New Faculty

Wilma Bainbridge (Psychology)

Wilma A. Bainbridge joined the University of Chicago faculty in January 2020 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology. Her research focuses on the cognitive neuroscience of perception and memory – looking at how certain items are intrinsically more memorable than others, and how the brain is sensitive to this information. She utilizes behavioral experiments, computer vision, machine learning, online studies, and functional MRI in her research. Prior to joining the University, Bainbridge received her B.A. in Cognitive Science from Yale, and completed her PhD in Brain & Cognitive Sciences at MIT.

Akram Bakkour (Psychology)

Professor Bakkour's research focuses on the cognitive and neural mechanisms by which relational memory contributes to decision making. To explore the interactions between memory and decision making, he uses a combination of functional brain imaging, eyetracking, computational modeling, machine learning, and neuropsychological studies with patients that have known cognitive deficits. He received his undergraduate degree in Neuroscience from Brown University, then conducted three years of translational research at MassachusettsGeneral Hospital developing imaging biomarkers of neurodegenerative disease. He completed his PhD in Neuroscience at The University of Texas at Austin studying value-based decision making and behavioral change. He then completed postdoctoral training at Columbia University before moving to Chicago.

Neil Brenner (Sociology)

Neil Brenner is a critical urban theorist, sociologist and geographer whose research explores diverse aspects of cities and urbanization under modern capitalism. His writing and teaching focus on the theoretical, conceptual and methodological dimensions of urban questions, and on the challenges of reinventing our approach to urbanization in relation to the crises, contradictions and struggles of our time. His current work focuses on the question of how "hinterlands"—the non-city territories, infrastructures and ecologies that support urban life—are being remade under contemporary supply-chain capitalism. Brenner 's previous books include New Urban Spaces: Urban Theory and the Scale Question (Oxford, 2019), Critique of Urbanization: Selected Essays (BauweltFundamente, 2016) and New State Spaces: Urban Governance and the Rescaling of Statehood (Oxford, 2004), as well as the edited volume Implosions/ Explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization (Jovis, 2014).

Marisa Casillas (Comparative Human Development)

Marisa Casillas received her PhD in Linguistics from Stanford University in 2013. She has been a post-doctoral researcher at the Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics since then, and will join the Comparative Human Development department at the University of Chicago as an assistant professor in January 2021. She is interested in exploring how cognitive and social processes shape the ways in which we learn, perceive, and produce language. Her primary research examines the relationship between communicative skills and linguistic processing in children and adults. She uses a combination of experimental- and observation-based methods to investigate these processes. Much of her work focuses in particular on how communicative and linguistic skills co-develop during in the first few years of life with the hope of better understanding how our capacity to produce, understand, and transmit language across generations is shaped by interactive needs.Her current project, funded by the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO) compares how children's early interactive experience influences their communicative development in two rural indigenous communities, one in Papua New Guinea and the other in Southern Mexico.

Elizabeth Chatterjee (History)

Elizabeth Chatterjee is an environmental historian working on the political economy of energy and climate change, with a particular focus on India. She has published several articles and essays on the history of electricity in (South) Asia and the transformations of India's distinctive mode of state-directed capitalism since independence in 1947. Currently, she is completing a book on the history of electricity in India, exploring how state development schemes and popular demands for cheap energy have together shaped our entry into the Anthropocene. Chatterjee, who was previously a postdoctoral scholar at UChicago's Franke Institute for the Humanities, is returning from Queen Mary University of London. She received her doctorate in International Development from the University of Oxford, where she was a Fellow of All Souls College. She is also a Fellow of the Initiative for Sustainable Energy Policy at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

Andrew Eggers (Political Science)

Andy Eggers is a political scientist whose research focuses on electoral systems, corruption/accountability, the relationship between money and politics, and political development in the U.S., Britain, and France. He also has an interest in research methodology.

From 2014-2020, he was a Professor in the Department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Oxford, a Professorial Fellow of Nuffield College, and Director of the Oxford QStep Centre. From 2011 to 2014 he was an Assistant Professor in the Department of Government at the London School of Economics.

Julian Go (Sociology)

Professor Go's research explores the social logics of imperial formations and modern colonialism; postcolonial/decolonial thought and related questions of social theory, epistemology, and knowledge; and global historical sociology. Much of Go's early work has focused on the US empire. More recently, he has been writing about postcolonial thought and social theory, as well as global historical sociology and transnational field theory. His current projects look at the history of imperialism's impact upon police militarization in the US, the UK and France. His scholarship has won prizes from the American Sociological Association, the Eastern Sociological Society, the American Political Science Association, and the International Studies Association, among other institutions. He received his B.A. in Sociology & Political Science from the University of Michigan and Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Chicago

Rashauna Johnson (History)

Rashauna Johnson is a historian of the 19th-century African diaspora, with an emphasis on slavery and emancipation in the US South and Atlantic World. She is especially interested in the limits and possibilities of archival histories of enslaved and freed people and the worlds in which they labored and lived. Johnson teaches courses on race, slavery, and nation; methodologies of slavery studies; and the 19th-century US. She is the author of Slavery's Metropolis: Unfree Labor in New Orleans during the Age of Revolutions (Cambridge UP, 2016; paperback 2018), which was awarded the 2016 Williams Prize for the best book in Louisiana history and the 2018 H. L. Mitchell Award by the Southern Historical Association for the best book on the southern working class. Slavery's Metropolis was also named a finalist for the 2016 Berkshire Conference of Women's Historians Book Prize, honorable mention for the Urban History Association's Kenneth Jackson Award, and a finalist for the 2017 Frederick Douglass Book Prize. She is currently at work on her second book project, a history of family and region, slavery and emancipation in rural Louisiana. That project has been supported by the Mellon Scholars Post-Doctoral Fellowship in African American History at the Library Company of Philadelphia and The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

Michael Kremer (Economics)

Nobel Prize-winning economist Michael Kremer joined the faculty of the Kenneth C. Griffin Department of Economics in September 2020. A pioneer in development economics who has shaped the discipline through the use of field experiments to inform economic models, policy and program development, Kremer shared the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel in 2019. Kremer earned his Ph.D. in economics from Harvard University in 1992. He was a visiting assistant professor at the University of Chicago in Spring Quarter 1993. Prior to his appointment at Harvard, he was a member of the faculty at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology from 1993 to 1999.

Jai Yu (Psychology)

Jai Yu is a neurobiologist who investigates how coordinated activity patterns across brain regions supports cognitive processes. He will focus on understanding the relationship between experience, memory and knowledge, and their underlying neurophysiological mechanisms. Dr. Yu performed postdoctoral research at the University of California San Francisco, where he used in-vivo electrophysiology to investigate the relationship between coordinated hippocampal-cortical activity and memory. As a data scientist at a Silicon Valley neuromodulation startup, he used advanced data analytics to guide the development of devices for treating neurological conditions. For his graduate research at the Institute of Molecular Pathology in Vienna, Austria, he used genetic and imaging methods to map a neural circuit in the Drosophila brain. He received a BBiomedSc and a BSc (Hons) from the University of Melbourne, Australia.