Letter from Christopher A. Faraone, Senior Chair of the Society of Fellows

Dear Present and Former Fellows, Friends and Colleagues,

I am very pleased to be writing to you in this inaugural issue of the University of Chicago Society of Fellows Newsletter. Why a newsletter? Well, although the Society was only formally constituted ten years ago, Harper Fellows have been teaching and researching at the University since the mid-1970s and, as a result, there is now a sizable and growing number of former fellows. After nearly forty years and with over 200 current and former fellows, our hope is to keep you informed of the post-fellowship adventures of our former colleagues along with the evolution of Society as an institution.

Since the mid-1970s the College has grown to over 5,000 students. The ranks of the Society have increased as well, numbering 31 in 09-10 and likely to increase to 36 in the near future. Appointments are for four year terms. The statutory title “Collegiate Assistant Professor” has been adopted to acknowledge the fact the Harper, Schmidt, Graham and Poss Fellows are full members of the College faculty and to recognize the important role they play in teaching in the College’s core. Another big change has been the renovation of the third and fourth floors of Gates-Blake Hall as the permanent home of the Society. Now there is an administrative office, a seminar room and lounge for us, and now every fellow gets his or her own office. It is a vibrant intellectual community with a regular series of meetings and receptions, organized by the our junior co-chairs, this year Leigh Claire La Berge for Humanities and Nitzan Shoshan for Social Sciences, as well as a series of symposia and conferences funded by the Bernard Weissbourd Memorial Fund and organized by our two coordinators, Andrew Dilts and Jennifer Palmer, both in the Social Sciences.

Another extremely important addition is our new administrator, Julia Klein, who came on board last fall and has energetically transformed the day-to-day life of the Society. Prior to working in the Society of Fellows, she worked in the Poetics Program and the Committee on Creative Writing at UofC. Julia holds an MFA in Sculpture from the Bard College Milton Avery Graduate School of the Arts and recently started Soberscove Press with the publication of her first book, *Artists’ Sessions at Studio 35 (1950)*. In addition to managing the annual search, two of Julia’s primary responsibilities are to edit this newsletter and to manage our website [www.societyoffellows.uchicago.edu] which I encourage you to visit. I also encourage you to send her updates [mail to: jnklein@uchicago.edu] as well as news and photographs related to appointments, professional development, publications, conferences, retirements, etc. and other material that you think is appropriate for the newsletter or that you would like to share with our community—this will be material for future publications. Last, if you visit the website, you will notice that we have had trouble finding locating some of the former fellows and we would be very happy if you are able to share their whereabouts and/or contact information.

Best wishes for the coming school year,

Christopher A. Faraone
Senior Chair of the Society of Fellows
and the Frank Curtis Springer and Gertrude Melcher Springer Professor in Classics and the College
Incoming Junior Fellows

The 2008-2009 search for new Harper-Schmidt fellows involved the review of nearly 700 Humanities applications and nearly 300 Social Sciences applications. Nearly 200 institutions were represented by applicants.

Nathan Bauer
PhD in Philosophy
University of Chicago
Much of his current research concerns Kant, both as a prominent figure in the history of philosophy and as a relevant guide to contemporary problems in the discipline. His dissertation, “Kant’s Transcendental Deductions of the Categories,” examines Kant’s account of our relation to the world as thinkers by way of a detailed examination and comparison of the two versions of the Deduction-argument in the Critique of Pure Reason.

Katie Chenoweth
PhD in French Studies
Brown University
Her research focuses on the history of writing and language theory, with specific attention to the Renaissance. Her dissertation, “Writing in French ‘and not otherwise,’ 1529-1592,” examines how practices of writing came to be redefined by various discourses (grammar, law, poetry, philosophy) during the “rise” of the vernacular language in sixteenth-century France.

Dina Gusejnova
PhD in History
Cambridge University
Her main field of research is modern German intellectual and social history. She also has an interest in Russian thought and in modern political theory. Focusing on a prominent group of German-speaking theorists of noble descent who advocated European unity, her thesis investigated how the experience of political crisis after 1918, when many European states abolished noble privileges, invited nobles to turn their very biographies into the foundations for a new political theory of European identity.

