

## **Columbia Journey Seminar – Fall 2016 Syllabus**

The Columbia Journey Seminar (CJS) is the cornerstone of the Scholars Program. Anchored in the principles of community, exploration, and engagement, this year-long seminar is modeled on core classes and meets weekly for one hour. It brings First-Year Scholars together with Graduate Student Mentors (GSM's) completing their PhDs in different fields as well as faculty, administrators, and representatives from the community.

The theme of the Columbia Journey Seminar is inspired by the name of alma mater, "Columbia University in the City of New York." Scholars will explore the concepts of identity and belonging both in the city and on campus through field trips and seminar discussions. Utilizing a stimulus and discussion model, Scholars should consider the ways in which each encounter – a lecture, film, neighborhood visit, interview with Columbia faculty, or tour of university spaces – shapes and is shaped by their experience as Columbia students.

**Attendance:** All First-Year scholars **must** participate in one of the Harlem tours that were scheduled at the beginning of September. Also, every First-Year Scholar must sign up for one CJS section that meets for about 1-hour weekly, eight times per semester. Scholars are permitted 2 excused absences per semester (no unexcused absences are allowed) and need to notify their GSM as soon as possible. Please note that unexcused absences impact negatively the scholar's good standing in the program.

**Readings:** The session summary and reading list is available below. Preparatory reading assignments are provided for each CJS session and must be read before the session date. The optional reading list provides additional readings that you can review at your leisure to expand your knowledge. Links for the articles are available in this syllabus and a comprehensive list is available in the "*For CUSP Scholars – CJS*" folder. PDF (or digital) versions of these articles will be available in the "*For CUSP Scholars – CJS*" folder as well. Scholars will receive an email notification when their access to the "*For CUSP Scholars – CJS*" folder is granted.

## Schedule/Readings

### FALL 2016 SEMESTER

#### **CJS # 1 – Introduction to the CJS**

*Week of Sept. 26-30, 2016*

This introductory CJS session will present an overview of the goals, expectations, and procedures of the Columbia Journey Seminar. During this session we will discuss this year's theme – "Columbia University in the City of New York."

#### **CJS # 2 – Harlem and Its Relationship With Columbia**

*Week of October 3-7, 2016*

During this session we will explore your personal reactions to the Harlem Tour and reflect upon Columbia University's place in the fabric of the surrounding neighborhood. We will discuss Columbia's expansion to Manhattanville in light of the assigned articles.

##### Preparatory Reading Assignment:

- Jonathan Hollander, "Manhattanville's Forgotten Beneficiaries," *Columbia Daily Spectator*, January 24, 2008  
<http://columbiaspectator.com/2008/01/24/manhattanville%E2%80%99s-forgotten-beneficiaries>
- Andrew Lyubarsky, "Manhattanville in a Global Context," *Columbia Daily Spectator*, January 29, 2008  
<http://columbiaspectator.com/2008/01/29/manhattanville-global-context>
- Francis Morrone, "No, New York City is not losing its soul: What the anti-gentrification handwringers fail to understand about the city's past, present and future," *New York Daily News*, May 31, 2015 <http://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/francis-morrone-no-new-york-city-not-losing-soul-article-1.2240544>

#### **CJS # 3 – The Immigrant City: Coming to New York, Coming to the U.S.**

*Week of October 10-14, 2016*

New York was, for many years, the principal port of entry for immigrants to the United States, particularly once Ellis Island became America's first Federal immigration station in 1890 (and its busiest until its closure in 1954). In this class, explore questions about how immigrants have contributed to the success of NYC specifically and America more generally.

Preparatory Reading Assignment:

- Anand Giridharadas, “The Immigrant Advantage,” *New York Times*, May 24, 2014  
[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/25/opinion/sunday/the-immigrant-advantage.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/25/opinion/sunday/the-immigrant-advantage.html?_r=0)
- Jose Antonio Vargas, “My Life As An Undocumented Immigrant,” *New York Times*, June 22, 2011 <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/26/magazine/my-life-as-an-undocumented-immigrant.html>

## **CJS # 4 – Genealogy**

*Week of October 17-21, 2016*

What are we, exactly, and where do we come from? How have our identities been shaped by events of the past over which we have no control? In what ways are our family’s stories also the stories of the places they have settled?

