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PRINCETON RESEARCH FORUM NEWSLETTER

Summer-Fall 2023

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

With gratitude to Linda Holt for her years of service as President of PRF, I have, with some trepidation, taken on the responsibilities of that office. My appreciation for Linda and others who have served as president increased as I quickly came to the realization that there is far more to do as president than as treasurer, the office I have held for several years. I am grateful to those who continue in their roles in the organization or who have taken on new responsibilities, such as **Bob Craig**, the incoming secretary. As I write this, however, there are still the unfilled positions of treasurer and Works-in-Progress coordinator. Please contact me if you might consider one of these roles.

The PRF Board met in September to discuss plans for the coming season. Despite a wish to resume in-person meetings, there was still enough concern about COVID-19 that we decided not to hold our traditional wine and cheese party this fall. As the situation changes, we will continue to discuss whether to return to in-person gatherings.

Aside from health concerns, there is the convenience of staying home and joining a

meeting remotely. Many of our recently accepted new members live far away from Princeton, and their participation will be very limited if we do not offer an online option.

At the same time, even though our interactions are intentionally of an intellectual nature, we remain physical and social beings who would like to be in the presence of whole bodies. Surely we will find occasions for socializing, whether by resuming our lunch gatherings or planning a party. Keep reading the monthly calendar to see what's in store!

Our interest groups, Science, Poetry, and Humanities, continue to meet regularly, whether by Zoom or in person. If any members have an interest not covered by these groups, we can always form other groups. My hope is that all members will support their fellow scholars by joining in the Works-in-Progress presentations. The first of these will be a talk by Richard Corbett on November 14 at 1pm on the topic "Researching the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939." Plans are in the works for monthly Works-in-Progress meetings, which, for now, will be held on Zoom to accommodate those who live at a distance. If you have a project you would like to discuss with the group, whether in an embryonic or nearly fully developed stage, let me know.

You will read about our new members in this newsletter as well as some of the recent accomplishments of continuing members. Many thanks to **Karen Reeds** for assembling all this information. Deep thanks also to **Lina Genovese** for making the Newsletters available on our website and for keeping us all connected on Zoom. Let us look forward to a new season of sharing ideas and encouraging one another's scholarship!

Joyce Irwin

PRF President

PRF ANNUAL MEETING 2023 and ELECTION OF OFFICERS TO SERVE 2023-2025

Following the bylaws of the Princeton Research Forum, we elect our officers at our June Annual Meeting, for two-year terms. Since we could not meet in person during COVID, Nominating Committee's slate of candidates was presented at the Zoom Annual Meeting on June 7, 2023. The Nominating Committee was headed by co-chairs, **Connie Goddard** and **Linda Holt** *ex officio*; **Bob Craig, Donn Mitchell**, and **Lina Genovesi** served as Committee Members.

An email vote followed, and on July 1, Linda Holt, our outgoing President, announced that the members had unanimously elected the entire slate of candidates proposed by the Nominating Committee. Many of these committed members had previously served in these or other positions and were willing to sign up for another term despite the difficulties of pandemic times. Our new roster of officers, who will serve for 2-year terms, through the Annual Meeting of 2025:

T	
Joyce Irwin	
Donn Mitchell	
Bob Craig	
Open*	
ge Joan Goldstein	
Ludmilla Popova-	
Wightman	
Connie Goddard	
Karen Reeds	
Karen Reeds***	
Karen Reeds	
Terri McNichol	
Pamela Sheehan	
Winifred Hughes	
Lina Genovesi	
s Open **	
s Jamileh Gerber	
(volunteer)	
Groups:	
Jeff Spear	
Winifred Hughes	
Science/Science History:	
Boris Katz	

*Board members will assume Treasurer tasks until that position is filled.

**This position may be combined with Program Chair as Pamela Sheehan's schedule changes in 2024.

***NB For new Library Access procedures, see below, p.14-17.

NEW MEMBERS

PRF is delighted to welcome three new members.



Mark H. Danley grew up in Newport News, Virginia and earned his B.A. in History and Classical Civilizations from University of Richmond in 1990 and his M.A. in History from Virginia Tech in 1991. After a few years active duty in the U.S. Army, he began his doctoral studies in History at Kansas State University, earning his Ph.D. in 2001 with specialties in military history and eighteenthcentury Europe. He earned his M.L.I.S. (Master of Library and Information Science) from Louisiana State University in 2003, with concentrations in cataloging and archives/special collections. He was Assistant Professor (later Associate Professor) in University Libraries at University of Memphis from 2005–2015. He has previously held adjunct faculty positions teaching history at University of Memphis, Louisiana State University and Christian Brothers University in Memphis, Tenn. From 2007-2015 he occasionally taught part-time in the Masters of Military History program at Norwich University. Since 2015 he has worked fulltime as a librarian in the federal civil service system.

Mark publishes scholarly work in both the history and library fields and has presented papers and chaired panels at many conferences, including the Society for Military History Annual Meeting, the Tennessee Library Association Conference, the American Library Association Midwinter Conference, and others. His main publications and conference papers in the history field concern the Seven Years' War as a global conflict, eighteenth-century British strategic thought, and warfare in eighteenthcentury South Asia. His main publications in the library field concern the special considerations of cataloging military history materials.

Joanna Kafarowski writes (with a photo taken in Narsaq, Greenland):



I'm a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, a Fellow of The Explorers Club and a member of the Society of Woman Geographers living in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. In

my early career, I worked in publishing and for women's organizations. Later, I worked with Inuit women in the Arctic on gender and natural resource issues including environmental contaminants and wildlife management, and I also enjoyed engaging with Indigenous women on related projects across the circumpolar north. Over the past decade and a half, my passion has been researching and writing about women and polar history. I wrote The Polar Adventures of a Rich American Dame A Life of Louise Arner Boyd (Dundurn Press, 2017) about the first female Arctic explorer as well as Antarctic Pioneer The Trailblazing Life of Jackie Ronne (Dundurn Press, 2022) about an early female Antarctic explorer. At present, I am writing a book for Princeton University Press on women and exploration in Greenland. My research interests include women's history, Greenland, the geography of polar regions and women and natural resources although I'm also tempted by conversations about pilgrimage and sacred sites.



