THE SOCIETY OF FELLOWS IN THE HUMANITIES

ANNUAL REPORT 2014–2015

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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In recent years the Society of Fellows has undergone a period of program innovation, expansion, and enhancement. Three years ago, we instituted the Friday Fellows Workshops—a series in which Fellows gather to share works in progress. The workshops have proven to be extremely popular with the Fellows and wonderfully generative, leading to an increase in both the quality of their scholarly work and its rate of publication. The last several years have also seen a steady increase in postdoctoral candidates applying for fellowships. Last year, in fact, the competition exceeded a thousand applicants for the first time ever. And the launch of our completely revitalized website continues to provide faculty, the general public, and current, prospective, and alumni Fellows a variety of resources previously unavailable to them, including detailed multimedia event listings, new Fellow video profiles, and a Fellows publication database.

This year, the Society not only advanced these new features, but it also produced some of its richest programming yet across its more established offerings. Our Fellows taught more than a dozen undergraduate and graduate courses in Columbia’s Core Curriculum and across the disciplines. Our Thursday Lecture Series continued to integrate the Fellows more fully into the fabric of the university, as they organized talks that drew faculty, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students from throughout the Columbia community and beyond. In the fall semester, the Fellows lectured on their current work, ranging in topic from the epistemology of financial bubbles to the new field of media archaeology to religion and state formation in mid-Republican Rome. In the spring semester, prominent scholars, invited by the Fellows to address the topic of “Exhaustion” from a wide variety of disciplinary perspectives, spoke on subjects as varied as tenement life, environmental policy, and Christian conversion.

The Thursday Lecture Series remains perhaps my favorite facet of the Society of Fellows in that it serves as the public face of the Society, offering an occasion each Thursday for scholars from throughout the university to participate in the exchange of ideas with our Fellows and one another. The talks are always of the highest quality, and the discussions that follow are some of the best on campus: they are vibrant, animated, and cross-disciplinary, leading those assembled to fresh, often surprising ways of understanding a given topic—and often opening new paths of inquiry for the presenter. If you haven’t joined us recently for a Thursday luncheon talk, I strongly encourage you to do so.
Our Fellows also organized major conferences this year, which are detailed more fully in the “Special Events” section. Society of Fellows alumna, Hagar Kotef (2009–2012), currently appointed in the Department of Politics and Government at Ben-Gurion University, returned to Columbia to co-host another iteration of “Political Concepts”—an ongoing project, directed by a group of faculty across several universities, to develop a “critical lexicon,” to which she first introduced Columbia faculty and Fellows in 2010. Fellow Hidetaka Hirota assembled more than twenty scholars for his two-day conference “Managing Borders,” which examined the history of American immigration policies, with particular focus on the present. And Brian Goldstone hosted a two-day symposium on the potentialities of ethnographic description in photographs and video. Entitled “Image as Method: Ethnography – Photography – Film – Sensation – Perception,” this symposium drew a room-packed audience and was accompanied by a multi-week exhibition of the work of photographer Robert R. Desjarlais, on view in the Boardroom and foyer of the Heyman Center.

In partnership with the Heyman Center, the Society organized or supported more than a hundred events this past year. These ranged in topic and scope from the Thursday talks and Fellows-organized conferences discussed above, to readings by novelists Marilynne Robinson and Téa Obreht, a workshop on “Embodied Cognition: Dance and Physics” (in collaboration with the newly inaugurated Center for Science and Society), and poetry readings, community conversations, and other programming supporting the Justice-in-Education Initiative (a new, Mellon-funded partnership between the Heyman Center and the Center for Justice). Bryonn Bain’s sold-out performance in Miller Theater of his one-man show “Lyrics from Lockdown” is one example of the new focus on social justice that the Heyman Center has added to its programming. Our close relationship with the Heyman Center, which has provided a home for the Society for the past thirty-five years, consistently produces some of the most outstanding programming on campus, drawing thousands of audience members each year.

We were pleased to welcome three new Fellows at the start of this year: Maggie Cao (PhD, 2014), Lecturer in Art History, who joined the Society from Harvard University; Murad Idris (PhD, 2012), Lecturer in Political Science, who received his doctorate from the University of Pennsylvania; and Dan-el Padilla Peralta (PhD, 2014), Lecturer in Classics, who came to us from Stanford University. This incoming cohort quickly bonded with our five continuing Fellows—William Deringer (History), Brian Goldstone (Anthropology), Hidetaka Hirota (History and Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race), Rebecca Woods (History), and Grant Wythoff (English and Comparative Literature)—which made it particularly sad to bid farewell to several of them, as we do every year in the late spring. Will Deringer left us to take up a post as Assistant Professor in the Science, Technology, and Society Program at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Brian Goldstone accepted a position as the inaugural Heyman Center Justice-in-Education Postdoctoral Fellow—a post financially supported by the Society of Fellows in partnership with the Mellon-funded
Justice-in-Education Initiative; and Murad Idris, after a one-year tenure at the Society, departed for a position as Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Virginia.

This year’s Fellowship Competition (for 2015–2016) drew more than 900 applicants, from which we selected three truly exceptional scholars, all of whom accepted our fellowship offer. We look forward to welcoming to the Society in July: Benjamin Breen (PhD, 2015, University of Texas, Austin), who will be a Lecturer in History; David Gutkin (PhD, 2015, Columbia University); and Carmel Raz (PhD, 2015, Yale University), both of whom will be Lecturers in Music.

Finally, this year, we were pleased to promote Eileen Gillooly, formerly Associate Director of the Society of Fellows and Heyman Center, to the position of Executive Director. Since joining the Society of Fellows and the Heyman Center, now a decade ago, Eileen has dedicated immeasurable time and effort to the improvement of the Society and the advancement of its Fellows and staff. Her remarkable enthusiasm, creativity, and commitment have pushed the Society and the Center to new heights, and I am so pleased that we will benefit from her leadership for years to come.

In summary, the Society remains as strong, vibrant, and active as it has been at any time in its history. I invite you to learn more in the pages that follow, and to join us in 2015–2016—the Society’s fortieth anniversary—for another year of outstanding scholarship, programs, and events.

Christopher L. Brown
Chair and Director
MEMBERS OF THE 2014–2015 GOVERNING BOARD

Christopher L. Brown (ex-officio)  
Chair/Director  
History

Julie Crawford (ex-officio)  
Chair, Literature Humanities  
English and Comparative Literature

Souleymane Bachir Diagne  
French and Romance Philology

Eileen Gillooly (ex-officio)  
Executive Director  
English and Comparative Literature

Ellie Hisama  
Music

Eleanor Johnson  
English and Comparative Literature

Matthew L. Jones (ex-officio)  
Chair, Contemporary Civilization  
History

Eugenia Lean  
East Asian Languages and Cultures

David Lurie  
East Asian Languages and Cultures

Reinhold Martin  
Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation

Mark Mazower (ex-officio)  
Heyman Center Director  
History

Michele Moody-Adams  
Philosophy

Frances Negron-Muntaner  
English and Comparative Literature and Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race

Alondra Nelson  
Sociology

Jesús Rodríguez-Velasco  
Latin American and Iberian Cultures

Elaine Sisman (ex-officio)  
Chair, Music Humanities  
Music

Katharina Volk  
Classics
The fortieth Society of Fellows in the Humanities Fellowship Competition closed on 6 October 2014, with 905 applicants vying for the three fellowship positions available for 2015–2016. Representatives from twenty-one departments, institutes, and centers conducted the first round of vetting. Each application recommended for advancement to the next level of competition received three readings: two by members of the Governing Board and one by a current Fellow. Each applicant was ranked on a scale of one to five and subsequently reviewed by the selection committee, a sub-committee of the Governing Board. In mid-December, the committee invited thirteen applicants to campus for interviews, which were held in January 2015 at the Heyman Center.

The three available fellowships for 2015–2016 were offered to, and accepted by: Benjamin Breen, PhD in History from the University of Texas at Austin; David Gutkin, PhD in Musicology from Columbia University; and Carmel Raz, PhD in Music Theory from Yale University.

The three Fellows, whose appointments began 1 July 2015, bring to the Society of Fellows different concentrations and approaches within the humanities field. Dr. Breen is a historian of the early modern world, whose current work focuses on the origins of the global drug trade in the tropical belt, with a particular focus on the Portuguese and British empires in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Dr. Gutkin is a scholar of American and European music from the early twentieth century, whose research focuses on technologies of mediating music, processes of canon formation, and temporal dimensions of historical memory. Dr. Raz, an active composer and violinist, is working on a book project that investigates early Romantic auditory cultures at the intersection of music and neuroscience.
## Competition Numbers
### Fellowships Starting in 2014–2015

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<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>No. of Applicants</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
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<tr>
<td>Anthropology</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>6.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art History and Archaeology</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>6.96%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2.21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classics</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>3.21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Asian Languages and Cultures</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>5.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English and Comparative Literature</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>15.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Film Studies</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2.43%</td>
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<tr>
<td>French and Romance Philology</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.77%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Germanic Languages</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>14.04%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institute for Research in African American Studies</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institute for Research on Women and Gender</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>4.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin American and Iberian Cultures</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies</td>
<td>65</td>
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<tr>
<td>Music</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
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<td>Political Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
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<td>Slavic Languages and Cultures</td>
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<td>1.88%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>2.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>100%</td>
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FELLOWS IN RESIDENCE
2014–2015
Maggie Cao is an art historian whose work focuses on intersections of art with histories of technology, natural science, and economics. In her first year as a Fellow, Dr. Cao began preparing her book manuscript, “The End of Landscape in Nineteenth-Century America,” for publication. The project examines the dissolution of landscape painting as a major cultural project in the late nineteenth-century United States and argues that landscape is the genre through which American artists most urgently sought to come to terms with modernity. During the academic year, Cao presented research from her book project at the Newberry Library’s Seminar in American Art and Visual Culture and at a conference on Destruction in American Art at the Courtauld Institute in London. She also completed an article on the theoretical and material links between painting and camouflage at the turn of the twentieth century. The essay, entitled “Abbott Thayer and the Invention of Camouflage” is slated for publication in the journal Art History. She also contributed to the exhibition catalogue for Picturing the Americas: Landscape Painting from Tierra Del Fuego to the Arctic, which opens in June 2015 at the National Gallery of Ontario before touring to Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art and Pinacoteca do Estado de São Paulo.

Dr. Cao taught Art Humanities during the fall term and an art history seminar entitled “Transpacific Objects” in the spring. The latter offered students an opportunity to study material history maps, porcelain, tattoos, and other artifacts of exploration and exchange from the age of sail to the age of flight. The topic is the basis of Dr. Cao’s newest research on eighteenth-century globalization, with which she plans to engage more fully as a second-year Fellow.
William Deringer is a historian of science and technology, with a particular interest in the history of calculation. His first book project, “Calculated Values: Financial Politics and the Quantitative Age, 1688–1776,” under contract with Harvard University Press, reconstructs how political disputes over public money in the aftermath of Britain’s Revolution of 1688 first gave rise to a popular belief that numbers are an especially objective form of knowledge. It seeks to explain historically why we trust numbers so deeply yet are simultaneously so aware of their failings—how we can say that “numbers never lie” one minute, and complain about “lies, damned lies, and statistics” the next. In 2014–2015, Dr. Deringer continued his work on “Calculated Values,” including drafting a new introduction and a new chapter on “The Preeminent Bookkeepers in Christendom.” The latter examines the individuals who performed the calculations that made Britain’s quantitative age, examining how deeply personal fights over numbers helped produce, somewhat paradoxically, the notion that numbers constitute an especially impersonal way of knowing.

