

The University Seminars Newsletter



Winter 2024

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Tribute to Alice Newton, Tannenbaum Award Honoree for 2024

In recognition of her extraordinary contributions to The University Seminars, Alice Newton will receive the 2024 Tannenbaum Award at the Annual Dinner on April 17, 2024.

In August 2023, Alice Newton retired after 18 years of distinguished service at The University Seminars, where she worked with three directors and was herself Interim Director for three years (2019 -2022). From 1968, while a student at Rutgers University, and later at New York University (where she completed a bachelor's degree in history), Alice participated in the anti-war, anti-racism, environmental justice, and women's movements. Social justice activism continues to be a central part of her life. Alice later earned a master's degree in international affairs from Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs with a specialty in human rights and Latin America. While working toward this degree, she began as an administrative assistant at The University Seminars with Director Robert Belknap. She was promoted to Assistant Director, Associate Director, Deputy Director, Acting Director, and finally Interim Director. In partnership with Director Bob Pollack, Alice expanded the breadth of the Seminars' programming with initiatives to promote diversity and to raise the voices of underrepresented and emerging scholars. Alice made The Seminars inclusive and welcoming also by facilitating initiatives such as the Seminar Workshops and the Belo Award, both founded under her leadership, and by working closely with the Columbia University Libraries to enable associate members to benefit from remote library privileges.

Over the course of her years at The Seminars, Alice accumulated a wealth of knowledge demonstrated in her introduction to *A Community of Scholars: 75 Years of The University Seminars at Columbia* (Columbia University Press, 2020). As a valued ambassador for The Seminars, she connected people and helped new projects blossom. Alice supported seminar participants from all over the University and the greater New York area.

Alice and her staff weathered many storms including the displacement of The Seminars during the renovation of Faculty House, and in 2020, the abrupt switch to virtual programming caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Alice's wisdom and sound judgment prevailed throughout these challenges. She always encouraged staff to be innovative, and rewarded their hard work; her firm belief in a healthy work/life balance created an office culture of fairness and trust. At the Annual Dinner on April 17, The Seminars community will have the opportunity to express appreciation to Alice for her outstanding service.

Sincerely,

Susan Boynton,
Director

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE OFFICE

SAVE THE DATE

APRIL 17, 2024

77th ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

TANNENBAUM LECTURE given by **STEVE COLL**
Professor of Journalism, Columbia University

“What Was Saddam Hussein Thinking?”
A Case Study in Misunderstanding Dictators

Details and invitation to follow



Steve Coll, Professor of Journalism, Columbia University



Alice Newton, Retired Interim Director of The University Seminars

CALENDAR | Spring 2024

Monday-Friday, 3.11-15 +	SPRING BREAK
Wednesday, 4.17	ANNUAL DINNER
Monday, 4.29	LAST DAY OF CLASSES
Wednesday, 5.15	COMMENCEMENT
Monday, 5.27 *+	MEMORIAL DAY

*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.

INTERFAITH CALENDAR

TRAVEL FUNDING

Travel and conference funds are limited and are not guaranteed. Do not book speakers before securing funding. Conference funding requests should be submitted months ahead of the proposed event date.

Deadlines: Fall and Spring

Priority: June 30

Preferred: July 31

Final: August 31

[TRAVEL FUNDING REQUESTS](#)

ADMINISTRATIVE PORTAL

Please use the Administrative Portal as your go-to reference for Seminars operations. In our continuous effort to support the community, we have expanded the concept of our Guidelines and offer this dynamic platform for your reference. Our team has worked diligently to provide you with all the information and tools you need. All administrative forms and instructions can be found in the portal.

[ADMINISTRATIVE PORTAL](#)

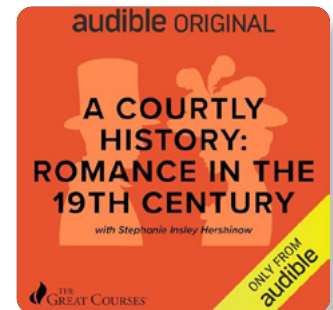
SEMINARS COMMUNITY

Professor and Director of The University Seminars **Susan Boynton** was elected a Fellow of the [Medieval Academy of America](#), an honor which recognizes major long-term scholarly achievement within the field of Medieval Studies. Fellows are nominated by MAA members and elected by the Fellows. The Fellows class of 2024 is listed [here](#).

