A Celebration of the 2017 Book Completion Award Winners
Wednesday, May 2, 2018, 5pm - 7pm

The Graduate Center
Elebash Recital Hall
365 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10016

Writing on the Wall
Graffiti and the Forgotten Jews of Late Antiquity
KAREN B. STERN

HUMAN RIGHTS IN THAILAND
DON F. SELBY

EATING NAFTA
TRADE AND FOOD POLICIES AND THE DESTRUCTION OF MEXICO
ALYSHA GÁLVEZ

PHILIP ROTH AND THE AMERICAN LIBERAL TRADITION
ANDY CONNOLLY

Writing on the Wall

Autistic disturbances
Theorizing Autism Politics from the DSM to Robinson Crusoe
Julia Maile Rodas, foreword by Melanie Yergeau

Depositions
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Charles Ludlam LIVES!
Charles Busch, Bradford Lounyky, Taylor Mac, and the Queer Legacy of the Ridiculous Theatrical Company
Sean F. Edgecomb

Waiting on Retirement
AGING AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY IN LOW WAGE WORK
Mary Gatta
A Celebration of 2017 Book Completion Award Winners

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The Graduate Center
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5:00 – 5:15
Opening Remarks
Vita Rabinowitz, Executive Vice Chancellor and University Provost, CUNY

5:15 – 5:30
Announcement of 2017 Book Completion Award Winners
Dan McCloskey, Interim Associate Vice Chancellor for Research, CUNY
Joy Connolly, Provost and Senior Vice President, The Graduate Center, CUNY

5:30 – 6:30
Panel Discussion: From First Book to Crossover Success
Jennifer Crewe, Associate Provost and Director, Columbia University Press
Deborah Gershenowitz, Senior Acquisitions Editor, Cambridge University Press
Fredric Nachbaur, Director, Fordham University Press
Stefan Vranka, Executive Editor, Classics, Ancient History, and Archaeology, Oxford University Press

Discussion moderated by Joy Connolly

6:30 – 7:00
Reception
Panelist Bios

Jennifer Crewe  
*President and Director, Columbia University Press*

Jennifer Crewe was appointed as President and Director of Columbia University Press in 2014. After a short time working in the commercial college textbook publishing industry, she returned to CUP three decades ago as an acquisitions editor. As editorial director, Crewe hired and trained acquisitions editors who have nurtured close ties to and created excellent publication programs with academic departments and centers at Columbia.

She is active in the wider world of publishing and academia, having served on the board of the Association of American University Presses and the Executive Council of the Modern Language Association. Crewe serves on the Executive Council of the Professional and Scholarly Division of the Association of American Publishers. She is the first woman director of an Ivy League university press.

Deborah Gershenowitz  
*Senior Editor, Cambridge University Press*

Deborah Gershenowitz commissions coursebooks, scholarly monographs, reference volumes, and trade titles on US and Latin American history. Her particular areas of interest include African-American history; Afro-Latin American history; gender, sexuality, and family history; the history of war, the military, and society; legal history; environmental history; the history of slavery; and foreign relations and transnational history.

She also works on the new Journal of Modern American History. Gershenowitz’s authors and series editors include leading figures in the fields of American history, Latin American history and environmental history.

Frederic Nachbaur  
*Director, Fordham University Press*

Fredric Nachbaur is Director of Fordham University Press, publisher of scholarly books in the humanities and social sciences as well as trade books focusing on the metropolitan New York region. In addition to overseeing the operations of the press, he acquires in cultural studies, education, history, media and communication, religion, and urban studies. Fred has close to 30 years of book publishing experience, the last twenty working with scholarly books. He got his start in publishing at John Wiley & Sons and made the foray into academic publishing by becoming the marketing director of arts and humanities at Routledge. Before taking the helm at Fordham, Fred was at NYU Press as the marketing and sales director.

