



THE ANDREW W. MELLON SOCIETY OF FELLOWS IN CRITICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY  
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1 October 2021

Dear Applicants:

Thank you for your interest in joining the Andrew W. Mellon Society of Fellows in Critical Bibliography (SoFCB) at Rare Book School (RBS). As you consider becoming part of this dynamic network of scholars dedicated to the study of material texts, you may be wondering—as some of us have over the years—whether your intellectual pursuits and life experiences will be embraced by institutions with a complicated history of racial and class differences. Our Society is unanimously committed to generous thinkers and doers striving together to build a free, safe, diverse, inclusive, and respectful community.

We are Junior and Senior Fellows from diverse racial, regional, and class backgrounds working and studying at museums and in public and private universities. We have been coming to Rare Book School since 2013, originally as part of the Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship of Scholars in Critical Bibliography, in pursuit of intellectual questions, but also to form a genuinely collaborative, inclusive, and interdisciplinary community. For individual members whose scholarly work didn't quite "fit" in their disciplinary or institutional settings, Rare Book School and the Mellon Fellowship have offered a haven. Since the Society's formation in 2017, creativity and camaraderie have continued to deepen among the SoFCB fellows. Fellows have collaborated with diverse groups beyond our own, both academic and professional. Besides achieving our original task—to revivify, deepen, and extend the field of bibliography and invigorate the humanities through the study of material texts—the fellows of the SoFCB have collectively seen our scholarly goals reach beyond bibliography and into new intellectual spaces.

We encourage applications to the Junior Fellowship Program from scholars whose experiences, perspectives, and work will expand and enrich the Society, the Rare Book School community, and the academic professions broadly conceived. During the Society's 2021–2022 application season, Senior Fellows will review applications for the purpose of inviting new colleagues into this community. The Society of Fellows in Critical Bibliography is an eclectic group of scholars working in a range of academic disciplines, humanistic institutions, and professions. We are firmly committed to supporting diversity and to advancing the scholarship of outstanding persons of every race, gender, sexual orientation, creed, and socio-economic background regardless of their immigration status and citizenship. With each new class of Junior Fellows, our society has grown more diverse; we continue to learn from each other how to build an equitable, inclusive scholarly community. Rare Book School shares these

commitments—for more information on the school’s inclusive excellence plan, please visit <https://rarebookschool.org/inclusive-excellence-plan/>.

If you have questions about the application process, the Rare Book School courses, or if you would like to talk to Senior Fellows about their experiences or the Society as a whole, we invite you to reach out to us, and we will do our best to help. We look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,  
SoFCB Diversity & Outreach Committee  
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The Andrew W. Mellon Society of Fellows in Critical Bibliography at Rare Book School particularly encourages applications from members of under-represented ethnic and racial groups, those committed to digital humanities and public engagement, academics working in libraries and those pursuing nontraditional career paths, faculty working at teaching-intensive and minority serving institutions, veterans, and individuals with disabilities. Rare Book School will make reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals with known disabilities.

Rare Book School requires that all its faculty, staff, students, and guests abide by the University of Virginia’s policy for preventing and addressing discrimination and harassment. The University’s policy appears at <https://rarebookschool.org/values/>.