In addition to his work on “Calculated Values,” Deringer returned to a topic of longstanding research interest: financial crises. He presented a version of that research at the Society’s Thursday Lecture Series in September 2014, under the title “For What It’s Worth: The Historical Epistemology of Financial Bubbles.” He later developed that talk into an article entitled “Bounded Rationality and the History of Science” for the journal Isis, which was published in September 2015. That article examines the contested ways in which “rational” and “irrational” financial behavior have been defined during moments of financial catastrophe, looking at two different historical sites: economics research in the late twentieth century and financial practice during the 1720 South Sea Bubble. He presented additional work at the American Historical Association annual conference in New York, the University of Southern California, New York University, and the German Historical Institute in Paris. He also taught a new course, “Quantifying People: A History of Social Science,” in the History Department in Spring 2015.

Dr. Deringer is sad that his term at the Society of Fellows has come to an end and is thankful to everyone at the Society for such a memorable and enriching three years. In Fall 2015, he begins a new position as Assistant Professor of Science, Technology and Society at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.
Research Project

The Miraculous Life: Scenes from the Charismatic Encounter in Northern Ghana

Brian Goldstone is an anthropologist with broad interests in religion and secularism, African studies, intellectual history, critical theory, ethnographic writing, visual anthropology, and mental illness. His book project, “The Miraculous Life: Scenes from the Charismatic Encounter in Northern Ghana,” explores the incursion of Pentecostal-charismatic churches into northern Ghana—a rural, predominantly Muslim region whose inhabitants (long the objects of expropriations and interventions of various kinds) have recently become the target of evangelistic efforts undertaken by Christians from the south. Arranged as a gathering of disparate scenes and using a wide array of ethnographic, literary, philosophical, video/photographic, and historical materials, the book charts the intimate, intensive, often precarious worlds that materialize as believers labor to make the “miraculous life” their own and wage a vigorous evangelistic campaign to reconstitute the social, moral, and spiritual disposition of an alleged “Islamic stronghold.” The manuscript of “Miraculous Life” has been solicited by the University of California Press for publication in its Ethnographic Studies in Subjectivity series.

In 2014–2015, the final year of his fellowship, Dr. Goldstone continued work on several projects. He completed final revisions on a co-edited collection, African Futures: Essays on Crisis, Emergence, and Possibility (University of Chicago Press), as well as two new chapters of his “Miraculous Life.” For the Society of Fellows Thursday Lecture Series, Dr. Goldstone presented “Life Without Lights (Electric Affinities),” which explored the empirical phenomenon of electrical light as an event at once moral and metaphysical, spiritual and infrastructural. Dr. Goldstone also wrote two new essays: “Taken Seriously: Sensation, Style, Critique, and the Anthropological Voice” and “The Last Enemy: Imaging Death in Ghanaian Pentecostalism.”

In Spring 2015, Dr. Goldstone organized two events for the Society of Fellows: a moderated discussion between the acclaimed anthropologists Anne Allison and Elizabeth A. Povinelli, entitled “A Conversation on Precarity and Exhaustion,” and the symposium “Image as Method: Ethnography – Photography – Film – Sensation – Perception.” This two-day event brought together an internationally renowned group of scholars, writers, photographers, and filmmakers to explore the question of whether images, broadly conceived, might present not simply a supplementary means of conveying anthropological insights, but a radically different way of imagining and arriving at them.

In 2015–2016, Dr. Goldstone will be a Justice-in-Education Fellow at the Heyman Center for the Humanities at Columbia University. During the course of the academic year, he will teach a seminar, “States of Confinement,” at Columbia (in the fall) and Sing Sing Prison (in the spring), while also beginning ethnographic research on issues of incarceration, mental illness, poverty, and religious sensibility.
Dr. Hirota spent the fall semester completing his book manuscript, “Expelling the Poor,” which examines the historical origins of immigration restriction in the United States. He submitted the manuscript to Oxford University Press in December, where it is currently under peer review. In the meantime, Dr. Hirota began research on his second book project, which explores the meaning of alien contract labor—the labor of foreign workers coming to the U.S. under contract with American employers—in American immigration history. This project, which illuminates the intersections of labor, business, and anti-immigrant sentiment in American history, is the first sustained study of the broad history of European, Asian, and Mexican contract laborers in the United States.

Dr. Hirota counted several scholarly achievements during the 2014–2015 academic year. In April 2015, he received the Carlton C. Qualey Memorial Award from the Immigration and Ethnic History Society for his 2014 article “The Great Entrepot for Mendicants: Foreign Poverty and Immigration Control in New York State to 1882,” as the best piece published in the Journal of American Ethnic History during 2013 and 2014. To mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 in April, he organized a two-day interdisciplinary conference on American immigration. Titled “Managing Borders,” the event drew many leading scholars in the field from universities across the nation.

Dr. Hirota actively participated in scholarly meetings throughout the year. In the fall, he presented his research at Glucksman Ireland House NYU, at the Workshop on Critical Approaches to Race, Ethnicity, and Migration at Columbia, and at international conferences held in Lisbon and Oxford. In the spring, he participated as a commentator in the Workshop on Critical Approaches to Race, Ethnicity, and Migration at Columbia and at the Massachusetts Historical Society Immigration and Urban History Seminar. In February, he visited McGill University in Montreal as an exchange scholar from the Columbia Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race, giving talks in an undergraduate course on Quebec Studies and at the Montreal History Group.

Dr. Hirota also participated in a grant-writing workshop for graduate students in the Columbia History Department and, as a member of the Executive Board at the Immigration and Ethnic History Society, served on the George E. Pozzetta Dissertation Award Committee. He greatly enjoyed teaching his seminar “Wealth and Poverty in America” in the spring semester, which included a class visit with his students to the Tenement Museum on the Lower East Side.
Murad Idris began his year at the Society of Fellows in the Humanities with a successful proposal to Oxford University Press for *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Political Theory*, a collaborative project with co-editors Leigh Jenco (London School of Economics) and Megan Thomas (University of California at Santa Cruz). Dr. Idris submitted a proposal for his own first book, “War for Peace,” in the fall as well. During his year as a Fellow, he presented different versions of a chapter on Ibn Khaldūn and Hobbes at the American Political Science Association (APSA) annual conference, the Society of Fellows Friday Workshop, and the biweekly War Seminar at the Mahindra Humanities Center at Harvard University. While in Boston, he visited the archives of John Rawls to study the philosopher’s construction of Islam and the fictional state he calls “Kazanistan,” which will inform a chapter of Dr. Idris’s second book project, “Islam in Political Language: Discursive Orders and Linguistic Disorders.”

Dr. Idris worked on two other papers this year as well. In the fall, he wrote about Qasim Amin’s political thought and its relationship to empire in light of contemporaneous reactions to his work in Europe and in Egypt. He presented this paper at a conference at the University of Oregon in October; a revised version will appear in *Colonial Exchanges* (Bloomsbury Press, forthcoming 2016). His second paper—on a text that he has written on twice before—discussed Ibn Tufayl’s twelfth-century allegory Ḥāyy ibn Yaqqān, which he presented at a conference in London on “New Histories of Political Thought” in April.

Other activities over the course of his Fellowship year included mentoring ABDs affiliated with the Mellon Mays Fellows Professional Network, organizing a panel for the American Political Science Association with Teresa Bejan (SoF, 2013–2014), serving as a member of the program committee for the annual conference of the Association for Political Theory, and acting as a discussant for the Political Theory Colloquium at the University of Virginia in January. He will also be reviewing Joseph Massad’s *Islam in Liberalism* (2015) for the journal *Theory & Event*. In Fall 2014, he taught Contemporary Civilization in the undergraduate Core Curriculum, and in Spring 2015, he offered an advanced seminar in the Middle East, South Asian, and African Studies Department on “The Politics of Colonized Thought,” with readings of thinkers writing in colonial contexts from 1700 to 1960.

In Fall 2015, he will take up the position of Assistant Professor of Political Theory at the University of Virginia.
Dan-el Padilla Peralta

Stanford University, Department of Classics, PhD 2014

Dr. Padilla Peralta’s first year at the Society of Fellows was an annus mirabilis. In the winter, he received tenure-track job offers from the Classics departments of both Columbia and Princeton Universities. After much thought, he accepted Princeton’s offer and will begin teaching there in the Fall of 2016. He signed a book contract with Princeton University Press for his first academic monograph, which will be a substantially revised version of his dissertation, “Divine Institutions: Religion and State Formation in Mid-Republican Rome.” In March, he and his co-editors submitted an edited volume entitled “Cargo Culture: Roman Literary and Material Appropriative Practices,” to Cambridge University Press for review. His memoir, Undocumented: A Dominican Boy’s Odyssey from a Homeless Shelter to the Ivy League, will be released by Penguin Press on 28 July 2015.

In Fall 2014, Dr. Padilla Peralta presented an overview of his dissertation at the Society of Fellows Thursday Lecture Series; the rich feedback from Fellows, Board members, and Classics Department faculty was incorporated into his book proposal. In October, he pivoted to the “Arts of Religious Communication in Mid-Republican Rome,” for his job talk at Princeton. In January, he participated in a Postclassicisms Network workshop on the theme of “Response and Responsibility” and delivered talks on the interrelationship of natural landscapes and divinatory practice at a two-day conference co-organized by Princeton and the University of Erfurt, and a second time at Columbia’s Center for the Ancient Mediterranean.

Much of the spring semester was devoted to writing: an essay on epigraphy and lexicography in Augustan Rome, submitted for the edited volume Texts and Monuments in Augustan Rome (De Gruyter); an essay on classical Athens and Sparta in the Dominican imaginary for an edited volume tentatively titled Classicisms of the Black Atlantic; an article on a Roman elite family; and a first draft of a book review of Jörg Rüpke’s From Jupiter to Christ for the journal Classical World.

He reports that teaching the Core Curriculum at Columbia in the fall was “a delight” and “an absolute blast.” His spring course on Roman religion “ended on a culinary high note” when one of his students tried her hand at preparing libum (a type of Roman sacrificial cake). Dr. Padilla Peralta will be joining forces this summer with Public Humanities Fellow Emily Hainze to teach “Humanities Texts, Critical Skills” to the inaugural cohort of Justice-in-Education Scholars in the Justice-in-Education Initiative, a collaboration between the Heyman Center for the Humanities and the Center for Justice at Columbia, made possible by a generous grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.
Dr. Woods began her second year in the Society teaching an undergraduate lecture course, “The British Empire,” and gave guest presentations in two classes at Columbia in the spring: “In the Hoof-prints of Empire,” in the Department of Art History, and “Environmental History,” for a class on environmental reporting in the School of Journalism. She also gave a lecture at Harvard and paid a guest visit to Professor Karl Appuhn’s graduate seminar on Environmental History. She was awarded a Course Development Grant by the Center for Science and Society at Columbia (with funds from the Heyman Center to support interdisciplinary innovation) for an undergraduate seminar, “The Histories of Cold,” which she will teach in the Spring 2016 semester.

Dr. Woods devoted most of the spring to restructuring her manuscript, “The Herds Shot Round the World: Native Breeds and the British Empire, 1800–1900.” She presented several chapters of the revised manuscript over the course of the semester, at the Fellows Friday Workshop in February, at the New York Metro Area Environmental History Working Group in April, and at MADCAP—the history of capitalism working group at the University of Virginia. Dr. Woods has approximately one-third of the manuscript revised and expects to resubmit it to the University of North Carolina Press in December 2015.