R. Isabela Morales is an award-winning author and public historian, specializing in the history of slavery and emancipation in the United States. She currently serves as the

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Editor of The Princeton & Slavery Project, an investigation into Princeton University's historical ties to the institution of slavery. <u>https://slavery.princeton.edu/</u> Isabela is also the Education and Exhibit Manager at the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum (SSAAM), central New Jersey's first Black history museum: <u>https://www.ssaamuseum.org/</u> (Watch for plans for a PRF field trip to the museum.)

Isabela received her PhD in history from Princeton University and a BA in history and American Studies from The University of Alabama. Her first book, *Happy Dreams of Liberty: An American Family in Slavery and Freedom* (Oxford University Press, 2022), won the Huntington Library's 2023 Shapiro Book Prize and the 2023 Tom Wason Brown Book Award from the Society of Civil War Historians and the Watson-Brown Foundation. It is currently among three finalists for the Gilder Lehrman Center's 2023 Frederick Douglass Prize.

Isabela recently gave a moving talk about her book at Morven Museum in Princeton. For <u>New</u> <u>Jersey Studies</u>, she had previously reviewed the museum's new permanent exhibition which reevaluates Morven's history as a site of bondage. For links to videos of her book talk at the Princeton Public Library and her Shapiro Prize Lecture, visit her website: <u>http://www.risabelamorales.com/</u>

Isabela is also featured in part 1 of the Emmynominated documentary, <u>The Price of Silence</u> (<u>Truehart Productions</u>). The film was inspired by a prize-winning book on the history of New Jersey's enslaved people, *If These Stones Could Speak* (Lambertville, NJ: Wild River Books, 2018), written by Isabela's colleagues, Beverly Mills and Elaine Buck, the founders of the Stoutsburg Sourland African American Museum. They are themselves descendants of men and women brought to life in the film. To see the film and a compelling discussion of the project (hosted by Morven Museum): <u>https://www.truehartproductions.org/</u> <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kvUV7xA</u> <u>kB</u>

WORKS IN PROGRESS

Mark your calendar, PRF Works in Progress in 2023, watch for the zoom links, and look forward to more WIPs to come in 2024:

Tuesday, November 14, 2023, 1pm EST Richard Corbett, "Researching the Spanish Civil War, 1936-1939" – find out how Rich delves into the historical background for his novel-in-progress. Please RSVP to Ellen Gilbert. Zoom link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4397398582?pwd= K1F6QU9sVkU0c2RSa1pLY1c3WitaUT09 Meeting ID: 439 739 8582 Passcode: Bw8VuO One tap mobile +13092053325,,4397398582#,,,,*066771# US +13126266799,,4397398582#,,,,*066771# US (Chicago) For more about Rich, see the Winter 2021 PRF Newsletter and his website https://corbettwriting.com/.

Tuesday, December 12, 2023, 1pm EST, Eric J. Titus, "Karl Barth's Theology During the Weimar Republic," which builds on his dissertation. For more about Eric, see the 2022-2023 PRF Newsletter.

BREAKING NEWS! – Two poetry prizes for **Winifred Hughes**!

Winnie's poem, "The Scene Without," is the overall winner of the 2023 Fish Publishing Company's annual competition. It was chosen from 2,348 entries by the contest judge, noted American poet and former poet laureate Billy Collins, and has now been published in *Fish Anthology 2023:* https://www.fishpublishing.com/book/fish-

anthology-2023/ Winnie read her poem at the launch of the anthology at the West Cork Literary Festival in Bantry, County Cork, Ireland, in July.



Winnie Hughes at Fish Anthology 2023 (6th from left, bottom row). Courtesy <u>fishpublishing.com</u>

Billy Collins said of Winnie's poem:

This poem is subtle elegy which uses the familiar scene of a rural backyard to evoke the absence of a loved one. The flora and flora are intimately rendered for nothing has changed, except a terrible sense of absence, creating a palpable split on what's on either side of the window. An accomplishment in understatement. –

<u>https://www.fishpublishing.com/?s=Hugh</u> <u>es#bio</u>

THE SCENE WITHOUT

Winifred Hughes

"The scene" is still the same—that's what you called it,

the view from our back windows that opens in winter

like a spread scroll—the brook that runs free and full, skidding

among stones, browned meadows with their broken stems

and grasses, matted leafmold, woods stripped of cover

spilling pent up secrets, light pallid, whether bleak or tender

only you could have told. You'd still know it instantly—how you

loved the scope of it, the sheer expanse; loved even the battered,

colorless stalks, the twiggy bushes, hollow seedpods—remnants

of your care only last summer, no longer ago than that, now

unbridgeable by any quickening of spring, unimaginable by any

thought of mine. Only this morning I saw a sharp-shinned hawk

gliding overhead, ready to plunge. Before that a fox, uttering

its short, sharp yap, then loping across the yard to re-enact

the primal plot that ends in survival and abrupt extinction.

Small songbirds enact it too, gorging against the cold but not

to the point of slowing their flight from the hawk. Look there—

I want to show you the brown creeper camouflaged against

the mottled bark, until it spirals down to the base of the trunk;

the golden-crowned kinglet flitting skittishly among the bare

branches, picking at lichens; the flicker, with its yellow-shafted wings

and dagger-like bill, drilling for grubs in the half-thawed ground.

I wonder if they might be the same individual birds you saw this time

last year, looking out from these same windows on this winter scene.

I want to tell you that they are all still here, that I am still here, that nothing

has changed—just everything inside the windows, but nothing without.

And Winnie's poem, "Imprinted," has been awarded honorable mention in the current *Passager* poetry contest. It has just appeared in: 2023 Passager Poetry Contest, #75: https://www.passagerbooks.com/2023passager-poetry-contest-75/

Mark your calendar! Winnie will read her poem at the *Passager* anthology launch: <u>Sunday</u>, <u>November 12, 2023, 2pm EST</u>

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https://www.passagerbooks.com/events https://ubalt.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_aS 9UMot_Sd6HSvwSy9nkxA#/registration

IMPRINTED

Winifred Hughes

I might have forgotten that moment when the sunlight fell into silence along the sand at Vineyard Sound,

opened a chink in the long afternoon letting in light that imprinted water and sand, white egret

poised at the verge, still as forgetting or absence, scallop hard-edged in my hand,

trailing seaweed rooted to the vacant shell. The touch we felt and withheld.