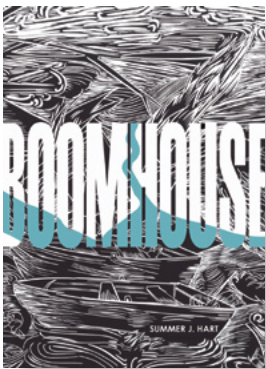


and to what the language of the Enlightenment excludes, represses, or struggles to erase. Order [here](#).

Seminar chair **Stephanie Insley Hershnow** (Baruch College and the Graduate Center, CUNY) wrote and narrated a series of lectures on Regency romance for The Great Courses. Now available on [Audible](#).



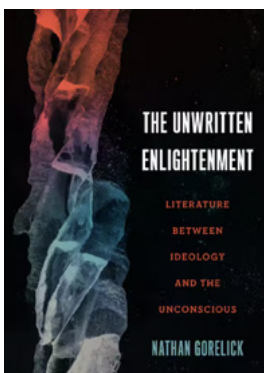
Seminars Chief Creative Officer, **Summer Hart** was selected by Shira Dentz as the recipient of the [2023 Eugene Paul Nassar Poetry Prize](#) for her debut collection of poetry [BOOMHOUSE](#) (The 3rd Thing Press, 2023) and will give a reading at Utica University on April 11, 2024. Order [here](#).



417 | Eighteenth-Century European Culture

Dustin Stewart, assistant professor of English at Columbia, published an article in *Representations* titled "Birds in the Loop: Parish Boundaries and Extendable Belonging."

[The Unwritten Enlightenment: Literature between Ideology and the Unconscious](#) by **Nathan Gorelick**, term assistant professor of English at Barnard, is forthcoming March 2024 from Northwestern University Press.



Tracing the relation between literary criticism and psychoanalysis to their shared origins in the eighteenth century's emergent notions of rational subjectivity, Gorelick argues that both modern literature and the unconscious were responses to these formations of the Enlightenment subject

473 | The Study of the Hebrew Bible

On January 11, 2024, the Columbia Hebrew Bible Seminar hosted its first day-long regional conference at Union Theological Seminary, co-sponsored by the University Seminars office and UTS. The theme of the day was "Making Connections for the Study of the Hebrew Bible." The conference provided an opportunity for doctoral students and scholars in the field to learn about one another's work and to think together about the different kinds of connections we make in our scholarship: interdisciplinary, intercultural, intertextual, and also interpersonal. The program included two sessions of paper presentations and two panels.



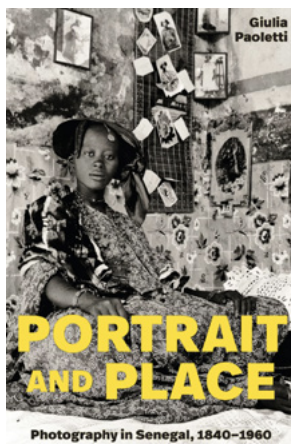
483 | Studies in Modern Italy

This summer, seminar member **Rebecca Bauman** will direct the NEH project: [Creative Spaces/Contested Spaces: Reinterpreting Italian American Public Art in New York City](#).

[Read more...](#)

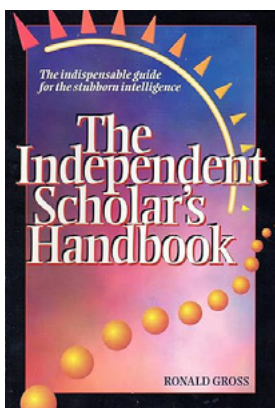
509 | The Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas

Giulia Paoletti's book [Portrait and Place: Photography in Senegal, 1840-1960](#) is forthcoming from Princeton University press. The author received support from the [Schoff Fund](#). Order [here](#).



511 | Innovation in Education

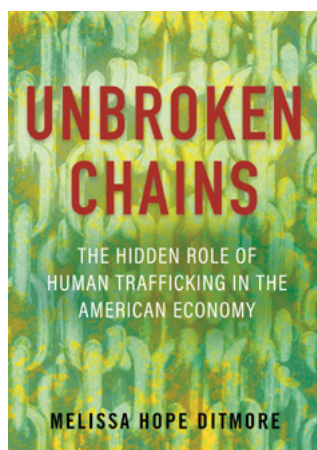
The Independent Scholar's Handbook by **Ronald Gross**, co-chair of The University Seminar on Innovation in Education, will be published in an updated version produced by the National Coalition of Independent Scholars later this year. When it was first published in 1982, the book was welcomed by notable thinkers including Buckminster Fuller who wrote that "if humanity is to pass safely through its present crisis on Earth, it will be because a majority of individuals are now doing their own thinking. This *Handbook* is a magnificent study of the successful realization of such work." The substantial participation of independent scholars in The University Seminars was the subject of Gross' acceptance speech on receiving the Tannenbaum-Warner Award for distinguished scholarship and service in 2019.