Stefan Vranka  
*Executive Editor, Oxford University Press*

Stefan Vranka is Executive Editor in the Academic and Trade books division of Oxford University Press, New York. For more than a decade, his acquisitions list has focused on Classics, Ancient History, and Archaeology. Prior to his hiring, these disciplines had very little presence in the editorial program of the New York office of OUP. His career in publishing began at Viking Penguin, in the marketing and publicity department, while he was enrolled in a PhD program in English and Comparative Literature at NYU. After leaving the program, un-degreed, he freelanced as a writer for various presses and review venues such as Publishers Weekly before moving to OUP nearly twenty years ago.
2017 Book Completion Award

Winners

Cristina Léon Alfar  The Selected Correspondence of Elizabeth and Anthony Bourne
Andrew Connolly  Philip Roth and the American Liberal Tradition
Cynthia Chris  The Indecent Screen: Regulating Television in the Twenty-First Century
Alyshia Galvez  Eating NAFTA: Trade, Food Policies, and the Destruction of Mexico
Mary Gatta  Living and Dying in Economic Insecurity
Richard Haw  Introduction: John A. Roebling, a Brief Guide
Robert McDougall  Righting Health Policy: How Kant Shows Us Why Bioethics Needs Political Philosophy
Elissa Nelson  The Breakfast Club: Youth Identity and Generational Conflict in the Golden Age of the Teen Film
Andrea Silva  The Brand of Print: Marketing Paratexts in the Early English Book Trade
Terri Watson  This is for Us: Lessons Learned from a Harlem School Community

Runners Up

Siraj Ahmed  Archaeology of Babel: The Colonial Foundations of the Humanities
Matt Brim  Poor Queer Studies
Darryl Brock  Botanical Monroe Doctrine and American Empire: The Scientific Survey of Puerto Rico
Enrique Chavez-Arvizo  Descartes on Animals
Jennifer Delfino  “What Does a Scientist (Sound) Like?”: Raciolinguistic Transformations of Schooling and Academic Success Among African American Children
Marit Dewhurst  Teachers Bridging Difference: Exploring Identity through Art
Sean Edgecomb  Charles Ludlam Lives! Charles Busch, Bradford Louryk, Taylor Mac and The Queer Legacy of the Ridiculous Theatrical Company
Jillian Hess  Archival Forms: Commonplace Books, Scrapbooks, and other Nineteenth Century Technologies
Orlando Justo  Following Art Between Passion and Patience: Critical Essays on Contemporary Cuban Art
Jungah Kim  Aesthetics and the Politics of Representation in Asian Diaspora Literature
Jane Mooney  The Theoretical Foundations of Criminology: Place, Time and Context
Andrea Morrell  Prison Town: Race, Work, and Making the Carceral State in Upstate New York
Julia Miele Rodas  Autistic Disturbances: Theorizing Autism Poetics from the DSM to Robinson Crusoe
Don Selby  Human Rights in Thailand
Catherine Seavitt Nordenson  Roberto Burle Marx and Public Landscapes Under Dictatorship
Nicolaus Rush Smith  Resisting Rights: Vigilantism and Contradictions of Democracy in Post-Apartheid South Africa
Gregory Smithsimon  Liberty Road: Black Middle-Class Suburbs Between Civil Rights and Neoliberalism
Karen Stern-Gabbay  Writing on the Wall: Graffiti and the Forgotten Jews of Antiquity
Denise Thomson  Disaster Risk Governance in Resource-Poor Developing Countries
Archaeology of Babel: The Colonial Foundations of the Humanities

Siraj Ahmed
Lehman College

Since the nineteenth century, philology has governed critical method in the humanities. According to the scholarly consensus, philology’s authority begins with the research university. *Archaeology of Babel: The Colonial Foundation of the Humanities* argues that its authority derives instead from colonial law. Scholars who have written disciplinary genealogies of literary studies have overlooked the fact that, long before the nineteenth-century research university, colonial rule imposed a philological approach to native languages and literatures. The privilege literary scholars now place on philology repeats a colonial hierarchy, which privileged a historical approach to literature above all others. This book unearths the approaches to language and literature that philology buried in its colonial past.

*Published by Stanford University Press in December 2017.*

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The Selected Correspondence of Elizabeth and Anthony Bourne

Cristina León Alfar
Hunter College

The letters between Elizabeth and Anthony Bourne, which have never been published before, provide a history of one particular English early modern marriage that failed to fit within the prescribed parameters of a proper, sober marriage between an obedient woman and an honorable, authoritative man. The violence of Anthony Bourne’s threats against his wife is described by Elizabeth in graphic detail in her formal complaint. This book includes a selection of the Bourne correspondence, along with Elizabeth Bourne’s official complaint to the Privy Council and supporting documents (including letters to and from various family members and advisors, and the couple’s final settlement) with a critical introduction. Elizabeth Bourne’s application to the Privy Council rather than to a court of law is of great significance to scholars in the legal field, particularly those interested in legal history and the activities of the monarch in private legal matters. The case is important to early modern women’s history and studies because it refutes all notions of the domination of women by abusive husbands, by legal systems, and by social conventions of silence, chastity and obedience.

