

LARA VAPNEK

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Education

Ph.D., History, Columbia University, under direction of Eric Foner, 2000

M.Phil., History, Columbia University, 1994

Certificate in Feminist Studies, Institute for Research on Women & Gender, Columbia University, 1994

M.A., History, Columbia University, 1992

B.A., Barnard College, *magna cum laude*, with Honors in History, 1990

Academic Appointments

Professor, Department of History, St. John's University, 2017- present

Director of Graduate Studies, Department of History, St. John's University, 2024-present

Associate Professor, Department of History, St. John's University, 2011-2017

Assistant Professor, Department of History, St. John's University, 2006-2011

Lecturer, Department of History, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, 2005-2006

Adjunct Assistant Professor, Department of History, Columbia University, 2001-2006

Lecturer, Department of History, Barnard College, 2000-2002

Honors and Awards

National Endowment for the Humanities, Fellowship, 2023-2024

Rubenstein Library, Duke University, Travel Grant, 2022

Medal for Outstanding Faculty Achievement, St. John's University, 2019

Distinguished Lecturer, Organization of American Historians, 2009-present

Fellow of the New York Academy of History, elected 2016

Elmer L. Andersen Research Scholar, University of Minnesota Libraries, 2016

Writer-in-Residence, Frederick Lewis Allen Room, New York Public Library, 2012-2013

Research Support Grant, Schlesinger Library, 2007

President's Fellow, Columbia University, 1992-1996

Richard Hofstadter Fellow, Columbia University, 1991-1992

Ellen Davis Goldwater History Prize, Barnard College, 1990

Phi Beta Kappa, 1990

Books

"Mothers, Milk, and Money: A History of Infant Feeding in the United States," manuscript under contract with Oxford University Press.

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn: Modern American Revolutionary, Routledge Press, 2015.

Breadwinners: Working Women and Economic Independence, 1865-1920, University of Illinois Press, 2009.

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Journal Articles & Chapters (selected)

- “The Labor of Infant Feeding: Wet-Nursing at the Nursery and Child’s Hospital, 1854-1910,” *Journal of American History*, vol. 109, Issue 1 (June 2022), 90-115.
- “Clean Milk for a Dirty City,” *Urban Infrastructure: Historical and Social Dimensions of an Interconnected World*, edited by Joseph Heathcott, Jonathan Soffer, Rae Zimmerman. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2022.
- “Elizabeth Gurley Flynn: Mortal Enemy of Capitalism,” *Communist Women Activists from Around the World*, edited by Francisca de Haan. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023.
- “An Interview with Alice Kessler-Harris, co-authored with Tony Michels and Annie Polland, *Jewish Social Studies*, vol. 24, no.2 (Winter 2019), 82-105.
- “The Rebel Girl Revisited: Rereading Elizabeth Gurley Flynn’s Life Story,” *Feminist Studies*, vol. 44, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 13-42.
- “Women's Labors in Industrial and Postindustrial America,” co-authored with Eileen Boris, *Oxford Handbook of American Women's and Gender History*, edited by Ellen Hartigan-O'Connor and Lisa G. Materson. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- “The 1919 International Congress of Working Women: Transnational Debates on the ‘Woman Worker,’” *Journal of Women’s History*, vol. 25, no. 4 (Spring 2014): 160-184.
- “The International Federation of Working Women, 1919-1924,” scholarly essay, *Women and Social Movements, International*, edited by Kathryn Kish Sklar and Thomas Dublin. Alexander Street Press, October 2012.
- “Staking Claims to Independence: Jennie Collins, Aurora Phelps and the Boston Working Women's League, 1865-1920,” in *No Permanent Waves: Recasting Histories of U.S. Feminism*, edited by Nancy Hewitt. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010.

