

ALUMNI NEWS

QUEENS COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY • SPRING 2026 NEWSLETTER



Our display case in Powdermaker showcases books published by History faculty, past and present.

A Message from the Chair

Greetings! A year has flown by since our last newsletter, from last summer's heat through an unusually cold winter to this verdant spring. We continue the vital work of serving students while maintaining our productivity as scholars. This year was particularly fruitful in terms of publications, public engagement, and awards. Marilyn and Alex continue to keep the office humming. The History Club carries on as a site of student engagement with history. And we continue to navigate the challenges thrown up by fast-moving local, national, and transnational trends. Those challenges fortify our determination to honor the standards of our discipline through fidelity to the historical record and truthful communication about the past in our research, teaching, and dialogues. As I wrote last year, our students deserve no less.

Rest assured that we appreciate your support and remain committed to keeping history at Queens strong. You can follow us at qc.cuny.edu/academics/history/news

Sincerely,

Julia Sneeringer, Professor and Chair of History

Department News

Peter Conolly-Smith was promoted to the rank of Professor... **Morris Rossabi** gave talks in the US and Asia, from lectures on China to Foreign Service personnel to a Weather Channel interview about how typhoons helped Japan repel a Mongol invasion... **Elena Frangakis-Syrett** keynoted a symposium in Turkey on Medieval and Early Modern Izmir... **Sarah Covington** organized two conferences on biography and memoir at the Graduate Center (on “legal lives” and on war veterans’ memoirs)... **Natanya Duncan** organized a roundtable on the 100th anniversary of Black History Month... “Melting Metropolis” co-director

Kara Schlichting and postdoctoral fellow **Daniel Cumming** held an event with students through Queens Memory and Columbia University on preserving stories of extreme heat in New York. MM artist-in-residence **Bryony Ella**’s work will be featured at London’s Saatchi Gallery this summer... **Carol Giardina** continues to prepare the archive of Redstockings, a women’s liberation group she helped found in New York City in 1969, for accession into the New York Public Library’s collection... On a sad note, we recently learned of the death of emeritus professor **Mark Rosenblum**. See **Frank Warren**’s tribute on page 3. The college plans to formally memorialize Mark this fall.

Faculty Accomplishments

Fidel Tavarez’s book *Assembling an Imperial Machine: Spanish Commercial Reform in the Age of Enlightenment*, appeared in April with Oxford University Press... **Elissa Bemporad**’s *Jews in the Soviet Union, A History: Revolution, Civil War, and New Ways of Life 1917-1930* (NYU Press, 2025) won the 75th National Jewish Book Award for Best Book in History. She edited an English translation of Rokhl Faygnberg’s *The Destruction of Dubrovna* for Bloomsbury Academic. And she’ll be a research fellow at the Center for Jewish History... **Nat Duncan**’s *An Efficient Womanhood* won the Letitia Woods Brown Prize from the Association of Black Women Historians Book Prize for Best Book in Black Women’s History... **Miryam Segal** launched a new review journal, *JLA (Jewish Law Association) Review*. She and Elissa will participate in the CUNY Grad Center’s Jewish Studies Working Group (founded by our colleague **Francesca Bregoli**) ... **Kate Antonova** won a Macmillan Research Fellowship at Yale to work on her book *Holy Fools and Difficult Women: The Transfer of Power in Russia after Napoleon*.

Our faculty were also sought out by media outlets. **Kara Schlichting** spoke to *The New York Times* about the “Negro Coney Island.” Vox.com interviewed **Kristin Celello** for the article “Relationships are Hard Work, Right?” **Nat Duncan** appeared on the podcast *Strictly Facts: A Guide to Caribbean History & Culture* with Alexandria Miller. **Julia Sneeringer** spoke to New Books Network’s podcast about her recent short history of West Germany.



Carol Giardina in the belly of the beast at New York Public Library’s research branch.

In Memoriam: Mark Rosenblum

By Frank Warren

I knew Mark for many years, from the 1969 Queens College student protests and anti-Vietnam War protests in Washington. I brought him into the department and am proud that I did. He was a brilliant teacher who impacted the lives of students at the deepest level. He facilitated Jewish and Muslim students to walk in each other's shoes. He was a brilliant lecturer who spoke without notes, never missing a beat. His articles on the Arab/Israeli conflict were respected by Israeli and US academics. Mark was a supreme multi-tasker: he ran the Michael Harrington Center; created the Center for Ethnic, Racial and Religious Understanding; directed the Jewish Studies program; and took students from Queens and other universities to the Middle East. He founded Americans for Peace Now and worked at the diplomatic level and on the important task of educating the public on the history and facts of the conflict. His passion for understanding led him one summer to live in a Palestinian refugee camp. Last year amidst the brutal war, he told me in our last phone conversation about a group he was trying to bring together to find solutions to end the conflict.

During the 1980s and 1990s, Mark would regularly talk on the Mid-East conflict to the faculty. We would kid Mark about the consistency of his talks: they were all about the obstacles to peace, but in the end, he would offer a glimmer of hope. At one point I realized Mark was an example of Gramsci's remark about the need for a pessimism of the intellect and optimism of the will. I think that optimism kept Mark going. And it inspired me not to fall victim to my own political pessimism, not to give up the struggle for peace and justice.



Susan Beberfall with Beberfall Scholarship winner (and History Club president) Siddhartha Chanda, who's headed to Hofstra Law School.

Student Achievements

Our annual **Honors Luncheon** in May brought smiles all around. Students got to meet some of the donors who fund the awards, such as **Susan Beberfall**... 19 MA and MLSMA students presented their capstone projects at this year's graduate student symposium ... **Noa Danesh** (MLSMA) will present at a conference in Amsterdam on the 1920s League Against Imperialism in 2027... **Ailbhe McDonnell** (MLSMA) published a story in the Queens Memory newsletter on the 60th anniversary of Queens' Central

Library building... Erin A'Hearn, Wilhelmine Coste, Patrick McGee, and Scout Zabel (MLSMA) published a research guide to holdings on the Red Scare at CUNY in the archives of Queens, Brooklyn, Hunter, and City College (https://academicworks.cuny.edu/oaa_pubs/38/)

Alumni Notes

If you're a QC History alum and would like us to know what you've been up to, please email History@qc.cuny.edu so we can brag about your achievements!



Graduate symposium presenters (left to right): Meghan Khameraj, Sophia Gallagher, Samantha Rooney, Daniel Giovannello, Professor Kara Schlichting, and Liam Delaite.



This year's Phi Alpha Theta inductees (left to right): Professor Tom Ort, Ethan Whinston, Hans Dela Cruz, Kayla Rose.

