JANICE P. NIMURA will speak on her dual biography of the groundbreaking sister doctors, Elizabeth and Emily Blackwell. Elizabeth Blackwell was the first woman in America to receive a medical degree, in 1849. Emily Blackwell, eternally eclipsed, was the third, in 1854. Together, they founded the New York Infirmary for Indigent Women & Children, the first hospital staffed entirely by women. Both sisters were tenacious and visionary; they were also judgmental, uncompromising, and occasionally misogynistic. NIMURA will discuss the challenges of reintroducing these often forgotten figures, reframing their story as two pioneers instead of one, and resisting hagiography. Her book on the Blackwells is forthcoming from W.W. Norton in 2021.

JANICE P. NIMURA received a 2017 Public Scholar grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. She is the author of the highly acclaimed Daughters of the Samurai: A Journey from East to West and Back, a 2015 New York Times Notable Book, described by the Times as a “Beautifully written...deftly interwoven account, (in which) the three girls emerge as contrasting types, like Chekhov’s ‘Three Sisters.’”

Cosponsored with The Leon Levy Center for Biography, Graduate Center, CUNY, PhD Programs in History and English, MA Program in Liberal Studies, MA Program in Women’s and Gender Studies, The Center for the Humanities, and The Feminist Press.

This event will be held at the Graduate Center, 365 Fifth Avenue (34th Street). It is free and open to the public. For more information see the Women’s Studies website: http://www.gc.cuny.edu/womencenter/