

The University Seminars
Newsletter



Spring 2020

LETTER from the DIRECTOR

Dear Seminars Community,

I am lucky enough to be in Georgia with my spouse, daughter, new grandson, and our dog. We arrived on February 27 fully expecting to be home by late March. Now I suspect we won't return to NYC until June.

I hope you are all safe and healthy and with loved ones, if not physically, then remotely. Bob Pollack called me in early March about canceling the seminar meetings and skillfully convinced Robert Remez and me of the wisdom of doing so. Many thanks to Bob for helping to keep us all safe; I am extremely grateful for his advice.

The Seminars are about community, and the self-isolation of the pandemic has many people focusing on the joy and value of our connections to each other. We are fortunate to be part of such an organized and vibrant way to get together. We will have it again!

It is interesting to realize what I miss. I miss New York; I miss being at work; I miss my colleagues. I miss all the people coming into the office. I also miss my apartment building, the dog scene in Riverside Park, everyone at Faculty House, Silver Moon, our dog walker, the random people I connect with on buses and subways. The friends I go out to dinner with. Restaurants!

And I know I am in a privileged situation. I see my grandson every day, and night, which is pure joy. We are in a lovely house surrounded by trees. I know for so many the situation is dire. Livelihoods threatened. Lives threatened...

We plan on having our Annual Dinner in the fall as well a party to celebrate The University Seminar's Anniversary Book! Everyone in the office is available by email. We are happy to help in any way we can. Some seminars are meeting using Zoom and we can help arrange this so please consider it.

I look forward to some version of normality. I believe it will happen and I sincerely hope our country will change and the sense of caring and community that is so palpable now continues.

Warm regards,

Alice Newton, Acting Director
The University Seminars

ANNOUNCEMENTS from the *Virtual* OFFICE



Here to Help...

Our office is available to answer questions over email or to meet via Zoom.

[EMAIL THE OFFICE](#)

Virtual Seminar Meetings

As the COVID 19 pandemic made in person gatherings impossible this semester, some seminars opted to close out the 2019-2020 academic year digitally. The future is uncertain, but The Seminars office will continue to support our seminars in any way we can. Until it is safe to resume in person meetings, our office encourages or those who wish to hold meetings over Zoom, Skype or Google Hangouts, to do so.

Our office is keeping in touch over Zoom and we have had reports back that Zoom seminar meetings have been a success! We will send more information along when we have a better sense of what the fall semester is going to look like but in the meantime we encourage you to read our initial guidelines on hosting virtual meetings.

VIRTUAL MEETING GUIDELINES

A Resource for the Community

Invisible Hands is a group of young volunteers offering free delivery of groceries and other supplies to those who are elderly, immunocompromised or otherwise at-risk. [Read more...](#)

Thank you!

To those who are risking their lives to keep us safe, fed, & connected.

Photo courtesy of Robert Pollack



Remote Library Privileges

REMOTE ACCESS FOR ASSOCIATES: Library locations are closed until further notice due to the COVID-19 health emergency. The University Seminars Associates have access to online resources with UNI and password. through the [Your Libraries Online](#) gateway.

For UNI activation, associates may go to the [Manage my UNI](#) section on the CUIT Website and select "Activate My UNI." They will be prompted to accept terms and create a password. For security purposes, passwords must be changed every two to four months.

Columbia UNI password issues are addressed by CUIT staff at 212-854-1919. University Alumni may need to go to the [Alumni website](#). Other questions may be directed to univ.seminars@columbia.edu.

End of the Semester Planning

Seminar Schedules are now being accepted for the 2020-2021 academic year. Submit the New Academic Year Planning Form to Pamela Guardia if you plan to hold a University Seminar in the 2020-2021 academic year.

Direct all schedule and planning questions to [Pamela Guardia](#).

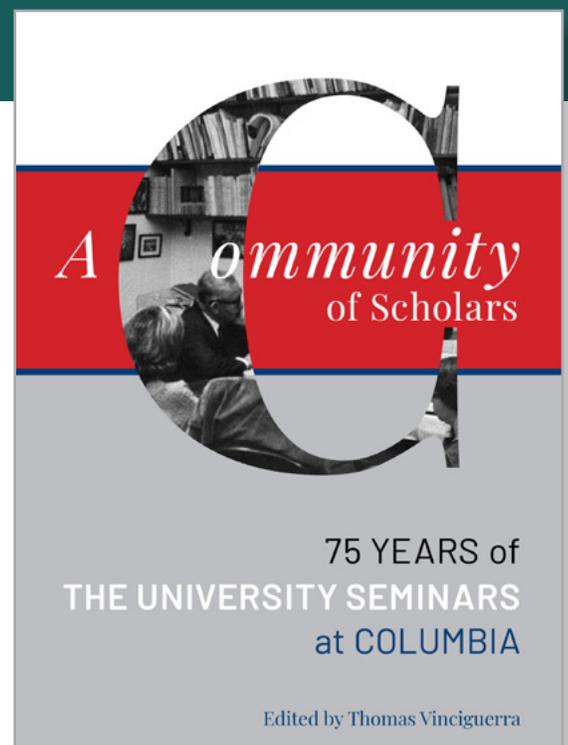
[New Academic Year Planning Form 2020-2021](#)

