

The New York Society Library Announces the Winners of the 2016 New York City Book Awards

Now in their 21st year, the New York City Book Awards are the only prizes exclusively for books about New York City. Since 1995-1996, the New York Society Library has sponsored these accolades to works of literary quality or historical importance that evoke the spirit or enhance appreciation of New York City.

The annual Hornblower Award, made possible by the George Marshall Hornblower Trust, is given to an excellent New York City-related book by a first-time author.

As New York City's oldest cultural institution, the New York Society Library is uniquely qualified to give the New York City Book Awards.

The New York Society Library is proud to announce the winners of the 2016-2017 New York City Book Awards:

Tyler Anbinder

City of Dreams: The 400-Year Epic History of Immigrant New York
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, October 2016

David Oshinsky

Bellevue: Three Centuries of Medicine and Mayhem at America's Most Storied Hospital
Doubleday, November 2016

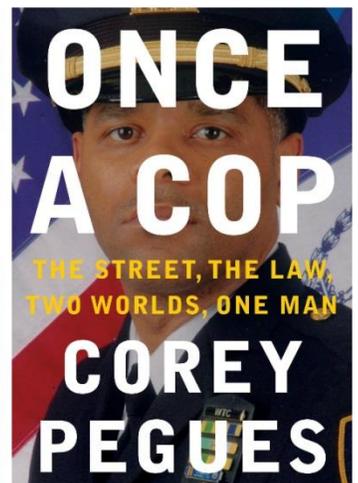
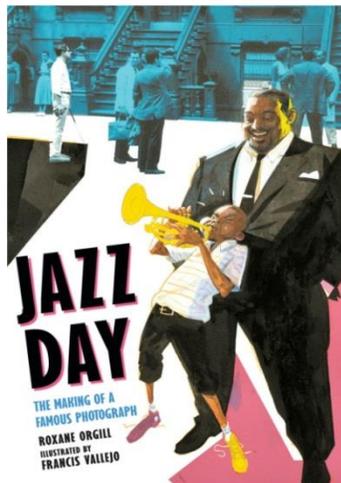
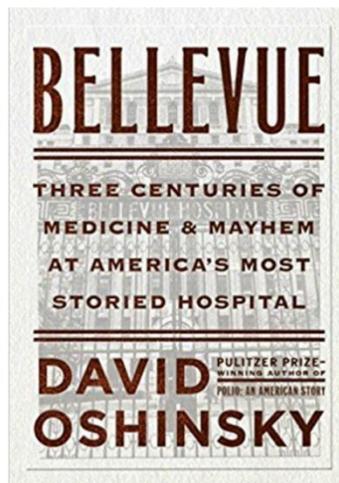
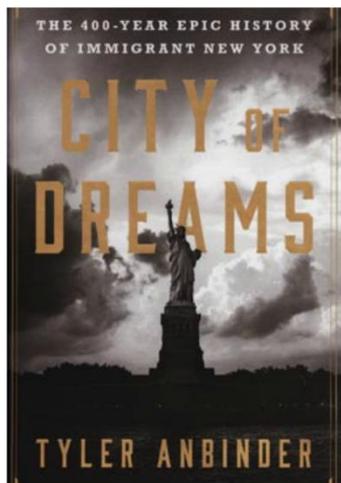
Roxane Orgill and Francis Vallejo

Jazz Day: The Making of a Famous Photograph
Candlewick Press, March 2016

The Hornblower Award for a First Book

Corey Pegues

Once a Cop: The Street, the Law, Two Worlds, One Man
Atria Books, May 2016



[More general information and a complete list of past winners is available here.](#)

The winning authors and publishers will be honored at a ceremony and reception on May 3, 2017 at 6:00 PM at the Library, 53 East 79th Street at Madison Avenue. The ceremony is by invitation and open to the press. [Click here for more information about the ceremony.](#)

The jury for 2016-2017 is chaired by Warren Wechsler and includes Bianca Calabresi, Barbara Cohen, Ellen Feldman, Ella Foshay, Karl E. Meyer, Janice Pomerance Nimura, Stephen Raphael, Peter Salwen, and Richard Snow.