*Under contract with Routledge.*

Co-edited with former CUNY student Emily G. Sherwood, Director of the Digital Scholarship Lab at University of Rochester’s River Campus Libraries.
Poor Queer Studies
Matt Brim
College of Staten Island

This book reimagines the field of queer studies by locating it in overlooked places, namely, at the classed and raced intersections where student precarity and institutional marginality meet queer pedagogical innovation. Poor Queer Studies offers a view of queer knowledge production on the margins: in night school for returning students; at the end of a three-hour commute and a 40-hour work week; in overflowing classrooms; in therapeutic office hours; without access to decent food; with kids in tow; with parents at the dinner table; in a state of homelessness; under the queer radar; on the “the forgotten borough.” While the broad context for this study is the deeply class-stratified system of higher education in the U.S. within which academic disciplines such as queer studies are constructed, the more immediate site for the book’s relocation of queer teaching and research is the underfunded, open admissions College of Staten Island, which is part of the larger working poor City University of New York system. The situated lessons of Poor Queer Studies will resonate with instructors and students at the schools that have been left out of the story of queer studies, as well as with readers throughout queer academe.

Botanical Monroe Doctrine and American Empire: The Scientific Survey of Puerto Rico
Darryl Brock
Borough of Manhattan Community College

This book chronicles the Scientific Survey of Puerto Rico (1913-1960), a colonial science project sponsored by the New York Academic of Sciences in concert with the city’s leading scientific institutions: The New York Botanical Garden and the American Museum of Natural History. These scientists were aligned with American Empire and organized expeditions to catalog the plants, animals, geology and archaeology of Puerto Rico. The Scientific Survey of Puerto Rico comprised eighteen scientific expeditions originating from the Garden during the years leading to 1933. Botanic Monroe Doctrine and American Empire traces the survey’s influence on Puerto Rico’s cultural nation-alism, and especially its economic development during the Great Depression. The unique juxtaposition of metropolitan science and America’s colonization of a Latin American nation makes this book an excellent interdisciplinary resource for scholars in both the history of science and in Caribbean Studies. The book acquaints scholars, students, and general audiences with a Puerto Rico just transferred from Spain, a territory in a colonial era little-remembered and little-studied, and challenges our understanding of today’s Puerto Rico.

Under contract with University of Alabama Press.

Descartes on Animals
Enrique Chavez-Arvizo
John Jay College of Criminal Justice

This book elucidates and critically assess Rene Descartes’ controversial doctrine of animal sentience, using the term as a convenient, if not fully accurate, shorthand for the capacity to suffer or experience enjoyment. It argues against the standard interpretation of Descartes, which claims that he denied sentience to non-human animals. The basis for the standard view lies mainly on Descartes’ explicit denial of thought or reason to animals and his insistence upon calling animals “natural automata.” However, if we look closely at what Descartes actually writes about animals it is by no means clear that he holds the “monstrous” view which commentators attribute to him. Neither in calling animals machines or automata, nor in denying they have thought—a claim which, by the way, is explicitly played down by Descartes in important pieces of correspondence—is Descartes denying sense perception to animals. Descartes on Animals considers the philosophical implications of Descartes’ doctrine along with its reception in seventeenth-century Europe.
The Indecent Screen: Regulating Television in the Twenty-First Century

Cynthia Chris  
College of Staten Island

While it is often assumed that “culture wars” are fought across generation gaps or along clear left/right, Democratic/Republican axes, the motivations for intervention into broadcast regulation are far more complex. This book explores the rationales behind both the Federal Communications Commission’s decency policies and challenges to it. It examines the agendas of an array of stakeholders in the decency debates and analyzes both controversial programming and the popular and legal discourses around it. It also contextualizes these debates within broader political and cultural trends. This book shows that, First Amendment ideals notwithstanding, both major political parties have tactically embraced particular forms of a “family values” discourse that legitimates considerable speech restrictions. Technological innovations have given viewers new forms of control over what, when and how we watch desired programming, but they seem to have failed to deter complaints about undesired programming, most of which could be avoided at the touch of a button. *The Indecent Screen* argues that the ramifications of twenty-first century campaigns against televised indecency are far-reaching and include harshened penalties; a chilling effect on expression, especially at public and independent stations; and experimental criminalization of indecent broadcasts.

