

OBSERVER  
JUNE 8, 2020

## **COME TOGETHER TO MOURN THE DEATH OF GEORGE FLOYD**

The Diversity-Outreach Committee invites all members of the IRP to participate in 8 minutes and 46 seconds of silence to mourn the death of George Floyd. We shall begin tomorrow morning, Tuesday June 9th, at 9AM. Click on this Zoom link to join the memorial: <https://bit.ly/30g24e6>. Discussion will follow.

### A Statement from IRP's Diversity-Outreach Committee

IRP member Linda Wilson asks: "Do we study the words and actions of philosophers and politicians, artists and architects, mathematicians and musicians, and close our eyes to the continuing carnage against Black people in America?"

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly."

Along with our claim to be lifelong learners comes our responsibility to examine what goes on in our IRP study groups. Issues of justice, equity and inclusion need to be part of the narrative of our community, as is the responsibility to examine the deep-seated unconscious biases based on race, gender, ethnicity and religion that taint our interactions with one another. It is part of the mission of the Diversity-Outreach Committee to recruit a more diverse membership and to make sure that we create an atmosphere that is comfortable for all; our progress has been slow, but, inspired by the national demonstrations and Linda's anguished statement, we pledge to redouble our efforts on both fronts.

Many of us would be out there demonstrating, were it not for Covid. Many know the sting of tear gas. Yet young people are putting their lives on the line during the pandemic, protesting not only the horrific recent murders but the structural racism that is part of our lives. We stand in solidarity with the protesters. We need to use our experience and our wisdom to move this conversation forward, both in and out of the classrooms.

The invigorating new beginning at the Graduate Center offers the opportunity to recommit to diversifying the IRP. From this time on, the whole organization must share the mission of making our student body as diverse as our beloved city, and of making each student as comfortable as we can. Being nice is not enough.

## NOTE FROM THE IRP DEAN AND DIRECTOR

Dear Members of the IRP:

Against the backdrop of the unprecedented global health crisis, we find ourselves confronted with the crisis that Black people and communities of color face on a daily basis –that of systemic injustice and violence. The statement from the IRP Executive Committee and the letter from member Linda P. Wilson last week articulate the importance of bringing this conversation to the forefront for all members of our society, and especially white people.

As the CUNY Chancellor wrote in his statement in response to the murder of George Floyd, The City University of New York is an institution “driven by the ideals of inclusion and equity” and has the capacity to be an “engine of change.” Education in and of itself contributes to social justice, but institutions of higher education must do more – there must be plans in place to fill in the gaps and to keep the conversations in play. Status quo is not acceptable, nor is silence. Instead, we must amplify the voices of the Black community and organizations working toward a more just and equitable world and do the necessary work as individuals to listen and self-educate. Interim President of the Graduate Center, James Muyskens, reminds us that “The Graduate Center has long been a place for thoughtful, open debate. And even though we are physically separated from one another due to our current public health crisis, we must continue to express ourselves and to support one another.” We invite members of the IRP to take up the charge of urgent and active anti-racism work and to collaborate with our office on the development of the IRP program’s actionable plan for justice and eliminating racism.

- Statement From Chancellor Matos Rodríguez On Police-Involved Killing Of George Floyd ([CUNY](#))
- Message From President Muyskens ([gc.cuny.edu](#))
- Scholarship at the GC: The killing of George Floyd was one more painful example of how the U.S. criminal justice system jeopardizes the lives of Black people. Anger and anguish over his killing and our country’s institutionalized racism have driven protesters into the streets. But the issues at the root of the protests have long been top of mind for Graduate Center faculty, students, and alumni. Through their [research](#), [writing](#), [films](#), and [commentaries](#) they illuminate how entrenched approaches to [mass incarceration](#), [law enforcement](#), [schooling](#), and [public space](#) negatively affect communities of color. We invite you to explore [the work of these 13 scholars and their stories](#).
- See [collection of Anti-Racism and Black Lives Matter resources](#) assembled by the Mina Rees Library staff at the Graduate Center

In humble solidarity,  
Brian and Mariel

## FROM THE ADVISORY BOARD

### **Reminder: Scholarships**

The Institute for Education in Retirement (IER), the IRP's fund-raising arm, is offering a limited number of needs-based scholarships for the coming academic year in order to help cover Graduate Center fees. The application and instructions for filing can be found on the Zine under the Scholarships tab. The deadline for applications is June 15, 2020.