Preparatory Reading Assignment:

- Susan Dominus, “The Mixed-Up Brothers of Bogotá,” *New York Times*, July 9, 2015  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/12/magazine/the-mixed-up-brothers-of-bogota.html>

## **CJS # 5 – I Heart New York?**

*Week of October 24-27, 2016*

Imagine that after ten years in New York pursuing your dreams, you decide to call it quits. How would you explain your decision to leave? In this class we will discuss issues about the romanticization of NYC.

Preparatory Reading Assignment:

- E. B. White, “Here is New York,” 1949 [excerpt located in a student folder in the Google Drive]
- Jeremiah Moss, “Jeremiah’s Vanishing New York,” *Vanishing New York (blog)*, 2016  
<http://vanishingnewyork.blogspot.com/>

Optional Reading:

- Joan Didion, "Goodbye To All That," 1967 <http://juliaallison.com/goodbye-to-all-that-by-joan-didion/>

**CJS # 6 – #BlackLivesMatter**

*Week of October 31 -November 4, 2016*

Over the past year, the Black Lives Matter movement has pushed the issue of police violence against black people in the United States into the spotlight. Violence and harassment of people of color at the hands of NYC police (NYPD) has been a long-standing problem that countless communities and organizations have confronted. This week, we'll look at articles on the history of "broken windows" policing in New York City and police violence against not only black men, but also black women.

Preparatory Reading Assignment:

- Ivie Ani, "Black Lives Matter – and that means ALL lives, including those of women and girls," *New York Times*, June 11, 2015  
<http://nytlive.nytimes.com/womenintheworld/2015/06/11/black-lives-matter-and-that-means-all-lives-including-those-of-women-and-girls/>
- Jason Farbman, "Breaking Broken Windows," *Socialist Worker (US)*, January 7, 2015  
<http://socialistworker.org/2015/01/07/breaking-broken-windows>
- Ta Nehisi Coates, "The Myth of Police Reform," *The Atlantic*, April 15, 2015  
[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/04/the-myth-of-police-reform/390057/?utm\\_source=atfb](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/04/the-myth-of-police-reform/390057/?utm_source=atfb)

Optional Reading:

- Ken Auletta, "Fixing Broken Windows," *New Yorker*, September 7, 2015  
<http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/09/07/fixing-broken-windows>
- Michael Greenberg, "Broken Windows and the New York Police," *The New York Review of Books*, November 6, 2014 <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2014/11/06/broken-windows-and-new-york-police/>

## CJS # 7 – New York On Film

Week of November 14-18, 2016

With over 40,000 locations shoots each year, no city has been depicted on film as frequently as New York. Yet it would be impossible to represent every angle and aspect of the city as a whole; representations always contain a particular bias – of culture, race, class, time, and style. As we round off the fall semester's exploration of identity and belonging, we'll consider a handful of the city's most iconic roles. In watching scenes from *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (1961), *Midnight Cowboy* (1969), *Manhattan* (1979), and *Do the Right Thing* (1989), students are invited to think about how these and other films reflect, shape and/or distort the identity of the city and those who live in it.

*Video montage for in-class discussion:*

<https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLkwiJC4GMumsr1BzgGW6YNPISS-Yryo88>

*Background on films:*

### **Manhattan (1979). Dir. Woody Allen**

Woody Allen wrote, directed and starred in this movie, which chronicles the romantic confusions of a twice-divorced 42-year-old comedy writer (Allen), as he dates a 17-year-old girl (Mariel Hemingway) before eventually falling in love with his best friend's mistress (Diane Keaton). Like many of Allen's films, it also serves as a sort of love-story about New York. The movie famously opens with images of New York shot in black and white film, against the backdrop of Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue, evoking a New York of a past era. Allen has written, "I always regretted that I was born too late for New York City in the twenties and thirties, because once the war started, it started to degenerate. Places started to close, the city slowly started getting sucked up into problems of huge welfare payments and narcotics problems, the crime problem mushroomed, television induced people indoors, and the city didn't have the vitality it had when there were so many Broadway shows going and so many nightclubs that you could go to." [Source: <http://nymag.com/nymetro/news/people/features/2415/>]