Philip Roth and the American Liberal Tradition

Andrew Connolly  
Hostos Community College

*Philip Roth and the American Liberal Tradition* undertakes an historical reading of a select number of Philip Roth’s later works by focusing intently on how these particular novels take a sharp interest in the changing shape and fortunes of American liberalism since the 1930s. As a partially historicist reading of Roth, this monograph looks closely at the ways in which his later phase of development examined certain dramatic upheavals within the American political and cultural landscape since the New Deal, and how such changes have brought into doubt important concepts of cultural commonality and inclusive citizenry that had once glued the Rooseveltian liberal ideal together. It develops upon the extensive body of existing criticism of Jewish identity and masculinity in Roth’s work by exploring how issues of ethnicity and gender are given heightened attention by being placed within much broader socio-historical contexts in the later novels selected for study.

Published by Lexington Books, 2017.
Negotiating Achievement

Jennifer Delfino
Borough of Manhattan Community College

This book examines how preadolescent-age African American students use African American Vernacular English (AAVE) in a school-based setting. It shows through detailed ethnographic analysis that the students used AAVE not to resist schooling and academic achievement (Fordham and Ogbu 1986, Fordham 1996 and 1999), but to challenge pathologizing stereotypes of African American students as unwilling, unprepared or resistant learners. In providing an updated perspective on how minority students attempt to redefine their schooling experiences and thereby become stakeholders in control of their own education, it meets an urgent need for a new comprehensive study of this topic. Based on ethnographic fieldwork with nine to 13-year-old African American students in a Washington, DC-based after school program, Negotiating Achievement offers a richly detailed account of language-in-use among African American preadolescents in their interactions with one another. It aligns research on how race and class minorities resist their school-based oppression (Willis 1997, MacLeod 1988, Fordham 1996, Ogbu 2003) with linguistically focused ethnographies that examine how children are socialized into their communities, classrooms, and the wider society via language (Heath 1983; Zentella 1997; Baquedano-Lopez & Kattan 2008; Ochs and Schieffelin 2009).

Teachers Bridging Difference: Exploring Identity Through Art

Marit Dewhurst
City College

This book explores how the arts can be used to explore identity and build bridges across difference. It argues that the arts can play a central role—one that has long been overlooked by many in the field—in helping us develop the skills, attitudes, and stances necessary to better understand how our identities shape who we are and how we move in the world. Drawing on interviews of City College art education students and alumni who are actively using art to teach about identity, Teachers Bridging Difference blends scholarship from multiple disciplines with empirical research to offer a set of arts-based stances focused on deepening our understanding of our multiple identities. Infused with examples of artists whose work deals with identity, the book provides a set of art strategies that educators and scholars can use to nurture their own capacity to work with people from multiple identity backgrounds. Moving beyond the notion of arts as merely an illustrative medium to express emotions or as simple warm-up activities for nurturing teamwork, this project highlights how looking at and making art can serve as complex tools for deepening our understandings of ourselves, our students, and the communities we aim to build.

Will be published in 2018 by Harvard Education Press.
Charles Ludlam Lives! Charles Busch, Bradford Louryk, Taylor Mac and the Queer Legacy of the Ridiculous Theatrical Company

Sean Edgecomb
College of Staten Island

This book explores the unique legacy of Charles Ludlam (1943-1987) twenty years after his premature death. It combines archival research with cultural ethnography to provide an alternative narrative on the phenomenon of legacy through the process of “queering,” and the resultant theoretical discourse. As a pioneer of the Ridiculous genre of gay theater in post-Stonewall America, Ludlam demands a place in the canon of contemporary gay literature and performance, an honor for which he has been too often overlooked. This is the first full-length scholarly analysis of Ludlam’s role as a founding father of gay theatre and his posthumous impact on contemporary queer performance in New York City. It is the only work to consider Ludlam’s “queer” legacy by examining the diverse work of three neo-Ridiculous heirs who openly acknowledge their forerunner’s influence via reinterpretations of “camp” (Ludlam’s modus operandi) and different modes of access to his plays. Charles Ludlam Lives! generates an alternative historical narrative that considers LGBTQ+ history, American studies, theatre and performance studies and queer theory. It aims to place Ludlam in a canonical position alongside the greatest auteurs of the twentieth century theatre.

Published by the University of Michigan Press in 2017.