### **Reminder: Director Meetings with Small Groups**

This week, Mariel and staff at the GC begin a series of meetings with small groups of IRP members, focused to start with on committees and SIGs. Their purpose is to get know our members, structures and processes, as well as our concerns and suggestions.

## MORE ON TECH

### From the IRP Director

#### **Best Practices for Accessing GC Network Resources**

After hearing about the recent instances of compromised email accounts among IRP members, I spoke with IT and they prepared the following recommendations.

Graduate Center IT does not provide support for personal computers and devices. To protect your hardware and accounts, we do highly recommend the following best practices and recommendations when accessing GC network resources. (This information will also be posted to our online document)

#### Best Practices

- Install anti-virus software on all machines; keep definition files updated. AVG offers a free basic version: <https://www.avg.com/en-us/free-antivirus-download>
- Use strong password and avoid using the same password for all or multiple apps and web portals/services. Here's a useful link to password recommendations: <https://security.web.cern.ch/recommendations/en/passwords.shtml>

#### Recommended user actions for email

- DO NOT reply to any email with any personal information or passwords. If you have reason to believe that a request is real, call the individual or company directly by independently looking up contact information.
- DO NOT click links or open attachments in unsolicited email messages. If you have reason to believe a request is real, type the web address for the company or institution directly into your web browser.
- BE SUSPICIOUS of any message requesting urgent action, particularly when the message appears to be sent by a VIP.

- DO NOT use the same password for your work account, bank, Facebook, etc. In the event you do fall victim to a phishing attempt, perpetrators attempt to use your compromised password to access many online services.
- DO verify that the message sender address is a CUNY (cuny.edu) address. Be wary of non-CUNY.edu addresses crafted to mislead, such as "[dean.cuny.edu@gmail.com](mailto:dean.cuny.edu@gmail.com)".
- DO be particularly cautious when reading email on a mobile device. It may be easier to miss telltale signs of phishing attempts when reading email on a smaller screen.
- DO remember that official communications will not solicit personal information by email.
- DO read the CUNY Phishing Advisory posted at [security.cuny.edu](http://security.cuny.edu) under CUNY Issued Security Advisories.
- DO change ALL of your passwords if you suspect any account you have access to may be compromised.
- DO complete the 30 minute information security awareness training located at [security.cuny.edu](http://security.cuny.edu).

### **From IRP's Tech Committee**

OED: To access the OED (Oxford English Dictionary) online through your CUNY account, go to <https://www-oed-com.ezproxy.gc.cuny.edu> and login with your CUNY user name and email password. Let your web browser save the login for next time.

CUNY emails: CUNY will send all IRP mail, such as the Observer and class registration information, to our CUNY email. Please check this mail often. You can always access it at <https://wa.gc.cuny.edu/owa/>. If you prefer to read your CUNY email where you read your other email, there are several options in the document at this link <https://bit.ly/3caNQO4>.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

#### **Make Sure You're Ready To Vote!!**

The New York Presidential and State Primary Election is coming up on Tuesday, June 23. All voters registered in NYS will be mailed an application to request an absentee ballot. Your application may have already arrived, or it should be coming soon. When you receive it, you must complete and return it in order to receive your ballot. You can return the application in various ways, including by mail or online. See the instructions on the back of the application form. The deadline for submitting a completed application request is June 16, but try to submit as early as you can. This application will have the Covid-19 language, so you may indicate that this is the reason you will be voting absentee this year.