Dr. Woods gave several invited talks this year, including her presentation at the Society of Fellows Thursday Lecture Series, a version of which she also delivered at Bennington College in the Center for the Advancement of Public Action in October. She presented material from her book project at the University of Western Ontario in October and delivered the pedagogical lecture for Contemporary Civilization instructors on Charles Darwin in April. In July 2014, she presented “A Model for Ecology? Soay Sheep, St Kilda, and Ecosystem Ecology in the 20th Century” at a panel she organized on insular economies and ecologies at the World Congress on Environmental History in Portugal. From this came an invitation to participate in a roundtable on methodologies at the annual conference of the Water History Society. In January, she presented work from her second project, “To Bridge the Hemispheres: Nineteenth-Century Refrigerators and Technological Precarity in Colonial Australasia,” at the American Historical Society in New York. She will deliver four papers this summer at meetings of the Agricultural History Society (Lexington, KY), Water History Society (Delft, the Netherlands), the European Society for Environmental History (Versailles, France), and the Society for the History of the Early American Republic (Raleigh, NC).
Grant Wythoff’s critical edition, “The Perversity of Things: Hugo Gernsback on Media, Tinkering, and Scientifiction,” has been accepted by the University of Minnesota Press for publication in its Electronic Mediations series, one of the leading forums for new work in media theory. Even more exciting, the Press has decided to use this book as a pilot project for a new online, interactive books platform: Manifold Editions. By turning the very successful and popular web version of “Debates in the Digital Humanities” into an extensible platform, this project will give authors the ability to say more than the space of the traditional monograph permits, as well as to engage a broader range of resources. Both the print book and the online edition will be released in Fall 2016.

Dr. Wythoff’s monograph, “Gadgetry,” has been percolating ever since an intensive one-week workshop at the First Book Institute two summers ago at Penn State, where eight recent doctoral recipients worked on turning their dissertations into book manuscripts. He plans to continue conversations with editors on this book project at this year’s American Studies Association, Modern Language Association, and Society for Cinema and Media Studies meetings.

His article “Artifactual Interpretation,” which discusses comparative methodologies between media studies and archaeology, was recently published in the Journal of Contemporary Archaeology for a special forum on media archaeologies. He is currently working on a longer version of this article, which he intends to submit to journals by the end of summer 2016. A short piece on the aesthetics of digital television, “The Form of Content Delivery,” was published with Media Fields Journal. In addition, his essay on digital humanities and media studies pedagogies, entitled “Design and DH in the Media Studies Classroom,” appeared in a special issue of Cinema Journal. Finally, he is completing an article on the origins of science fiction in electrical parts catalogs, which he wrote alongside the introduction to The Perversity of Things and which was solicited for publication by American Literature.

Dr. Wythoff received a course development grant from the Center for Science and Society at Columbia (with funds from the Heyman Center to support interdisciplinary innovation) for his Spring 2016 course “The Science of Fiction: American Naturalism, 1880–1915.” In addition, he was awarded grants from centerNET and the Consortium of Humanities Centers and Institutes (CHCI) to support his attendance at the annual Digital Humanities conference in Sydney during the summer of 2015, where he will be a participant in the New Scholars Seminar.
THURSDAY LECTURE SERIES
### Columbia University Society of Fellows in the Humanities
#### Fall 2014 Thursday Lecture Series

Open to Columbia University faculty, students, and invited guests. Unless otherwise noted, all talks begin at 12:15 in the Second Floor Common Room, Heyman Center, East Campus.

**societyoffellows.columbia.edu**

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**Friday, Nov 7, 2014 9:30am - 5:30pm**

**Special Event**

"Rewriting English: Gauri Viswanathan’s Masks of Conquest at Twenty Five"

A full day conference.

The Heyman Center, Second Floor Common Room

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**Feb 25**

**William Deringer**
Fellow/Lecturer in History

“For What It’s Worth: The Historical Epistemology of Financial Bubbles”
Chair: Michele Moody-Adams

**Oct 2**

**Rebecca Woods**
Fellow/Lecturer in History

“Nature’s Laboratory: Soay Sheep and St Kilda and in Twentieth-Century Ecological Thought and Practice”
Chair: Matthew L. Jones

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“A Plan for Universal Peace: Sayyid Qutb in the Shade of Immanuel Kant”
Chair: Julie Crawford

**Dec 4**

**Emily Ogden**
Assistant Professor of English, University of Virginia and Alumna Fellow ('10-'13)

“Hawthorne’s Disenchantments”
25 September

For What It’s Worth: The Historical Epistemology of Financial Bubbles
William Deringer, Society of Fellows, Lecturer in History

Financial crises have long served as exemplary trials of economic rationality. Many observers have cited financial panics as instances of the collective limitations of human rationality, of what Victorian chronicler Charles Mackay memorably called “extraordinary popular delusions and the madness of crowds.” Yet, at the same time, such sudden ruptures have often served to reaffirm and even strengthen belief in rational standards of economic behavior. “Bubbles”—significant deviations in price from the “intrinsic” value of an asset—are usually explained in ways that affirm a unitary, rigid view of what rational economic behavior ought to look like. Economic historians, divided on the “rationality” of a given historical bubble, nonetheless generally agree on what such rationality is. This talk proposed a very different approach: to examine past bubbles not as assays of a monolithic rationality, but as moments of crisis in economic knowledge.

Drawing together methodological insights from historical epistemology and behavioral economics—particularly those that attempt to model financial bubbles in terms of investor “disagreement”—Dr. Deringer analyzed the specific calculations sophisticated observers used to model one notorious “bubble” asset: the stock of the South Sea Company in 1720. A close reading of especially adventurous valuations from the period suggests that, in the midst of the South Sea mania, what qualified as “rational” was precisely the question. Observers were faced with a range of plausible, divergent ways of valuing that stock, none of which constituted a single, discernibly correct viewpoint. By reconstructing such disagreement, we can see how social contexts create variable boundaries around rational—and ethical—financial behavior. We can also see why humanistic analysis provides a productive—indeed, necessary—complement to social-scientific approaches in understanding economic life, past and present.

2 October

Nature’s Laboratory: Soay Sheep and St Kilda in Twentieth-Century Ecological Thought and Practice
Rebecca Woods, Society of Fellows, Lecturer in History

Since at least the nineteenth century, islands have held a privileged position in evolutionary and ecological thought. Encircled by water, an island offers a discrete, self-contained unit—an evident “natural laboratory,” where the selective forces of evolution operate with more intensity and therefore, to the human observer, more apparently. An insular laboratory, though, is as much the outcome of literal and figurative work as its brick and mortar counterpart, as a close look at the archipelago of St Kilda in the North Atlantic reveals.

Home to an unusual type of sheep called Soays, believed to be the oldest known breed of domesticated sheep in Europe, St Kilda is a natural laboratory par excellence—a simplified ecosystem that reveals the dynamic relationship between an herbivore population and its food source in an environment absent of predation, competition, or human interference. The insights that intense longitudinal study of these sheep reveal, however, are dependent upon the erasure of a much longer history of St Kilda, which includes (among other things) a long history of human occupation that came to a close only in 1930. Attention to this deeper and more complex past, as well as to the interpretive decisions made by the scientists who study Soay sheep, force us to reconsider the notion of a “natural laboratory,” as well as the historical and scientific explanatory power of islands more generally.

9 October

Painting Banknotes, Coining Landscape: Ralph Blakelock and the Economics of the Nocturne
Maggie Cao, Society of Fellows, Lecturer in Art History and Archaeology

The language of value, in its aesthetic and monetary ambivalence, has long played a role in destabilizing artistic representation, from the sixteenth-century portraits of Flemish moneylenders to Andy Warhol’s dollar bills. Dr. Cao’s talk examined a specific moment of that history—the United States in the final decades of the nine-
teenth century—when artistic and economic theories coalesced around landscape, a genre that Americans feared functioned too much like money within economic circuits.

To explore the complex entanglement of landscape painting and economics, she focused on a particularly apt figure, Ralph Blakelock (1847–1919), an American nocturne painter who ended his career by making landscapes that mimic circulating banknotes. Though little known today, Blakelock was a household name in American culture around 1900, twice setting records for the price of his paintings. His paintings not only underwent the entropic processes of the capitalist system (both literal and financial liquefaction) but were also subject to the dangerous tendencies of currency itself: counterfeiting, uneven exchange, even hoarding. Blakelock’s aesthetic struggles poignantly, and at times humorously, reveal the material and spatial anxieties surrounding economic modernity at the turn of the century.

16 October

Divine Institutions: Religion and State Formation in Mid-Republican Rome
Dan-el Padilla Peralta, Society of Fellows, Lecturer in Classics

The progression of Republican Rome from Italic city-state to Mediterranean superpower during the fourth to second centuries BCE continues to fascinate. More than two millennia after the Greek Polybius asked, at the opening of his Histories, whether there was anyone so trivial-minded and lazy that he could not be bothered to know how and under what constitutional system the Romans had subjugated “almost the entire inhabited world,” Rome’s imperial expansion remains a topic of lively debate. Dr. Padilla Peralta argued that one important contributing factor to this successful imperial expansion, often overlooked or incorrectly evaluated, was Roman religious practice.

Attempts to write the history of mid-republican Rome face evidentiary hurdles: Romans do not begin writing their own histories until the end of the third and beginning of the second century, and these histories—and most other contemporary or near-contemporary writings—survive only in fragmentary form; the material evidence unearthed by archaeologists regularly poses challenges of dating and interpretation. What is true for the writing of mid-republican Roman history at large is particularly true for the writing of its religious history. Dr. Padilla Peralta offered a path to clearing these hurdles, explaining how a combination of quantitative modeling and social-scientific theory can help us recover the types and patterns of social behavior structured around religious ritual. His talk then explored how such religious rituals set up the durable and long-lasting institutions that maintained communal trust and cohesion in the face of rising military commitments and considerable social upheaval.

23 October

Mobile Media and the Paleolithic
Grant Wythoff, Society of Fellows, Lecturer in English

In the mid-1950s, a collection of Neanderthal artifacts was unearthed in the town of Mouster, in southwest France, kicking off one of the most famous debates over the study of cultural transmission through the archaeological record. At a time before the development of chronometric techniques such as radiocarbon dating, which would allow later archaeologists definitively to order these artifacts in time and space, the Mousterian debate centered on the question of how we might extrapolate history from the formal properties of a technical object.

In this presentation, Dr. Wythoff put debates from the history of archaeology into conversation with an exciting new field in media studies known as “media archaeology.” Media archaeology has thus far been informed by Michel Foucault’s (largely metaphorical) use of the term archaeology to denote an inquiry into “the law of what can be said, the system that governs the appearance of statements as unique events.” But traditional archaeology, Dr. Wythoff argued, has much to offer media archaeology studies. He began by focusing on the two principal figures in the debate—the established French archaeologist and sometime science fiction novelist François Bordes and the upstart American archaeologist Lewis Binford—in order to draw larger conclusions about how we both experience and interpret the artifacts around us. He then applied the methodological insights gleaned from this episode in the history of archaeological thought to current debates about the cognitive effects of mobile media on their users. In contrast to
fears that digital devices are forcing us to “evolve” in some sense, the Mousterian debate reveals the complexity of how we should narrate the many lives of technology—the tasks to which our tools are put, the expanded ranges of action and forms of expression they enable, the cohesion and succession of sociocultural traditions—and how we resurrect such forms of subject-object interaction from history.