Spencer Leonard
PhD in History/South Asian Languages and Civilizations
University of Chicago
His dissertation, “A Fit of Absence of Mind? IlIliberal Imperialism and the Founding of British India, 1757-1776,” is an intensive study of the initial decades of East India Company state formation in Bengal. Spencer’s research attempts to revise received understandings of imperialism by reaching behind assumptions, whether imperialist or nationalist, that derive from the 20th century experience of decolonization.

Megan Luke
PhD in Art History
Harvard University
Her research focuses on modernism and mass culture, with an emphasis on abstraction, reproductive media, sculpture, and collage. Her dissertation, “Space for Recognition: The Late Work and Exile of Kurt Schwitters (1930-1948),” provides the first survey of the sculptural work of the German avant-garde collagist and poet and offers a critical reevaluation of his practice following his defamation under National Socialism.

Timothy Michael
PhD in English Literature
Harvard University
His current project, British Romanticism and the Principles of Political Knowledge, is an epistemological study of Romantic politics. It examines how Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Godwin, and Burke understood and represented the epistemic status of political belief. Related research and teaching interests include eighteenth-century poetry and philosophy, literary criticism and theory, and Marxist aesthetics.

Poornima Paidipaty
PhD in Anthropology
Columbia University
Her dissertation, entitled, “Tribal Nation: Politics and the Making of Modern Anthropology in India” explores the entangled histories of social science, colonial militarism, frontier politics, and tribal governance in India, starting in the nineteenth century. Her thesis examines the agonistic relationship between anthropology as a formal discipline and contemporary tribal movements, which share common histories, archives, and conceptual formations that trace back to colonial policies of frontier pacification.

Emily Steinlight
PhD in English Literature
Brown University
Her research focuses on nineteenth-century British literature, the emergence of the social sciences, and the relationship between political logic and literary form. Her dissertation argues that the narratives and genres that define the century are organized around the formal principle of producing and managing a hypothetical surplus of biological life.
Outgoing Junior Fellows

Naomi Beck (2005-2009)
Max Weber Postdoctoral Fellowship, European University Institute, Florence, Italy

Mogens Laerke (2007-2009)
Lecturer, Department of Philosophy, University of Aberdeen, Scotland

Hedy Law (2007-09)
Assistant Professor in Music History, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX

Desirae Matherly (2006-2009)
Assistant Professor of Journalism and Professional Writing, Tusculum College, Greeneville, TN

Liesl Olson (2005-2009)
National Endowment for the Humanities Long-Term Fellow at the Newberry Library, Chicago, IL

Oded Schechter (2007-2009)
Post-Doctoral Fellow, Tikvah Project on Jewish Thought, Princeton University, Princeton, NJ

Tara Schwegler (2005-2009)
Relocating to San Antonio, TX

Olga Sezneva (2005-2009)
Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology and a Fellow at the Institute for Migration and Ethnicity Studies, University of Amsterdam

2009-2010 Senior Fellows

Senior Fellows participate in the social and intellectual opportunities for fellowship and collaboration in the Society and they also serve as important intellectual and professional mentors to the Junior Fellows.