Book Reviews (selected)

- Peace on Our Terms: The Global Battle for Women’s Rights After the First World War*, by Mona L. Siegel *Labor: Studies in Working Class History*, vol. 19, no. 3 (September 2022), 129-131.
- Women’s Work and Politics in World War I America: The Munsingware Family of Minneapolis* by Lars Olsson, *Scandia*, vol. 86, issue 1 (Summer 2020), 123-126.
- Brokering Servitude: Migration and the Politics of Domestic Labor*, by Andrew Urban, *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas*, vol. 16, no. 4 (December 2019), 131-132.
- Frank Little and the IWW: the Blood that Stained an American Family*, by Jane Little Botkin, *New Mexico Historical Review*, vol. 94, no. 1 (Winter 2019), 112-113.
- Equality on Trial: Gender and Rights in the Modern Workplace*, by Katherine Turk, *American Historical Review*, vol. 112, issue 4 (October 2017), 1265-1266.
- We Shall Not Be Moved/No Nos Moverán: Biography of a Song of Struggle*, by David Spener, *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas*, vol. 14, no. 3 (September 2017), 111-112.
- The Salome Ensemble: Rose Pastor Stokes, Anzja Yeżierska, Sonya Levin, and Jetta Goudal*, by Alan Robert Ginsberg, *American Jewish History*, vol. 101, no. 2 (April 2017), 311-313.
- “Working Women and the Contested Meanings of Equality,” *Reviews in American History*, volume 44, no. 2 (June 2016), 305-311.

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The Great Lawrence Textile Strike of 1912: New Scholarship on the Bread & Roses Strike, edited by Robert Forrant and Jurg Siegenthaler, *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas*, vol. 12, no. 14 (December 2015), 133-134.

Child Care in Black and White: Working Parents and the History of Orphanages, by Jessie B. Ramey, *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas*, vol. 11, no. 1 (Spring 2014), 133-135.

Three Worlds of Relief: Race, Immigration, and the American Welfare State from the Progressive Era to the New Deal, by Cybelle Fox, *Journal of Children and Poverty*, vol. 19, no. 1 (March 2013), 64-65.

She Was One of Us: Eleanor Roosevelt and the American Worker, by Brigid O'Farrell, *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas*, vol. 9, no. 3 (Fall 2012), 119-121.

Earning Power: Women and Work in Los Angeles, 1880-1930 by Eileen V. Wallis. *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, vol. 11, issue 1 (January 2012), 119-122.

Breadwinners and Citizens: Gender in the Making of the French Social Model, by Laura Levine Frader. *Enterprise & Society*, vol. 12, no. 2 (June 2011), 455-457.

Transcending the New Woman: Multiethnic Narratives in the Progressive Era, by Charlotte J. Rich. *Journal of Illinois History*, vol. 13, no. 1 (Spring 2010), 68-69.

Conference Presentations (Selected)

"Laboring Mothers in the 1980s: from Self-Help and Breast Pumps to Union Action and Welfare, panel organizer (with Kirsten Swinth), Labor and Working-Class History Association Conference, June 2025

"Care is Work," roundtable participant, Max Conference on Women's History, Center for Women's History, New-York Historical Society, March 2024

"Intimate Labor Revisited: the Legacy of Eileen Boris's Reconceptualization of Work," Roundtable Participant, Berkshire Conference on History of Women, June 2023

"Social Reproduction and Everyday Class Struggle in the United States and Spain," commentator, Labor And Working-Class History Association Conference, May 2023

"Love, Anarchy, Radical Feminism and Emma Goldman," Roundtable Participant, Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association," virtual program, February 2022

"'Little Ones Left Desolate and Dependent': Institutional Care for the Infants of Wet-Nurses in New York City, 1850-1900," Society for the History of Children and Youth, virtual program, June 2021

"Woman Suffrage, Race and Class," roundtable participant, How Long Must Women Wait for Liberty? Woman Suffrage and Women's Citizenship in the Long History of the 19th Amendment, University of Lille and Nouvelle Sorbonne, January 2020

"Roma and Histories of Domestic Labor," roundtable participant, American Historical Association, January 2020

"Radical Migrations: People and Ideas on the Move," roundtable participant, Global Labor Migration Past and Present, International Institute of Social History, June 2019

"Mothers and the Milk Wars: Consumer Cooperatives and Anticommunism in 1930s New York City," presenter, International Federation for Research in Women's History, August 2018

"From National to Transnational: An Exploration of Changing Configurations of Labor during the Cold War," roundtable participant, Annual Meeting of the Labor and Working-Class History Association, June 2017

