HSS | 2025–2026 NEW FACES

We are pleased to introduce the new lecturers, postdocs, students, and staff arriving in the Division of the Humanities and Social Sciences for the 2025–2026 academic year. Please join us in welcoming them all to HSS!

LECTURERS & OTHER FACULTY

BRIAN BARTELL
Lecturer in English

Bartell joins the division as a lecturer in English for the fall and winter terms. He studies twentieth and twenty-first century American and Black studies with a special interest in technology, race and social difference, aesthetics, ecology, and political economy. His first book, *On the Eve of the Cybercultural Revolution: Black Power and Capitalism in the 1960s,* will be out this October. Bartell holds a PhD in English and comparative literature from Columbia University.

SUSAN JUSTER
Lecturer in History

Juster is the W.M. Keck Foundation Director of Research at The Huntington. Prior to joining The Huntington, she was the Rhys Isaac Collegiate Professor of History at the University of Michigan, where she also served as associate dean for social sciences. A recipient of a 2020 Guggenheim Fellowship, Juster is the author of numerous books on the religious history of the early English Atlantic. She joins HSS this fall to teach a new course, Religion in America, from the Reformation to the Rapture (Hum/H 47).

RICARDO MATTHEWS
Lecturer in English

A medievalist by training, Matthews studies historical rhetoric (medieval and premodern) and its relationship to romance. He will teach two courses at Caltech this year: Medieval Networks (Hum/En 56) and Medieval Hybridity (En 180). Matthews also teaches at his alma mater, UC Irvine, where he earned a PhD in English literature.

LECTURERS & OTHER FACULTY

JASON STOHLER
Lecturer in History

With a PhD in history from UC Santa Barbara (UCSB), Stohler's research interests include Chinese migration, US history, comparative gender, and law and society. He previously taught at The City College of New York and UCSB and will teach a course on Asian American history (H 161) at Caltech this winter.

LISE VESTERLUND
Moore Distinguished Scholar

Vesterlund is the Andrew W. Mellon Professor of Economics at the University of Pittsburgh and director of the Behavioral Economics Design Initiative and the Pittsburgh Experimental Economics Laboratory. Her work in behavioral and experimental economics shows how gender differences in competition, confidence, and expectations contribute to the persistent gender gap in advancement. Her co-authored book *The No Club: Putting a Stop to Women's Dead-End Work* uncovers that a fair distribution of work assignments is the path to gender equity in the workplace. Vesterlund will visit HSS in spring 2026.

CHRISTIN ZURBACH
Lecturer in History

Zurbach is a sociopolitical historian of medicine and minorities. She holds a doctorate from the history department at UC Berkeley, where she received an Outstanding Graduate Student Instructor Award in 2023. Zurbach spent the last academic year as the inaugural Cedars-Sinai/Huntington Library Postdoctoral Fellow studying the professionalization of medicine in the Ottoman Empire. She joins HSS in the spring to teach a new course on gender and sexuality in the Middle East (H 161).

POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS

KATHERINE CAVANAUGH
Postdoctoral Scholar Research Associate in Climate Impacts

Cavanaugh, who received a PhD in geography from UCLA, joined HSS to collaborate with Assistant Professor of Economics Hannah Druckenmiller. Her project focuses on quantifying the costs of sea level rise under various scenarios by combining geospatial data on human and natural systems with location-specific asset valuations. Cavanaugh aims to develop cost estimates at global scale and at high enough spatial granularity to inform local-level decision-making.

POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS

RAQUEL CENTENO
Postdoctoral Scholar Teaching Fellow in Science, Society, and Policy

Centeno's research is centered around the areas of public opinion, political psychology, and political behavior. She studies how voters think and feel about parties and partisanship, and she explores how these feelings are shaped by voters' various group identities, particularly their racial and ethnic identity. Centeno, who recently earned her PhD from USC in political science and international relations, joined HSS to collaborate with faculty in The Ronald and Maxine Linde Center for Science, Society, and Policy (LCSSP).

NICK EARHART
Weisman Postdoctoral Scholar Teaching Fellow in English and Visual Culture

Earhart is a writer and researcher focusing on art, ecology, and urban space. He holds a PhD in English and a certificate in visual studies from USC, and his dissertation looked at the relationship between art and activism along the Los Angeles River since the 1970s. His 2025–2026 courses include Climate Fiction (Hum/En 42), Graphic Non-Fiction: Memoir, History, and Journalism (En/VC 198), and Nature Writing (Hum/En 42).

MATEUSZ FALKOWSKI
Howard E. and Susanne C. Jessen Postdoctoral Scholar Teaching Fellow in Early Modern Literature and the Classical Tradition

Falkowski is a scholar of early modern Europe, studying intellectual and religious history with a particular focus on Italy and Spain. His work combines approaches from book history, classical reception studies, and the history of science. With a PhD in history from Princeton University, Falkowski was the 2024–2025 Francesco De Dombrowski Postdoctoral Fellow at I Tatti - The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies in Florence. At Caltech, he will teach courses on Books, Readers, and Science in Early Modern Europe (H 113) and Environment and Environmental Expertise in Premodern World (Hum/H 16).

MAHMOUD JALLOH
Postdoctoral Scholar Research Associate in History and Philosophy of Science

Jalloh joins the Einstein Papers Project to work with Einstein's published and unpublished writings, calculations, and letters ranging from 1930–1933. He comes to Caltech after completing his PhD in philosophy at USC and two years of teaching at St. John's College in New Mexico. Jalloh's research interests include the history and philosophy of science, particularly physics and metaphysics, as well as the history of philosophy, with a focus on Immanuel Kant, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and phenomenology.

POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS

DELANIE J. LINDEN
Anne Rothenberg Postdoctoral Scholar Teaching Fellow in Visual Culture

Linden recently earned her PhD in art history from MIT's History, Theory and Criticism of Architecture and Art program. Her work is broadly concerned with the global trade of material culture as well as art and architecture materials imported into Europe and how these objects and resources influenced taste, local materials science, art techniques, architectural interiors, decorative arts and design, optical perception, and political economies in the nineteenth century. Linden will teach two courses this year: Color (Hum/VC 52) and Extraction! Art, Architecture, and Environmental History (VC 178).

TANYA SCHMIDT MORSTEIN
Postdoctoral Scholar Teaching Fellow in English

Morstein comes to Caltech from Stanford University, where she taught for two years in the Structured Liberal Education program. She completed her PhD in English at New York University, after which she took up a postdoctoral teaching fellowship and received an outstanding teaching award. This academic year, she will teach three undergraduate courses at Caltech: Shakespeare at the Cinema (En/VC 199), There and Back Again: Ancient and Early Modern Epic Storytelling (En 194), and The Ethics of Friendship (Hum/En 39).

EMILY TOWNER
Postdoctoral Scholar Research Associate in Computational Neuroscience of Social Media and Emotion

Towner joins the Mobbs Lab to investigate how interactions on social media become toxic and to study the brain's response to online threats. She recently completed her PhD in psychology at the University of Cambridge, and her research interests include loneliness, anxiety, mental health, and social media. In 2024, Towner was named on the inaugural 50 Under 50 alumni list for The City University of New York, where she earned a BA in communications and media.

CRISTIANO ZANETTI
Eleanor Searle Postdoctoral Scholar Teaching Fellow in the History of Science and Technology

Zanetti is the inaugural holder of the Eleanor Searle Postdoctoral Scholar Teaching Fellowship, which is a collaboration between Caltech and The Huntington. His research focuses on the social and cultural history of technological innovation in the long Renaissance. He holds a PhD in history and civilization from the European University Institute. In 2025–2026, Zanetti will teach two new undergraduate courses: Leonardo da Vinci & Co.: How to Understand Technological Invention in the Long Renaissance (Hum/H 38) and Instruments of Knowledge from Antiquity to the Early Modern World (H 115).

GRADUATE STUDENTS

CHIH-YI (ETHAN) CHEN
Social and Decision Neuroscience Graduate Student

Chen's research interests center on using computational models, particularly reinforcement learning frameworks, to investigate the information processing underlying human decision-making and higher-level cognition, with behavioral and neuroscientific data as model constraints. He earned a BS in psychology and BA in economics, with a minor in computer science, from National Chengchi University and an MS in brain and mind sciences from National Taiwan University.

FRANCESCO CRISPANO
Social Sciences Graduate Student

With a background in real analysis, static and dynamic optimization, and probability via measure theory, Crispano's research interests include information economics, behavioral economics, and experimental economics. He completed undergraduate and graduate degrees in economics and finance at the University of Naples Federico II, where he spent the last two years as a junior fellow at the Centre for Studies in Economics and Finance.

ALEXANDER HALSEY
Social Sciences Graduate Student

After receiving a BS in math from The University of Texas at Austin, Halsey joined the Federal Reserve as a research assistant, where he became interested in research applications of natural language processing, large language models, and other machine learning methods. At Caltech, he hopes to focus both on methodological applications of AI, like parsing nontraditional datasets or simulating surveys and scenario analysis, and on policy questions, like how to integrate AI fairly into society.

MICHEL KAMEDA-HENRY
Social Sciences Graduate Student

Incoming social sciences graduate student Kameda-Henry is interested in decision theory, theoretical neuroscience, and mathematics. He recently graduated from Pennsylvania State University with a BS in mathematics and a minor in biology. He has a background in microeconomic theory, behavioral economics, measure theory, probability theory, and dynamical systems.

GRADUATE STUDENTS

TIANSHU (ANYA) OUYANG
Social and Decision Neuroscience Graduate Student

Ouyang is interested in human decision-making, reinforcement learning, and their neural underpinnings. She recently graduated from Johns Hopkins University where she majored in neuroscience and mathematics and collaborated on projects pertaining to value-based decision-making using human intracranial EEG data and on semantic memory.

ERIK SCHEUERMANN
Social Sciences Graduate Student

Scheuermann has a background in stochastic analysis, numerical analysis, partial differential equations, and misspecified learning. He holds a BS in economics and a BS in mathematics from the University of Bonn, where he recently completed an MS in mathematics with a thesis on Bayesian posterior concentration. His research interests include behavioral economics, experimental economics, neuroeconomics, political economy, and Bayesian learning.

KATHERINE TANG
Social Sciences Graduate Student

Tang recently graduated from New York University with a BA in economics and mathematics. She has a background in computer science, data science, and pure mathematics, and her research interests include mathematical economics and microeconomic theory, with a particular focus on decision theory and game theory. Tang is interested in learning more about stochastic choice, uncertainty, and matching during her graduate studies at Caltech.

STAFF

JARED BIGMAN
Senior Director of Development, Humanities and Social Sciences

Bigman is the new senior director of development working with HSS. He joined Caltech's Advancement and Alumni Relations from UC Irvine (UCI), where he led fundraising programs for the Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center and the Chao Digestive Health Institute and most recently served as senior director of development for the Susan Samueli Integrative Health Institute. Prior to working at UCI, Bigman held development roles at the American Lung Association and the American Cancer Society.

STAFF

SARA KASSIR
Research Policy Lead

Kassir holds a master's degree in public policy from the Harvard Kennedy School and a BA in government from Dartmouth College. She joined the Linde Center for Science, Society, and Policy (LCSSP) to focus on identifying and developing opportunities for greater engagement between the science happening at Caltech and essential public policy conversations. Prior to joining Caltech, Kassir worked in technology policy for several NYC-based startups across the AI and blockchain industries.

CADY NGO
Research Assistant

Ngo recently joined HSS as a research assistant in the Camerer Group. In summer 2024, she worked with Camerer as a visiting undergraduate research fellow on a project that used price history, forecasts, risk attitudes, and emotional measures to predict experimental asset bubble crashes. She holds dual BAs in economics and in mathematics and statistics from Grinnell College. Her research interests lie broadly in behavioral game theory, experimental economics, and neuroeconomics, with a focus on modeling decision-making in high-risk, uncertain environments.

SARAH SHERWOOD
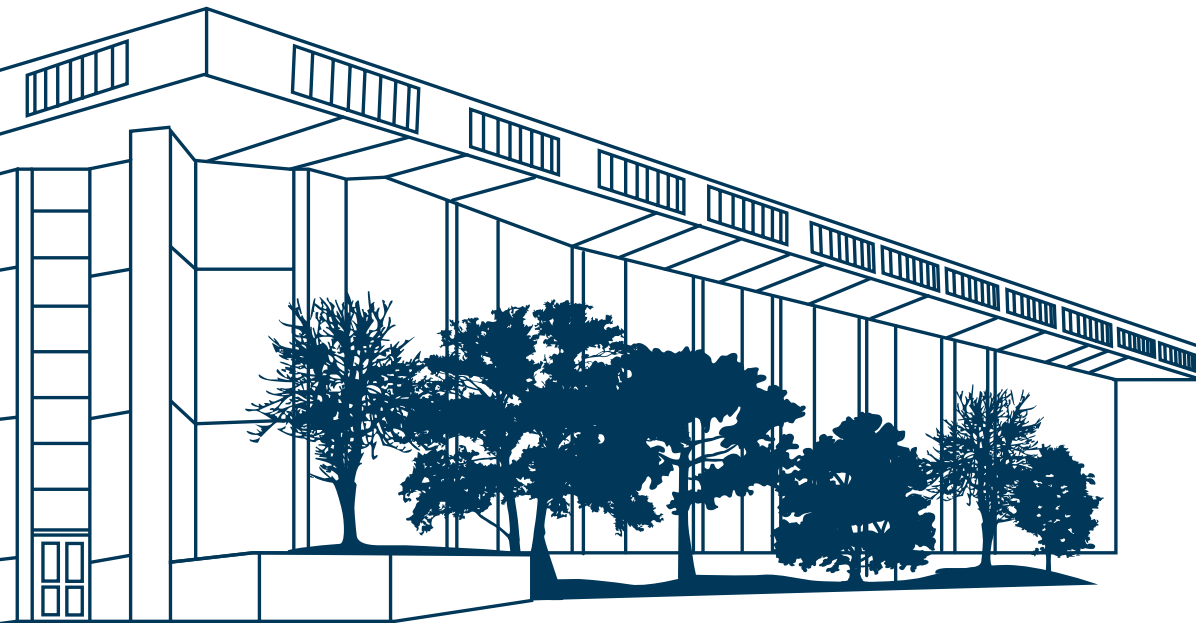### *Administrative Assistant*

Sherwood joined the HSS administrative team in April. She holds a BA in English from California Lutheran University, where she worked as a department assistant during her undergraduate years. She spent the last four years as an administrative assistant and marketing coordinator for Williams Homes.

TOMAS WINEGAR
Research Assistant

Winegar holds BAs in neuroscience and psychology from Harvard University. His current interests include theoretical neuroscience, etiologies of psychiatric conditions, and distributed network motifs in the brain. As a research assistant in the Rangel Lab, he works on modeling human sampling, economic choice behavior and learning using cognitive science models, and neuroscience-inspired machine learning.

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REMINDER

HSS Fall
Welcome Party

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2025

4:00 - 6:00 p.m. // Dabney Garden