Eating NAFTA: Trade and Food Policies and the Destruction of Mexico

Alyshia Gálvez
Lehman College

If we assess two decades of the implementation of the most comprehensive and ambitious free trade agreement to date, the North American Free Trade Agreement, which went into effect the first day of 1994, we have reason to be concerned. While business is booming, the gains have been for a tiny minority. The present moment in Mexico is one in which citizens are less able to find work or to migrate, and are expected to contribute through consumption. This book traces the paradoxical rise of Mexican food as a global cuisine at the same time that average citizens in Mexico find traditional foods increasingly out of reach or out of step with their lifestyles. Eating NAFTA notes how corn, the most basic element of Mexican food, exemplifies larger trends in the economy, as small-scale farmers find they can no longer afford to grow it, and as it is becoming more common for it to be consumed in the form of soda, chips and sweets rather than in tortillas and tamales. This book follows the rise in consumption of soda and processed foods, and the decline in availability and affordability of traditional foods and even water. It explores the ways that Mexico engages with and serves its citizens, especially anti-obesity, anti-poverty, health, and education policies, that have driven Mexican families away from traditional livelihoods and eating habits. These policies and programs, and the overall restructuring of Mexico’s food system imply steep human costs while burdening the health care system. This generates ripples across borders: the rise and subsequent leveling off of migration, and the health consequences of migration as Mexican workers sustain US food production and preparation industries, while suffering a decline in their own health.

Will be published in September 2018 by University of California Press.
Living and Dying in Economic Insecurity

Mary Gatta
Guttman Community College

What is it like to age in America’s low wage jobs? And how are we—as workers, employers, and as a nation—going to prepare for what is ahead for so many working families when they approach retirement from low wage work? To address these questions, Living and Dying in Economic Insecurity draws on ethnographic research with older workers in low wage jobs. It taps into interviews and focus groups with current retirees, many of whom were not low wage workers in their careers. These sources highlight the struggles that retirees with pensions and savings are experiencing today. The book hones in on in-depth interviews and observation data with older employees in the growing field of restaurant work to capture their lived experiences as they struggle for some semblance of economic stability. Readers will learn about the coping strategies that retirees and older workers use; the difficult choices they make each day; and the expectations they had of their lives and their hopes for the future. This book argues that today’s low wage workers don’t have to be doomed to working and aging in economic insecurity, though it may seem that way. Changes can be made not only to improve older low-wage workers lives, but also to ensure they can age with security. The book ends with what public policies and workforce practices can and must be implemented to avoid an untenable American future for so many hard workers.


Engineering America: The Life and Times of John A. Roebling

Richard Haw
John Jay College of Criminal Justice

John Roebling (1806-1869) was the foremost suspension bridge engineer of the nineteenth century. He was responsible for some of the world’s most famous, beautiful and enduring spans, yet surprisingly little is known of him. The last biography of Roebling was published in 1945, and it has not worn well. This book provides a full account of one of the nineteenth century’s most influential and intriguing personalities. We have long come to terms with one pole of Roebling’s biography—his engineering feats—but not with the man himself. Alongside the drama of large scale construction lies an equally rich drama of intellectual and social development and crisis, one that mirrored and reflected the great forces, trials, and failures of the American nineteenth century.

Under contract with Oxford University Press and set to be released in 2019.

Archival Forms: Commonplace Books, Scrapbooks, and other Nineteenth-Century Technologies

Jillian Hess
Bronx Community College

Archival Forms provides the first dedicated study of one of the most important manuscript forms of nineteenth-century England: the commonplace book and its descendent, the scrapbook. The book develops a methodology for reading manuscripts of assembly such as commonplace works. These forms have posed significant problems of interpretation for historians and literary scholars. Though there is work on commonplace-book culture, no sustained study of nineteenth-century commonplace-book forms exists. Archival Forms joins archival breadth with formally specific close readings of individual manuscripts and literary works. The method developed here reveals how the structural qualities of manuscripts suggest stylistic patterns in associated published works. With support from the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Keats-Shelley Memorial Association, the North American Society for the Study of Romanticism, and
the National Endowment for the Humanities, the author studied over three hundred commonplace books and scrapbooks with an eye to examining form. The book focuses particularly on uses of indexes, creative re-working of quotations, and the way that entries affect symbiosis, synthesis, and contradiction.

Following Art Between Passion and Patience: Critical Essays on Contemporary Cuban Art

Orlando Justo
Borough of Manhattan Community College

This book analyzes the evolution of contemporary art in Cuba from the 1980s until the present, exploring a broad range of topics related to institutional, economic, political, and social factors that have influenced the aesthetics and artistic creation of Cuban artists, both within and outside the island. Focusing on the field of fine arts, this book is a multidisciplinary study that involves scholars and researchers from history, philosophy, and business, alongside art historians. Orlando Justo is the editor of the project, working in collaboration with Elvira R. Castro, a professor of art at the University of Havana.

Aesthetics and the Politics of Representation in Asian Diaspora Literature

Jungah Kim
Borough of Manhattan Community College

This book examines representations of race, empire, and national identity in Asian American literature with a specific focus on transnational connections between Asia and Asian America. It argues that Asian states and nationalisms play a significant role in the politics of reading Asian American literature. This transnational aspect of Asian American literature shapes the domestic political activities of Asian American readers in relation to Asia, particularly their homelands or countries of origin. As a number of critics have noted, Asian American writers often embody a politics of accommodation through their literary representations with the various kinds of oppression that Asian Americans have had to endure in the United States, whereas Asian American imagination has no single unifying grand narrative to organize the vast materials that Asian American writers call on. Aesthetics and the Politics of Representation in Asian Diaspora Literature follows the well-established political tradition of Asian American literary representation and at the same time critically re-examines it. It contends that Asian American writers as well as Asian American literary critics often see Asian America exclusively as a place of domestic resistance and have not been capable of articulating transnational connections between Asia and Asian America, thereby unwittingly obliterating Asian America’s ideological diversity and contradictions.

Righting Health Policy: How Kant Shows Us Why Bioethics Needs Political Philosophy

D. Robert MacDougall
New York City College of Technology

Righting Health Policy addresses the role and importance of normative political philosophy in contemporary bioethics. The book argues that political philosophy has been neglected in the bioethics literature, and utilizes Kant’s moral and political philosophy in order to demonstrate that this is true, to explain why it is problematic, and to explore ways in which incorporation of normative political philosophy could improve bioethics debate.

Prison Town: Race, Work, and Making the Carceral State in Upstate New York

Andrea Morrell
Guttman Community College

In the fall of 1985, a few months after the New York Times asserted that “[p]erhaps no other small city in the Northeast provides a more vivid example of how American manufacturing has declined,” Elmira, New York was chosen as the site of another new state prison (Lueck, 1985: A1). A small, multiracial city of just under 30,000 people in central New York State,
Elmira was seen as a good candidate for one of the thirty-nine new prisons built under the leadership of Governor Mario Cuomo. The city was already home to the Elmira Correctional Facility, built in 1876, and was reeling from the loss of thousands of manufacturing jobs that occurred over the previous decade. Some city leaders and residents were eager for the relatively high-paying jobs in the proposed prison. “Great! Call Elmira a prison town, call it anything you want,” an editorial in the local paper, the Elmira Star-Gazette, encouraged, and keep up that “spirit of cooperation,” in order to secure a “fat new payroll” for the area (Elmira Star-Gazette 1985). When the Southport Correctional Facility opened in 1988, the increased number of state jobs available for Elmirans at the prison fueled high hopes for a brighter economic picture for the area. Based on interviews with Correction Officers, social workers, lawyers, and families of incarcerated men and women and their families, Prison Town examines the consequences of New York State’s project to replace manufacturing work in upstate New York.

The Breakfast Club: Youth Identity and Generational Conflict in the Golden Age of the Teen Film

Elissa H. Nelson
Bronx Community College

This book examines the many reasons that The Breakfast Club is often classified as a quintessential teen film. The film focuses predominantly on teen characters during the 1980s, a time when the Hollywood film industry was gearing more and more of its products to the youth demographic. But more than just featuring a cast of popular Brat Pack actors, the film spoke to the generation coming of age at the time with a story that got to the heart of the conflict between adults and young adults, that understood both the camaraderie and the pressures of peer groups, and that unabashedly dealt with teenagers as real people with real problems. With writer and director John Hughes’ particular voice at the helm, the film capitalized on a culture already targeting the youth market, and by telling its tale from a youth perspective, was able to leave a lasting impression on both contemporary and present-day audiences. This book considers the content of the film as well as detailed analyses of the context of production of the film, including industrial concerns and socio-cultural issues. It explains why the film was meaningful when it was released and why it continues to be influential.

Forthcoming from Routledge.