Clifford Ando, Prof., Classics and the College; Dept of New Testament & Early Christian Literature
Leora Auslander, Prof., History and the College; Cmtes on the History of Culture and Jewish Studies; Center for Gender Studies
David Bevington, Phyllis Fay Horton Distinguished Service Prof in Humanities; Prof., Depts of English Language & Literature, Comparative Literature and the College
Robert Bird, Associate Prof., Dept of Slavic Languages and Literatures (Chair) and the College
Dan Budney, Associate Prof., Dept of Philosophy and the College
James Chandler, Barbara E. & Richard J. Franke Prof., Dept of English Language & Literature, Cmtes on the History of Culture, Cinema & Media Studies and Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities; and the College, Director, Franke Institute for the Humanities
Ted Cohen, Prof., Dept of Philosophy, Dept of Art & Design, Cmte on Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities, and the College
Bert Kohler, William Rainey Harper Prof., Social Sciences Collegiate Division; Prof. in the Depts of Psychology and Psychiatry, Divinity School, Cmtes on Human Development and Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities
Christopher Faraone, Frank Curtis Springer and Gertrude Melcher Springer Prof. in the Humanities and the College, Dept of Classic Languages and Literatures; Martha Feldman, Prof., Dept of New Testament & Early Christian Literature, Cmte on Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities, and the College
Robert Godding-Williams, Ralph and Mary Otis Isham Prof. of Political Science and the College
Ramón Gutiérrez, Preston & Sterling Morton Distinguished Service Prof., Dept of History and the College; Director, Ctr for Race, Politics & Culture
Bernard E. Harcourt, Julius Kreeger Prof. of Law & Criminology, Prof. of Political Science
Gary Herrigel, Associate Prof., Dept of Political Science and the College
John Kelly, Chair, Dept of Anthropology; Prof., Dept of Anthropology and the College
Robert Kendrick, Prof., Dept of Music (Chair) and the College; Faculty Associate, Dept of Romance Languages and Literatures
Jonathan Lear, John U. Nef Distinguished Service Prof., Cmte on Social Thought, Dept of Philosophy and The College
Bruce Lincoln, Caroline Haskell Prof., Divinity School, Center for Middle Eastern Studies, and Cmte on the History of Culture; Associate, Member, Depts of Anthropology and Classical Languages and Literatures
Michèle Lowrie, Prof., Dept of Classics and the College
Patchen Markell, Associate Prof., Dept of Political Science and the College
Christine Mehring, Associate Prof., Dept of Art History and the College
Stephan Palmié, Associate Prof., Dept of Anthropology and the College
Mark Payne, Associate Prof., Dept of Classic Languages and Literatures and the College
Jennifer Pitts, Associate Prof., Dept of Political Science and the College
Moïsé Postone, Prof., Dept of History and the College and the Cmte on Jewish Studies
Robert Richards, Morris Fishbein Prof. in the History of Science & Medicine, Dept of History; Prof., Depts of Philosophy, Psychology, the College
Eric Santner, Philip and Ida Romberg Prof. in Modern Germanic Studies, Dept. of Germanic Studies and the College
Julie Saville, Associate Prof., Dept of History and the College,
Mario Small, Prof., Dept of Sociology and the College
Richard Strier, Prof., Dept of English Language & Literature and Dept of Visual Arts; Frank L. Sulzberger Prof. of Civilizations in the College
Nathan Tarcov, Prof., John U. Nef Cmte on Social Thought, Dept. of Political Science, and the College; Director, Leo Strauss Center
Christopher Wild, Associate Prof., Dept of Germanic Studies and the College
David Wray, Associate Prof., Depts of Comparative Literature, Classic Languages and Literatures and the College; Ed., Classical Philology
Lawrence Zbikowski, Associate Prof., Dept of Music and the College
Linda Zerilli, Prof., Center for Gender Studies; Charles E. Merriam Distinguished Service Prof., Dept of Political Science and the College
Rebecca Zorach, Associate Prof., Dept of Art History and the College

JENNIFER PALMER
What's in a Name? Mixed-Race Families and Resistance to Racial Marginalization in 18th-Century La Rochelle. French Historical Studies, Special Issue on Race and Gender (Forthcoming 2010)

NITZAN SHOSHAN

CHRISTOPHER WARREN
These quotes are drawn from 2008-2009 evaluations of Junior Fellows teaching in the College Core:

**Reading Cultures:**
This class had the most productive class discussion I have been a part of in my first year at the College. Participation is an integral part to success in this class, and I think everyone benefited from this aspect being stressed....(the instructor) was more than capable of stimulating discussion or rerouting us when we got stuck or slowed down.

**Human Being and Citizen:**
It has made me excited to read classical texts, Christian literature (which I never thought I would be interested in before this course) and philosophy. Basically, it has given me the most solid of foundations in classical texts and taught me how to more insightfully and coherently analyze them. I could not have asked for a better Hum. class. I’m going to miss it a lot.

**Readings in World Literature:**
These were the most difficult texts put in front of me this quarter, and just by learning how to read them and learning about some of the themes within them I think I’ve made the rest of my time at UChicago 100x easier.