MORE BREAKING NEWS, MORE

POETRY! –Just out, *Remember Death*, by Edvin Sugarev, translated from the Bulgarian by **Ludmilla Popova-Wightman** (Bulgarian Poetry in Translation, Vol. 11, edited by Lois Maris Harrod; Princeton: <u>Ivy Press</u>, 2023). This is the third volume of Sugarev's short poems that Ludmilla has given us in English. A sample:

GAME

Edvin Sugarev

we are children we use bricks from the tower of Babel as our wooden blocks

MEMBER NEWS

Toni Vogel Carey was awarded a 2023 PRF Hutner Presentation Grant for her presentation at the Adam Smith tercentenary conference in Scotland. Toni writes:

I want to express heartfelt thanks to PRF for the Hutner Presentation Grant awarded me for a presentation titled "The Invisible Hand and Natural Selection: Peas in a Conceptual Pod" at the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, in July 2023. These two famous methodological concepts come from different domains and different centuries, so it comes as a jolt to see them juxtaposed. That said, I am not the first to connect them. Stephen Jay Gould actually calls them "isomorphic – that is, structurally similar point for point, even though the subject matter differs."

What I presented were six direct parallels between the two, some simple, some

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complex. A simple one is the strong tendency for phenomena eligible for explanation in terms of an invisible hand or natural selection to be explained in terms of intentional design, human or divine. But all six involve the idea that nature tout court is wiser and more trustworthy than *Homo sapiens*. For Smith the invisible hand means not just laissez faire, but of *'laissez faire la Nature,'* in de Boisguilbert's more complete 1707 phrase.

What may interest PRF members most about my project is its pivotal role in my independent scholarly life. Having long since left academia, I was suddenly seized - there is no other word for it – with a hunch that there must be a close conceptual connection between these two foundational concepts. Undaunted by never having had a course in economics or biology, I headed back to university libraries, copying materials that, as a music major with a PhD in philosophy, I had never expected to need. And I began a years-long correspondence with the historian of biology David Hull at Northwestern University, who I suspect helped get my paper published in a journal named – wonder of wonders – Biology and Philosophy. Since then I have published 35 articles and presented 24 conference papers as an independent scholar. I resurrected and revised the Smith-Darwin paper to include in a book about Adam Smith's methods.

After a panel that **Lara Freidenfelds** organized for the 2020 American Historical Association on "Narrating the History of Sex and Reproduction in a Time of Conservative Backlash," a CNN editor asked her to contribute occasional opinion pieces. Lara's most recent <u>CNN Opinion Post</u> appeared this fall: "The truth behind menopause test kits" (October 7, 2023). See <u>Nursing Clio</u> for Lara's October 2023 review of Lori Freeman, *Bishops and Bodies: Reproductive Care in American Catholic Hospitals.*

Ellen Gilbert writes: "I continue to write book reviews for *Library Journal*; am teaching a course on "Children's Books" at the Princeton Learning Coop, and continue to read to kindergarteners through the Princeton Public School's GrandPals program. I'll be teaching a six-week 'Power of Words' short story series at the Princeton Public Library starting in February 2024."

Mark your calendar: **Kairy Koshoeva** will present a piano concert on <u>Sunday November</u> <u>19, 2023, 2:30pm EST</u>, at the Seminary Chapel on the campus of the Princeton Theological Seminary, 64 Mercer St, Princeton, NJ 08540. Kairy and her special guest, the violinist Sunghae Anna Lim, Performance Faculty, Music Department, Princeton University, will perform works by Bach, Bortkiewicz, Tchaikovsky, and Franck.



This musicale is sponsored by the Steinway Society and the New Schoolfor Music Study (NSMS) for an annual Steinway Society scholarship award in support of deserving students. The concert honors Alice Kuhn

Bleimaier, the mother of Steinway Society founding member, John Bleimaier. To purchase tickets and learn more about the Steinway Society Scholarship at NSMS:

- <u>https://form.jotform.com/232405774353153</u>
- <u>https://www.nsmspiano.org/post/kairy-koshoeva-in-concert-november-19th</u>,
- <u>https://www.nsmspiano.org/student-</u> <u>scholarships</u>

Terri McNichol writes: "I'm pleased to share that my abstract, "Re-Enchanting Their World: College Students' Aesthetic Inquiry into Global Arts in the Museum" will be featured as a Poster Presentation at the 2023 Global Flourishing Conference, November 29-30, 2023, hosted by @TempletonWorld. The conference is virtual and FREE to all! Please join me, other researchers, and decision-makers working towards a flourishing world. Register at: https://bit.ly/2023FlourishingConf or https://confsa.eventsair.com/globalflourishing-conference/register/Site/Register The conference is sponsored by the Templeton World Charity Foundation."

Ashwini Mokashi Ashwini has just accepted a part-time position as a Hindi lecturer at Oxford University. Her research article, "Exploring Three Traditions of Philosophical Counseling in India," appeared in the *Journal* of the American Philosophical Practitioners Association (March 2023, vol 18:1), in a special issue on philosophical counseling in India. She wrote the foreword to a new book, "East & West," a collection of dialogues with Gurudev Ranade, the founder of one of those traditions (Belagavi, India: Academy of Comparative Philosophy and Religion, 2023).

To appreciate Ashwini's philosophical counselling practice, watch the video,

"Philosophical Health as bridge btw Indian and Western traditions: Ashwini Mokashi & Luis de Miranda" – a wide-ranging conversation between Ashwini and Luis de Miranda, Senior Research Fellow at the Philosophy Department of the University of Turku, Finland, and a Fellow of the Turku Institute for Advanced Studies. It includes engaging stories about how Ashwini got her start as a philosophical counselor at a detention center in India (long before she even knew there could be such a profession) and how she uses her philosophical learning with her counseling clients

Karen Reeds contributed the Foreword to a newly published volume: *Plants in 16th and 17th Century: Botany between Medicine and Science*, edited by Fabrizio Baldassarri (Medical Traditions, Volume 8, series editor, Alain Touwaide) (Berlin/Boston: DeGruyter, 2023) <u>https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110739930</u>).

IN MEMORIAM

In recent months PRF has lost two longtime members **Sally Reichart** and **Evelyn Witkin**. And just last week, we learned of the death of **Natalie Zemon Davis**, who served on our Advisory Board. We will miss them all greatly.

