spring 2022 study groups is here.](#) Please choose and rank your preferences (#1 being your first choice), and note how many study groups in total you would like to enroll in. **Be sure to list as many options as you can.** You can submit multiple entries and the most recent will be used in the lottery.

Definitions:

1. **Zoom only:** No in-person component.
2. **Hyflex:** Zoom and in-person components. [See this video](#) of Howie Menikoff's Fall 2021 hyflex study group as an example.
3. **In-person only:** No Zoom component; meets at the Graduate Center at 34th street and 5th avenue. (Not for the immunocompromised or mask averse)

If you register for a **hyflex** class, you may attend in-person or on Zoom. The coordinator will reach out prior to the start of the term to confirm your preference for coming in person to the Graduate Center or participating remotely by Zoom.

PLEASE NOTE: Members in hyflex or in-person study groups will need a CUNY-specific Access Pass (in a system called Cleared4) and a Graduate Center student ID. Instructions to secure these pieces will be sent to those on hyflex/in-person rosters. When on campus, all members **need to wear**

masks regardless of vaccination status per the CUNY mandate. As of right now, the elevators on campus have a capacity of four passengers.

Selection of study groups and registration is completed online and by lottery, organized by the office of academic initiatives and strategic innovation. Every effort is made to provide all members with their first and/or second choices. Please be sure that your first choice study group is ranked in Slot 1, your second choice in Slot 2, your third choice in Slot 3, etc., with as many options as possible, in order of preference, on the registration form. You may request as many film study groups as you like, but expect to receive no more than one, due to popularity.

You can enroll in a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of three and a half study groups (3.5, or the equivalent of three 12-week study groups and one 6-week study group) without any special approval from the director. Be in touch with the director, Mariel Villeré, with questions or to request other accommodations: mwillere@gc.cuny.edu.

Make sure to hit "SUBMIT" once you have completed the form, and you will receive an email confirmation to the email address you provided. *Please pay special attention to make sure you enter your email address correctly so that you receive the confirmation.*

If you are seeking **financial support**, please [complete this form](#) to request a scholarship from the IER (Institute for Education in Retirement).

For those planning to take a **leave of absence**, [please submit this form](#) and Mariel will be in touch.

Be in touch with us at engagement@gc.cuny.edu if you have any questions. Remember that the deadline to register is Friday, December 17.

Thank you!

Spring 2022 offerings in list form

Zoom ONLY Study Groups

- *The Divine Comedy*, Part I: Richard Zuckerman (Monday 9:30-11)

- Science Wednesday: Maureen Hatch, Mary Padilla, Hannah Shear, Lorne Taichman, Eva Vogel (Wednesday 9:30-11) – 6 weeks starting March 15
- Against the Grain – Early Stages of Human Development: Charles Troob (Wednesday 9:30-11)
- Jazz Appreciation: Tom Grant, Rob Tessler (Wednesday 9:30-11)
- Revisiting w. Somerset Maugham: Mary Semel (Wednesday 11:45-1:15) – 6 weeks starting January 31
- Documentary Film: Art and Avarice: Lynn Brenner, Mary Connelly, Bob Sholiton (Wednesday 11:45-1:15) – 6 weeks starting March 15
- Adventures in Print: Exploring Ideas in Narrative Non-Fiction: Elisabeth Gitter, Linda Gottlieb, Lorraine Matovina, Rita Silverman, Ken Witty (Wednesday 11:45-1:15)
- Qing Dynasty Part 2: Decline and Fall of the Last Chinese Empire: Eric Zimile (Wednesday 11:45-1:15)
- Alexander Pushkin and the Birth of Modern Russian Literature: Steve Kalinsky (Wednesday 2:00-3:30) – 6 weeks starting January 31
- Harper Lee: Two Novels About Race and Class in America: Arlynn Brody, Steve Kalinsky (Wednesday 2:00-3:30) – 6 weeks starting March 15
- Literary and Cultural Analysis: A Cognitive Approach: James Smith (Wednesday 2:00-3:30)
- Films of John Huston: Howie Menikoff (Wednesday 2:00-3:30)
- Dutch Seventeenth-Century Art: Deborah Markow (Thursday 9:30-11)
- Writing Workshop: Leslie Bedford, Charles Troob (Thursday 9:30-11)
- JFK Reappraised: Michael Shapiro (Thursday 9:30-11)
- Literary Analysis: Mary Rowan (Thursday 11:45-1:15)
- The Lives of Others: Reading Memoir 3: Jay Fleishman, Laini Gerald, Lesley Herrmann, Jenny Ross, Miriam Lawrence (Thursday 11:45-1:15)
- Do You Understand Dylan?: James Smith (Thursday 2:00-3:30)
- Sinclair Lewis, Satirist Extraordinaire: Steve Kalinsky, Sara Otey (Thursday 2:00-3:30)
- Advanced Guided Biography: David Grogan (Thursday 2:00-3:30)
- Memories: Writing Workshop: Andy Shapiro (Friday **11-12:30**)
- Great Stories, Not-so-great Relationships: Sophie Balcoff (Friday **11-12:30**)