**Greek Thought and Literature:**
I feel I have grown the most from this class in comprehending difficult texts, participating in class discussion, and conveying my beliefs through papers.... It made me care about school again.

**Philosophical Perspectives:**
It has really piqued my interest in philosophy. After spending an entire lecture on a paragraph of text, I see how intricate and involved it is. This course pushed me to question many things....

**Power, Resistance and Identity:**
It solidified certain personal views and clarified the practical importance of philosophy. Furthermore, the imposing figures of the authors we’ve read over the year ceased to inspire such anxiety.

**Classics of Social and Political Thought:**
I feel like I’ve been given the most thorough survey course one can have in the classics of philosophy. I’ve been taught to delve into the theories of these thinkers, and the instructor has made the readings seem far less intimidating than they would have been had I attempted to read them on my own. I am so grateful for having been given this really solid foundation in philosophy.

**Self, Culture and Society:**
I’m being completely serious when I say that this course has changed the way that I think about myself and the world. It puts being a member of society in a totally different perspective -- forcing us to think about what society is, where it came from, how we acquire our identities from it, etc. I had never bothered thinking this deeply about something so fundamental before.

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**The Quantrell Award**

In addition to excellence in their own original scholarship, the primary responsibility of fellows in the Society of Fellows at the University of Chicago is to teach in the College’s undergraduate general education (Core) program. Thus, the Society of Fellows takes special pride in recognizing three fellows who received the Quantrell award during their time at the University (Fellows only became eligible for the award since the Society was officially formed):

1991: **Martin Burke** (Social Sciences 1988-1991)
Associate Professor, Department of History
Lehman College, CUNY

CEO and Founder of Biopractices, Washington D.C.

"The students have to learn how to become comfortable expressing their own ideas -- not parroting mine," he said. "The essence of education, after all, is for them to come to terms with their own thoughts." Caplan teaches the social-science core sequence, the yearlong course Self, Culture & Society, as well as a course he designed himself, Madness & Anxiety in America, a class that grew out of his research interest in the history of American psychiatry. In that course as well as others, he challenges students to take a fresh look at assumptions they may have about how society operates. Students gain a new understanding about the changing role of doctors, for instance, as they study how mental health has been viewed over time. Caplan said he has enjoyed the chance to teach a topic directly tied to his research. "This gives me an opportunity to think through the topic myself, to see students deal with some of the ideas I have dealt with." (from The University of Chicago Chronicle, May 23, 1996, Vol. 15, No. 18)

2005: **Holly Swyers** (Social Sciences 2003-2006)
Assistant Professor, Sociology and Anthropology,
Lake Forest College

In her classes, which also include the Self, Culture and Society introductory sequence in the social sciences, Swyers tries to challenge students to look at big issues that are drawn from some classic texts in the social sciences. "In addition to getting students to understand social theory, I want them to understand what motivates that theory. I want them to ask, ‘How do you change the world?’ and ‘Do you want to?’" she says. The conversations lead to discussions of race, capitalism, communism and other topics fundamental to the organization of societies. In conducting her classes, Swyers says she tries to allow the students to develop a sense of ownership of the course so their curiosity encourages conversation. (from The University of Chicago Chronicle, May 26, 2005, Vol. 24 No. 17)
Highlights of the 08-09 Academic Year

October 29
Leigh Claire La Berge
Junior Fellow in the Humanities
"Fictitious Capital and Financial Fiction"

November 5
Aaron Johnson
Junior Fellow in the Humanities
"Hellenism and Ethnicity in Late Ancient Platonism: The Case of Porphyry of Tyre"

November 19
Elisabeth Clemens
Master, Social Sciences Collegiate Division and Professor, Department of Sociology
"Nationalizing Reciprocity: Alignments of Charity and Citizenship in American Governance"

January 13
David Bevington
Senior Fellow & Phyllis Fay Horton Distinguished Service Professor Emeritus in the Humanities; Professor Emeritus, Departments of English Language & Literature, Comparative Literature and The College
"Shakespeare on Religion"

February 11
Liesl Olson
Junior Fellow in the Humanities
"Gertrude Stein's Habits"