Natalie Zemon Davis (1928-2023)

A longer tribute to Natalie will appear in the next issue; for now, we share a personal tribute by **Maureen E**. **Mulvihill**, posted to listservs that Natalie was active on (EMW-L Early Modern Women; Ficino-L; c18-L; SHARP-L):

Remembering Natalie Zemon Davis (Detroit, 1928-Toronto, 2023)

Many colleagues are saddened by the recent passing of cultural historian and feminist scholar, **Natalie Zemon Davis**.

Natalie was in an elite vanguard of highfunctioning women of her generation, now departed: Mary Eccles, Elizabeth Eisenstein, Elizabeth Ettinghausen [PRF member], Margaret MacCurtain, Leona Rostenberg, Madeleine B. Stern, *inter alia.* We are often startled when they leave us, as colleagues of such talent should be around forever.

For a detailed obituary with four photos, see <u>New York Times</u> online, October 23, 2023. (Correction: <u>Kingswood Cranbrook</u> in suburban Detroit was certainly not a "girls' finishing school" when Natalie attended; this is a selective campus for aspiring achievers, famously designed by Eero Saarinen. Many of my professors and classmates at Monteith College, Detroit, had deep ties to <u>Cranbrook</u>.)

Natalie's years of service as a valued member of the Advisory Board, <u>Princeton</u> <u>Research Forum</u>, NJ, will always be appreciated; likewise, her contribution to my essay on <u>the Margrieta Van Varick exhibition</u> (co-curator, Marybeth De Filippis [PRF member]) and to my <u>Ulysses centenary</u> <u>essay</u> to which she contributed a generous Comment. <Here's Natalie interviewed.>

Unacknowledged in most accounts is her last book, *Listening to the Languages of the People: Lazare Sainéan on Romanian, Yiddish, and French* (Vienna: Central Eastern UP, 2022; <u>advert</u>.). Gábor Klaniczay's <u>remembrance</u> on the CEU website enhances our appreciation of her eclectic interests and full-circle return to ethnic roots. Rest in Peace, Natalie, many are inspired by your example. MEM / Princeton Research Forum, NJ.



<u>Preview YouTube video</u> – Natalie Davis and Peter Miller, Dean, Bard Graduate College: "About an Inventory: Dutch New York Between East and West: The World of Margrieta van Varick"

Sarah (Sally) Louise Bennett Reichart (1931-2023)

The Princeton Packet obituary below touches only briefly on Sally's scholarly contributions to the history of music and dance. In addition to her publications listed on the PRF website, Sally's 1986-87 study of the provenance and annotations in some of Princeton University Library's Italian incunables deserves mention an early entry in the now-flourishing field of the material culture of the early printed book. (See https://library.princeton.edu/specialcollections/topics/annotated-books. A copy of this study is in the PUL Special Collections File under "Incunabula.") Sally's last publication, co-authored with independent scholar Vivian Ramalingam, "Three Heptagonal Sacred Spaces," appeared in Music and Deep Memory: Speculations in Ancient Mathematics, Tuning, and Tradition -In Memoriam Ernest G. McClain, 1918-2014, ed. Brvan Carr and Richard Dumbrill (London: Iconea Publications, 2018). The editors observed:

The number seven looms large [here]... because these proportions generate a scale of seven notes, widely associated in antiquity with the seven classical "planets." Seven is also linked to one of the earliest geometrical problems which is unsolvable with compass and unmarked straightedge alone: the drawing of a heptagon. Sarah Reichart and Vivian Ramalingam show how this challenge was navigated by convenient approximations in several striking monuments of sacred architecture. They provide a rich account of the histories and implicit symbolisms of these sites, striking in their cross cultural resonance. Their survey covers three buildings, in France, the Netherlands, and Germany (and mentions several other sites of interest along the way), and also treats the extensive symbolism of the number seven rooted in myth, scripture, and numerology.



Sarah (Sally) died at her home in Princeton on Wednesday, July 12 in Hospice care. She was born in Chicago in 1931, soon moving to Boston where her father joined the faculty of MIT. In 1941, the family moved to Washington, DC, after her father joined the Navy. She graduated from the Holton Arms School in Washington, a life-rewarding experience for her.

Sally lived in the Washington area until she attended Vassar College from which she graduated in 1952 with a double major in Music and Geology. She worked briefly for General Electric in Schenectady, then taught Science at the Brierley School in New York City before marrying Richard Benjamin Reichart on September 25, 1954. They had two children, Phyllis (Angela) and Andrew in New York, moving to Wayne, New Jersey and finally to Princeton in 1982.

In New York, Sally developed her lifelong interest in music and music history through a Master's degree in Music at Brooklyn College and a PhD in Musicology at CUNY Graduate Center. Her late husband said that she loved learning and went through life "by degrees." She taught and performed on the recorder and was a member of the New York Recorder Society.

After moving to Princeton, she earned a Master's in Library Science at Rutgers and worked in the Princeton Public Library. In her later years, she did much scholarly genealogical research, enduring gifts for her family and others.

She was predeceased by her husband Richard in 2020. She is survived by her daughter Angela (Phyllis) in Knoxville, TN; her granddaughter Lila in Massachusetts; her son Andrew and his wife Joy in Berkeley, CA; and her brother, Ralph Bennett, Jr. and his wife Carol in Silver Spring, MD.

Sally and her family are especially appreciative of the support and assistance of her neighbors and Jessica Almodovar. A memorial gathering will be organized for mid-August; details to

follow. Contributions to the Princeton Public Library in Sally's name are welcome.

Evelyn Maisel Witkin (1921–2023)

With **Evelyn Witkin**'s passing, the world has lost a great scientist and activist – and PRF has lost a beloved member. Evelyn joined PRF after her retirement from Rutgers. A conversation with **Karen Reeds** at a PRF lunch led to the founding of PRF's Science/Science History Group in 1998. Evelyn became the group's most faithful member and its most incisive commentator. She recommended more books to the group than anyone else.

Below, see the <u>New York Times obituary</u>, along with its embedded video, "DNA's Defenses," and links to several remembrances of Evelyn published in scientific and medical journals – all assembled thanks to **Boris Katz**, coordinator of PRF's Science Group.