Autistic Disturbances: Theorizing Autism Poetics from the DSM to Robinson Crusoe

Julia Miele Rodas
Bronx Community College

While research on autism has sometimes focused on special talents or abilities, autism is typically characterized as impoverished or defective when it comes to language. Autistic Disturbances reveals the ways interpreters have failed to register the real creative valence of autistic language and offers a theoretical framework for understanding the distinctive aesthetics of autistic rhetoric and semiotics. Autistic Disturbances pursues these resonances and explores the tensions of language and culture that led to the classification of some verbal expression as disordered while other, similar expression enjoys prized status as literature. It identifies the most characteristic patterns of autistic expression-repetition, monologue, ejaculation, verbal ordering or list-making, and neologism—and adopts new language to describe and reimagine these categories in aesthetically productive terms. In so doing, the book seeks to redress the place of verbal autistic language, to argue for the value and complexity of autistic ways of speaking, and to invite recognition of an obscured tradition of literary autism at the very center of Anglo-American text culture.

Forthcoming from the University of Michigan Press.
Depositions: Culture and the Counsel of Roberto Burle Marx

Catherine Seavitt Nordenson
City College

This manuscript addresses the landscape architect Robert Burle Marx's public parks and subsequent political testimonies as a cultural counselor to the military dictatorship in Brazil from 1967-1974. Marx designed significant public landscapes in Brazil, beginning with small plazas in Recife in the 1930s and culminating with large public parks in the early 1960s, including the Parque Zoológico Brasília, Parque do Ibirapuera, São Paulo; and Parque do Flamengo, Rio de Janeiro. This project is particularly distinctive for several reasons. First, it situates Burle Marx’s work with indigenous tropical plants within the longer trajectory of a state-supported Brazilian cultural project from the eighteenth century forward. Second, unlike recent scholarship, it addresses Burle Marx’s affiliation with the oppressive military dictatorship in Brazil as a member of the Conselho Fedearl de Cultura (Federal Cultural Council). Lastly, the book is premised on an argument that the act of writing is a critical and creative act, an aspect of the making of landscapes. *Depositions* includes the author’s English translations of Burle Marx’s eighteen testimonies as a counselor to the Brazilian military dictatorship. These depositions have never previously appeared in English, nor been reprinted since their initial publication in the 1960s and 1970s in the journal Cultura as proceedings of the Conselho Fedearl de Cultura.

Published by University of Texas Press in April 2018.

Human Rights in Thailand

Don Selby
College of Staten Island

This manuscript grows out of eighteen months of fieldwork in the wake of the Thai state’s establishment of the National Human Rights Commission of Thailand. As the only monograph on human rights in Thailand, it contributes to Thai studies; to legal anthropology, especially the anthropology of human rights; and to human rights studies. Its particular innovation is to chart, through concrete social and discursive practices, how the NHRC and other human rights advocates sought to define human rights in articulation with Buddhist morality, nationalistic mythologies, social rank, and Thailand’s contested history of democratic struggle. The author accompanied a group of lawyers connected to the NHRC as they worked with Burmese migrants after the 2004 tsunami that demolished Thailand’s Andaman coast.

Published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in January 2018.
The Brand of Print: Marketing Paratexts in the Early English Book Trade

Andrea Silva
York College

Paratextual Remediation in the Early English Book Trade demonstrates the value of nonauthorial paratexts for the study of the early modern book trade and the remediation of rare books in new and emerging technologies. This book examines paratexts designed and produced by printers, publishers, and booksellers, calling attention to the ways they functioned not simply as marketing strategies, but as unique sites for cultural capital and user/developer relationships. By establishing these “print agents” as producers of knowledge and tastemakers, this book proposes new ways to evaluate and contextualize the labor of mediation within and beyond the early modern period.

Resisting Rights: Vigilantism and the Contradictions of Democratic State Formation in Post-Apartheid South Africa

Nicholas Rush Smith
City College

This book addresses a puzzle: despite being one of the world’s most vibrant democracies, vigilantism is regularly practiced in South Africa. In any given year, police estimate nearly five percent of the country’s murders result from vigilante violence – four times the percentage resulting from gang violence (SAPS 2009, 11). That means over 800 people a year are beaten, stoned, or burnt to death in retribution for some crime while thousands more are assaulted, publically humiliated, or burnt out of their homes. South Africa’s high rates of vigilantism are puzzling given that it underwent a celebrated transition to democracy, has a lauded constitution, and enacted massive reforms of the state’s legal institutions following democratization. Resisting Rights asks why vigilantism is prevalent in South Africa, asks what South Africa reveals about vigilantism in other emerging democracies, and uses vigilantism to explore contradictions of democratic state formation generally. Based on nearly twenty months of field research in South Africa, including seventeen months of immersive, ethnographic participant observation and three months of archival research, this work shows that vigilantism is a response to processes of democratic state formation—specifically the extension of rights—and thrives in dense civic networks.