February 24
Sarah Graff
Junior Fellow in the Social Sciences
"In Defense of Karl Polanyi: Markets, Economic "Laws" and their Consequence for Archaeological Interpretation"

April 10+11
WORLDMAKING
The Society of Fellows Annual Weissbourd Conference

Keynote Address: Richard Sennett NYU and London School of Economics

This interdisciplinary conference, “Worldmaking,” seeks to resuscitate, historically and across various disciplinary registers, the question of the “world” and its historical relation to labor, production and, more generally, the processes of making. The impetus of the conference is to ask, given the historical permutations of the term “world,” why has it failed to resonate in an era of saturated by a discourse of the globe. If the modern fascination with the global emerges, at least in part, from among the detritus of failed worldmaking discourses – aesthetic, economic, philosophical as well as political – this conference hopes to bring the discourse of the world and its various constructions back within view.


COMPLETE INFO: http://societyoffellows.uchicago.edu/conferences/Worldmaking

April 10+11, 2009
WORLDMAKING:
The Society of Fellows
Annual Weissbourd Conference

Conference Organizers:
Craig Carson and Olga Sezneva

Bernard Weissbourd Memorial Fund for The Society of Fellows

Bernard (Barney) Weissbourd enjoyed a life-long connection with the University of Chicago, beginning at age 15 when he received a full scholarship to attend the College. In these first years, Weissbourd was captivated by the University’s intellectual life, his concentration in chemistry, and especially his study of the classics, a staple of the curriculum in the Hutchins era. When he graduated in 1941, he entered the law school. WWII interrupted his studies, but he remained at the University, having been assigned to work on the Manhattan Project, where he contributed to the discovery of an element. At the war’s end, he returned to the law school and became an editor of the Law Review before graduating in 1948. Weissbourd maintained a lifelong interest in civic affairs, working on issues ranging from race and poverty to nuclear arms. His interest in the relationship between human psychology and social institutions led him to found the Center for Psycho-Social Studies in the early 1970’s. He served the University as an active member of the Board of Trustees and as Trustee Emeritus until his death in 2000 at the age of 78.

The Bernard Weissbourd Memorial Fund for the Society of Fellows pays tribute to Barney Weissbourd’s history of involvement with the University. The Fund reflects his abiding commitments to spirited inquiry, the excitement of learning, the power of discourse, and through all of these, the pursuit of a more just and humane society.
2009-2010 Society of Fellows Calendar

Autumn 09

Orientation  Monday, Sept 28
Quarter begins  Tuesday, Sept 29
SoF meeting  Wednesday, Oct 7
Fall reception  Wednesday, Oct 14
Fall symposium  Friday, Oct 16
SoF meeting  Wednesday, Oct 21
SoF meeting  Wednesday, Nov 4
Text Seminar  Nov 10/11/12
SoF meeting  Wednesday, Nov 18
Thanksgiving  Thu-Fri Nov 26-27
Christmas party  Tuesday, Dec 1
Classes end  Wednesday, Dec 2

Winter 10

Quarter begins  Monday, Jan 4
Quad Club dinner  Thursday, Jan 7
SoF meeting  Wednesday, Jan 13
MLK day  Monday, Jan 18
Text Seminar  January 19/20/21
SoF meeting  Wednesday, Jan 27
SoF meeting  Wednesday, Feb 10
College break  Friday, Feb 12
Text Seminar  Feb 16/17/18
SoF meeting  Wednesday, Feb 24
SoF Elections  Mon-Fri Mar 1-5
Text Seminar  Mar 9/10
Classes end  Wednesday Mar 10

Spring 10

Quarter begins  Monday, Mar 29
SoF meeting  Wednesday, Apr 7
Weissbourd conference  Mid-April (dates TBA)
SoF meeting  Wednesday, Apr 21
SoF meeting  Wednesday, May 5
Text Seminar  May 11/12/13
SoF meeting  Wednesday, May 19
Spring party  Sunday, May 30
Memorial day  Monday, May 31
Classes end  Wednesday, Jun 02

For details about all events, visit:
http://societyoffellows.uchicago.edu

From the Weissbourd Conference Committee...

The Conference Committee is excited to announce a year-long series of events that will examine the theme "Peculiar Institutions: Boundaries, Borders, Identities, and Genres."