Next, **Roger Moseley** offers his personal eulogy, delivered at the memorial gathering at *The Watershed, August 27, 2023.*

And, finally, prompted by Roger's mention of the special fruitcake Evelyn made so often for the Science Group, we pass along Evelyn's recipe for her sister Lillian Maisel's Lolly-Cake: bake it, share it, and remember Evelyn with gratitude.

Evelyn M. Witkin, Who Discovered How DNA Repairs Itself, Dies at 102 <u>https://www.nytimes.com/2023/07/13/science/</u> evelyn-m-witkin-dead.html

By Clay Risen, July 13, 2023

Her findings led to breakthroughs in the treatment of cancer and in the

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understanding of the mechanics of evolution.



The geneticist Evelyn M. Witkin in an undated photo. Her research shed new light on how solar radiation and chemicals in the environment impact our genetic makeup. Credit...Rutgers University

Evelyn M. Witkin, whose discovery of the process by which DNA repairs itself opened the door to significant advances in the treatment of cancer and genetic defects, died on Saturday in Plainsboro Township, N.J.

She was 102.

Her son, Joseph, said her death, in a rehabilitation facility, resulted from complications of a fall.

In a career that began at the dawn of modern genetic research in the late 1940s, Dr. Witkin explored the ways in which radiation both damaged DNA and generated a repair mechanism, what she came to call the SOS response.

The repair mechanism produces an enzyme that in turn creates replacement parts for the damaged DNA. But it's an imperfect process that can at times turn out slightly different versions, or mutations — what scientists call mutagenesis. Her insight into the SOS response, which Dr. Witkin developed with Miroslav Radman, then a scientist at the Free University of Brussels, shed new light on how solar radiation and chemicals in the environment affect humans' genetic makeup.

"She discovered the first coordinated response to stress in cells," Joann Sweasy, a geneticist at the University of Arizona who studied under Dr. Witkin, said in a phone interview. "And that's so incredibly important for understanding evolution, and for understanding mutagenesis in terms of tumors."

Dr. Witkin was still a graduate student at Columbia when she spent the summer of 1944 working at the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory, on the north shore of Long Island. Though she had no background in microbiology — her research until then had been with fruit flies — on her first day there she was assigned to generate mutations in cultures of the bacteria *E. coli*.

She placed several under a germicidal ultraviolet lamp. Almost all of them died. But four colonies survived.

"At this point, I asked, 'Why did they survive? Maybe a mutation made them resistant,"" <u>Dr.</u> <u>Witkin told The New York Times</u> in 2016.

That single question set in motion nearly a half-century of research for Dr. Witkin, first at Cold Spring Harbor and then at the Downstate Medical Center at the State University of New York, in Brooklyn, and finally at Rutgers University, where she worked from 1971 until retiring in 1991.

She won the National Medal of Science some years later, in 2002, but the pinnacle of her career came in 2015, when she and another

geneticist, Stephen J. Elledge, won the <u>Albert</u> <u>Lasker Award for Basic Medical Research</u>, the highest honor in the medical sciences after the Nobel Prize.

"She had a remarkable ability to see into fundamental biological questions," Donna L. George, a geneticist at the University of Pennsylvania who studied under Dr. Witkin, said by phone. "The central tenets of her ideas were validated, sometimes decades later, by the development of new experimental techniques and molecular probes." [See *Times* link for embedded video," by Flora Lichtman: "DNA's Defenses: *Evelyn M. Witkin and Stephen J. Elledge received a Lasker award for insights into how cells respond to damaged DNA.*"]

Evelyn Ruth Maisel was born on March 9, 1921, in Manhattan. Her father, Joseph, was a pharmacist who died when Evelyn was 3. Her mother, Manya (Levin) Maisel, then married Jacob Bersin, another pharmacist, who moved the family to Forest Hills, Queens.

Evelyn attended New York public schools and studied zoology at New York University. During her senior year, she joined a group of students who were protesting the university's policy of benching Black athletes whenever its sports teams played opponents from segregated schools.

They rallied around the case of a Black football player, Leonard Bates, who was to be left behind when the team traveled to the University of Missouri. They collected 4,000 names on a petition to let him play and organized 2,000 students to protest outside the central administration building.

"No Missouri compromise!" they chanted. "Let Bates play!"

Mr. Bates did not play — against Missouri or, later, against other segregated teams. Other Black athletes faced similar discrimination. The protests continued through the school year, until the university put an end to them by suspending <u>seven of the movement's leaders</u>, including Evelyn.



Dr. Witkin at her home in Princeton, N.J., in 2015, the year she and another geneticist won the Albert Lasker Award for Basic Medical Research.Credit...Laura Pedrick for The New York Times

She had been planning to continue into graduate work at N.Y.U., but now, having also lost a graduate assistantship as punishment, she set her sights on Columbia. She graduated from N.Y.U. in the fall of 1941 and immediately went uptown to begin her doctorate.

"My having gone to Columbia was the greatest blessing that ever happened to me professionally," <u>she told the National Science</u> and Technology Medals Foundation in 2016. She wasn't sure she'd have been a National Medal of Science laureate, she said, "if New York University hadn't decided that I was a bad girl in 1941."

She was already interested in genes, and especially in a theory espoused by the Russian

scientist Trofim Lysenko that denied their existence and insisted that environment shaped evolution.

At Columbia, she worked with another Russian-born researcher, <u>Theodosius</u> <u>Dobzhansky</u>, considered a founder of evolutionary genetics. He not only disabused her of Dr. Lysenko's ideas; he also introduced her to a paper by <u>Salvador Luria</u> and <u>Max</u> <u>Delbrück</u> proving that bacteria had DNA.

"Reporting on it for Dobzhansky's class, I jumped up and down with excitement," she told The Times. "At the time, one of the big questions involved how genetic mutations occurred. Thanks to Luria and Delbrück, I now saw how we could use bacteria models to answer that."

She married <u>Herman Witkin</u>, a psychologist, in 1943. He died in 1979. Along with her son, Joseph, a doctor who is also a founding member of the rock 'n' roll group <u>Sha Na Na</u>, she is survived by four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. Another son, Andrew, died in 2010.

