



October 7, 2013: Guest speaker Esther Katz, editor and director of the Margaret Sanger Papers Project, addressed how documentary editors approach the process of telling their subjects' life stories, drawing examples from her long history of working on Sanger, the birth control pioneer. Kate Culkin organized and moderated the session.

October 21, 2014: Seminar member Betty Boyd Caroli, author of *First Ladies* and *The Roosevelt Women*, delivered the fall 2013 **Dorothy O. Helly Works-in-Progress Lecture** at the CUNY Graduate Center. Caroli discussed her biography of Lady Bird Johnson, to be published by Simon & Schuster in 2014, addressing how she chose her subject (after having written about all the first ladies), the major problems she encountered, and the support system that helped her get the book written. The event was co-sponsored by CUNY Graduate Center's Department of History, Department of English, Center for the Study of Women and Society, The Leon Levy Center for Biography, The Center for the Humanities and the MA Program in Liberal Studies.

November 4, 2013: Guest speaker Laura Browder, Tyler and Alice Haynes Professor of American Studies at the University of Richmond and author of *When Janey Comes Marching Home: Stories of American Women at War*, discussed the memoir she is writing about her grandfather, Earl Browder, head of the American Communist Party in the 1930s and early 1940s. Victoria Olsen organized and moderated the session.

December 2, 2013: Guest speaker Tomiko Brown-Nagin, Daniel P.S. Paul Professor of Constitutional Law and Professor of History at Harvard University and author of *Courage to Dissent: Atlanta and the Long History of the Civil Rights Movement*, discussed her work on the lawyer, politician, and judge Constance Baker Motley, including empirical analysis she has done on Motley's and other judges' decisions. Jill Norgren and Sydney Stern organized the session, and Lynda Dodd moderated.

January 6, 2014: Guest speaker Michele Mitchell, Associate Professor of History at New York University and author of *Righteous Propagation: African Americans and the Politics of Racial Destiny after Reconstruction*, addressed how biographical work on Civil Rights activist and author Pauli Murray may fit into her current project, tentatively titled *Idle Anxieties: Youth, Race, and Sexuality during the Great Depression*. Carla Peterson organized and moderated the session.

February 3, 2014: Seminar member Julia Van Haaften's presentation on photographer Berenice Abbott was cancelled due to snow. It has been rescheduled for the first session of the 2014-2015 schedule: October 6, 2014.

March 3, 2014: In this problem solving session, three seminar members addressed challenges in their research. Anna Simonson, a PhD candidate in history at the CUNY Graduate Center and recipient of the Levy Center for Biography Dissertation Fellowship, addressed tensions between biography and history, and how she experiences them in her work on the life of Katharine Anthony. Kate Culkin, Associate Professor of History at Bronx Community College and author of *Harriet Hosmer: A Cultural Biography*, discussed why she moved from writing a biography of Ellen Tucker Emerson, the eldest daughter of Ralph Waldo Emerson, to writing a dual biography of Ellen and her sister Edith Emerson Forbes. Ruth Franklin, author of *A Thousand Darknests*

Lies and Truth in Holocaust Fiction, talked about the problem of how to deal with material that is provided by an earlier biographer but is not easy to corroborate in her biography of the author Shirley Jackson. Pat Auspos organized and moderated the session.

March 10, 2014: Seminar member Barbara F. McManus, Professor of Classics Emerita, The College of New Rochelle, and author of *Classics and Feminism: Gendering the Classics*, delivered the spring 2014 **Dorothy O. Helly Works-in-Progress Lecture** at the CUNY Graduate Center. In the illustrated lecture "Grace Harriet Macurdy (1866-1946): Pioneering Feminist Scholar," McManus discussed the life of Macurdy, Professor of Greek at Vassar College from 1893 to 1937, including her rise from a poverty-stricken childhood to become the first woman to win international recognition as a professional classicist and the first to focus her scholarship on ancient women. McManus explored the challenges of writing a biography of a woman who is relatively little known today but whose engrossing life story illuminates significant issues such as the opening of higher education to women, the erosion of gender and class barriers in the professions, the overcoming of disability, the delicate balancing act between personal and professional life required of women, the fissures and strains in female solidarity, and the sometimes vicious back-room battles among academics. The event was co-sponsored by CUNY Graduate Center's Department of History, Department of English, Center for the Study of Women and Society, The Leon Levy Center for Biography, The Center for the Humanities and the MA Program in Liberal Studies.

April 7, 2014: Guest speaker Kate Donovan, an archivist at New York University's Tamiment Library, talked about women's papers within the Tamiment collection and some of the ways it is necessary to search archives to find women's papers. Dorothy O. Helly organized and moderated the session.

May 5, 2014: Seminar members Allison Gilbert and Carol Ascher focused on locating and extracting information from sources. Gilbert, an Emmy-award-winning journalist and author of *Parentless Parents: How the Loss of Our Mothers and Fathers Impacts the Way We Raise Our Children*, challenged assumptions about the availability of resources to authors – from embargoed information intended only for the media to locating experts and whistleblowers. Ascher, author of *Simone deBeauvoir: A Life of Freedom* and *Afterimages*, shared the interview techniques she often uses to inspire cooperation from human sources. This session was organized by Nancy Rubin Stuart and moderated by Patricia Laurence.

June 6, 2014: The guest speaker for the 4th Annual Women's Writing Women's Lives Luncheon was seminar member Sallie Bingham, author of *Passion and Prejudice*, among other works. She talked about her varied experiences with archives, using them in her own research and establishing the Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture at Duke University. The luncheon was organized by Kathy Chamberlain and Sydney Stern.