Please Submit Outstanding Minutes

If you are a chair or rapporteur with minutes from the 2019-2020 academic year, **please submit them now**. Email any questions or concerns regarding meeting documentation to [Summer Hart](#).

[PREORDER HERE](#)

A Community of Scholars is a seventy-fifth anniversary celebration of the founding of The University Seminars. It brings together essays by seminar chairs and other leading participants that exemplify the diversity and vibrancy of these proceedings. Their topics are wide-ranging—the evolution of the labor movement, urban life, the politics and culture of Brazil, the Enlightenment, the prospects for world peace—but in each, a commitment to intellectual provocation and shared learning is on full display. An informative introduction explains how The Seminars came into being and why they continue to matter. The volume also features biographical sketches of Frank Tannenbaum, the Latin America scholar and criminologist who founded The Seminars, and his wife, the anthropologist Jane Belo, a close friend of Margaret Mead. Belo and Tannenbaum endowed The Seminars and allowed them to flourish. A remarkable testament to an unparalleled intellectual forum, *A Community of Scholars* allows readers to share in the eclectic spirit of the Seminars. [Read more...](#)



CONFERENCES, SYMPOSIA, and EVENTS

ALL SPRING EVENTS CANCELED DUE TO COVID-19

551 | Ottoman and Turkish Studies

2.28-2.29

This two-day conference brought together a diverse group of established and emerging scholars working on the history of modern Iraq from the Ottoman period to the present to interrogate Iraqi studies; taking stock of its past, reflecting on the present, and looking towards its future. Studies of modern Iraq have grown qualitatively and quantitatively in recent years. There is now a critical mass of innovative scholars in the US, Europe, and the Middle East who work on Iraq and are exploring new lines of inquiry in a number of different directions. It is common to see Iraq-themed panels and round tables at international conferences. Given this volume of scholarly activity connected to modern Iraq, it is an opportune time to critically reflect on and examine Iraqi studies and its status as a burgeoning sub-field of Middle East Studies.

771 | Indigenous Studies

11.11-11.12

"The constructed names and borders of colonization cannot break the human bond of sacredness which binds us still today as Original Nations of Indigenous Peoples of Mother Earth" -Gaen hia uh, Betty Lyons (Onondaga Nation/Snipe Clan), American Indian Law Alliance

The Symposium was composed of six panels and eighteen presenters from around the world as well as discussions among participants, who included academics, traditional authorities of Indigenous Peoples, leading Indigenous organizations and UN experts. Tóhono O'odham, Yaqui, Haudenosaunne and Lenape representatives were also present. The Symposium's selected issues for discussion included: evolving contexts of statehood, and indigenous governance; borders, lands, territories in everyday life worlds, public memory and border poetics; re-bordering and de-bordering by the state and its high-tech intelligence-military complex; the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as a universal document and framework of situated border politics; Indigenous visions of multiple territorialities and trans border movements;

well-being with culture and identity within and without borders. [Read more...](#)

An edited volume will be prepared by the Institute for the Study of Human Rights on the topic of the Symposium. See also, [Symposium's Outcome Document](#)

The full program of the Symposium, other documents and the YouTube link are all posted [HERE](#).

A film will soon be available as well that can be a tool of teaching, learning and overall information.



Indigenous Women from FIMI at Columbia 2019

Seminars Wine Reception

2.10

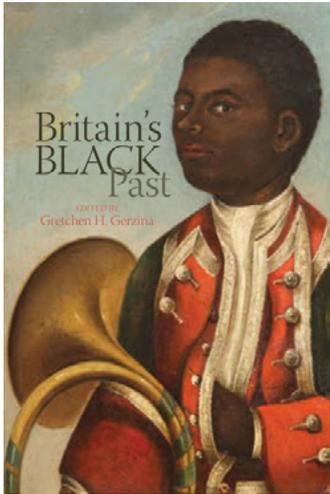
The first Seminars Wine Reception was a success! Members of The Seminars community mingled over wine & hot hors d'oeuvres. We look forward to hosting additional receptions in the fall.