Fall Fellows Symposium (October 16)
We invite all Fellows to share a synopsis of or highlights from their current research project. We are eager to hear what you are working on now, and to begin to engage in scholarly dialogue. The Symposium will be followed by a dinner.

Text Seminars
Throughout the year we have scheduled a series of informal text seminars, where leading faculty from Chicago-area universities will discuss their latest work. This is a chance for us to talk with senior scholars about methodology, the writing process, how they apply theory, and publishing, as well as to engage with their work on a scholarly level. All seminars will be loosely organized around the theme "Peculiar Institutions." The text will be provided for all interested participants.

Currently Scheduled

December: Dianna Frid, Former Junior Fellow & Assistant Professor of Studio Art, University of Chicago-Illinois School of Art and Design

January: Namita Goswami, Assistant Professor of Philosophy, DePaul University

February: John D’Emilio, Professor of History and Gender & Women’s Studies, University of Chicago-Illinois

March: Dorothy Roberts, Kirkland and Ellis Professor, Northwestern University Law School

**Texts, exact dates and times, and additional speakers to be announced.

Weissbourd Conference (Mid-April, dates TBA)
An opportunity for all Fellows to present and engage in discussion about their original research. Like the text seminars, the conference will use the theme "Peculiar Institutions" as a jumping off point. Amy Kaminsky, a prominent feminist and Latina Studies theorist and Professor of Women’s Studies and Global Studies at University of Minnesota, will present the keynote address.

We invite alumni fellows who live in Chicago or who may be visiting to attend any of the text seminars and/or the conference.

We would be grateful if you could let us know in advance if you plan to attend.
A Selection of Recent Publications by Society of Fellows Alumni

Artifice and Design: Art and Technology in Human Experience  
(Cornell University Press, 2008)  
**Barry Allen**  
*Humanities 1984-1986*  
Professor, Department of Philosophy  
McMaster University  

“Situated at the intersection of philosophy of technology and philosophy of art, this book explores the influence of aesthetic considerations on technical design and the impact of technology on art. It is more a philosophical commonplace book than a systematic treatise, but this is its great virtue. Allen displays formidable erudition, drawing on a wide range of natural and social scientific literatures, art history, and both the Continental and analytical philosophical traditions. The book is packed with fascinating and sometimes little-known information about human evolution (particularly the evolution of the human hand, language, and cognition), the design of bridges, the history of technology, the nature of tools (and how they are unique to humans), and a host of other subjects....” - *Choice*

Marriage and Modernity: Family Values in Bengal  
(Duke University Press, 2009)  
**Rochana Majumdar**  
*Social Sciences 2003-2005*  
Assistant Professor, Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations  
University of Chicago  

“Whereas most earlier studies focus on changes that new laws and reforms wrought upon Hindu marriage, Majumdar explores the actual ritual practices and ideological norms that constituted the system, even as she maps the new print culture, caste mobility processes, literary values and consumption habits that reinflected and altered it continuously, making it a contested and complex site in colonial times. It is altogether a new approach that she brings to social history, an approach that is enriched by conceptual clarity, meticulous research, a fascinating visual archive, and elegant prose.” - Tanika Sarkar, Jawaharlal Nehru University

The Politics of Heritage from Madras to Chennai  
(Indiana University Press 2008)  
**Mary Hancock**  
*Social Sciences 1990-1993*  
Professor, Departments of Anthropology and History  
University of California, Santa Barbara  

“...a major contribution to an underexamined field. ... [T]his book is ... a formidable effort at comprehending the industries of cultural heritage in India as they confront and negotiate our contemporary world.” - H-Asia

The Time of the Crime: Phenomenology, Psychoanalysis, Italian Film  
(Stanford University Press, 2008)  
**Domietta Torlasco**  
*Humanities 2003-2007*  
Assistant Professor, Department of French and Italian  
Northwestern University  

"...Torlasco reveals an impressive knowledge of film and theory and succeeds admirably in elucidation both the films and the philosophical and psychoanalytical points to which they lead." - Choice

The next Society of Fellows newsletter will be available in Spring 2010.