



THE ANDREW W. MELLON SOCIETY OF FELLOWS IN CRITICAL BIBLIOGRAPHY
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29 August 2019

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 perspective and life experiences will be embraced by institutions with a long and complicated racial and class history, whether your ideas will be welcomed, or whether you will feel safe in Charlottesville and the South. As members of the SoFCB's Council and its Committee on Diversity and Outreach, we write to offer assurances about what we stand for as a Society, and to address any uncertainties you may have. Our Society is unanimously committed to generous thinkers and doers who want to build a free, safe, diverse, inclusive, and respectful community.

We are Senior Fellows from diverse racial and class backgrounds who now work 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" at their home institution, Rare Book School and the Mellon Fellowship offered a haven. Since the Society's formation in 2017, creativity and camaraderie have continued to deepen among the SoFCB fellows, and numerous collaborations, have connected fellows 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 to reanimate the study of the humanities via critical bibliography—the fellows of SoFCB have collectively seen our scholarly goals as reaching far beyond bibliography, and into new intellectual spaces.

We encourage applications 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 2019–20 application cycle, Senior Fellows will review applications for the purpose of inviting new colleagues into this community. The Society of Fellows in Critical Bibliography is 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, and to advancing the diversity of the professions and academic disciplines it represents, including the professoriate, museums, libraries, archives, public humanists, and the humanist academic disciplines.

While filling out the application, if you have questions about which courses you might benefit from in Rare Book School's existing catalog, if you would like to talk to Senior Fellows about their experiences, if you are not sure whether your work makes you a good intellectual fit for the Society, or if you would like to view videos of the workshops and colloquia that members of the Society have hosted, 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 is committed to fostering an inclusive, respectful, and welcoming environment that embraces a richly diverse representation of human attributes, perspectives, and disciplines. RBS is dedicated to providing educational experiences that are inclusive, respectful, and diverse. RBS's full statement of values and code of conduct appears at <https://rarebookschool.org/values/>