6 November

The Journey Continued

Hidetaka Hirota, Society of Fellows, Lecturer in History and the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race

This presentation introduced a chapter in Dr. Hirota’s book manuscript, “Expelling the Poor,” which examines the origins of American immigration control. In response to the influx of large numbers of impoverished Irish immigrants during the 1840s, New York and Massachusetts developed laws for rejecting immigrant paupers on landing and deporting them back to Europe. Drawing from Irish and British archival materials, such as local newspapers, workhouse records, and Parliamentary documents, this presentation explored what happened to Irish deportees after being shipped back to Liverpool or Ireland.

The expelled Irish paupers’ post-deportation experiences reveal some of the harshest aspects of America’s deportation policy in the nineteenth century, including the utter neglect of deportees’ welfare during the cross-ocean voyage and the practice of abandoning deportees on the street without basic provisions for self-support. Stories introduced in this presentation demonstrated that deportation was not merely the legal embodiment of anti-immigrant sentiment but a policy that profoundly affected deportees’ lives long after the moment of expulsion from the United States.

Dr. Hirota’s presentation also illuminated the transnational dimensions of American immigration policy. By analyzing British and Irish officials’ responses to Irish deportees, the presentation showed how the legal concept of belonging led to the deportation of Irish migrant paupers not only from the United States to Liverpool, but also from Liverpool on to Ireland, where they were socially marginalized. American deportation policy was driven by anti-Irish nativism, but it unfolded within a larger legal culture that worked to exclude non-producing members from allied societies operating in a transatlantic context.

13 November

Life Without Lights (Electric Affinities)
Brian Goldstone, Society of Fellows, Lecturer in Anthropology

Dr. Goldstone’s talk explored the empirical phenomenon of light—specifically electric light—as at once a moral and metaphysical, spiritual (even quasi-vitalist) and infrastructural event. Based on ethnographic and archival research in northern Ghana, the talk reconsidered the purported status of this region as an abject space of darkness—as a shadowy “Muslim stronghold” and hence an abode of demons (according to the country’s charismatic Christians) and as a destitute, underdeveloped milieu of “energy poverty” (according to the country’s NGOs)—in order to sketch the contours of an anthropology of light in contemporary Africa more generally.

20 November

A Plan for Universal Peace: Sayyid Qutb in the Shade of Immanuel Kant

Murad Idris, Society of Fellows, Lecturer in Political Science and in Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies

“Before us today is the problem of universal peace,” Sayyid Qutb declares in the preface to his much-neglected Universal Peace and Islam (1951). “Does Islam have an opinion on the matter? Does Islam have a solution?” Immanuel Kant’s construction of the political universe would foreclose any answer. After all, Kant’s arrangement of non-European peoples as lagging behind Europeans implies that those of Qutb’s ilk only receive constitutions, states, and ultimately, universal peace; they do not design them, and any thought Islam might have on peace is irrelevant to history. In Perpetual Peace (1795), Kant specifically names the Arab as an antithesis of universal hospitality, which is a central tenet of his plan for peace. Kant’s ambivalence about Arabs, as well as his cartographic imagination, suggest that what he calls an “unjust
enemy”—he whose will renders peace “impossible”—might indeed be epitomized by the Arab.

Albeit popularly considered the ideologue of “Islamic jihād,” the Muslim Brotherhood’s leading theorist also designed a plan for universal peace. Dr. Idris brought the two thinkers into mutual critique through their assumptions about geography, political economy, and secularism, treating each as a window into the other’s distortions. The two theorists peg the emergence of universal peace to an immanent organization of individual states with laws in common. They promise a peaceful world through the legal form of the state. This promise is embedded in an Enlightenment script that claims to correct unjust savagery through the state-form and law-form but that in effect constrains pacific imaginaries and authorizes hostility. Through Kant’s figure of “the Arab,” this talk unpacked a logic of interstate peace that remains current today. Qutb’s adaptations of this familiar logic unwittingly expose its limits, culminating with perpetual war against enemies whose laws and form are “wrong.”

4 December

Hawthorne’s Disenchantments
Emily Ogden, Assistant Professor of English, University of Virginia
Society of Fellows, 2010–2013

In his preface to The Blithedale Romance (1852), Nathaniel Hawthorne claimed to have been trying to construct a “Faery Land” in his novel, a place of enchantment where the fragile “beings of imagination” would not be exposed to killing skepticism. Why then also have a first-person narrator, Coverdale, who seems to be skepticism incarnate? One reason might be that the attitudes of disenchantment—debunking, skepticism, and contempt—do not destroy the practices they target. They preserve and protect those practices. Dr. Ogden elaborated a theory of a disenchantment that incites rather than represses. Her talk moved between Hawthorne’s novel and the art or science of psychometry—a form of psychic reading rife in The Blithedale Romance’s fictional community and at the real Brook Farm community, on which Blithedale was based.

Spring 2015

Exhaustion

12 February

Tenement Toil and Exhaustion
Annie Polland, Senior Vice President, Education & Programs, Lower East Side Tenement Museum

When reformers visited the Lower East Side at the turn of the twentieth century, they noted the ever-present whirr of the sewing machine. Early in the morning till late at night, tenement dwellers sewed clothes, carried buckets of drinking water up multiple flights of stairs, battled contagious diseases, and struggled to sound out new languages. Even the Sabbath, the supposed day of rest, required hours of preparatory labor. Dr. Polland discussed the toll that tenement life took on immigrant families, as well as the challenges of conveying that exhaustion to modern-day students and tourists.

19 February

The Bet: Our Gamble Over Earth’s Future
Paul Sabin, Associate Professor of History and American Studies, Yale University

Are we headed for a world of scarce resources and environmental catastrophe, or will market forces and technological innovation yield greater prosperity? Paul Sabin, Associate Professor of History and American Studies at Yale University, took up this question in his book The Bet: Paul Ehrlich, Julian Simon, and Our Gamble over Earth’s Future. Using a highly publicized wager between celebrated biologist Paul Ehrlich and iconoclastic economist Julian Simon over the future price of metals as a frame, Sabin examined the clash between environmentalists and their critics and traced the origins of the political gulf that separates the two sides.
Columbia University Society of Fellows
Spring 2015 Thursday Lecture Series
Exhaustion

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Open to Columbia University faculty, students, and guests.
societyoffellows.columbia.edu

February 12
Annie Polland
Senior Vice President of Education & Programs, Tenement Museum
Tenement Toil and Exhaustion

February 19
Paul Sabin
Associate Professor of History and American Studies, Yale University
The Bet: Our Gamble over Earth’s Future

March 5
Carlo Rotella
Professor of English, Boston College
Lost Cities: Chicago’s South Side in the 1970s

March 12
Kristina Killgrove
Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of West Florida
Civic Corpses: A Bioarcheological Analysis of Imperial Gabii (Italy)

April 2
Jeff Green
Associate Professor of Political Science, University of Pennsylvania
Four Implications of Permanent Plutocracy

April 9
Daniel Colucciello Barber
Fellow, Institute for Cultural Inquiry, Berlin
Exhaustion, Conversion, Excommunication

April 16
Craige Champion
Associate Professor of History, Syracuse University
Senatorial Audiences and the Limits of Political Patience

April 22
Anne Allison
Robert O. Keohane Professor of Cultural Anthropology, Duke University
& Elizabeth Povenilli
Professor of Anthropology, Columbia University
PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS EVENT IS ON A WEDNESDAY
A Conversation on Precarity and Exhaustion

April 23
Hannah Landecker
Associate Professor of Sociology, University of California, Los Angeles
After Homeostasis

April 30
James Nisbet
Assistant Professor of Art History, University of California, Irvine
Beyond Entropy
5 March

Lost Cities: Chicago’s South Side in the 1970s  
Carlo Rotella, Professor of English,  
Director of American Studies, Boston College

Any city at any historical moment is composed of many layers, including not only emergent and dominant forms of urbanism but also superseded, decaying, elapsed, or otherwise exhausted versions of itself. On the South Side of Chicago in the 1970s, the “lost cities” still visible and reachable in the landscape included remnants and ruins of the White City of the Columbian Exposition of 1893, the Black Metropolis that had been home to the golden age of Chicago blues, the industrial city that had once been one of the world’s great manufacturing centers, the city of white-ethnic urban villages, the Cold War city designed for nuclear self-destruction via the Nike and Hercules missile programs, and more.

Dr. Rotella’s survey of these fallen or fading orders pursued a larger objective: an understanding of how the cultural complexity of an historical moment expresses the quality of density, the single trait that mostly crucially defines the city.

2 March

Civic Corpses: A Bioarchaeological Analysis of Imperial Gabii (Italy)  
Kristina Killgrove, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, University of West Florida

After centuries as a small but thriving urban center and quarry less than twenty kilometers east of Rome, the city of Gabii essentially collapsed, and its Imperial-era occupation was of the dead rather than the living. Excavations by the Gabii Project since 2009 have uncovered several dozen burial sites dating to a range of time periods; the Imperial ones, however, are the most numerous and the most anomalous. From standard lower-class burials a cappuccina to the unique “lead burrito,” the Imperial tombs effectively marked Gabii as a place only for the deceased. Dr. Killgrove addressed the bioarchaeological evidence of the Imperial burials at Gabii—including age-at-death, sex, stature, and pathological conditions—in an attempt to understand how these defunct bodies produced and were the product of a lifeless city.

2 April

Four Implications of Permanent Plutocracy  
Jeffrey Green, Associate Professor in Political Science, University of Pennsylvania

Liberals today almost universally conceive of plutocracy as a problem that in principle would be satisfactorily corrected in a well-ordered liberal-democratic regime. Against this, Green argued that plutocracy is an inescapable problem that cannot be fully solved—at least not so long as there is private property and the family. Its inescapability thus generates a second-order challenge for liberals committed to social justice: not just how to reduce plutocracy, but how to respond retrospectively to the plutocracy that has always existed in liberal-democratic states. The problem of plutocracy explains why a purely idealized project of liberal-democracy ought to be seen as having exhausted itself.

9 April

Exhaustion, Conversion, Excommunication  
Daniel Colucciello Barber, Research Fellow, Institute for Critical Inquiry Berlin

The term conversion carries connotations of religion and coloniality. But this has not prevented it from appearing, more generally, as an index of change and transformation. Drawing on debates in Religious Studies, Philosophy, Black Studies, and Media Studies, Dr. Barber argued that the apparent generalizability of conversion is actually limited by its specifically Christian formation. Whereas conversion once mediated Christian salvation to the world, it now makes the world itself a secular medium of salvation.

In this sense, conversion names a process that is both fluid and fixed, one that is capable of simultaneously sedimenting, exhausting, and generating identity. Within this process, exhaustion emerges both as a limit and as a new medium for production: by marking what threatens to be lost, it also names a condition from which we are supposed to be saved. Exhaustion, far from pointing to the cessation of the world, provides media for the world’s conversion. Against this ceaseless world—whether Christian, secular, or even post-secular—Dr. Barber proposed a logic of excommu-
16 April

**Senatorial Audiences and the Limits of Political Patience**  
Craige Champion, Associate Professor of Ancient History and Classics, Syracuse University

The Greek historian Polybius notes the flood of all things Greek into the city of Rome in the wake of the Roman victory at Pydna in 168 BCE. Between 200 and 150 BCE, the Roman senatorial class exhibited signs of being overwhelmed by a Greek cultural onslaught, as we may surmise from the periodic expulsion of Greek intellectuals from the city. One way in which direct contacts with the Greek world accelerated during this time was in the increasing frequency of Greek diplomatic embassies to the Roman Senate. Building on the theme of this colloquium series, Dr. Champion argued that the ennui and exhaustion involved in hosting such embassies provide the backdrop against which to view an increasingly sharp Roman response to Greek political problems, resulting in the so-called Achaean War and the destruction of Corinth in 146 BCE.