PUBLICATIONS, AWARDS, and ANNOUNCEMENTS

417 | Eighteenth-Century European Culture

Gretchen Gerzina's edited collection *Britain's Black Past* is available for preorder [HERE](#).



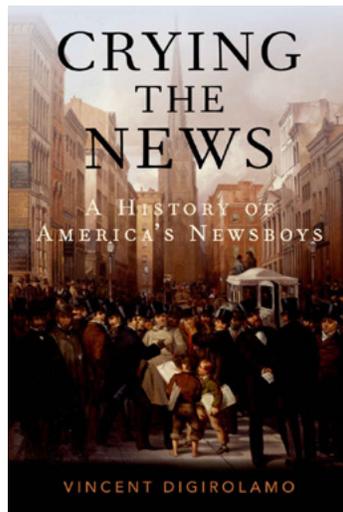
Expanding upon the 2017 Radio 4 series 'Britain's Black Past', this book presents those stories and analyses through the lens of a re-covered past. Even those who may be familiar with some of the materials will find much that they had not previously

known, and will be introduced to people, places, and stories brought to light by new research. *Britain's Black Past* is not only presented anew, but shown to be very much alive in our own time.

Listen to Gretchen H. Gerzina's Radio 4 series 'Britain's Black Past' on BBC Sounds

459A | The City

Vincent DiGirolamo, received the 2020 Frederick Jackson Turner Award for his book, *Crying The News: A History of America's Newsboys*, from the Organization of American Historians. The award is given every year for a first scholarly book dealing with some aspect of American history. [Read more...](#)



On November 14 and 15, 2019, the University Seminar on The City hosted the conference, *An Urban World: The Changing Landscape of Suburbs and Cities* at Columbia University's Faculty House. The conference began with a keynote address by Professor **Kenneth T. Jackson**, Jacques Barzun Professor of History. Over two days, more than two hundred attendees heard presentations from two-dozen scholars, archivists, and urban planners who traveled from across the country and as far away as Australia to participate. Many of the panelists were former students of Professor Jackson who toasted his retirement after half a century of committed service to the University. [Read more...](#)



Professor Kenneth T. Jackson

Congratulations! from our office...

Ken Jackson has had a profound impact on the studies of cities; on his students; and on the intellectual community here at Columbia. We at The University Seminars are grateful, and proud, that Ken has chosen to make the University Seminars one of his scholarly homes over these many decades. Ken was instrumental in starting, in 1993, the Leonard Hastings Schoff Memorial Lecture series, which The University Seminars co-sponsors with Columbia University Press. He was the Schoff Lecturer in 1996 and spoke on: *Gentleman's Agreement: Political Balkanization and Social Inequality in America*. We are now holding our 27th Schoff Lectures, and the collection of books coming out of the Schoff lectures is one of The Seminars' most visible legacies. We are grateful to Ken for his foresight in knowing how important it was to capture The Seminars' intellectual contributions in such volumes. [Read more...](#)