Dr. Witkin stayed at Cold Spring Harbor until 1955, when she moved to SUNY Downstate. She later joined the faculty at Douglass College in New Jersey, at the time an all-women's institution attached to Rutgers. In 1983 she became the director of the Waksman Institute of Microbiology, also at Rutgers, where she stayed until retiring.

In 2021, on her 100th birthday, the Waksman Institute renamed one of its premier research laboratories for her.

Additional tributes, all worth reading: Michael R. Volkert, "Remembering Evelyn M. Witkin (1921–2023) and the SOS Response,"

PNAS (September 18, 2023): https://www.pnas.org/doi/full/10.1073/pnas.23 14904120

Geoff Watts (2023) "Evelyn Ruth Maisel Witkin. *The Lancet*, 402(10401), 522: <u>https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pi</u> <u>i=S0140-6736%2823%2901630-6</u>

Joann B. Sweasy and Philip C. Hanawalt, "Evelyn M. Witkin (1921–2023) – Pioneer of cell mutagenesis and DNA repair research," *Science* Vol. 381, Issue 6682, p 1052 (8 September2023: https://www.science.org/doi/epdf/10.1126/scie nce.adk1028

Roger Moseley's Eulogy

Memorial Service for Evelyn Witkin, The Watershed, August 27, 2023

This is a sad occasion, though there are tears in my eyes, there's always a smile in my heart whenever I think of Evelyn. I imagine many of you experience the same feeling.I imagine many of you experience the same feeling.

As others will/have recount/ed, she was not only an internationally famed scientist, a social justice activist, a pioneer among women in science, but also a kind, modest, person ... gentle yet strong. and radiating a kind of ... warm authority.

I'd like to tell about a couple of my happy memories. We first met when we were both auditing a course in evolutionary biology Princeton more than 25 years ago, and Evelyn invited me to join at her bookreading group in the Princeton Research Forum. Over succeeding years we read more than 100 books on topics ranging from evolution and molecular biology to neuroscience, nuclear physics, cosmology, fungi and worms ... and about scientists Aristotle and Lucretius, to Darwin, Watson and Crick. Evelyn often led the discussions and, even when failing vision required her to use audio books, she was able to recall fine details and make insightful observations that enlivened our discussions.

And she was also a gourmet cook. Her delicious coq au vin truly memorable. Often Evelyn would invite lucky friends to was tea. That is ... real tea ... not teabag tea ... but brewed in a teapot served in a fine China teacup. And always with the added delight of bite-sized cucumber sandwiches and, in a Proustian gesture to time and memory, madeleines. In the holiday season there was always a special treat ... Evelyn's scrumptious fruit cake.

I'm sure you have heard of Evelyn's enthusiasm for the Victorian era poet, Robert Browning: at one time she was the president of the New York Browning society. It was one of the few things that Evelyn and I had divergent opinions about, and we often joked about it. She knew I found him at once overthe-top and boring ... but she tried hard to persuade me that he had some important things to say.

In fact, intellectually restless after retiring from her position in the lab, she took up a diligent search to answer a question of a possible link between the poet and another of her other heroes, Charles Darwin. She had noticed a comment in Darwin's autobiography that in his youth he had been inspired to search the world, and nature, by a then popular 18th century book entitled <u>Wonders of the Little World</u>, by Nathaniel Wanley. She found that Browning had used the same book as a source of ideas throughout his life. Her research took her to the

Browning Memorial Library in Austin, Texas (of all places) and there she found Browning's own copy of that very book.

She perused this book, a bizarre compilation of travelers' tales, real and imagined, that marveled at the extraordinary and bizarre features of changing life forms around the planet. There was particular focus on the wide variation in human physiognomy and behavior in place and over time. Yet, in spite of that variety, Wanley observed that " ... even in the most Barbarous and cruel nations, none are utterly lost to all sentiments of Humanity and Civility"

Here was raised the suggestion not only of evolution but also about the origin of moral ideas. This had troubled both Darwin and Browning ... and Evelyn as well. Browning's poem 'Caliban upon Setebos' offers a convoluted explanation for the cruelties of a world created by a benevolent God. And Darwin himself realized that the survival of the fittest, required by his evolutionary theory, conflicted with the concepts of cooperation and altruism that underly moral ideas. Darwin suggested that "... groups with a greater number of courageous, sympathetic and faithful members would spread and be victorious over other tribes."

Like a good detective ... or a thorough scientist ... Evelyn firmly tied the knot. She contacted the Shrewsbury School in England where Darwin had been a student and found that the school still possessed the actual copy of Wanley's book that Darwin must have read as a boy She had discovered a previously unrecognized but vital intellectual link between Charles Darwin and the poet Robert Browning, and her work appeared as an article, her last publication, in the journal <u>Perspectives in Biology and</u> <u>Medicine</u>. Her two heroes were inspired by that same long forgotten book "Wonders of the Little World."

But that's Evelyn for you, always discovering new wonders about this little world ...

Lolly's Cherry-nut Cake recipe

Evelyn Witkin to Karen Reeds email, December 10, 2010:

Dear Karen,

I'm attaching the recipe -- in the family, we never call it fruitcake, which has a bad reputation. My sister Lillian's nickname was Lolly, so we call it Lolly cake. I stocked up on cherries last winter, so if you need any, I'll be glad to share them.

Enjoy the holidays! Evelyn 12/10/2010 Evelyn Witkin

Lolly's Cherry-nut Cake

Preheat oven to 325° and butter lightly

- 2 8"x 3 ^{3/4}" foil loaf pans
- \circ 1¹/₂ sticks butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 extra large or jumbo eggs
- \circ ³/₄ tsp vanilla
- \circ 1^{1/4} cups flour (divided)
- \circ pinch of salt
- \circ 8 oz walnuts
- 8 oz pecans
- 8 oz golden raisins (or 4 oz golden raisins and 4 oz dried cranberries)
- 8 oz Paradise cherries (the kind used in fruitcakes hard to find except between Thanksgiving and Christmas)

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Use processor. Keep machine running.

