

The University Seminars Newsletter



Spring 2018

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE OFFICE

Dear Colleagues,

As I write this letter to welcome the Spring 2018 issue of our University Seminars Newsletter it is tax day, it is pouring, and the temperature has not yet gone up to 40 degrees. Even so, we have a lot to be grateful for.

This month those members who attended our Annual Dinner and Tannenbaum Lecture had the gift of hearing a brilliant talk by Professor Farah Griffin. At the risk of losing a nuance or two, I wish to share her argument here: justice is necessary, but only justice with mercy is sufficient.

That speaks to our Seminars program: we may have as many different definitions of justice as we have Seminars, but they all share a merciful commitment to the tamping down of competition, and they all welcome disagreement while precluding marginalization. In the fall we will begin a project to commemorate our 75th anniversary as a program of free and independent Seminars, held together all these years by those commitments.

You've been asked by our office to fill out a survey to help determine the contents of a planned 75th anniversary book edited by Columbia historian Thomas Vinciguerra. It will be the 2020 book in the Columbia University Press Schoff series. Please respond promptly, so we can get this important project under way.

All the best for Spring and always happy to learn what you are thinking.



Robert Pollack
Director, The University Seminars

75th Anniversary!

In academic year 2019-2020, The University Seminars will turn 75. In lieu of the Leonard Hastings Schoff Memorial Lecture Series that fall, The Seminars will throw a 75th Anniversary Event. In the spirit of Frank Tannenbaum, who intended The University Seminars to make a contribution to society, we will also publish a collection of essays written by members of the University Seminars community and edited by Tom Vinciguerra, tentatively titled: ***Keeping Speech Free: The University Seminars and the Preservation of Intellectual Conversation***.

The Book Committee asks each Seminar to consider the question: What have you learned from the past and how do the 'lessons learned' shape your approach towards the future? All narratives will be considered!

To help our Editor and the Advisory Board Book Committee determine the number and length of essays that will be accepted for the final project, we have put together a brief survey.

If you are interested in submitting a proposal, please complete the following questionnaire by **April 30**.

[Complete the Survey](#)

REMOTE ACCESS FOR ASSOCIATES

The University Seminars Associates have free reading and borrowing privileges at the University's libraries; these privileges include physical access (with CUID), off-campus access to online resources (with UNI and password), and borrowing privileges with no monthly fees. Note that some electronic books are available only to Columbia University students. Specific library databases can be found at: [CLIO](#).

Read more about membership privileges and remote access [here...](#)

ID CARD ACTIVATION

Seminar Associates may activate or renew ID cards by calling or emailing [Alice Newton](#) and providing the following information:

Full Name
Seminar #
DOB

Once this information has been updated in the system, they can go over to the Columbia University [ID Center](#), 204 Kent Hall, between 9am-5pm Monday-Friday and request a new card.

CALLING ALL CHAIRS!

You are cordially invited to lunch at Faculty House with the Director and Deputy Director (Bob & Alice) this semester and again in Fall 2018. Please send Alice a few possible dates. We'll organize small groups and talk about the seminars and more.

To schedule a lunch, email Alice: an2113@columbia.edu

EVENTS

THE UNIVERSITY SEMINARS CALENDAR | SPRING 2018

Monday	April 30	Spring Term Ends – dining room closes
Wednesday	May 16	Commencement
Friday	May 25	The Faculty House closes for regular seminar meetings
Monday	May 28*+	Memorial Day

The University Seminars office will be closed on Fridays from June 1, 2018 through August 31, 2018.

* Dates shown with asterisk indicate days when offices on Morningside Campus are closed.

+ Dates shown with cross indicate days when the Faculty House is closed for seminars and events.

BAR DATES

May 2, 3, 4

Faculty House Community Hour

May 2

During *Community Hour*, the bar is available to CU faculty, staff, and students in the Ivy Lounge. Entry is a flat \$10 for unlimited wine and beer.