## EVENTS

### **Advances in Civilization**

Thursday June 11, 4PM

Barry Levine and Steve Kalinsky will be discussing Frederic Banting and the Discovery of Insulin. Those who have attended prior events in this series may enter through the Advances in Civilization Zoom invite; those who are interested but have not previously participated may email Steve at [stephenkalinsky@gmail.com](mailto:stephenkalinsky@gmail.com) and they will receive an invite.

### **Reminders: Inter-Term Activities Continuing**

#### Short Stories Aloud

Every Tuesday, 4PM

Contact Sharon Girard at [proustmatters@gmail.com](mailto:proustmatters@gmail.com).

#### Federalists Forever

Every Other Thursday, 4PM

Next sessions June 18, July 2, July 16

The Federalists will discuss such topics as the continuing relevance of the Constitution and the strengths and weaknesses of the American political system, particularly in this time of crisis.

Contact Howard Miller at [howard3915@outlook.com](mailto:howard3915@outlook.com).

#### Men's Group

Every Wednesday, 12:15PM

Contact Jay Fleischman at [ejayfleish@aol.com](mailto:ejayfleish@aol.com).

#### Women's Group

Every Thursday, 3PM

Contact Arlyne LeSchack at: [aleschack@aol.com](mailto:aleschack@aol.com).

#### Pour at Four

Every Friday, 4PM

This gathering, hosted by Susan Rubens, will continue to meet at our 24-hour chat room: <https://sites.google.com/view/irptechstuff>.

## MEMBER FORUM

Keep your ideas coming to Leslie Davis at: [ldavis7104@yahoo.com](mailto:ldavis7104@yahoo.com).

## ONLINE ART SHOW

Iz Greenwald provides our twenty second contribution to the online art show.



**Title:** *The Path to Home*, Oil painting of photograph

**By:** Israel Greenwald

According to Iz: “This is an oil painting of a photograph I found in a book and which created a feeling of relaxation.”

## Recommendations: Promoting Racial Justice

### Donations

Members have commented that one way to show solidarity with those who are most affected by racism and unequal justice is to provide financial support. Since we often don't know where to make our donations, these members have begun to suggest groups engaged in ongoing work to build strong Black communities, fight racism, and end police

brutality. Here is a first list of groups vetted by Common Cause. We welcome additional suggestions.

Black Lives Matter Global Network  
NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund  
Movement for Black Lives  
Campaign Zero  
National Police Accountability Fund  
National Bail Fund Network

### Readings

Eileen Sullivan suggests:

- *Fatal Invention: How Science, Politics, and Big Business Re-create Race in the Twenty-First Century*, Dorothy Roberts
- *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, Michelle Alexander
- *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church*, Bryan N. Massingale
- *When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America*, Ira Katznelson
- *White Fragility: Why It's So Hard For White People to Talk About Racism*, Robin DiAngelo
- *Storming Caesars Palace: How Black Mothers Fought Their Own War on Poverty*, Annelise Orleck

Susan Rubens offers this link to a list on the website of Minnesota Monthly:

<https://bit.ly/3f3n0sK>

## **RESOURCES**

### IRP Zine

- Observer Archive <https://www.irpzine.org/irp-observer1-1>

### CUNY Graduate Center

- See <https://www.gc.cuny.edu/All-GC-Events/Calendar> for the most centralized GC events calendar.
- Newmark J School Let's Talk News Business Series: <https://bit.ly/37a4IDs>
- The Advanced Science Research Center's (ASRC) [upcoming webinars](#) explore CUNY's interdisciplinary excellence and opportunities in the following areas:
  - **June 9:** [Urban Environmental Impacts Across Kingdoms \[go.pardot.com\]](#)
  - **June 23:** [Hacking Biology to Advance Medicine \[go.pardot.com\]](#)
- Center for Humanities: <https://centerforthehumanities.org/> online events are listed (current series on translation). You can also subscribe to its newsletter.
- Segal Theatre Center: <https://theseagalcenter.org/> – Online events are listed; can also subscribe to newsletter.