23 April

**After Homeostasis**  
Hannah Landecker, Associate Professor of Sociology, University of California, Los Angeles

Dr. Landecker considered the role that twentieth-century models of intermediary metabolism played in the constitution of ideas of homeostasis and interiority for organisms vis-à-vis their environments. These earlier metabolic ideas can be contrasted with contemporary theories of metabolic disorder, made evident through ethnographic observation of current biomedical research. In its traditional formulation, homeostasis seemed to be a state that had no end; it was all about return, recurrence, and stability. So what can come after homeostasis, save death? Contemporary biomedical researchers have identified a variety of practical problems that relate precisely to this question, including beta-cell exhaustion, inflammation, genomic instability, hyperphagia, and dysbiology. Though seemingly narrow matters of technical and medical concern, these research topics can be seen as arenas in which researchers are struggling with broader cultural and theoretical questions about what remains once homeostasis ends.

30 April

**Beyond Entropy**  
James Nisbet, Assistant Professor of Art History, University of California, Irvine

During the 1960s, entropy was a powerful concept for the production and interpretation of the large-scale earthworks of the Land Art movement. But while this focus on entropy is important, it has since come to obscure the more extensive role of energy in the art and politics of the postwar decades. Dr. Nisbet addressed some of these larger currents of energy in the visual arts, considering the legacy of earthworks after the exhaustion of Land Art itself.
In an effort to integrate the Fellows more fully as members of their home departments and to encourage them to work with professional colleagues from multiple disciplines and institutions on projects of mutual interest, the Society provided financial support for seven special events at the Heyman Center in 2014–2015. All seven, which included four two-day conferences, were organized by the Fellows.
FALL 2014

27 October
The Potency of Indigenous Bibles and Biographies

Mapuche oral shamanic biographies and performances—some of which take the form of “Bibles” and shamanic literacies—play a central role in the production of indigenous history in southern Chile. In this talk, entitled “The Potency of Indigenous Bibles and Biographies: Mapuche Shamanic Literacy and Historical Consciousness,” Ana Mariella Bacigalupo, Associate Professor of Anthropology, University at Buffalo, State University of New York, explained how and why a mixed-race Mapuche shaman charged her to write about the shaman’s life and practice in the form of a “Bible.”

This “Bible” would become a ritual object and a means of storing the Mapuche woman’s shamanic power by textualizing it, thereby allowing her to speak to a future audience. The realities and powers of her “Bible” stories can be extracted, transformed, circulated, and actualized for a variety of ends, even to bring about shamanic rebirth. Dr. Bacigalupo argued that through their use and interpretation of this “Bible,” Mapuche shamans in southern Chile expand academic notions of indigenous history and literacy.

The evening was organized by Brian Goldstone (Society of Fellows, 2012–2015), Lecturer in Anthropology, Columbia University.

7 November
Rewriting English: Gauri Viswanathan’s 
Masks of Conquest at Twenty-Five

Organized in partnership with three of Columbia University Professor Gauri Viswanathan’s former doctoral students and the staff of the Society of Fellows, this all-day conference celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of Masks of Conquest: Literary Study
and British Rule in India by Gauri Viswanathan (Society of Fellows, 1986–1988). This groundbreaking book, which changed the way we think about English Literature as a “discipline,” continues to be not only one of the most important works on the teaching of English in colonial India, but also one of the most persuasive analyses for the idea of literature as a conscious strategy of hegemony. In this commemorative event, twenty scholars of post-colonial thought (sixteen of them her former students) gave short papers addressing the legacy of this work.

This conference was cosponsored by University Seminars, Columbia University Press, the New York University Department of English, and, at Columbia, the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, the Department of English, and the Department of Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies.

Siraj Ahmed, Associate Professor of English at Lehman College, City University of New York, and Tim Watson, Associate Professor of English at University of Miami, were among the panelists at Rewriting English: Gauri Viswanathan’s Masks of Conquest at Twenty-Five.

**SPRING 2015**

**6–7 March**

**Political Concepts**

Political Concepts, an annual conference rotating among several universities, returned to Columbia this year. The Political Concepts project is guided by one formal principle—the posing of a Socratic question “What is x?”—and by one theoretical principle—that the concepts defined should be relevant to political thought and, more broadly, to thinking about the political. The two-day conference, organized by alumna Fellow Hagar Kotef (2009–2012), drew sixteen scholars from across the US. It was co-sponsored by the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society and the Heyman Center for the Humanities.

**28–29 March**

**Current Musicology 50th Anniversary Conference**

*Current Musicology*, a leading journal for scholarly research on music, celebrated its fiftieth anniversary with an open-themed conference at Columbia University. The journal was founded as a semi-annual review by Columbia graduate students in 1965. It publishes articles and book reviews in the fields of historical musicology, ethnomusicology, music theory and analysis, and philosophy of music. Georgina Born, Professor of Music and Anthropology at the University of Oxford, was the keynote speaker. She was joined in conversation by Kofi Agawu, Professor of Music, Princeton University; Lydia Goehr, Professor of Philosophy, Columbia University; and Lawrence Kramer, Distinguished Professor of English and Music, Fordham University.

This conference was organized by Ellie Hisama, Professor of Music at Columbia and member of the Governing Board of the Society of Fellows (2015–2017) and was co-sponsored by the Department of Music, the Graduate Student Advisory Council, the Department of Anthropology, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society, and the Heyman Center for the Humanities.
3–4 April  
Managing Borders

In October 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Immigration and Nationality Act, abolishing the national origins quota system, which had heavily restricted immigration from Asia and southern and eastern Europe for decades. The act introduced new systems that gave preference to immigrants’ occupational qualifications and family ties with the United States.

Under the theme of “Managing Borders,” participants in this interdisciplinary conference—who came from a wide range of academic disciplines, including history, literature, cultural studies, sociology, anthropology, political science, and law—sought to achieve a better understanding of issues and problems associated with American immigration today.

The conference was organized by Hidetaka Hirota, Society of Fellows (2013–2016) and Lecturer in History, and the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race.

22 April  
A Conversation on Precarity and Exhaustion

Brian Goldstone (Society of Fellows, 2012–2015) introduced and moderated a public conversation between Anne Allison, Robert O. Keohane Professor of Cultural Anthropology and Professor of Women’s Studies at Duke University, and Elizabeth Povinelli, Franz Boas Professor of Anthropology at Columbia University.

In this special event, organized in conjunction with “Exhaustion,” the theme of the spring Thursday Lecture Series, anthropologists Povinelli and Allison reflected on how worlds are inhabited, made precarious, and pushed to endure in the interstices of late liberal life. Their conversation explored the ways in which a distinctively ethnographic mode attunes us to the textures and temporalities of these precarious worlds, as well as to the forms of knowledge and critique—and perhaps to possibilities for a radical otherwise—to which such a mode might give rise.
4–5 May
Image as Method: Ethnography – Photography – Film – Sensation – Perception

In recent years, there has been an opening up within anthropology of the limits and potentialities of ethnographic description, with increasing use being made of photographic and filmic images in particular. Considerably less attention, however, has been paid to the question of whether images, broadly conceived, might present not just a supplementary means of conveying ethnographic insights, but also a radically different way of imagining and arriving at them. What would an imagistic—as opposed to a more conventionally discursive or didactic—anthropological mode of knowing necessitate? What forms might this take, and what kinds of worlds—of sensation and memory, perception and experience—might it open onto? This two-day symposium, which was organized by Brian Goldstone—Society of Fellows (2012–2015) and Lecturer in Anthropology—brought together a select group of scholars, writers, and artists whose work lies at the forefront of attempts to address such questions.
The Society of Fellows financially supports the extensive programming—lectures, panel discussions, conferences, and workshops—presented by the Heyman Center for the Humanities. The Heyman Center provides the intellectual and physical space for members of the Columbia community and the New York City public to consider topics and issues of common interest and concern from the perspectives of the humanities and the humanistic social sciences. Highlights from the year’s 76 events are followed by a master list of all events by date and title. Additional details may be found at heymancenter.org/events.
Event Highlights

23 September

The Writing Lives Series
An Evening with Novelist Téa Obreht

The Heyman Center welcomed Téa Obreht, author of the bestseller *The Tiger’s Wife* (Random House, 2011), who read from her work and joined in conversation with Mark Mazower, Director of the Heyman Center. Obreht was named by *The New Yorker* as one of the twenty best American fiction writers under forty and by The National Book Foundation as a 2012 “5 Under 35” fiction author honoree. She was a 2013–2014 Fellow at the Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers at The New York Public Library.

20 October

The Edward W. Said Memorial Lecture
*The Palestinian Future After Gaza*

Richard Falk, Albert G. Milbank Professor of International Law and Practice Emeritus, Princeton University, delivered a talk focused on the present reality and future direction of the Palestinian struggle. Taking account of Edward Said’s prophetic premise that the two-state approach should no longer cloud our judgment, Falk set forth the grounds for a sustainable peace.
19 November

Reading Penelope Fitzgerald with Hermione Lee, Margot Livesey, Alexander Chee, and Ellis Avery

Called “the mistress of the hint of the sublime” by The New York Times, Penelope Fitzgerald (1916–2000) began publishing at the age of fifty-eight and produced nine novels and three biographies by the time of her death at eighty-three. Her third novel, Offshore, won the Booker Prize in 1979, while her final novel, The Blue Flower, was named Book of the Year by nineteen British newspapers in 1995 and won the National Book Critics Circle Award in 1997.

Hermione Lee, the acclaimed biographer of Edith Wharton and Virginia Woolf, and award-winning novelists Ellis Avery, Alexander Chee, and Margot Livesey celebrated the life and writing of Penelope Fitzgerald at an event that showcased Lee’s new biography, Penelope Fitzgerald: A Life (Knopf, 2014).

18 November

Great Exploitations: History and the NSA Debate

Matthew L. Jones (Columbia University) argued that we cannot understand the programs revealed by Edward Snowden and other whistleblowers without understanding a broader set of historical developments before and after 9/11. These developments include the growing spread of computation into everyday transactions from the 1960s into the 1990s and the development of new fields of computational analysis, colloquially called “data mining,” designed to produce knowledge or intelligence from vast volumes of information. In the immediate wake of 9/11, the Bush administration branded these developments essential security in the global war on terror to create a massive global surveillance regime. The job of the NSA was “to exploit” communications networks—to make them available to policymakers: to do this, its lawyers “exploited” the law as well as technology. David Armitage (Harvard University) served as respondent.
24 November

The Lionel Trilling Seminar
Rethinking the “One-Sex” Body: Sex, Gender, and Medicine in Medieval and Early Modern Europe

The governing narrative of Thomas Laqueur’s Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud (1990)—namely, that the late eighteenth century saw a shift from a “one-sex” to a “two-sex” body in Western society—has gained broad acceptance among modern historians and scholars in literary and cultural studies. At the same time, it has come under increasing attack by historians of ancient, medieval, and early modern law and medicine.