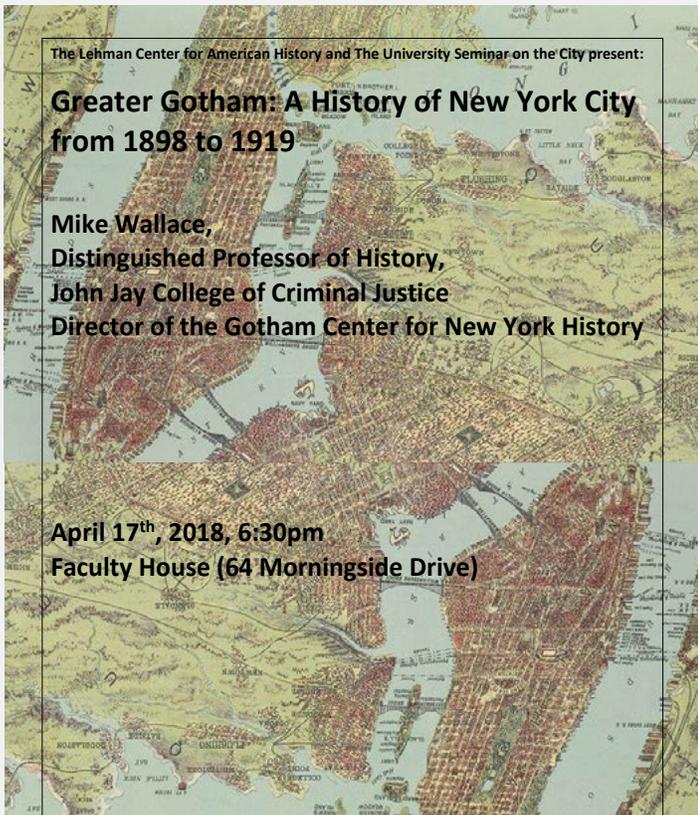
427 | Studies in Political and Social Thought

Unions and Federations in Imperial and Anti-Imperial Political Thought: an international conference

April 27-28



459A | The City



Greater Gotham: A History of New York City from 1898 to 1919

April 17

511 | Innovation in Education

The Seminar on Innovation in Education will join 50+ non-profits and university-based programs throughout the country, to celebrate a National Week of Conversation (NWOC), April 20-28th, to model civic discourse on divisive issues including Guns, Immigration, Race, Free Speech, and Sexual Assault. Participants in the conversations will pledge "to listen first to understand and consider another's views before sharing my own. I will prioritize respect and understanding in conversation. And I will encourage others to do the same."

[READ MORE...](#)

557 | Brazil

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THOSE WHO INVEST YOUR PENSION FUNDS ARE DOING WITH YOUR MONEY?

This is a wakeup call for colleagues who have pension plans managed by TIAA. If you are concerned with any of the following: the warming of the planet, the increase of Co2 in the environment, the destruction of biodiversity, and the human rights of Indigenous peoples or the Quilombo descendants of slaves in Brazil, this information is for you.

Through a series of subsidiary companies, formed to evade Brazilian laws and using the money they invest for their clients and other retirement funds, TIAA has purchased land in the Brazilian Cerrado, the vast savanna to the east and south of the Amazon Rain Forest. Though the titles to these lands are questionable, TIAA's projects have the support of local elites and their congressional representatives wishing to promote the development and modernization of the region. To accomplish this, mercenaries are forcing the inhabitants of Indigenous communities and Quilombeiros whose ancestors escaped the slave plantations, off land they have occupied for generations. The subsidiary companies have brought in heavy machinery to cut the pristine vegetation in the uplands and plant commercial crops thereby precipitating the lowering of the water table in the lowlands that effect vast areas to the east and south of Brazil. These commercial farming activities are destroying the bio-diversity of the region. Furthermore, the fertilizers and pesticides are killing the fish and other forms of river life forcing the residents out of their homes and into the slums of already overcrowded urban centers.

This will be the theme of the Brazil Seminar meetings on April 19 and May 10, 2018. All interested parties are invited. If you would like to discuss this matter and obtain more information, please feel free to contact me. Finally, let me urge you to contact your TIAA representative and ask what they are doing with your money in this part of Brazil and other agricultural areas across the globe. Ask them who is monitoring the consequences of their investment projects. It is up to you to make sure that they are representing you and your wishes.

Sidney M. Greenfield

Co-chair, Seminars on Brazil and Studies in Religion

sidneygreenfield@gmail.com

719 | Injury Prevention and Control

Annual Translating Injury Science to Prevention Symposium

The Injury Prevention and Control Seminar will jointly sponsor a day-long symposium on May 24th in the 8th floor auditorium of the Rosenfield Building at 722 Haven Avenue. The seminar requires registration, but is free and open to the public. Attendees can register [HERE](#).

Come meet your colleagues from academia, health departments, hospitals and other organizations to learn cutting-edge research and best practices in injury prevention. Sessions and roundtables will cover drug overdose, traffic injuries, falls, traumatic brain injury, violence, suicide, and injury science communication. Free registration, complimentary lunch, and networking for safer and healthier communities.

