Recent Books by Washington College Faculty

Robert Lynch (Economics)
Enriching Children, Enriching the Nation

Groundbreaking study shows nationwide program for three- and four-year-olds starts paying for itself in as little as six years, and strengthens case for public investment in comprehensive early childhood development.

–Economic Policy Institute

Carol Wilson (History)
The Two Lives of Sally Miller: A Case of Mistaken Racial Identity in Antebellum New Orleans

The Two Lives of Sally Miller is a useful contribution that deepens our understanding of how racial slavery operated in a racially fluid society. It is eminently readable and an attractive choice for undergraduate courses.

–Scott Hancock, Gettysburg College

Peter Weigel (Philosophy)
Aquinas on Simplicity: An Investigation into the Foundations of his Philosophical Theology
Julie Ann Dolan, Melissa Deckman (political science), Michele Swers

Women and Politics: Paths to Power and Political Influence

[This book] tells the stories behind not only women as participators in public affairs, but women as political movers and shakers, policy makers at all levels of government – federal, states, cities, counties, and towns, as well as the media and judiciary. It provides a balanced account of both liberal and conservative political women and incorporates the immense wealth in new scholarly work in women and political studies available over the last 10 years.

Thomas J. Cousineau (english)

Three-Part Inventions: The Novels of Thomas Bernhard

This excellent, closely argued study will be indispensable to Bernhard’s growing audience, as well as to readers of postmodern fiction in general.

–Marjorie Perloff, Professor Emerita, Stanford University; former president of the Modern Language Association.

Bruce Graham and Michele Volansky (drama)

The Collaborative Playwright: Practical Advice for Getting Your Play Written

The interaction between the ideas of the playwright and the know-how of the dramaturg is vital to the success of any production. But not every writer is accustomed to thinking like a dramaturg. The Collaborative Playwright changes that by offering a lively dialogue between a highly successful playwright, Bruce Graham, and an equally accomplished dramaturg, Michele Volansky, supported by hands-on exercises to get you thinking and writing in new ways.

Andrew Oros (political science)

Normalizing Japan: Politics, Identity and the Evolution of Security Practice

Andrew Oros argues that Japanese security policy has not changed as much in recent years as many believe, and that future change also will be highly constrained by Japan’s long-standing “security identity” – the central principle guiding Japanese policy over the past half century. His analysis is based on detailed exploration of three cases of policy evolution – restrictions on arms exports, the military use of outer space, and cooperation with the United States on missile defense – which shed light on other cases of policy change, such as Japan’s deployment of its military to Iraq and elsewhere and its recent creation of a Ministry of Defense.
John A. Booth, Christine J. Wade (political science), Thomas W. Walker

Understanding Central America: Global Forces, Rebellion and Change

The main thrust of the work lies in the chapter about global forces and change in Central America since 1970. The authors have made explicit a model of the impact of global factors on domestic politics in the region. While the impetus for change may come from outside, domestic forces play a crucial role in determining the outcome of rebellions and regime change. . . . This is a clearly organized and comprehensive discussion of Central America’s recent political situation. It is rich in theoretical and critical explanations which both general readers and undergraduates will find thoroughly accessible.

Kathryn Moncrief (English) and Kathryn R. McPherson

Performing Maternity in Early Modern England

This collection of essays is a vitally important and lucidly edited contribution to the subject of early modern studies . . . [It] is critical reading for those interested in or studying the literature and culture of the English Renaissance.


Richard Striner (History)

Father Abraham: Lincoln’s Relentless Struggle to End Slavery

No one can come away from this book without being deeply affected by it. The writing is forceful and the narrative gripping. The reader stays by Lincoln’s side throughout his career, thanks to Striner’s gifts both for presenting a political historical panorama and for constantly foregrounding Lincoln.

– Richard M. Valelly, American Historical Review

The fresh and provocative insights in this book demonstrate that despite all that has been written about Lincoln, there is still something new to learn.

– James M. McPherson, author of Battle Cry of Freedom
Pamela A. Pears (French)

Remnants of Empire in Algeria and Vietnam: Women, Words, and War

This remarkable comparative study of francophone literature cuts through scholarly barriers with rare elegance. Grounding her discussion in a rich and varied theoretical framework, Pears deftly questions the very notion of francophonie and at the same time reasserts connections between Vietnam and Algeria from a historical perspective. Through careful analysis, Pears clarifies the position of the postcolonial woman writer as distinct from hybrid, and the notion of fragmentation as a positive, enriching one. A model of its genre, this book will engage all who are interested in francophone literature. Essential.

— Choice

Monika Weiss (Art and Art History)

Five Rivers

Monika Weiss uses transient and changing media which she continues to develop over the years and which communicate with the world at large, while their ephemeral quality has the capacity to eventually replace the object.

— Samuel Lallouz

Sean Ross Meehan (English)

Mediating American Autobiography: Photography in Emerson, Thoreau, Douglass, and Whitman

Sean Ross Meehan has filled a substantial gap in the study of photography and literature, visual culture in nineteenth-century America, media studies, and mid-nineteenth-century American literature and autobiography. . . . Meehan has sharply illuminated an important aspect of American thought and culture at the onset of the technological era.

— Linda Haverty Rugg, author of Picturing Ourselves: Photography and Autobiography