In this talk, Katharine Park (Samuel Zemurray, Jr. and Doris Zemurray Stone Radcliffe Professor of the History of Science at Harvard University), examined whether Laqueur was wrong, and, if so, how and what difference that makes. Joel Kaye (Professor of History at Barnard College) and Pamela H. Smith (Seth Low Professor of History at Columbia University) were the respondents.

2 December

Old Masters: Art Spiegelman, Jules Feiffer, Alex Melamid

Three renowned artists and authors—the cartoonist, playwright, and children’s book author Jules Feiffer; the Pulitzer prize-winning graphic novelist Art Spiegelman; and the visual and performance artist Alex Melamid—discussed the history and achievements of artists whose “late style” work (produced in the last decades of their lives) demonstrates new creative energies. The discussion took as its starting point what critic Barbara Herrnstein Smith called “the senile sublime”—and offered Jules Feiffer, a first-time graphic novelist at the age of 85, as “Exhibit A.”
The intersection between kinesthetic imagination and scientific ideas was explored in a lecture-as-performance by Yale University professors Emily Coates, Faculty Director of Dance Studies, and Sarah Demers, Associate Professor of Physics. Coates, a former principal dancer with the New York City Ballet, choreographed and performed excerpts from “Incarnations: Sketches for a Longer Work,” which terpsichorically represented the Higgs boson (the “God particle” in the standard model of particle physics), with interwoven commentary by Demers. They also screened their co-created short science-art film, “Three Views of the Higgs and Dance.” Michael Tuts, Professor of Physics, Columbia University, and Carrie Noland, Professor of French and Comparative Literature, University of California, Irvine, joined Coates and Demers on stage for an after-performance discussion.

Ghosts of the Past: Nazi-Looted Art and Its Legacies

An international group of art historians, historians, curators, and scholars in provenance research and the history of German art dealership convened to explore the legacies of the Third Reich. Olaf Peters, Professor at Martin Luther Universität Halle-Wittenberg and curator of the exhibition “Degenerate Art” at the Neue Galerie, delivered the opening keynote lecture at the Jewish Museum. The following days’ panels took place on the campus of Columbia University and featured seventeen leading scholars.

This three-day conference was organized by Holger Klein, Professor of Art History and Archaeology at Columbia, and co-sponsored by a host of institutions, including the Goethe-Institut.
(New York), the Jewish Museum (New York), Samuel H. Kress Foundation, Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst (DAAD), and New German Critique. Columbia sponsorship included the Heyman Center for the Humanities, the Middle East Institute, the Department of History, the University Seminar on Cultural Memory, and the Institute of Israel and Jewish Studies.

25 February

Poets at Barnard: Claudia Rankine and Robert Hass

The Heyman Center joined Barnard College in hosting readings by Claudia Rankine and Robert Hass, two of the most honored and beloved of contemporary poets. The event was introduced by the poet Saskia Hamilton and by the novelist Mary Gordon and concluded with audience discussion.


13 March

Art Spiegelman and Phillip Johnston: Wordless!

Art Spiegelman’s WORDLESS!—a hybrid of slides, talk, and musical performance—reflects on the form, prehistory, and possibilities of the graphic novel. The critically acclaimed jazz composer Phillip Johnston, who scored WORDLESS! and performed the music live with his sextet, accompanied the cartoonist’s personal tour of the first legitimate “graphic novels”: silent picture stories made by the early twentieth-century masters Frans Masereel, Lynd Ward, and Milt Gross.
9 April

The Writing Lives Series

Colm Tóibín and Roy Foster in Conversation with Fintan O’Toole

The writers Colm Tóibín and Roy Foster read from their recently published work and joined Fintan O’Toole, the literary editor of The Irish Times and visiting faculty at the Lewis Center for the Arts at Princeton, in a lively discussion about Irish history and literature of the twentieth century.

Tóibín’s newest novel, Nora Webster (2015), dramatizes the life of a woman and her family in a small town in Ireland in the late 1960s. The author of many award-winning books, including The Master (2004) and Brooklyn (2010), Tóibín is Irene and Sidney B. Silverman Professor of the Humanities at Columbia. Roy Foster

30 March

The Writing Lives Series

Marilynne Robinson in Conversation with Robert Hardies: A Reading and Discussion

The prize-winning author of Housekeeping (1988) and the Gilead trilogy, Marilynne Robinson read from her work and joined in discussion with Unitarian Minister Robert Hardies. Robinson’s most recent book, Lila (2014)—the third in the Gilead series—was a finalist for the National Book Award and a winner of the National Book Critics Circle Award for fiction. Her novel Gilead (2005) won the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction and the National Book Critics Circle Award. Alexander Chee, author most recently of The Queen of the Night (2016) and a former student of Robinson’s at the Iowa Writers’ Workshop, introduced the event, which was co-sponsored by the Heyman Center for the Humanities and Public Books.
is Carroll Professor of Irish History at the University of Oxford and the author of more than a dozen books, including the well-known *Modern Ireland: 1600–1972* (1988) and most recently *Vivid Faces: The Revolutionary Generation in Ireland* (2014), a portrait of the leaders of the Irish Uprising of 1916.

**20 April**

**The Writing Lives Series**  
**Artist at the Center: Maxine Hong Kingston**

In the latest “Artist at the Center” collaboration between the Center for the Study of Ethnicity and Race and the Heyman Center for the Humanities, Maxine Hong Kingston—best known for her groundbreaking *Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood among Ghosts* (1976)—spoke about her life and work as an Asian-American woman and read from her poetry and other writings. She was later joined by Dorothy Ko, Professor of History at Barnard College, and Marie Myung-Ok Lee, on faculty at Columbia University School of the Arts and Founder of the Asian American Writers Workshop, for further discussion.

Maxine Hong Kingston in an exchange with Marie Myung-Ok Lee.

**23–24 April**

**Description Across the Disciplines**

While description has proven to be contentious in literary studies and critical theory, it constitutes a central and prized aspect of scholarly practice in fields such as anthropology, musicology, and art history and has remained so despite critiques of objectivity and the “view from nowhere.” This two-day conference brought together scholars from multiple disciplines to address a number of related questions. How have practices of description—from ethnography to ekphrasis—shifted in light of changing views of the role of the observer, scholarly ethics, and epistemology? What protocols are involved in describing people, texts, images, musical scores, and material artifacts?
Participants included scholars of history, anthropology, psychology, art history, and literary studies as well as curators and artists working in different genres, such as observational documentary and graphic memoir, for whom description represents a crucial aspect of their practice. The conference was organized by Heather Love (University of Pennsylvania), Stephen Best (UC Berkeley), and Sharon Marcus (Columbia University), and included among its speakers the art critic Michael Fried, the historian of science Lorraine Daston, and the cartoonist and MacArthur Fellow Alison Bechdel. Several of the current members of the Society of Fellows served as moderators.

8 May

The Money Series
The Social, Legal, and Political Life of Money

Money is a notoriously difficult phenomenon to grasp. Why it works, how it works, and where it works are thorny questions the answers to which have eluded scholars for centuries. Three recent authors on the topic of money—Christine Desan, the Leo Gottlieb Professor of Law at Harvard University; Rebecca Spang, Professor of History, Indiana University at Bloomington; and Nigel Dodd, Professor of Sociology at the London School of Economics—engaged in a conversation with a set of respondents about the social, legal, and political role and implications of money in the past and present, its political instrumentality and its transformative power. This event was co-sponsored by the Heyman Center for the Humanities and the Department of History.
Public Humanities Initiative

The Public Humanities Initiative sponsors cultural events, discussions, and collaborative projects that advance public engagement with the humanities. These projects involve faculty, undergraduate and graduate students, community organizations, and local artists.

16 October
Each and Every Thing

The latest solo performance from award-winning actor and playwright Dan Hoyle explores how we experience the world in the digital age. From a showdown with a violent felon in small-town Nebraska to a childhood listening to anti-conformist rants in San Francisco; from the hard-scrabble corner boys of Chicago to the intellectual temple of Calcutta’s famed coffeehouse; from a Digital Detox retreat in remote Northern California to an intimate confession in Manhattan, the audience accompanies Hoyle in his search for community, spontaneity, and wonder in our fractured and hyper-connected world. This performance was followed by a discussion between Hoyle and Pratim Sengupta, Assistant Professor of Learning Sciences and Science Education and Director of the Mind, Matter and Media Lab at Peabody College, Vanderbilt University—who also appears as a major character in Hoyle’s Each and Every Thing.

20 November
Lyrics from Lockdown

Hip hop theater innovator and spoken word champion, Bryonn Bain (Columbia, BA; Harvard, JD) performed his one-man show exposing racial profiling and wrongful incarceration. Bain was joined by School of the Arts Professor Jamal Joseph and Asha Rosa Ransby-Spom (Columbia College, Class of 2015), an organizer with Students Against Mass Incarceration, for a discussion about arts and activism in the era of mass incarceration. Soffiyah Elijah, Executive Director of the Correctional Association of New York, moderated the discussion.
26 February
*Film Screening and Discussion: The Cooler Bandits*

In 1991, four teenagers from the North Hill neighborhood of Akron, Ohio, committed a series of restaurant robberies. During the robberies the young men locked the restaurant employees in the walk-in coolers, gaining them the moniker “The Cooler Bandits.” Although no one was physically injured, the group received prison sentences of up to 500 years apiece. From 2006–2013, director John Lucas followed the journeys of Charlie Kelly, Donovan Harris, Richard “Poochie” Roderick, and Frankie Porter as they coped with and survived the harsh realities of prison. The screening was followed by a panel discussion with Lucas and two of the people featured in the documentary, Harris and Roderick. The film’s producer and editor, Sam and Jason Pollard, joined the panel for a discussion moderated by director and producer Jamal Joseph, Professor of Film at the Columbia School of the Arts.

24 February
*An Evening of Justice Poetry*

Poet Claudia Rankine, whose bestselling book *Citizen: An American Lyric* (2014) has been called a Whitmanesque exploration of our racial traumas, read from her work and discussed the events and experiences that inspired it. *Citizen* was singularly honored in having been nominated for best book of the year by the National Book Critics Circle in the category of both poetry and memoir. Rankine was joined by the essayist and award-winning poet Dawn Lundy Martin, author of *A Gathering of Matter / A Matter of Gathering* (2007), and by the spoken word poet, hip hop artist, and youth activist Messiah Ramkissoon. Monica L. Miller, Associate Professor of English, Barnard University, introduced the poets, and Timothy Donnelly, Professor of Poetry at Columbia School of the Arts, moderated the discussion.

A group discussion that followed a screening of *The Cooler Bandits* included (from left) Sam Pollard, John Lucas, Richard Roderick, Donovan Harris, Jason Pollard, and Jamal Joseph.
26 February
"But the Past Is Passed": Haiti, Historical Memory, and New Narratives

What is the stuff of history? Who writes it, who is allowed to speak in it—and in what language? And where is the place of stories, memories, metaphors, conflicts, translations, and mistranslations in historiography? How can these questions help us understand not only the historical process, but also the ways in which historical narrative shapes the present? Heyman Center Public Humanities Fellow Mary Grace Albanese reflected on the challenge of translation in her nascent oral history project, which aims to gather, publish, and translate Haitian and Haitian-American narratives.