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- “Sexuality and Self-Narration: The Rebel Girl Reconsidered,” presenter, Berkshire Conference, June 2017
- “In Honor of Rosalyn Baxandall: a Conversation on Left Feminism and Sexual Radicalism,” roundtable participant, Berkshire Conference, June 2017
- “Clean Milk for a Dirty City: Urban Infrastructure and the Shift from Breast to Bottle,” presenter, Interdisciplinary Perspectives of Urban Infrastructure, History, and the Social Sciences, NYU-Paris, May 2017
- “Wet-Nurses as Workers: Gender, Labor, and Social Policy in Nineteenth Century New York City,” presenter, Urban History Association, October 2016
- “Organizing the Unorganizable: Gendering Labor History,” presenter, Women’s History in Motion, a conference in honor of Alice Kessler-Harris, Institute for Research on Women, Gender, and Sexuality, Columbia University, April 2016
- “Working-Class Feminisms,” commentator, On the Move: Working Women and the Struggle for Social Justice, Sarah Lawrence College, March 2016.
- “To Care or to Earn: Wet-Nurses in Nineteenth Century New York City,” presenter, Motherhood in the Age of Austerity, Sarah Lawrence College, March 2015
- “Women’s Labors in Industrial and Post-Industrial America,” presenter, American Women’s and Gender History Conference, U.C. Davis, November 2014
- “Body Work and Working Bodies: Gendering Labor in the City,” commentator, Urban History Association, October 2014
- “Infant Feeding on the Edge: Wet-Nurses in 19th-Century New York City,” presenter, Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, May 2014
- “The Changing Story of Child Labor,” presenter, Mid-Atlantic Popular Culture Association, Annual Meeting, November 2013
- “Mothers, Milk, and Money,” presenter, Western Association of Women’s Historians, Annual Meeting, May 2012.
- “Negotiating Mothers’ Milk: Wet-Nurses in Nineteenth Century New York City,” presenter, Annual Meeting of the Organization of American Historians, April 2012
- “The 1919 International Congress of Working Women and the Contested Category of the ‘Woman Worker,’” presenter, Berkshire Conference on the History of Women, June 2011
- “Building Alliances between Workers and Consumers: Lessons from the Gilded Age Labor Movement,” presenter, Labor and Working-Class History Association Conference on Contemporary Activism and the Labor Movement, March 2011

Invited Presentations (Selected)

- “Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Behind the Headlines,” Humanities@Home, New Hampshire Humanities Council, Distinguished Lecture for Organization of American Historians, July 2023
- “Infant Feeding in the United States, 1890s-1910s,” Le Domestique Comme Lieu de Production du Politique, Centre d’Études en Civilisations, Langues et Lettres Étrangères, Université de Lille, December 2023
- “Elizabeth Gurley Flynn: Mortal Enemy of Capitalism,” Distinguished Lecture for OAH, Waukesha Reads Program, October 2022
- “Radical Social Movements in the Village and Battle for Free Speech,” Greenwich Village Preservation Society, October 2022