The 2016-2017 New York City Book Awards are generously underwritten by Ellen M. Iseman.

About the Winners



From left: Tyler Anbinder, David Oshinsky, Roxane Orgill, Francis Vallejo, Corey Pegues

Tyler Anbinder, *City of Dreams*

Tyler Anbinder is a two-time winner of a New York City Book Award. His first award came for *Five Points* in 2001.

City of Dreams is an essential American story of millions of immigrants, hundreds of languages, and one great city.

New York has been America's city of immigrants for nearly four centuries. Growing from Peter Minuit's tiny settlement of 1626 to one with more than three million immigrants today, the city has always been a magnet for transplants from all over the globe. It is only fitting that the United States, a "nation of immigrants," is home to the only world city built primarily by immigration. More immigrants have entered the United States through New York than through all other entry points combined, making New York's immigrant saga a quintessentially American story.

City of Dreams is the inspiring and defining account of New York's both famous and forgotten immigrants: the young man from the Caribbean who relocated to New York and became a Founding Father; an Italian immigrant who toiled for years at railroad track maintenance before achieving his dream of becoming a nationally renowned poet; Russian-born Emma Goldman, who condoned the murder of American industrialists as a means of aiding downtrodden workers; Dominican immigrant Oscar de la Renta, who dressed first ladies from Jackie Kennedy to Michelle Obama. Over ten years in the making, Tyler Anbinder's story is one of innovators and artists, revolutionaries and rioters, staggering deprivation and soaring triumphs. Today's immigrants are really no different from those who have come to America in centuries past—and their story has never before been told with such breadth of scope, lavish research, and resounding spirit.

City of Dreams has also been awarded the Mark Lynton History Prize.

Tyler Anbinder is a professor of history and former chair of the History Department at George Washington University. His previous books include *Nativism and Slavery*, winner of the Avery Craven Prize of the Organization of American Historians, and *Five Points*, winner of a 2001 New York City Book Award. He served as a consultant to Martin Scorsese for *Gangs of New York*. His ancestors came to New York from southwest Germany, Poland, Ukraine, and Russia.

David Oshinsky, *Bellevue*

From a Pulitzer Prize-winning historian comes a riveting history of New York's famed public hospital that charts the turbulent rise of American medicine.

Bellevue Hospital occupies a colorful and horrifying place in the public imagination: a den of mangled crime victims, vicious psychopaths, assorted derelicts, lunatics, and exotic-disease sufferers. In its two and a half centuries of service, there was hardly an epidemic or social catastrophe—or groundbreaking scientific advance—that did not touch Bellevue.

David Oshinsky, whose last book, *Polio: An American Story*, was awarded a Pulitzer Prize, chronicles the history of America's oldest hospital and in so doing also charts the rise of New York to the nation's preeminent city, the path of American medicine from butchery and quackery to a professional and scientific endeavor, and the growth of a civic institution. From its origins in 1738 as an almshouse and pesthouse, Bellevue today is a revered public hospital bringing first-class care to anyone in need. With its diverse, ailing, and unprotesting patient population, the hospital was a natural laboratory for the nation's first clinical research. It treated tens of thousands of Civil War soldiers, launched the first civilian ambulance corps and the first nursing school for women, pioneered medical photography and psychiatric treatment, and spurred New York City to establish the country's first official Board of Health.

As medical technology advanced, "voluntary" hospitals began to seek out patients willing to pay for their care. For charity cases, it was left to Bellevue to fill the void. The latter decades of the twentieth century brought rampant crime, drug addiction, and homelessness to the nation's struggling cities—problems that called a public hospital's very survival into question. It took the AIDS crisis to cement Bellevue's enduring place as New York's ultimate safety net, the iconic hospital of last resort. Lively, page-turning, fascinating, *Bellevue* is essential American history.