Forthcoming from Oxford University Press, Oxford Series in Culture and Politics.

Liberty Road: Black Middle-Class Suburbs Between Civil Rights and Neoliberalism

Gregory Smithsimon
Brooklyn College

For a century, urban sociology has examined racial inequality in the context of low-income urban ghettos. Liberty Road offers a new view of racial discrimination by examining the African American middle-class suburb of Randallstown, Maryland. A neighborhood of single-family homes, schools surrounded by vast sports fields, shopping malls, garden apartments, supermarkets, small businesses, and new big box stores, the Liberty Road corridor (also known as Randallstown) is much like African American suburbs outside Chicago, Atlanta, Washington, and other cities. Based on ethnographic observations, interviews, census data and archival research, Liberty Road explains how African Americans were able to break the color barrier. Unlike earlier accounts of blockbusting that focused on predatory white realtors and saw African Americans as victims or dupes, this account identifies how home seekers and professionals opened the suburbs to African Americans who had been rigidly excluded. Once Liberty Road was desegregated, it proved to be an ideal place to understand the growth of an African American suburb much like those that have grown up
in recent decades around many US cities. In examining community battles over the expansion of bus lines or the arrival of Walmart, as well as American health crises and the looming foreclosure problem, *Liberty Road* shows the unique ways middle-class suburban African Americans build strong communities in the face of racially discriminatory business practices, threats to their middle-class status, and strained relationships with both suburban whites and urban Blacks. Residents in African American middle-class suburbs demonstrated that race remains as real as ever, but that struggles against racial inequality are taking new forms as they move into the suburban landscape.

**Writing on the Wall: Graffiti and the Forgotten Jews of Late Antiquity**

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This book aims to write a new type of history of ancient Jews by reframing the available evidence and asking new questions. The central argument suggests that attention to a single relationship—that between writing and space—can offer new insights into the daily activities and behaviors of Jews and their neighbors from all reaches of the Greco-Roman world. Graffiti associated with ancient Jews serve as the cornerstones of this study. Most social historians, art historians, and archaeologists neglect graffiti associated with ancient Jews, partly due to their poor appearances and their seemingly random find-spots, and partly due to their spare and disparate publications. But, as this book suggests, such modes of writing, broadly defined, merit greater consideration than they have received, because their systematic analyses reveal surprising insights into the long-forgotten features of ancient Jewish life. Each chapter takes a case study approach to offer renewed interpretations of religious, mortuary, social, and cultural practices associated with Jews throughout Roman and Byzantine Syria, Palestine, Italy, and Asia Minor. It concludes with an evaluation of how these readings of ancient graffiti can prompt new insights into practices of drawing, writing, and interactivity in the modern world.

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**Disaster Risk Governance in Resource-Poor Developing Countries**

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Despite the extensive and growing body of literature on governance and an ever-increasing body of literature on disaster risk reduction, there is not enough meaningful coverage of resource-poor countries and their experiences. By focusing on the poorest developing countries in the Caribbean and Sub-Saharan Africa, and merging the literatures on governance and disaster risk reduction, this book adds geographic and contextual knowledge to these literatures. In poor countries, such as those being studies for this book, people become obliged, or are forced, to live in hazard-prone, vulnerable places. This book compares disaster risk governance in some of the poorest developing countries and provides insights on what works and the pitfalls to avoid.

*To be published by Routledge in December 2018.*
While famous for its arts and culture, little is known about the nine Harlem mothers who, in 1958, refused to send their children to dilapidated schools staffed with uncertified teachers. Indeed, before and after the Brown v. Board of Education (1954) decision, Harlem’s schools remained segregated and unequal. This book project spans 60 years (1958 – 2018) and chronicles Harlem’s quest for high quality public schools. It is autobiographical, in part, and will serve to illuminate the schools we need based on my experiences in NYC’s public schools as a student, a teacher, a parent, and an education researcher coupled with narratives from Harlem’s children, parents, and school leaders.

*Under contract with Harvard University Press.*