

Andrew W. Mellon Society of Fellows in Critical Bibliography 2023-2025 Junior Fellows Biographical Information



JIAYI CHEN

Ph.D. Candidate

Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago

Jiayi Chen is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations at the University of Chicago. She works on early modern Chinese literature, with special interests in the history of reading, theater, material and visual cultures, and Sino-Japanese cultural exchange. Her dissertation, “Reading Games in Early Modern China,” explores how games shaped the ways writers and readers perceived literature. By investigating a matrix of game-literature interactions—like puzzles of reading, literary traces on game equipment, and representations of games in literature—it sheds new light on a pre-digital ludic age. In fall 2023, she will join the Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures at Washington University in St. Louis.

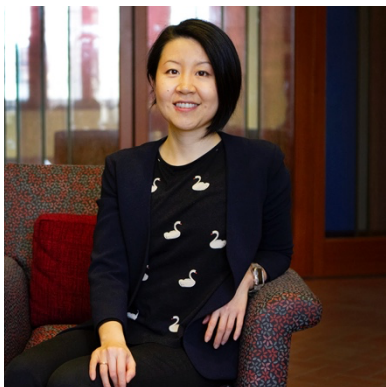


DU FEI

Ph.D. Candidate

Department of History, Cornell University

Du Fei is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at Cornell University. His dissertation focuses on gendered practices of property and legal documentation in Mughal India from the seventeenth to early nineteenth century at the interface between the Persianate and the Indian Ocean worlds. Working across history, gender and sexuality studies, and Islamic studies, he employs methods of textual and material analysis to address the related issues of archive-making and (im)mobility in our understanding of the global transition to the modern period. More broadly, Fei’s interests include post-classical Islamic law, transnational feminism, manuscript collection and digitization, and digital humanities. In 2018, he curated an exhibit on writing cultures in South Asia for the University of Chicago Library.



HENG DU

Andrew W. Mellon Assistant Professor of Chinese

Department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, Wellesley College

Heng Du is the Andrew W. Mellon Assistant Professor of Chinese at Wellesley College. She specializes in the book history of early China, and her existing publications touch upon topics such as authorship, information management, and the ideological significance of calendar-making. She is also interested in the comparative study of book cultures across the ancient world. Her teaching on pre-modern Chinese literature, history, and philosophy are deeply concerned with the relevance of the past to contemporary life.



MARGARET GEOGA
Assistant Professor of Egyptology
University of Chicago

Margaret Geoga is an Egyptologist specializing in the transmission and reception of ancient Egyptian literature. Her current project focuses on *The Teaching of Amenemhat*, an enigmatic Middle Egyptian poem depicting the murder of a pharaoh, examining surviving manuscripts to investigate how this unusual and popular text was interpreted by its many ancient readers in Egypt and Nubia, ca. 1550–500 BCE. Maggie’s interest in reception also extends beyond antiquity. An ongoing project centers on Jean Terrasson’s 1731 novel *Séthos*, whose depiction of ancient Egypt strongly influenced numerous eighteenth-century authors, artists, and thinkers and still underlies contemporary beliefs about ancient Egypt.



SHARMEEN MEHRI
Ph.D. Candidate
Department of English, University at Buffalo, State University of New York

Sharmeen Mehri is Ph.D. candidate at the University at Buffalo from Karachi, Pakistan. She holds a Master of Arts degree in English Literature, Language, and Theory from Hunter College, CUNY. Her research focuses on Parsi writing from the early twentieth century. She is interested in how collective memory works within the novel form, specifically concerning Zoroastrian authors and how they depict Zoroastrian communities within South Asia. Sharmeen is also interested in mapping a historiography of printing and circulation of Zoroastrian religious texts in Mumbai and Karachi during the late 1800s to early 1900s. She was an Archival Creators fellow for the South Asian American Digital Archive 2021-22 for which she collected oral histories from South Asian Zoroastrian Americans on their migration journeys. This has motivated her as an instructor in the Department of English to teach auto-ethnography in her courses.



CHRISTINA MICHELON
Associate Curator
Special Collections, Boston Athenaeum

Christina Michelon is Associate Curator at the Boston Athenaeum where she oversees the graphic arts collection. Christina specializes in nineteenth-century American visual and material culture and received her Ph.D. in Art History from the University of Minnesota. Her writing has appeared in the journals *J19*, *Common-place*, *Panorama*, and in *American Art*, for which she received the 2021 Frost Essay Award from the Smithsonian American Art Museum. In addition to curatorial projects that include a permanent collection reinstallation, special exhibitions, and student-driven collaborations, Christina is currently at work on a book about “printcraft” and the creative reuse of printed images.



TAYLOR M. MOORE

Assistant Professor of History

Department of History, University of California, Santa Barbara

Taylor M. Moore is an Assistant Professor of History at the University of California, Santa Barbara, specializing in histories of science, race, and gender in the modern Middle East. She is currently completing her first book, *Amulet Tales: Race, Magic, and Medicine in Egypt*, which uses amuletic objects as archives to examine the entangled social histories of magic, medicine, and museum anthropology in late Ottoman and interwar Egypt.



ALEC POLLAK

Ph.D. Candidate

Department of Literatures in English, Cornell University

Alec Pollak is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of Literatures in English at Cornell University. He works on literary estates and executors, with emphases on intellectual property law, publishing history, and archive management. His scholarship explores how the decisions of literary heirs and estates have influenced the legacies of twentieth-century women writers.



NEIL B. WEIJER

Curator of the Harold & Mary Jean Hanson Rare Book Collection

Department of Special and Area Studies Collections, University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries

Neil's research focuses on how evidence from books and book collections, from their production to the chance encounters preserved on their pages, can inform historical and cultural studies and illuminate how successive generations have perceived their pasts. As curator of the University of Florida's Rare Book Collection, he encourages interaction with material books through teaching, mentorship, and exhibition, and is currently at work on an exhibit on the history of tactile printing in nineteenth-century Europe and America. An early modernist by training, he has published on the intersections of history, forgery, and antiquarianism in early modern England.



CARLY YINGST
Ph.D. Candidate
Department of English, Harvard University

Carly Yingst is a Ph.D. Candidate in the Department of English at Harvard University. Their research focuses on British literature of the long eighteenth century, with particular attention to book history, media theory, and trans and queer studies. Their dissertation—which they recently defended—rereads the emergence of the British novel in relation to early modern and eighteenth-century practices of preserving ephemeral print. Their second book project in progress aims to trace, in part, how notions of authorship and conventions of print in the long eighteenth century functioned as early technologies of gender transition—an investigation that will also attend to the interactions between (and ultimately aims to unsettle the categories of) book and non-book forms of print.