David Oshinsky, Ph.D., is a professor in the NYU Department of History and director of the Division of Medical Humanities at the NYU School of Medicine. In 2005, he won the Pulitzer Prize in History for *Polio: An American Story*. His other books include the D.B. Hardeman Prize-winning *A Conspiracy So Immense: The World of Joe McCarthy*, and the Robert Kennedy Prize-winning "*Worse Than Slavery*": *Parchman Farm and the Ordeal of Jim Crow Justice*. His articles and reviews appear regularly in the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

Roxane Orgill and Francis Vallejo, *Jazz Day*

What happens when you invite as many jazz musicians as you can to pose for a photo in 1950s Harlem? Playful verse and glorious artwork capture a memorable moment for American jazz.

When *Esquire* magazine planned an issue to salute the American jazz scene in 1958, graphic designer Art Kane pitched a crazy idea: how about gathering a group of beloved jazz musicians and photographing them? He didn't own a good camera, didn't know if any musicians would show up, and insisted on setting up the shoot in front of a Harlem brownstone. Could he pull it off? In a captivating collection of poems, Roxane Orgill steps into the frame of Harlem 1958, bringing to life the musicians' mischief and quirks, their memorable style, and the vivacious atmosphere of a Harlem block full of kids on a hot summer's day. Francis Vallejo's vibrant, detailed, and wonderfully expressive paintings do loving justice to the larger-than-life quality of jazz musicians of the era.

Roxane Orgill is an award-winning writer on music and the author of *Skit-Scat Raggedy Cat: Ella Fitzgerald* and *Footwork: The Story of Fred and Adele Astaire*.

Francis Vallejo is an assistant professor of illustration at the College for Creative Studies. This is his first book.

Corey Pegues, *Once a Cop*

During the 1980s, crack cocaine devastated many of America's inner-city communities. Drug dealers seized neighborhoods, terrorizing its inhabitants with brutal violence. Those who lived through the nightmare tell unimaginable stories of that era. *Once a Cop* is one of the most extraordinary.

Raised in Queens, a teenaged Corey Pegues watched drugs uproot his stable, working-class neighborhood almost overnight. When times got tough, he had a choice: continue to watch his family struggle to pay bills, or sell dope. He chose the latter, eventually becoming part of the notorious Supreme Team street gang. After a botched murder attempt on a rival gang member, Corey, the only member of his family to graduate from high school, knew he had to get out. After a stint in the U.S. Army, he breezed through the police academy to become a New York City cop.

In this provocative memoir, Corey Pegues tells how a onetime crack dealer transformed himself into one the highest ranking members of the largest police force in the country, living and working in the nation's most violent neighborhoods. His meteoric rise from patrol officer to deputy inspector covers the administrations of former New York City mayors Rudy Giuliani and Michael Bloomberg, and coincides with the early tenures of famed police commissioners Ray Kelly and William "Bill" Bratton. Pegues grants readers full access to the manner in which some of the NYPD's most controversial policies were implemented and gives an insider's take on the shootings of Sean Bell and Amadou Diallo, the assault on Abner Louima, and other tragedies that stained the department.

As tensions continue to mount between police and communities of color, Pegues tears down the blue wall to discuss the discriminatory practices he faced within the NYPD and talks candidly about the distrust that exists between law enforcement and the citizens they are sworn to protect. What is daily life truly like for urban youth in America? What is the one problem endemic in law enforcement that's even more dangerous than rampant racism? Pegues contends that his life on the streets informed his approach to police work, and he shows how it made him a more conscientious and compassionate officer. Few people understand both sides of the story like him.

About the New York Society Library

Founded in 1754, the Library is open to all for reading, reference, and many events. Circulation and other services are available to members. Our landmark building houses over 300,000 volumes, reading rooms, study spaces, a children's library, and the Peluso Family Exhibition Gallery. The Library is a not-for-profit organization supported in part by tax-deductible contributions.

Information on the Library and its history and activities can be found at www.nysoclib.org.

For more information, contact

Sara Holliday, Head of Events

212-288-6900 x222

events@nysoclib.org