511 | Innovation in Education

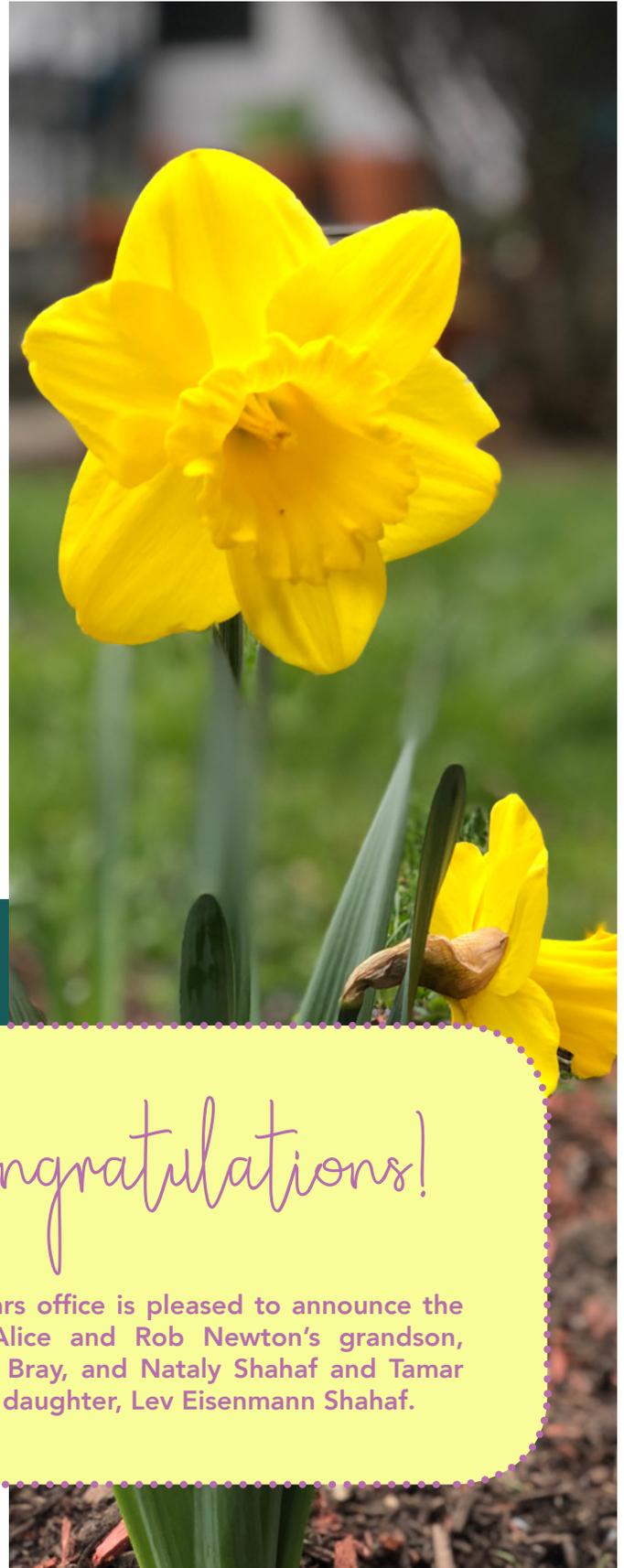
Ronald Gross and **Elizabeth Cohn**, Co-Chairs of the Seminar on Innovation in Education, have responded to the need for new ways of gathering for intellectual sociability, by launching an on-line program of virtual gatherings at 6:00 pm every Friday evening, hosted by a corps of experienced facilitators, and sponsored by their non-profit organization: **Conversations New York**.

Elizabeth Cohn, Co-chair of the Seminar on Innovation in Education, conducted a call for the National Institutes of Health on "Translational Nursing Science Reimagined in the Post-COVID World," that was attended by over 400 nurses throughout the country.

773 | The Integrative Study of Animal Behavior

Dustin Rubenstein's paper, **Coevolution of Genome Architecture and Social Behavior**, presented at the 2017 Public Symposium co-sponsored by The University Seminar on The Integrative Study of Animal Behavior, **Social Evolution and Genome Complexity**, was featured in Cell Press' Best of Trends Series as this year's review from *Trends in Ecology and Evolution*.

The post featuring this paper, as well as a short blurb from the editor on why it was selected, can be read online [HERE](#).



Welcome to The Seminars Community!



Oscar Jack Bray
Photo courtesy of Karen Bray

Congratulations!

The Seminars office is pleased to announce the births of Alice and Rob Newton's grandson, Oscar Jack Bray, and Nataly Shahaf and Tamar Eisenman's daughter, Lev Eisenmann Shahaf.

IN MEMORIAM

407 | Renaissance

We're saddened to announce the passing of our long-time Seminar member, Beatrice Gottlieb, who died on January 30, 2020, at the age of 94. Bea remained a strong supporter of the Seminar to the end of her life, attending meetings in the fall 2019 semester, always keen to hear new work, and greeting it with incisive comments. We shall miss her. [Read more...](#)

525 | The Middle East

Don Hepburn was a devoted member of the Middle East Seminar for many years. Illness prevented him from participating in the past several years. He was always a voice of reason in a region that often seemed unreasonable. I'm sure that many seminar members, together with me, share the sadness of Jean-Francois Seznec in the note below.

It is with great sadness that I must announce to all the members of Gulf 2000 that our friend Don Hepburn died this past Thursday March 5th 2020. Don was one of the most knowledgeable persons about the Gulf and especially about Bahrain. He was close to all sides in this divided island. He was a man of great integrity and great courage, who always stood up for what was right for his friends and employees. This earned him the respect of all, even of the powers that be in Gulf. His wisdom and respect of all people will be greatly missed. [Read more...](#)

Mahmoud I Essaid passed away on April 7th at his home in Old Greenwich, CT. He was one of the most devoted members of the Seminar and will be greatly missed. [Read more...](#)

Got news?

Deadline for the Fall 2020 issue is **September 8, 2020**

Please review our [submissions guidelines](#).

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