7 May
Teaching from the Archive of Women’s Incarceration

How do we teach the history of imprisonment in the United States when mass incarceration continues to shape our current social landscape? Heyman Center Public Humanities Fellow Emily Hainze spoke about a curriculum project she is developing in partnership with the Prison Public Memory Project, a nonprofit organization dedicated to recovering, preserving, and interpreting the historical artifacts and cultural memory of prisons and the communities with which they are entwined. The talk focused on the process of introducing archival material from the Hudson Training School for Girls (a juvenile prison facility that existed in Hudson, New York from 1904–1975) into a classroom setting.
Justice Forum

Issues of mass incarceration and a just society are complex and cut across many systems, cultures, and communities. As such, the efforts and dialogues aimed at changing the current criminal justice system must also cross disciplines and socio-political structures. The Justice Forum provides a space for leading thinkers in justice working from a variety of disciplines and experiences to examine together some of the most critical issues facing us today. The Forum encourages the cross-pollination of ideas and perspectives and, in doing so, contributes to efforts to rethink our current criminal justice policies and practices.

11 November
Reimagining Justice: Narratives of Inclusion

How do we change the current criminal justice system, a system defined by mass incarceration, a paradigm of punishment, and racial discrimination? This immense undertaking involves examining current and historical narratives about justice, crime, safety, punishment, race, class, and gender, among other social factors. Led by Columbia Professors Geraldine Downey, Carl Hart, and Frances Negrón-Muntaner, and by Robin McGinty (Center for Institutional and Social Change), the discussion engaged a standing-room-only audience focused on the prevailing narratives and the various ways they might be transformed to create a more inclusive framework.

3 December
Paradigms for Justice: Beyond Punishment

There is a growing national consensus about the devastating consequences of mass incarceration and criminal justice policy in the US. Scholars, clinicians, educators, politicians, and activists are examining anew the use of punishment in schools, courts, jails, and prisons and disclosing the disproportionate implementation of punitive policies and practices in low-income communities of color. The roundtable participants, who examined the utility of punishment and discussed alternative approaches to justice, accountability, and safety, included Danielle Sered (Director, Common Justice at the Vera Institute of Justice), John Valverde (Associate Executive Director for Program Operations, Osborne Association), Michelle Fine (Distinguished Professor, CUNY Graduate Center), and James Gilligan (Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, New York University).
10 March
*Race and Justice: Past, Present and Future*

Drivers of America’s current state of mass incarceration, such as minimum mandatory sentencing, the war on drugs, and stop and frisk, have always disproportionately affected people of color. This roundtable examined the history of race-based injustices in America, how those practices have informed the criminal justice system today, and what implications they have for the future. Participants included: Khalil Gibran Muhammad, Director of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; Glenn E. Martin, criminal justice reform advocate and founder of Just Leadership USA; Valerie Purdie-Vaughns, Associate Professor of Psychology at Columbia; and Thenjiwe McHarris, Director of the Human Rights at Home Campaign. Alondra Nelson, Dean of Social Science at Columbia University, moderated the discussion.

From left to right, panel participants included Glenn E. Martin, Valerie Purdie-Vaughns, Alondra Nelson, Khalil Gibran Muhammad, Thenjiwe McHarris.

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**Heyman Center Workshops**

**On Method**

Organized by Fellow Grant Wythoff (2013–2016), this workshop series examines the range of methods, theoretical and practical, used by humanities scholars and critics, past and present. What are the overarching techniques and epistemologies inherent to humanities research? How are the technological challenges and opportunities provided by new research methods (computational, quantitative) and organizational structures (labs, workshops, and
Professor Altschul addressed the history of philology and its basic methodological assumptions, bringing to the fore some of its colonial underpinnings and, as part of the conversation, asking digital humanists about connections between Digital Humanity and this core method in humanities research.

8 April
The Longue Durée of Empiricism in the Humanities: Patterns versus Interpretations
Rens Bod, Professor of Digital Humanities, University of Amsterdam
Professor Bod sketched the longue durée of the pattern-seeking tradition in the humanities and compared it to the interpretative tradition. Bod argued that interpretations were not always in opposition to pattern-seeking, but were often constructed on the patterns found. Thus, the common wisdom that the humanities are moving towards science when they search for patterns is mistaken: rather, the search for patterns has been a continuous line in the humanities from Antiquity onwards.

17 November
Introducing Paper Machines
Jo Guldi, Assistant Professor of History, Brown University
How do you summarize millions of books with a single tool? The question is relevant to literary scholars, but especially to historians of political institutions and the “official mind.” Professor Guldi, co-author with David Armitage of The History Manifesto (Cambridge University Press), introduced Paper Machines, an open-source data visualization toolkit that works with minimal code on the texts that historians and other scholars are already using and allows for visualizations that depict their subjects as they change over time and space.

10 December
The Humanities in Full: Polemics Against the Two-Culture Fallacy
Chad Wellmon, Associate Professor of German Studies, University of Virginia
If the recent diatribes against the Digital Humanities have done anything, they have demonstrated how truncated and ahistorical most of our conceptions of the humanities are. Professor Wellmon argued that we need a history and vision of the humanities capacious enough to see them not as a particular method or set of disciplines but as a disposition, as a way of engaging the world.

18 February
On Philology
Nadia Altschul, Assistant Professor of Spanish, Johns Hopkins University
Philology and the reconstruction of texts has been a main humanistic method since the purported end of the middle ages.
Neuroscience and History

For a second year, the Heyman Center for the Humanities supported the “Neuroscience and History Workshop,” organized by Professor Deborah Coen of Barnard College on behalf of the Columbia Center for Science and Society. This workshop aims to foster interdisciplinary conversation about the promises and challenges of contemporary neuroscience. Participants explored the historical conditions for the emergence of neuroscience as a discipline, as well as the synergies and tensions between historical and neuroscientific modes of explanation. Lead presenters for each session are included under the workshop titles noted below.

11 February

Psychoanalysis and Neuroscience: Can a Critical History Have a Scientific Future?
Nima Bassiri, Collegiate Assistant Professor in the Humanities, University of Chicago
Andrew Gerber, Assistant Professor of Clinical Psychiatry, Columbia University, respondent

Rather than considering the relationship between psychoanalysis and brain science as a narrative of Freud’s transition from neurology to metapsychology—a historical approach that is often oriented towards fulfilling the demands of contemporary research—Professor Bassiri instead situated Freud’s neuropathology and metapsychology within a broader set of anxieties and problems faced by both neurologists and psychiatrists in nineteenth-century brain and behavioral medicine.

6 May

What Was “Close Reading”?
Barbara Herrnstein Smith, Braxton Craven Professor of Comparative Literature and English Emerita, Duke University

Since the 1940s, invocations of “close reading” (however understood) have figured centrally in controversies over new methodological developments in literary studies: e.g., the New Criticism, structuralism, New Historicism, deconstruction, ideology critique, and, notably now, the Digital Humanities. Professor Smith’s talk recalled some of those controversies and considered how the idea or ideal of “close reading” operates in current debates about—and within—the Digital Humanities.
23 March

**Plastic Neuroscience, Plastic History:**

*Plans and the Structure of Psychologists’ Behavior*

Joseph Dumit, Professor of Anthropology, University of California, Davis  
Kevin Ochsner, Professor of Psychology, Columbia University, respondent

In this talk, the early brain-computer analogy was investigated for how strange and surprising it started out being, challenging researchers to imagine what it might be like to be running programs. Following up on suggestions from Allan Newell, perhaps neuroscience can go beyond binary hypothesis testing and design experiments that follow what neurons care about. Examples from Lettvin and others demonstrate that one can experimentally play with neurons and generate surprising results. In this manner, brains are not confused with persons; rather, persons are understood to do things with their brains.

13 May

**War Neurosis and Medical Cinematography in Germany, 1917–1923**

Andreas Killen, Professor of History, The City College of New York  
Yuval Neria, Professor of Medical Psychology, Columbia University, respondent

When the Dadaist Georg Grosz referred in his autobiography to the “real or fake” Kriegszitterer (literally, “war-tremblers”) that could be encountered on every street corner in post-World War I Berlin, he alluded to the problem of knowledge that these figures posed for contemporaries. This talk examined the efforts of German psychiatrists and neurologists to address this problem through the medium of cinematography, during and after the war. While the moving image remained a crucial means for capturing and making visible that experience, in the postwar era the problem of the representability of trauma became inseparable from related issues of medical power and authority, as well as of the reliability of the cinematic medium itself.
Full List of Heyman Center Events 2014–2015

Fall 2014

12 September
The Future of French and Francophone Studies:
The Status of Literature

23 September
The Writing Lives Series
An Evening with Novelist Téa Obreht

1 October
“L’Encre des savants”
Souleymane Bachir Diagne and Vincent Debaene,
Columbia University

1 October
The Disciplines Series: The Idea of Development
The Learning Society
Joseph E. Stiglitz and Robert Heilbrunn, Columbia University

2 October
Liberalism and Its Critics
Eric Foner and Ira Katznelson, Columbia University
Anne Kornhauser and Judith Stein, The City College of New York

4 October
Trans-Atlantic Celebrity: H.G. Wells,
Elinor Glyn, and Sarah Bernhardt
Sarah Cole, Hilary A. Hallett, Sharon Marcus,
and Susan Pedersen, Columbia University

6 October
FIERCE: The Work and Life of Manuel Ramos Otero
Authors Magali García Ramis and Luis Negrón
Frances Negrón-Muntaner, Columbia University
Arnaldo Cruz-Malavé, Fordham University

7 October
Comics at Columbia: Past, Present, Future
An exhibition curated by Librarian Karen Green,
Columbia University

8 October
The Writing Lives Series
Creative Writing Lecture Series: Karen Russell

8 October
Rethinking Knowledge: Global Governance
Mark Mazower, Partha Chatterjee,
Katharina Pistor, Columbia University

10 October
The Disciplines Series
Development and Underdevelopment in Postwar Europe
A two-day conference

16 October
Public Humanities Initiative
Dan Hoyle’s “Each and Every Thing”
Writer and performer Dan Hoyle and
Pratim Sengupta, Vanderbilt University

20 October
The Edward W. Said Memorial Lecture
The Palestinian Future After Gaza
Richard Falk, Princeton University

21 October
Film Screening: Knowledge is the Beginning:
Barenboim, Said, and Young Middle Eastern Musicians
22 October
Judging Science: The Historian, the Courts, & Discerning Responsibility for Environmental Pollution
David Rosner, Columbia University

27 October
The Potency of Indigenous Bibles and Biographies
Ana Mariella Bacigalupo, SUNY Buffalo
Laurel Kendall, American Museum of Natural History
Jennifer Cole, University of Chicago

28 October
Is Health a Human Right?: The European Perspective
Panayotis Yataganztidis

5 November
Is Evil Still a Meaningful Concept Today?
Simona Forti, Università del Piemonte Orientale

6 November
Life Outsourced: Globalization and Transnational Surrogacy in India
Shamita Das Dasgupta and Sayantani Dasgupta

7 November
Rewriting English: Gauri Viswanathan’s Masks of Conquest at Twenty-Five
A daylong conference

7 November
Michel Foucault: The Late Lectures
Seyla Benhabib, Yale University
François Ewald, Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers
George Kateb, Princeton University
Emmanuelle Saada and Bernard E. Harcourt, Columbia University

11 November
The Justice Forum
Reimagining Justice: Narratives of Inclusion
Geraldine Downey, Frances Negrón-Muntaner, Carl Hart, and Robin McGinty, Columbia University

13 November
Thinking with Balibar
A two-day conference

17 November
The History Manifesto: The Role of History and the Humanities in a Digital Age
Authors David Armitage, Harvard University and Jo Guldi, Brown University
Dan Edelstein, Stanford University
Matthew L. Jones and Mark Mazower, Columbia University