545 | Women in Society

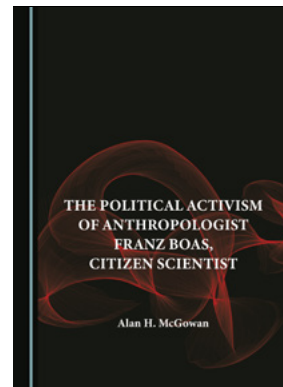
Melissa Ditmore published [Unbroken Chains: The Hidden Role of Human Trafficking in the American Economy](#) with Beacon Press. The author received support from the [Schoff Fund](#).

Order [here](#).



689 | Memory and Slavery

Alan McGowan published [The Political Activism of Anthropologist Franz Boas, Citizen Scientist](#) with Cambridge Scholars Publishing/UK. The author received support from the [Schoff Fund](#). [Read more ...](#)



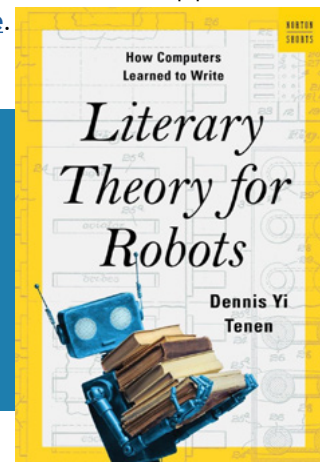
711 | Literary Theory

Bruno Bosteels, co-chair of the Literary Theory seminar with Emily Apter (NYU), was named Jesse and George Siegel Professor in the Humanities. He also is publishing a new book in Spanish *¿Qué es la antifilosofía?* with Prometeo Libros in Argentina.

Dennis Tenen published [How Computers Learned to Write: Literary Theory for Robots](#) with W. W. Norton & Company. The author received support from the [Schoff Fund](#). Order [here](#).

"Timely and original, this is an essential resource on the history of text generating AI, and its future."

Publishers Weekly



797 | Korean Studies

The Korean Studies Seminar held three meetings in the fall of 2023. A general meeting in September was followed by **Jinwon Kim's** (CUNY) "The Koreatown in Manhattan" in October. The seminar engaged **Dongwoo Yim's** (Hongik University/PRAUD, Seoul, Korea) exploration of Seoul through the lens of accessories in November's "Accessories: Seoul Case Study" session. This presentation was complemented by a co-sponsored collaboration event with [The Korea Society](#). Upcoming speakers for Spring are **Eleanor Soo-ah Hyun** from The Metropolitan Museum of Art, **Sooran**

Choi of the University of Vermont in Burlington, and Theodore Hughes of Columbia University.

IN MEMORIAM

509 | The Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas

03.28.24

Reception in Memory of Francesco Pellizzi
6:15 pm - 8:00 pm



The University Seminar for the Arts of Africa, Oceania, and the Americas will be hosting a reception to celebrate the life and achievements of **Dr. Francesco Pellizzi**, who joined the ancestors in August 2023.

[Read more ...](#)

RSVP

791 | Science and Subjectivity

Peter Swords, treasured member of The University Seminar on Science and Subjectivity died suddenly and unexpectedly on Tuesday, May 9, 2024 at Mount Sinai Morningside Hospital due to complications from a fall.

[Read more ...](#)

MAKE A DONATION
TO THE SEMINARS

Seminar members, guests, foundations, institutions, and other contributors can make a tax-deductible donation to The University Seminars General Fund or to any of our seminars. An individual seminar can ask Gesenia Alvarez-Lazauskas to establish and maintain a gift account for its use. Individual seminar gift accounts can be used to supplement the limited funding available from The University Seminars for costs such as meals, travel, and lodging associated with regular meetings and conferences.

General Fund gifts help us support conferences and symposia, special events, and publications.

We welcome any contributions.

NEWSLETTER SUBMISSIONS

Seminar chairs and / or rapporteurs are encouraged to submit seminar, chair, member, and rapporteur news to be featured in the The University Seminars newsletter. The newsletter is published triannually.

Submissions are accepted on a rolling basis. To be considered for the next issue, please review the current submission guidelines.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES