The Chancellor Jackman Research Fellowships in the Humanities, 2022-2023
12-month awards

Research Fellows hold an office on the 10th floor of the Jackman Humanities Building and are central members of the Circle of Fellows. They are University of Toronto tenured faculty members by the time of their fellowship, chosen for their distinction in achievements relative to their career stage, the excellence of their proposed project, and its relation to the annual theme for 2022-2023, Labour.

2022-2023 Annual Theme: Labour
From the labour of childbirth to the travail of making a living, human beings are labouring animals who derive meaning and experience meaninglessness in work. Historically, human creativity has long flourished both through and against labour-saving technologies. In a globalizing and climate-changing world, rising nationalist movements call for the fortification of borders that would stop seasonal flows of labour, while women call for pay equity and harassment-free workplaces to allow for the freedom to work in peace. In a world of increasingly precarious labour, thanks in part to automation, what does the future of work portend for both people and the planet? What forms of resistance are possible when workers face both the irrelevance of their labour and its exploitation?

Seth Bernard, FAS Classics
Seth Bernard (Ph.D. University of Pennsylvania, 2012) is associate professor of Roman history in the Department of Classics. He works on the social and economic history of Roman Italy, and his work is characterized by its broad methodological interests in combining historical, textual, archaeological, and scientific evidence. He has been a Regular Member of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens and a Rome Prize Fellow at the American Academy in Rome. He has published over forty papers on various aspects of Roman social and economic history. His first book Building Mid-Republican Rome: Labor, Architecture and the Urban Economy (Oxford, 2018) looks at the transformative impact on the city of Rome of the early stages of imperial conquest. He is finishing up a second book on Historical Culture in Early Italy looking at unwritten ways of encoding history in Iron Age Italy, and he is writing a third on the economic history of Italy during the period of Roman conquest for which he has received a SSHRC Insight Grant. He is also actively involved in fieldwork and co-directs archaeological excavations at Populonia and Falerii Novi in Italy.

Fellowship Research Project
“At the Origins of Roman Labour: The Making of a Slave Society in Italy, 500-200 BCE”
My project investigates the early development of Roman slavery, long considered an archetypal system of labour in global premodern history. The exploitation of enslaved persons was central to Rome’s economy, and slaves appear throughout Roman culture and society. Previous work has struggled to understand the origins of this slave society between textual and material evidence, as
each corpus has tended to emphasize different trajectories of development. My project presents an entirely new reading of the material by turning to a broader and more interdisciplinary approach, one that situates the rise of Rome’s slave economy within wider Italian and Central Mediterranean labour history. I argue that Roman slave society developed significantly during the earliest phases of imperial conquest in the fourth and third centuries BCE, but not necessarily because of any exceptional Roman interest in slaveholding. Rather, early Roman slavery should be understood as part of regional and more fundamental changes in the structures of labour. The project points out the benefit to approaching Roman slavery not as a discrete phenomenon, but as a part of broader histories of pre-modern labour.

Urvashi Chakravarty, UTSC English
Urvashi Chakravarty (Ph.D. University of Pennsylvania, 2010) works on early modern English literature, critical race studies, queer studies, and slavery and servitude in early modern England and the Atlantic world. Her first book, Fictions of Consent: Slavery, Servitude, and Free Service in Early Modern England, explores the ideologies of Atlantic slavery in early modern England, revealing the everyday sites where the foundations of racialized slavery were laid. Fictions of Consent will be published by the University of Pennsylvania Press in March 2022 as the first book in a new series on “RaceB4Race: Critical Race Studies of the Premodern.” Her second book, currently in progress, is titled From Fairest Creatures: Race, Reproduction, and Slavery in the Early Modern British Atlantic World, and explores the nexus of race and reproduction, including the construction of white womanhood and white childhood in the early modern Atlantic world, and its relationship to the structures of colonial violence and enslavement. She has written articles on, among other subjects, early modern race and reproduction; queer and racialized futurity; labour, domestic service, and whiteness; the “spiriting” of indentured labourers; and the future of early modern race studies. These essays appear or are forthcoming in English Literary Renaissance, Shakespeare Quarterly, the Journal of Early Modern Cultural Studies, Spenser Studies, postmedieval, Literature Compass, and the edited collections Queering Childhood in Early Modern English Drama and Culture, Shakespeare/Sex: Contemporary Readings in Gender and Sexuality, and The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare and Race.

Fellowship Research Project
“From Fairest Creatures: Race, Reproduction and Slavery in the Early Modern British Atlantic World”
This fellowship will support the completion of my second book project, which explores the nexus of race and reproduction in the early modern Atlantic world. From Fairest Creatures attends to the ways in which English formations of family and kinship were intimately connected to—indeed, reliant on—the intellectual, conceptual, political, and economic architectures of race and slavery in the British Atlantic world. The word “family” is itself etymologically tied to slavery through its linguistic roots in the word famulus, a Roman household slave, philologically braiding together reproductive and enslaved labour; this book therefore seeks to recover and reconceptualize the discursive and cultural mechanisms by which the generation of an enslaved and labouring population reframed ideas of lineal, familial, and racial futurity in English contexts. In other words, this project rethinks our ideas of the relationship between the family, the nation, and the empire through a sustained interrogation of the discursive and political nexus of race and reproduction. At
the same time, it aims to work across chronological and geographical disciplinary divides to reimagine the relationship between England and its Atlantic trades, traffics, and territories. Central to this relationship, I argue, was the formation of white womanhood and white childhood in early modern England and the Atlantic world. From Fairest Creatures reveals how early modern texts construct a representation of womanhood and childhood specifically and explicitly marked (and unmarked) as white and argues that this construction of white womanhood and childhood was in turn mobilized to underwrite the operations of violence and enslavement.

Emily Nacol, UTM Political Science
Emily Nacol (Ph.D. 2007, University of Chicago) is Associate Professor of Political Science and author of An Age of Risk: Politics and Economy in Early Modern Britain (Princeton University Press, 2016). As a political theorist who specializes in the history of early modern political thought and political economy, Emily studies how early modern people coped with the problems of risk and uncertainty in political, social, and economic life. Her current research project explores shifting attitudes towards labour and risk in Britain in the long eighteenth century, with special attention to how Britons conceptualized and singled out certain types of workers as particularly risky and undesirable (e.g., prostitutes, new finance workers, and the labouring poor). Her work aims to understand how these risky designations—found in political, economic, and legal discourse, as well as in literary works and material culture—aimed to soothe public anxieties about the changing nature of labour in a new finance economy and to shore up traditional accounts of labour and work. She is interested, too, in how these designations further burdened already vulnerable, marginalized workers. In addition to An Age of Risk, Emily has published book chapters and articles on the political thought of John Locke and on the impact of insurance practices on early modern political writing.

Fellowship Research Project
“Reimagining Labour: The Politics of Risk and Blame in Early Modern Britain”
This fellowship will support the research and writing of my second book, which will focus on social and political arguments about the risks and value of labour and work as they appear in early modern British political and economic writing in the long eighteenth century (ca. 1688-1815). I am interested in how particular forms of labour become established as both morally and materially productive and desirable, while others are marked as destructive and threatening to social order and prosperity. Phrased in the language of my thematic research agenda on the politics of risk, I want to analyse how and why some forms of labour and some labourers themselves become designated as risky, while others do not. Close study of these risk designations can, I argue, illuminate the social and political commitments—and fears—that shape the societies in which labourers perform their work. To capture these dynamics, as a scholar of early modern political thought and political economy, I turn to representations of distinct but sometimes overlapping groups of labourers in eighteenth-century Britain: prostitutes, low-level workers on the stock market, the working and non-working poor, and migrant labourers. While my research is historical and interpretive in character, I remain cognizant of how these dynamics play out, albeit in new ways, in contemporary political debates about labour and work. We, too, classify some forms of work as more desirable or valuable than others, and in our own labour-centric political economies, we place moral and social value on productivity and deal harshly with those deemed unproductive.
Eric T. Jennings, FAS History

Eric T. Jennings (Ph.D. University of California-Berkeley, 1998) is Distinguished Professor of France and Francophone History. His areas of expertise include modern France, French colonialism, decolonization, and the francophone world. He is the author of seven books and an edited volume, the most recent of which is *Escape from Vichy: The Refugee Exodus to the French Caribbean* (Harvard, 2018). It explores the experiences of some 5,000 refugees who fled mainland France via the island of Martinique in 1940-1941, analyzing the ensuing confluences between Surrealism and Nègritude. He has also authored over sixty refereed chapters and articles straddling the histories of France, Southeast Asia, the Indian Ocean, Africa, and the Caribbean. These include contributions to the following edited volumes: *L'Histoire mondiale de la France; World War II in the West Indies; Africa and World War II; The Routledge History of Western Empires; The Cambridge History of Nationhood and Nationalism* (forthcoming), and *The Cambridge History of the Vietnam War* (forthcoming). In addition to English and French, some of his work has also appeared in Vietnamese, Bengali, Korean, Hebrew, Italian, Spanish, German, and Chinese. He has received a John Simon Guggenheim fellowship, as well as a CIHR grant and six Standard/Insight SSHRC grants. In 2011-2012 he held a six-month JHI Faculty Research Fellowship, and we are delighted to welcome him back.

**Fellowship Research Project**

**“Vanilla Labourers: 1841-2000”**

This project is a component of a monograph tentatively titled *A World History of Vanilla* (under contract, Yale University Press). It will examine the history of vanilla labour in the nineteenth century from a range of interdisciplinary perspectives including environmental studies, gender studies, French studies, colonial commodity studies, visual studies, African/Indian Ocean studies, and food studies. Vanilla’s moment of globalization is deeply connected to slavery, but in different ways and with different chronologies than cotton or sugar. Prior to 1841, Mexico held a small near-monopoly over vanilla output. In 1841, an enslaved Black teenager named Edmond – subsequently given the surname Albius upon emancipation in 1848 – completely transformed the vanilla sector. He discovered an efficient way of artificially pollinating the vanilla orchid in a matter of seconds with a toothpick or a needle. My project will contextualize his status as a so-called “specialist slave,” the ways he acquired botanical knowledge, as well as his triumphs, trials and tribulations, rooted in local and global contexts.