### **Midnight Cowboy (1969). Dir. John Schlesinger**

John Voight and Dustin Hoffman star as two New York City hustlers in this landmark film, which examines with unprecedented realism and humanity the social and moral decay of New York in the 1970's. A young and naive Texan, Joe Buck (Voight) heads to New York, hoping to succeed as a male prostitute for women. This scene appears early in the film, when 'Ratso' (Hoffman), a crippled street conman, is trying to convince Buck that he needs Ratso's help to succeed. It references many of the guiding concepts of the film - the hustle of the street, the use of sex as means of achieving power, and a deeply divided city in which the very richest and the very poorest share a sidewalk but never connect. The film serves as powerful piece of social

commentary, not just on a particular era in New York City's history but also on the darker aspects to the American dream as they are embedded in it.

### **Breakfast at Tiffany's (1961). Dir. Blake Edwards**

In one of her most memorable roles, Audrey Hepburn plays Holly Golightly, an eccentric New York socialite who wins the heart of Paul, a young writer. In spite of her apparently carefree demeanor, Golightly slowly reveals a traumatic past; like Paul, she emerges as something of a misfit; lost and adrift. The opening scene shows Golightly at Tiffany's flagship store on 5th avenue. It takes place against another classic piece of music, Mancini's Moon River; now indelibly associated with New York.

### **Do the Right Thing (1989). Dir. Spike Lee**

Upon its release, Spike Lee's film won high acclaim for its portrayal of racial and class tensions within the community in Brooklyn's Bedford-Stuyvesant (BedStuy) neighborhood. The action takes place on a single day at the height of summer - as the heat builds to a crescendo, so does the anger of the local black residents who turn on the Italian owners of the local pizzeria, and on the police who try to subdue them. This scene is part of the mounting tension before the riot, as the black customers in the pizzeria begin to voice their feelings of marginalization.

## **CJS # 8 – Genealogy Project Discussion**

*Week of November 28-December 1, 2016*

The goal of the Genealogy Project is to explore your own personal genealogy in light of themes we have discussed over the course of the CJS fall seminar. The central question to consider is "How did you get to Columbia?" To answer this question, please conduct informal interviews with family members in order to piece together a narrative of your genealogy up to the present moment. You can reflect on any aspect of your broader identity (gender-race-class-nationality) at any scale (that is reasonable within the scope of the assignment); or you can be very specific, for example by focusing on a single pivotal shift. Allow yourself the freedom of a literary reflection, like White and Eugenides, but also strive to be as concise as possible. To that end, your essay should be approx. 600 words. Please upload it for the rest of the class to read by the Friday before the last class session. We will have a general discussion in class about your essays.

### Preparatory Reading Assignment:

- Russell Shorto, "The Source of New York's Greatness", *The New York Times*, September 8, 2014 <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/09/08/opinion/the-source-of-new->

[yorks-greatness.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=c-column-top-span-region&region=c-column-top-span-region&WT.nav=c-column-top-span-region](http://yorks-greatness.html?hp&action=click&pgtype=Homepage&module=c-column-top-span-region&region=c-column-top-span-region&WT.nav=c-column-top-span-region)

## SPRING 2017 SEMESTER

### Pre-CJS – New York NY Film Screening 2017

Thursday January 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017, 6pm-8pm

This is an optional event for first-year scholars to meet up and share in comradery at the beginning of the spring semester while watching an iconic NY movie together.

Movie: TBD

Location: Davis Auditorium

Who? Open to all first year Scholars.

### CJS # 1 – Screening of May '68 Documentary of Columbia Revolt

Week of February 6-10, 2016

During this session students will view a documentary on the 1968 student protests and explore Columbia University's role in shaping the broader academy and the social movements of the 1960s.