751 | Religion and Writing

Of Prophets and Saints: Literary Traditions and "convivencia" in Medieval and Early Modern Iberia was held on Feb. 22-23, 2018 in Madrid.

Carole Slade, who is a member of the Seminar on Religion and Writing participated in the workshop. The Columbia professor Jesus Velasco was another Columbian participating in the workshop. The audience included Fred Colby, a professor in the religion department of the University of Oregon, who had extra traveled to Madrid for the workshop. There were also a few US graduate students on research stays in Madrid, aside from Spanish students and professors

The University Seminars

74th Annual Dinner Meeting



Farah Jasmine Griffin



Robert Remez, Gertrude S. Goldberg, Robert Pollack

On April 11th, The University Seminars community gathered in celebration...

THE TANNENBAUM-WARNER AWARD

For Distinguished Scholarship and Great Service to The University Seminars

was presented to **Gertrude S. Goldberg**

THE TANNENBAUM LECTURE

“In Pursuit of Justice and Grace: Reflections on the African-American Literary Tradition”

was delivered by **Farah Jasmine Griffin**

AWARDS & PUBLICATIONS

557 | Brazil

Associate seminar member **Sean Mitchell's** *Constellations of Inequality: Space, Race, and Utopia in Brazil*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, previously reported has won the 2018 Social Sciences Book Prize from the Latin American Studies Association Brazil Section.

Professor Mitchell co-edited “Afro-Brazilian Citizenship and the Politics of History,” *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*. 10(2). with Merle L. Bowen and LaShandra Sullivan.

He also published the following articles:

“Naming Brazil’s Previously Poor: ‘New Middle Class’ as an Economic, Political, and Experiential Category” (co-authored with Charles Klein and Benjamin Junge).

Economic Anthropology, 2018. 5(1): 83-95.

“Introduction: Afro-Brazilian Citizenship and the Politics of History.” *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*, 2017. 10(2): 109-113.

“Whitening and Racial Ambiguity: Racialization and Ethnoracial Citizenship in Contemporary Brazil.” *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*, 2017. 10(2): 114-130.

Associate member **Maxine L. Margolis** has published: “They Look Like Us, But They Don’t Act Like Us”: The Transnational Experience of Japanese Brazilians in Japan.” In *Global Latinos: Latin American Diasporas and Regional Migrations*. Mark Overmyer-Velázquez and Enrique Sepúlveda, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 163-81, 2017 and “O que é ser brasileiro na emigração??” In *A nova face da emigração internacional no Brasil*. Lucia Bógus and Rosana Baeninger, eds. São Paulo: Editora da Pontifícia Universidade Católica de São Paulo, 2018.

Associate member **Laura Randall** continues to edit the free daily NewsletterOnBrazil, with links to stories in English and Portuguese about Brazil. It is available by request sent to her.

Associate member **Roberta Marx Delson** published “‘The Bullet and the Crust’: A World War I Exhibition on Nutrition and Food Conservation at the American Museum of Natural History”; *Museum History Journal*, 2018, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 1-23; [online](#).

775 | The Future of Aging Research

As of 2018, the chairs are Jennifer Manly (Associate Professor, Neuropsychology in Neurology), Martin Picard (Herbert Irving Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Neurology in Behavioral Medicine) and Kavita Sivaramakrishnan (Interim Co-Director, Columbia Aging Center and Assistant Professor of Sociomedical Sciences). The 2018 subtopic for USEM 775 is an interdisciplinary exploration of aging disparities.

In October, **Professor Manly** presented “Deconstructing lifecourse mechanisms of Alzheimer’s disease disparities” in the NIH Director’s Wednesday Afternoon Lecture Series, colloquially known as WALs, the highest-profile lecture program at the NIH.

[READ MORE...](#)

IN MEMORIUM

521 | Population Biology

We are saddened to announce that respected microbiologist and River Project board member Michael Levandowsky has passed away as a result of brain cancer. He died peacefully in his sleep on December 23, attended by his cherished caretaker Guzel. Michael's dear friends Leisha Aras, Dan Zweig and Tom Gorell had been taking care of Michael in recent months.

[READ MORE...](#)

525 | The Middle East

Richard Charles (Chuck) Robarts died peacefully in the presence of his family at Stamford CT Hospital on Palm Sunday, March 25, 2018. He died of complications of Parkinson's Disease and faced this challenge with patience, courage, and grace.

[READ MORE...](#)

Got News?

We'd love to hear from you

Deadline for the Fall 2018 issue:

September 10, 2018

Please visit our website for complete [submissions guidelines](#).

[Make a Donation](#)

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