- 1. Cream butter
- 2. Add sugar gradually
- 3. Add eggs one at a time
- 4. Add vanilla
- 5. Stop machine and scrape down sides
- with spatula

6. Start machine, add 1 cup flour (mixed with salt); run until just mixed in (this requires a funnel)
7. Mix nuts and fruits with 1/4 cup flour, mix well in a large bowl
8. Empty batter on top of nuts and fruits, mix well, divide into loaf pans, tamping down to distribute
evenly and bake at 325° for about 1 hour, or until top is golden brown and cake begins to pull away from sides of pan

9. Turn out on a rack after 5 or 10 minutes.

This cake keeps very well in the freezer. For best results, slice thin with a sharp serrated knife while still cold. It's delicious frozen.

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY LIBRARY ACCESS – IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT NEW PROCEDURES

Here is a summary of the new realities of using Princeton University Libraries (PUL) as an independent scholar. To highlight how the new procedures apply to PRF members, I've included links to library webpages, and I've annotated excerpts from the webpages. Also, our librarian members, **Jamileh Gerber** and **Mark Danley**, can help you figure out how to get at digital and archival resources.

Karen Reeds PRF Library Access

1) As of this past summer, PUL has done away with Visitor Access Cards for nonprofit local organizations. So this is no longer a major budget item for PRF, and members no longer need to borrow the cards from PRF's library access liaison.

2) <u>Access to stacks</u>: Anyone who wants to get through the turnstile and into the stacks (and the Tiger Tea Room) at Firestone Library should reserve a Day Pass well ahead of time: <u>https://library.princeton.edu/services/visitors</u> NB There are only **25** slots available to the world on any given day, and no category of visitor has priority. So sign up as soon as you know the day you intend to visit Firestone. Once you have your Day Pass, you can go in and out of the library for as long as it's open that day. (Princeton Public Library no longer issues day-passes to Firestone – it just refers you to the PUL webpage.):

"Day Pass Reservations

Day passes provide access beyond the turnstile and are valid for one day. You must stop by the Access Desk upon your arrival. The library offers 25 day passes each day for anyone not affiliated with Princeton University who wish to use the collections and for quiet study. The following people must <u>make a reservation</u>.

- Faculty, staff, and students at an institution not affiliated with the above consortia
- Independent researchers [i .e. PRF members]
- Community members

You can reserve ahead of time to guarantee access, or you may do so at the Access Desk upon your arrival. Please note that you will need a **photo ID** to get your

day pass. Visitors who book a day pass need to arrive during the <u>open</u> <u>hours</u> of the Access Desk... If you have questions, please contact the Access Office at (609) 258-5737." <u>Make a reservation</u>: <u>https://libcal.princeton.edu/passes/firest</u> <u>one</u> Check Access Desk hours for the date of your reservation: <u>https://libcal.princeton.edu/hours</u>"

Typically, the Access Desk seems to be open M-F 9am-7pm, Sat/Sun 11am-7pm.

3) <u>Branch libraries</u>: PUL's branch libraries are more hospitable than Firestone to visitors. No sign-up seems to be needed. The branch libraries' staff might also be more helpful about letting you use databases without a Princeton University ID.

Marquand Library (art library) is currently under construction, and most of its collections are offsite. For the time being, there is a Marquand reading room in Firestone (C level), and it might be possible to have material brought there for you to use.

"Branch Libraries

Branch libraries are open to visitors when the buildings and libraries are open. There is no need to check in at the front desk. If you have questions about visitor access to a particular <u>branch</u>, please reach out to them directly."

"Marquand Library at Firestone

Please note that most of the collections are off-site.

Email <u>marquand@princeton.edu</u> in advance to discuss your visit. Also note that Marquand's <u>operating hours</u> differ from Firestone."

4) <u>Access to databases and other electronic</u> <u>resources</u> <u>https://library.princeton.edu/services/technolo</u> <u>gy/visitor-access</u>:

"Visitors may access Princeton University Library networked databases, e-books, and other digital collections at any library public workstation. Please note that these databases are not available to non-Princeton University users outside of the Library. **But** please note that even in the library, some databases are restricted by license to academic purposes by current Princeton University faculty, staff, and students only. Several of the Library's <u>discovery tools</u> are freely available to anyone with access to the internet."

5) Wireless access in the library

https://library.princeton.edu/services/technolog y/wireless-access:

"Princeton University provides wireless internet service to campus visitors through either the Visitor Wireless service or Eduroam. Visitors who are in the Eduroam community should connect to Eduroam; all other visitors should use the visitor wireless service."

6) <u>Tiger Tea Room, Open M-F, 10am-6:30pm</u> Once you get past the turnstile, check out this amenity. Tea, coffee, expresso, juices, pastries, sandwiches, snacks. Friendly staff. OK to bring books and laptops and to work at the tables. Likely to get crowded during term-time. Aside from the noisy expresso machine, it's a congenial place to meet PRF colleagues.

7) <u>Special Collections/Rare Books</u>: For independent scholars, the rare book room might be the most welcoming place in the library: <u>https://library.princeton.edu/special-</u> <u>collections/research-account-access</u>

"Princeton University Library welcomes all researchers to its special collections reading rooms. Special collections readers

in the Firestone Library, Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Marquand Library, and East Asian Library are **required to create a research account for access to the reading rooms and to submit online requests to consult special collections material**."

https://library.princeton.edu/specialcollections/library-services: Access Services

"Princeton University Library's Special Collections is open to all.

We welcome you to the reading rooms in Firestone and Mudd Libraries during our open hours of Monday-Friday 9am-4:45pm during the academic year and 9am-4:15pm during the summer. The information on this page will help you get started with your research."

8) <u>Visitor Borrowing Privileges – if you can</u> afford them:

https://library.princeton.edu/services/visitors/b orrowing

"Visitors may purchase borrowing privileges on a yearly or quarterly basis. The following is included when borrowing privileges are purchased:

- The ability to borrow physical materials from Princeton University Library (up to 25 items at a time)
- An access card that allows you through the turnstile at Firestone Library
- Free requesting of material that is held offsite

The following are NOT included in the purchase of borrowing, and cannot be purchased by visitors:

Off-site access to electronic resources, including but not limited to databases, ebooks, audiobooks

- Access to reserve materials
- Interlibrary loan service
- Borrow Direct loan services
- The ability to page items from the stacks

Borrowing Fees

- \$400 for 6 months from date of purchase
- \$800 for 12 months from date of purchase
- Alumni receive a 50% discount on borrowing fees.

If you would like to purchase borrowing privileges, please visit the Access Desk Monday to Friday from 9am to 5pm."