Link to Film: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUcYLuGiL\\_s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUcYLuGiL_s)

#### Preparatory Reading Assignment:

- Serena Golden, "Harlem vs. Columbia University: An Interview with Stefan Bradley," *Inside Higher Ed*, August 20, 2009  
<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2009/08/20/bradley>
- Daniel J. Wakin, "Quieter Lives for '60s Militants, But Intensity of Beliefs Hasn't Faded," *New York Times*, August 24, 2003  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2003/08/24/nyregion/quieter-lives-for-60-s-militants-but-intensity-of-beliefs-hasn-t-faded.html>

## CJS # 2 – College & Society: 1968 and the Struggle Over Columbia's Role in the World

Week of February 13-17, 2016

During this session we will introduce ourselves and have an initial discussion about the Capstone Projects that are due at the end of the semester.

In addition, we will discuss the documentary we watched last week, *Columbia Revolt*. Many issues are raised in *Columbia Revolt*, including the importance of activism at Columbia and within universities more generally during the 1960s. The student protests proved that universities do not exist in a bubble, and are susceptible to the political, social, and economic realities that surround them. In this session of the CJS, we will talk about how the protests at Columbia reflected diverging ideas about what Columbia's role in society was – and should be. Many of these differing positions are visible in the alumni accounts of 1968 that we read. And as last year's Disorientation Guide shows, these divergent ideas continue to exist today.

### Preparatory Reading Assignment:

- “Spring '68: Alumni Recall a Tumultuous Time and How it Changed their Lives,” *Columbia College Today*, May/June 2008  
[https://www.college.columbia.edu/cct/may\\_jun08/cover\\_story](https://www.college.columbia.edu/cct/may_jun08/cover_story)
- Conor Friedersdorf, “The New Intolerance of Student Activism,” *The Atlantic*, November 9, 2015. <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/11/the-new-intolerance-of-student-activism-at-yale/414810/>

### Optional Reading:

- “Disorientation Guide,” created in 2014 by campus activist groups about current issues at Columbia, <https://cudisguide.files.wordpress.com/2014/08/dis-guide1.pdf>
- 1968: Columbia in Crisis (Online Exhibition from the Columbia University Archives)  
<https://exhibitions.cul.columbia.edu/exhibits/show/1968>
- George Joseph, “Breaking Past the Brochure,” *Youngist*, April 6, 2014  
<http://youngist.org/breaking-past-the-brochure/#.U4zpWZSwLtM>
- George Joseph, “Title IX and Title II federal complaint,” *Youngist*, April 24, 2014  
<http://youngist.org/columbia-students-file-clery-act-title-ix-complaints/#.U4zp55SwLtM>

### **Chronology of spring, 1968 at Columbia University**

- 23 April 1968 Occupation of gym site, occupation of Hamilton Hall
- 24 April 1968 Occupation of Low Library
- 26-28 April 1968 Occupation of Math, Avery, Fayerweather
- 30 April 1968 712 building occupiers and bystanders arrested
- 6 May 1968 University reopened, students boycott classes
- 17 May 1968 117 arrested at 114th Street SRO
- 21 May 1968 138 arrested in "Hamilton II" + bystanders
- 4 June 1968 Counter-commencement on Low Plaza.

### **CJS # 3 –RBML Visit**

*Week of February 20-23, 2017*

As a group, we will visit the Rare Book & Manuscripts Library, located on the sixth floor of Butler Library. University Archivist Jocelyn Wilk will present a show-and-tell of interesting archival documents and publications from the history of Columbia. In an era when a multitude of resources are readily available via digital technology, it is good to be reminded of the material resources that are available in archives, which tell a richer and often unknown story than cannot be accessed on the internet. Primary sources can also spark the historical imagination and curiosity of the dedicated researcher.

Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Columbia University Libraries:

<http://library.columbia.edu/locations/rbml.html>

#### Preparatory Reading Assignment:

- Ian Cobain and Richard Norton-Taylor, "Sins of colonialists lay concealed for decades in secret archive," *The Guardian*, April 18, 2012  
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk/2012/apr/18/sins-colonialists-concealed-secret-archive>

#### Optional Reading:

- David J. Craig, "The Ghost Files," *Columbia Magazine*, Winter 2013-2014  
<http://magazine.columbia.edu/features/winter-2013-14/ghost-files>

## CJS # 4 – Inclusion/Exclusion

Week of February 27 – March 3, 2017

What does it take to 'belong' at Columbia? In this class we consider the idea that a letter of admittance is not always enough: the barriers to inclusion at a college may extend beyond whether one "gets in" or not. Paul Tough opens his article, "Who Gets to Graduate?," with a deeply disturbing statistic: about a quarter of college freshmen born into the bottom half of the income distribution will manage to collect a bachelor's degree by age 24, while almost 90 percent of freshmen born into families in the top income quartile will go on to finish their degree. According to a study of this phenomenon at UT-Austin, there are no statistically significant differences in intelligence between poorer and wealthier students which would explain the disparity. Instead, researchers found that the impediments to success of poorer students could be attributed to the students own beliefs about their suitability for college: first, students in transition often experienced profound doubts about whether they really belonged — or could ever belong — in their new institution; and second, students tended to believe that ability was innate, and thus took early failures as a sign that they lacked 'what it took'. In this class we'll discuss the implications of these problems and proposals for how to remedy them, as well as relating them to your own experiences of the 'Columbia identity' and institutional belonging.

### Preparatory Reading Assignment:

- Paul Tough, "Who Gets to Graduate?" *New York Times Magazine*, May 15, 2014, [http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/18/magazine/who-gets-to-graduate.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/05/18/magazine/who-gets-to-graduate.html?_r=0)
- Identify your favorite or least favorite Columbian, write 100 words about this individual, and prepare to present why you chose him or her. Notable Columbians may include famous politicians, writers, public figures, former faculty members, prominent intellectuals, or institutional pillars of the Columbia community.
  - For an introduction to some of the most notable Columbians, please familiarize yourself with the *Columbia 250* website. The website features a page called "Columbians Ahead of Their Time." This list of short bios should provide an excellent starting point as you search for your favorite intellectual forefathers: [http://c250.columbia.edu/c250\\_celebrates/remarkable\\_columbians/](http://c250.columbia.edu/c250_celebrates/remarkable_columbians/)
  - Here, you will find the Finding Aid for the Historical Biographical Files, which features many of the figures noted in the *Columbia 250* list cited above: [http://findingaids.cul.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-ua/ldpd\\_4202865/summary](http://findingaids.cul.columbia.edu/ead/nnc-ua/ldpd_4202865/summary)

- For a broader look at the institutional history of the university, you might also look at the *Columbia 250* feature, “Columbia through Time:”  
[http://c250.columbia.edu/c250\\_celebrates/people\\_and\\_ideas/](http://c250.columbia.edu/c250_celebrates/people_and_ideas/)

## **CJS # 5 – Teachers & Mentors: Office Hours and Beyond**

*Week of March 6 – 10, 2017*

In this session, we will explore the culture of teaching at Columbia and the importance of building a wide range of mentoring relationships. In the weeks leading up to this class, you should reach out to a professor at Columbia and interview them (for about 15 minutes) about their research and academic history. This is a great opportunity to interact with someone who you've enjoyed as a teacher, or would like to work with in the future in a way that is more personal than getting help with an assignment or an exam. You'll also gain some perspective on Columbia as institution from their position 'on the other side of the classroom', so to speak.

### *Preparatory Reading Assignment:*

- Rachel Riederer, “The Teaching Class,” *Guernica: A Magazine of Art & Politics*, June 16, 2014 <https://www.guernicamag.com/features/the-teaching-class/>

### *Optional Reading:*

- Alan Ryans, “The Fall of the Faculty,” (book review) *Times Higher Education*, December 1, 2011 <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/books/the-fall-of-the-faculty-the-rise-of-the-all-administrative-university-and-why-it-matters/418285.article>

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## **Week of March 13-17, 2016: Spring Break – No CJS Sessions**

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## **CJS # 6 – CJS #9 – Capstone Presentations & Wrap Up**

*Weeks of March 20, 27, April 3, April 10, 2017*

During our final three classes, each one of you will present your Capstone Project. We will discuss the specifics of this assignment early in the semester, and a sheet outlining the Capstone Project will be distributed. We will also take a look at some examples from last year and wrap up in the final session with an overview of our journey for the year.