

# Columbia History Department

## Summer Research Fellowship 2022 Opportunities

**Position/Faculty member:** Prof. Rebecca Kobrin (rk2351@columbia.edu)

**Timeframe:** May - June

**Project description:**

The research fellow will survey secondary sources on post-1965 Russian/Ukrainian Jewish migration to the US and Germany; the researcher will also look through primary sources available at online archives; finally, the researcher will create a bibliography and summaries of scholarly pieces. The research fellow will develop the skills necessary to undertake a major research project from surveying what other scholars have said to what is available in the archives.

**How to apply:**

Interested students should apply through the Summer Research Application 2022 found on the History Department's Fellowship page (<https://history.columbia.edu/undergraduate/senior-thesis-2/>)

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**Position/Faculty members:** Prof. Rebecca Kobrin (rk2351@columbia.edu) & Prof. Mae Ngai (mn53@columbia.edu)

**Timeframe:** May - July

**Project description:**

The Mapping Historical New York Project visualizes Manhattan's and Brooklyn's transformations during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Drawing on census data, we explore how migration, residential, and occupational patterns shaped the historical city. The researcher will be working on looking at enslaved and free Blacks in New York City in the 1820 census.

As a researcher on this project, you will be tasked with helping collect, refine, and build spatial data for the Mapping Historical NYC project. To start, this will include work with city directories, source maps, and other archival materials. You will also work on digitizing historical streets and addresses. Research assistants will have a role in

developing methods to work with these datasets and establish workflows that other researchers and students will implement in the future as the project evolves.

Experience with spatial analysis and Geographic Information Systems is preferred but not required as staff already working on the Mapping Historical New York project will train researchers in the methods needed to carry out relevant digitization at the onset and student researcher will be paid for time spent acquiring requisite GIS skills. We're encouraging researchers on the project to pull in relevant contextual sources, deepen the team's understanding of the historical development of the city, and participate in method design and visualization design conversations.

**How to apply:**

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**Position/Faculty member:** Prof. Stephanie McCurry (sm4041@columbia.edu)

**Timeframe:** Flexible

**Project description:**

Research in Freedmen's Bureau Records for the state of South Carolina, dating 1865-1868. For a book (tentatively titled) *Reconstructing Belonging* about the reconstruction of lives and livelihoods in the U.S. after the American Civil War. This research is for a chapter (2) on freed peoples' attempts to forge new land and labor relations after emancipation, often on the same land and with the same white men/families who had previously owned them. I also want to focus on a rice strike in the SC lowcountry and on a couple of places in South Carolina where Black men and women succeeded in gaining title to land and worked out livelihoods independent of white planter employers.

The RA would work to identify the relevant documents in particular record groups or printed volumes and to take notes on the documents relevant to my chapter.

I would train the RA in archival research using both printed and online databases of Freedmen's Bureau records. I would also train them in the proper citation method (quite complicated) for National Archives documents. They would also learn how to cull large collections of archival documents for the parts relevant to a particular analysis and narrative. It would provide a valuable guided introduction to the use of archival sources more generally and to strategies and techniques of social historical analysis.

**How to apply:**

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**Position/Faculty member:** Prof. Pamela Smith (ps2270@columbia.edu)

**Timeframe:** May - June (and potentially August)

**Project description:**

- Compiling bibliography for a new project, Industry, Infrastructure, and Environment in early modern Europe
- Bibliography searching, potentially doing some reading and summarizing of various articles. RA needs to be trained by the librarians in searching.
- Completing further essays and digital project on the Making and Knowing Project and its edition, *Secrets of Craft and Nature in Renaissance France: A Digital Critical Edition and English Translation of BnF Ms. Fr. 640*: <https://edition640.makingandknowing.org>
- Copy-editing, digital humanities work on *Secrets of Craft and Nature*
- Prof. Smith will be working remotely the entire period. The RA will be also working with Making and Knowing Project team members

**How to apply:**

Interested students should apply through the Summer Research Application 2022 found on the History Department's Fellowship page (<https://history.columbia.edu/undergraduate/senior-thesis-2/>)

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**Position/Faculty member:** Prof. Samuel Roberts

**Timeframe:** May-July (flexible)

**Project description:**

The Critical Studies in Harm Reduction History Project: Historical Analysis of Public Health Activism against Structural Racism and Punitive Drug Policy.

The Research Cluster for the Historical Study of Race, Inequality, and Health (led by Prof. Samuel Kelton Roberts and coordinated by Valentina Parisi) has launched a program of research and public engagement around the (provisionally titled) theme of **“Critical Studies in Harm Reduction History.”** This project concerns itself with the historical analysis of certain events (1950s-1990s) in the United States, including

- drug policy, the War on Drugs, and mass incarceration
- Health policy
- medical, public health, and structural racism
- medico-racial constructions of addiction
- addiction/substance use disorder treatment and recovery policy politics
- health justice activism
- HIV/AIDS and HCV education and prevention
- Medically assisted treatment (MAT), including methadone maintenance and buprenorphine
- syringe/needle exchange programs (SEPs/NEPs)
- Decriminalization politics

Although many definitions of harm reduction exist internationally, applicants interested in this work may find a useful point of departure in the National Harm Reduction Coalition’s [“Principles of Harm Reduction”](https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/) (<https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>).

Student researchers will have the opportunity to do digital and possibly in-person archival research toward building an online repository and exhibition offering interpretive essays, images, video, audio, oral histories, primary sources, and a historical atlas. Each student researcher will receive training and supervision in

- digital archive and database research
- Writing short interpretive essays (similar to encyclopedia entries)
- Possible coordination with internal and external partners, including the Columbia Libraries’ Digital Scholarship office and members of the National Black Harm Reduction Network

Minimum qualifications:

- Task management and planning, and conscientious attention to detail
- Writing ability
- Experience in the use of various online research tools and databases (i.e. JSTOR, EBSCO, ProQuest, Wilson, etc.)
- Academic experience in African-American or Latinx history, or in public health studies

Helpful (but not required) skills:

- Archival research skills
- Audio or video editing
- Graphic design/web site design
- Familiarity with open-source, web publishing platforms (e.g., Omeka)
- Work or academic experience in public health, especially drug policy, substance use disorder (SUD) treatment, or harm reduction

**How to apply:**

Interested students should send an inquiry with resumé/cv and official or unofficial transcript to both Prof. Samuel Kelton Roberts ([skroberts@columbia.edu](mailto:skroberts@columbia.edu)) and Valentina Parisi ([vep2113@cumc.columbia.edu](mailto:vep2113@cumc.columbia.edu))