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- “The Extra Hazardous Business of Being a Baby,” Dirty History Workshop on Agriculture, Environment, and Capitalism, University of Georgia, September 2022
- “The Complex History of Birth Control,” Virtual Tenement Talk, July 2022
- Roundtable on Peter Cole’s *Ben Fletcher: The Life and Times of a Black Wobbly*, Labor and Working-Class History Association, May 2021
- “The Salomé Ensemble,” Center for Women’s History Salon, New-York Historical Society, January 2020
- “The Rebel Girl Revisited: Re-reading Elizabeth Gurley Flynn’s Life Story,” NYU Seminar on History of Women and Gender, December 2019
- “Soapbox Walks: Firebrand Women,” Center for Jewish History, September 2019
- “For the Work of the Day We Want Something to Say: Social Class and Suffrage,” Alice Paul Institute, Mount Laurel, NJ, March 2019
- “Daughters of Toil: Working Women in 19th Century New York City,” Morris Jumel Mansion, New York, NY, March 2019
- “Women of the Village,” Center for Women’s History Salon, New-York Historical Society, December 2017
- “Then and Now: Historical and Contemporary Achievements of Women in the Workplace,” U.S. Department of Labor, Women’s Bureau, March 2017
- “Women and Workplace Equality,” workshop for educators, New-York Historical Society, February 2017
- “Birth Control in the Tenements,” workshop for educators, Tenement Museum, January 2017
- “Infant Feeding in the Tenements,” workshop for educators, Tenement Museum, December 2016
- Comment on Jacob Zumoff’s paper, “Hell in New Jersey: the Communist Party and the 1926 Passaic Textile Strike,” Hunter Labor History Seminar, September 2016
- “A Conversation on Printing Women,” Berger Forum, New York Public Library, April 2016
- “New Eyes on Alice Austen,” Whitney Museum, March 2016
- “On Strike and On Fire: Women’s Activism in the Garment Industry,” Diane and Adam E. Max Conference in Women’s History, New-York Historical Society, March 2016
- “Tenement Talk: Elizabeth Gurley Flynn,” with comments from Alice Kessler-Harris, March 2015
- “Women and Power,” Brooklyn Historical Society, March 2015
- “Elizabeth Gurley Flynn: Modern American Revolutionary,” New York Public Library, January 2015
- “The Rebel Girl Revisited: Re-Reading the Life of Elizabeth Gurley Flynn,” presenter, with comments from Linda Gordon, Hunter College Labor History Seminar, September 2014
- “The Legacy of Emma Goldman,” Tenement Museum, April 2014
- “Soapboxes of Union Square,” Tenement Museum, October 2013
- “Breadwinners: Working Women in the Gilded Age,” Distinguished Lecture for OAH, Lorenzo Cultural Center, Macomb Community College, April 2013.
- “Industrialization and the Changing Story of Child Labor,” Museum of Early Trades and Crafts, Madison, N.J., January 2013.
- “Jewish Women in New York City Labor and Reform Politics during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era,” Center for Jewish History, New York April 2012

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“Mothers, Milk and Money,” Washington, D.C. Labor and Working-Class History Seminar, September 2011

“‘The Daily Labor of Our Own Hands’: Jennie Collins and Working Women’s Fight for Gender Equality,” workshop for educators, American Social History Project, City University of New York, April 2011

“Breadwinners: Working Women in the Gilded Age,” Distinguished Lecture for OAH, Lake County Schools, Eustis, Florida, March 2011

“Mother’s Love and Mother’s Care: Wet-Nurses and their Infants,” St. John’s University Faculty Symposium, February 2011

“Gender in the Workplace,” The Virginia Frese Palmer Conference, Queens College, March 2010

“Leonora O’Reilly and the Battle for Suffrage and Labor Rights,” Tenement Museum, March 2010

Professional Service

Manuscript Reviews

Journal of American History, *Gender & History*, *Labor: Studies in Working Class History*, *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era*, *Journal of Women’s History*, *Left History*, *New York History*, *Politics & Gender*, *Social Science History*, *Women’s History Review*, *Women’s Studies International Forum*, Berghahn Books, University of Illinois Press, Cornell University Press, University of Chicago Press

Scholarly Advisor for Cultural Institutions

Alice Austen House, New Eyes on Alice Austen, 2015-2016

American Jewish Historical Society, The Emma Lazarus Project, 2018-2022

New York Historical, Center for Women’s History, Scholarly Advisory Board, 2015-present; Co-convenor of U.S. Women’s and Gender History Reading and Writing Group, 2017-present

St. John's University

History Department, Personnel & Budget Committee, 2013-2019, 2022-2023

History Department, Graduate Education Policy Committee, 2010-present

Middle-States Working Group, 2014-2016

Enrollment Task Force, Member, 2009-2010

Junior Faculty Research Colloquium, Organizer and Moderator, 2007-2009

Liberal Arts Faculty Council, Member, 2007-2009

Women's & Gender Studies Committee, 2007-2009

Professional Societies

Organization of American Historians; Chair, Mary Nickliss Prize Committee, 2019-2020; Editorial Board, *Journal of American History*, 2023-2026

Labor and Working-Class History Association; Contributing Editor, *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas*, 2018-present; Communications Committee, 2023-present

American Historical Association; Local Arrangements Committee, 2009