17 November
Heyman Center Workshops: On Method
Introducing Paper Machines
Jo Guldi, Brown University

18 November
Great Exploitations: History and the NSA Debate
Matthew L. Jones, Columbia University
David Armitage, Harvard University

19 November
Reading Penelope Fitzgerald
Hermione Lee, Margot Livesey, Alexander Chee, and Ellis Avery

20 November
Bryonn Bain’s “Lyrics From Lockdown”
Writer and performer Bryonn Bain

24 November
The Lionel Trilling Seminar
Rethinking the “One-Sex” Body: Sex, Gender, and Medicine in Medieval and Early Modern Europe
Katharine Park, Harvard University
Respondents: Joel Kaye and Pamela H. Smith, Columbia University

2 December
Old Masters
Art Spiegelman, Jules Feiffer, and Alex Melamid
3 December
The Justice Forum
Paradigms for Justice: Beyond Punishment

8 December
Ebola: Field Histories
Mauricio Ferri, MD
Megan Vaughan, City University of New York
Cristobal Silva and Kavita Sivaramakrishnan,
Columbia University

10 December
Heyman Center Workshops: On Method
The Humanities in Full: Polemics
Against the Two-Culture Fallacy
Chad Wellmon, University of Virginia

15 December
The Fundamental Contradictions of the Contemporary World
Alain Badiou

SPRING 2015

28 January
The Writing Lives Series
The Nonfiction Dialogues: Wayne Koestenbaum

3 February
The Embodied Cognition Workshop: Dance and Physics
Emily Coates and Sarah Demers, Yale University

4 February
The Writing Lives Series
Creative Writing Lecture Series: Michael Cunningham

5 February
Music for Words: Bob Dylan
Christopher Ricks, Boston University
Sean Wilentz, Princeton University

5–7 February
The Congress of Vienna 1814–1815:
Making Peace after Global War
A three-day conference

6 February
The Disciplines Series
Economics as a Discipline and Profession
James K. Galbraith, University of Texas
Prabhat Patnaik, Jawaharlal Nehru University

11 February
Heyman Center Workshops: Neuroscience & History
Psychoanalysis and Neuroscience:
Can a Critical History Have a Scientific Future?
Nima Bassiri, University of Chicago
Andrew Gerber, Columbia University

18 February
Heyman Center Workshops: On Method
On Philology
Nadia Altschul, Johns Hopkins University

19–21 February
Ghosts of the Past: Nazi-Looted Art and Its Legacies
A three-day conference

24 February
Public Humanities Initiative
An Evening of Justice Poetry
Claudia Rankine, Dawn Lundy Martin, and Messiah Ramkissoon

25 February
Poets at Barnard
Claudia Rankine and Robert Hass

26 February
Public Humanities Initiative
Film Screening and Discussion: The Cooler Bandits
26 February
Public Humanities Initiative
“But the Past Is Passed”: Haiti, Historical Memory, and New Narratives
Mary Grace Albanese, Heyman Center Public Humanities Fellow

26 February
John Berryman at 100: A Celebration

3 March
Your Language—My Ear: Russian and American Poets at Close Quarters
Alexander Skidan, Alexandra Petrova, Shamshad Abdullaev, and Keti Chukhrov

6–7 March
Political Concepts: A Critical Lexicon
A two-day conference

10 March
The Justice Forum
Race and Justice: Past, Present and Future

13 March
Art Spiegelman and Phillip Johnston: Wordless!

23 March
Heyman Center Workshops: Neuroscience & History
Plastic Neuroscience, Plastic History: Plans and the Structure of Psychologists’ Behavior
Joseph Dumit, University of California, Davis

25 March
The Disciplines Series: Evaluation, Value, and Evidence
Narratives of Earned Hope: Or the Ways Adversity Can Build Compensatory Strengths
Ron Suskind

26 March
Genocidal Regimes and Their Perpetrators
Abram de Swaan, University of Amsterdam
Ira Katznelson, Columbia University

28–29 March
Stalking the Essay
A two-day conference
Organized by Phillip Lopate, Columbia University

30 March
The Writing Lives Series
Marilynne Robinson in Conversation with Robert Hardies

1–2 April
Fascisms Across Borders
A two-day conference

3–4 April
Managing Borders
A two-day conference
Organized by Fellow Hidetaka Hirota (2013–2016)

3 April
The Future of French and Francophone Studies:
The “Francophone” in Question
A day-long workshop

7 April
States of Division: Borders and Boundary-Formation in the Cold War and Beyond
Sagi Schaefer, Tel Aviv University
Charles K. Armstrong, George Gavrillis, and Mark Mazower, Columbia University

8 April
Heyman Center Workshops: On Method
The Longue Durée of Empiricism in the Humanities:
Patterns versus Interpretations
Rens Bod, University of Amsterdam
8 April
On Exterminability: The Affective Culture of Settler-Colonialism Today
Ghassan Hage, University of Melbourne

9 April
The Writing Lives Series
*Colm Tóibín and Roy Foster in Conversation with Fintan O'Toole*

9 April
*Comparative Settler Colonialisms: A Workshop*

9 April
Adapting to Modernity or Taming It? Catholicism’s Laborious Relationship with Liberalism
Rosario Forlenza, University of Padua
Anna Loretoni, Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna di Pisa
Jan-Werner Mueller, Princeton University
Bjørn Thomassen, Roskilde University
Nadia Urbinati, Columbia University

17–18 April
*history of data / data in history*
A two-day workshop

20 April
The Writing Lives Series
*Artist at the Center: Maxine Hong Kingston*

22 April
The Writing Lives Series
*An Evening with Author Kate Southwood*

23–24 April
Description Across the Disciplines
*A two-day conference*

4 May
Image as Method: Ethnography – Photography – Film – Sensation – Perception
A two-day conference
Organized by Fellow Brian Goldstone (2012–2015)

5 May
Digits & Treasuries: How to Address the Fiscal Challenges of the Digital Economy?
Pierre Collin and Martin Collett, Université Panthéon-Assas (Paris II)
François Ewald, Emeritus, Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers

6 May
Heyman Center Workshops: On Method
*What Was “Close Reading”?
Barbara Herrnstein Smith, Duke University*

7 May
Public Humanities Initiative
*Teaching from the Archive of Women’s Incarceration*
Emily Hainze, Heyman Center Public Humanities Fellow

8 May
The Money Series
*The Social, Legal, and Political Life of Money*
Christine Desan, Harvard University
Rebecca Spang, Indiana University, Bloomington
Nigel Dodd, London School of Economics

13 May
Heyman Center Workshops: Neuroscience & History
*War Neurosis and Medical Cinematography in Germany, 1917–1923*
Andreas Killen, The City College of New York
Vanessa Agard-Jones (2013–2014) is Assistant Professor of Women’s Gender and Sexuality Studies at Yale University.

Jordanna Bailkin (1999–2001) has been named the Jere L. Bacharach Endowed Professor in International Studies at the University of Washington. She is completing a book on refugee camps in Britain, supported by a fellowship from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Jeffrey Andrew Barash (1983–1985) is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Picardie Jules Verne in Amiens, France.


Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski (1981–1983) was promoted to Distinguished Professor at the University of Pittsburgh. Her new book, The Strange Case of Ermine de Reims: A Medieval Woman Between Demons and Saints, was published by University of Pennsylvania Press (2015).


Julie E. Cooper (2003–2005) is Senior Lecturer in the Political Science department at Tel Aviv University.

Mary E. Dillard (2000–2001) was recently appointed Graduate Director of the M.A. Program in Women’s History at Sarah Lawrence College. She is currently working on a book manuscript entitled A Permanent Inheritance: Determinants of Nigerian American Educational Success, and is on the editorial board of ìrinkèrindò: A Journal of African Migration.

Greg Downey (1998–2000) is currently the Head of the Department of Anthropology at Macquarie University, in Sydney, Australia. He has been chief investigator for a major curriculum development project financed by a Strategic Priority Grant from the Office of Learning and Teaching of the Australian government: “Classroom of Many Cultures: Co-creating Curriculum with International Partners.” His most recent book is The Encultured Brain: An Introduction to Neuroanthropology (MIT University Press, 2012); he co-edited the volume with a colleague, Associate Professor Daniel Lende of the University of South Florida.

Dana Fields (2010–2013) is Assistant Professor of Classics at the State University of New York at Buffalo.

Victoria Holbrook (1985–1987) lives in Istanbul, where she teaches a required freshman course based on Columbia’s Literature Humanities curriculum at Bilgi University’s Faculty of Architecture and
supervises other teachers of her course. She also teaches graduate courses such as Poetics and Architecture. Her most recent translations from Turkish include a verse translation of Beauty and Love by Şeyh Galip; The New Cultural Climate in Turkey: Living in a Shop Window by Nurdan Gürbilek; and Listen: Commentary on the Spiritual Couplets of Mevlana Rumi by Kenan Rifai. She is working with New York agent Gillian MacKenzie to revise her novel Rumi’s Flaw for publication, completing a degree in Ayurvedic medicine, and translating a new commentary on the Koran.

Judith L. Johnston (1977–1979) Following a 40-year career in English and Gender Studies, Judith Johnston is an Emerita Professor. She enjoys singing in two NYC choruses (cantorinewyork.com and riversidechoral.org) and volunteering for her local food pantry.

Muhammad Ali Khalidi (1991–1993) is currently serving as Chair of the Department of Philosophy at York University in Toronto, where he has been based for nine years. Over the past year, he has contributed articles to the *Oxford Handbook for the Philosophy of Science and the Oxford Handbook for Islamic Philosophy*, as well as to the *Journal of Social Ontology, Philosophical Psychology, and Synthese*. He has recently spoken at a conference at al-Quds University in Palestine and has given talks on the philosophy of science in France, Canada, and the US.

Susan Manning (1987–1988) is Professor of English and Theatre at Northwestern University, currently serving a six-year term (2012 to 2018) as Principal Investigator for a Mellon-funded project, “Dance Studies in/and the Humanities.” The $2 million project supports six years of postdoctoral fellows at Northwestern, Brown, and Stanford, along with intensive summer workshops for emerging scholars from 2012 through 2015. She is now co-editing a volume based on the project, *The Futures of Dance Studies*.

Richard C. McCoy (1977–1979) was promoted to Distinguished Professor at CUNY. He is currently working on a book on Shakespeare’s clowns.


Richard Serrano (1996–1998) is Professor of French and Comparative

**Andrey Shcherbenok** (2006–2009) was a Newton international research fellow of the British Academy from 2009–2011, doing research on the Soviet past as the traumatic object of contemporary Russian culture at the University of Sheffield. Since 2012 he has worked at Skolkovo Business School in Moscow, where he deals with research university governance and strategic management. He leads project work in integrated educational programs for university leaders, does strategy sessions in dozens of research universities across the country, contributes to the 5-100 project to raise the global competitiveness of Russian universities, and does research on organizational subcultures, disciplinarity, and university transformation.

**Barbara L. Tischler** (1983–1985) recently completed her first year as Head of the Speyer Legacy School, a K–8 school for accelerated learners in Manhattan. Her latest book *Muhammad Ali: Man of Many Voices* is forthcoming from Taylor and Francis (November 2015). She is also now a grandmother.

**Joanna Waley-Cohen** (1988–1990) was the founding Dean of Arts and Sciences at NYU’s third degree-granting campus, NYU Shanghai in 2013, and since 2014 she has served as its Provost. NYU Shanghai is the first Sino-American joint venture in higher education, established as a possible model for transforming higher education in China.

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