Hyflex Study Groups

- Kazuo Ishiguro, *A Thoughtful Man*: Eileen Hanley (Monday 11:45-1:15) – 6 weeks starting March 15
- 4 Countries, 4 Books – What Literature Can Teach Us: Meera Kumar (Monday 11:45-1:15)
- The Movies Look at Working Women: Sheila O’Connell (Monday 11:45-1:15)
- US Health Care: The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Charles Brecher (Monday 2:00-3:30) – 6 weeks starting March 15
- Systemic Inequality: Frances De Lott, Marge Heins, Susan Herman, Marietta Meyers, Susan Sabatino, Mark Scher, Joy Schulman (Monday 2:00-3:30)
- There Goes Rhymin’ Simon – The Music of Paul Simon: Randy Ross (Tuesday 9:30-11)
- *These Truths, a History of the US* by Jill Lepore: Jeffrey Siegel (Tuesday 9:30-11)
- Happiness the New Science: Michael Hill (Tuesday 11:45-1:15)
- The Art of *The New Yorker* Profile: Aileen Gitelson, et al. (Tuesday 11:45-1:15)
- 21st Century Voices: Great Contemporary Novelists: Susan Smahl (Tuesday 2:00-3:30)
- Makers of Modern India: Ajit Kumar, Meera Kumar (Tuesday 2:00-3:30)
- International Mysteries: Other Cultures: Iris Zevin, Jack Zevin (Tuesday 2:00-3:30)

In-Person ONLY Study Groups

- Sleep (and Dreams): Don Ray (Monday 2:00-3:30)
- Philip Roth, *The Biography*: Arlyne LeSchack, Judy Zaborowski (Tuesday 11:45-1:15)
- Who’s Afraid of Joseph Conrad?: Steve Reichstein (Tuesday 11:45-1:15) – 6 weeks starting March 15

6-Week Study Groups

1st session

- Revisiting w. Somerset Maugham: Mary Semel (Wednesday 11:45-1:15) – 6 weeks starting January 31
- Alexander Pushkin and the Birth of Modern Russian Literature: Steve Kalinsky (Wednesday 2:00-3:30) – 6 weeks starting January 31

2nd session

- Kazuo Ishiguro, *A Thoughtful Man*: Eileen Hanley (Monday 11:45-1:15) – 6 weeks starting March 15
- US Health Care: *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*: Charles Brecher (Monday 2:00-3:30) – 6 weeks starting March 15
- *Who's Afraid of Joseph Conrad?*: Steve Reichstein (Tuesday 11:45-1:15) – 6 weeks starting March 15
- Science Wednesday: Maureen Hatch, Mary Padilla, Hannah Shear, Lorne Taichman, Eva Vogel (Wednesday 9:30-11) – 6 weeks starting March 15
- Documentary Film: *Art and Avarice*: Lynn Brenner, Mary Connelly, Bob Sholiton (Wednesday 11:45-1:15) – 6 weeks starting March 15
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