For an intensive research project where you would have to try to get a Visitor Day Pass over and over again, it might be worth paying for a Visitor's Borrowing Privileges. That gets you a guest borrower's access card and allows you to take up to 25 books home for a month and lets you save on parking and driving. With the access card's Alma ID number and password, you can renew books online and request RECAP books in off-site storage (they usually take a few days to reach Firestone's check-out desk for pick-up). The price: \$400 for 6 months from date of purchase: \$800 for 12 months from date of purchase. Quarterly borrowing privileges are no longer offered. (Visitor's Borrowing Privileges might be tax deductible as a research expense.)

9) <u>Library News</u>: To find out about exhibitions and other happenings at PUL, see the Library's

Newsletter and its links to blogs of individual libraries: https://library.princeton.edu/news

SCHOLARLY RESOURCES, OPPORTUNITIES and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Call for Submissions — Post45 Essay Prizes for Emerging and Contingent Scholars [posted on H-Scholar]. If you are writing on "any aspect of American literature and culture since the mid-twentieth century," check out this Call for Submissions from the open access online journal, Post45. The two prize-winning essays will be awarded \$500 each and ----pending anonymous peer review — will be published in the journal. Strong submissions that are not selected for a prize will also be considered for publication (also pending anonymous peer review). Deadline for submissions, January 15, 2024. https://post45.org/prizes-cfp/ Contact email: submissions@post45.org.

<u>Problems with access to archives?</u> — The Society of American Archivists, Privacy and Confidentiality Section, wants to know what kinds of access restrictions researchers are encountering. "You are invited to participate

in an English-language survey aiming to assess the experiences of people who have conducted research at or attempted to access materials at an archival repository in the United States. We welcome perspectives from researchers of all experience levels and fields of study. The survey will take approximately 10-30 minutes to complete. Any publication of full-text responses will be screened to anonymize information. However, we also invite those willing to participate in follow-up interviews to provide their contact information; this contact information will not be published or shared beyond the research team. Please follow this link to the survey:

> https://uark.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ 3KLAUuUC2tX8BGS_

To participate, please submit your answers by Nov. 23, 2023. Please feel free to share this survey link with any other archival researchers who may be interested in participating." For questions or concerns about the study, contact SAA researcher Katrina Windon, <u>windon@uark.edu.</u>

<u>An easy way to check the Table of Contents for</u> <u>many journals at once</u>: — "JournalTOCs is a Current Awareness Service (CAS) where you can discover the newest papers coming directly from the publishers as soon as they have been published online. You can search for articles by keyword, journals by publisher, title, or subject."

https://www.journaltocs.ac.uk/page_about.php

PRF and NCIS: STRENGTHENING OUR TIES

PRF is an affiliate member of NCIS, the National Coalition of Independent Scholars <u>http://www.ncis.org/</u>. The most obvious value of our being a Partner Group is that PRF members can submit manuscripts, book reviews, and our own books for review to NCIS's open-access, peer-reviewed journal, The Independent Scholar. Read the journal at: <u>https://www.ncis.org/theindependent-scholar/tis</u> and address queries to: <u>mailto:tis@ncis.org</u>.

NCIS also sponsors <u>H-Scholar</u>, an international web-based listserve/discussion group for independent scholars, where subscribers can post announcements, queries, and join in discussions on topics affecting independent scholars. H-Scholar is part of <u>H-Net</u>, a network of discipline-based listservs and related services to scholars inthe humanities and social sciences.

To explore H-Scholar and H-Net Commons:

<u>https://networks.h-net.org/</u> <u>https://networks.h-net.org/h-scholar</u>.

While PRF members are not automatically NCIS members, by joining NCIS as an individual member – as a number of PRF members have done – you benefit as an individual (want a webpage?), as a member of PRF, and as a part of the larger community of independent scholars. Happily, it works both ways: PRF has gained new members who learned about us through our ties with NCIS.

MAILING ADDRESS & WEBSITE

PRF's mailing address is: Princeton Research Forum, P.O. Box 264 Kingston NJ 08528-0264. Email: <u>info@princetonresearchforum.org</u> Website: http://www.princetonresearchforum.org/

Please send updates in your mailing, email address, or phone to **Joyce Irwin**.

DUES REMINDER

PRF observes the academic year from September 1 through August 31. Annual dues for an individual are \$40; the bargain price for a couple is \$60. A lifetime membership is \$400. The official deadline for receipt of dues for 2023-2024: December 31, 2023. But it's not too late to mail checks for missed 2022-

2023 dues (nor too early for 2024-2025) to: Princeton Research Forum, P.O. Box 264 Kingston NJ 08528-0264.

WORK-IN-PROGRESS

Until we have a WIP chair (please volunteer!), please contact **Joyce Irwin** to arrange to give a work-in-progress or other presentation.

PRF PRESENTATION GRANTS

Giving a talk at a meeting? Save your receipts and apply for a PRF Presentation Grant when you get home. The grants help our members cover some of the costs of registration, travel, and accommodation. The first five grants awarded in a given year are named in honor of our late colleague, Frankie Hutner (1918– 2014), a founding member of PRF whose generosity continues to fund these grants.

Grants are awarded on a rolling basis, with no annual deadline. To be eligible, applicants must be PRF members in good standing for at least one year, must be an independent scholar, must incur presentation-related expenses in excess of \$300 that are not fully reimbursed by any other grant or institution,

and must not have received more than one Presentation Grant within the previous five years.

If you meet the criteria, please send your documentation as soon as you have given a presentation to: **Karen Reeds**, PRF Grants Committee. Grant recipients are asked to write a short item about the presentation and conference for the PRF Newsletter. **Pandemic note:** To support PRF members' presentations in the Zoom era, the PRF Executive Board is formulating new guidelines for these grants. If your talk was or will be online, talk to Karen about ways that a PRF Presentation Grant might apply to expenses you've incurred, e.g., travel to archives (rather than the traditional expense of conference travel).

NEWSLETTER SCHEDULE

Spring/Summer Issue: *deadline* mid-June for publication in July.Fall Issue: *deadline* mid-late October for publication in November.Winter Issue: *deadline* mid-late February

for publication in April

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See *In Memoriam*, above, for Advisory Board Member, Natalie Zemon Davis, University of Toronto (1928-2023).