

DUMBARTON OAKS

RESEARCH LIBRARY AND COLLECTION

1703 32ND STREET, NW / WASHINGTON, DC 20007-2934

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Dumbarton Oaks and JSTOR Award New Plant Humanities Fellowships Mellon grant fosters collaboration between special collections and the digital humanities

NEW YORK AND WASHINGTON —Dumbarton Oaks, a research institute of Harvard University, and JSTOR, the digital library for research and teaching that is part of the nonprofit ITHAKA, are pleased to welcome four Plant Humanities Fellows supported by [The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation](#). Offered for the first time this year, the fellowships enable emerging scholars to shape a bold new initiative integrating science, art, history, and the digital humanities.

The [Plant Humanities Initiative](#) explores the cultural histories, travels, and influence of plants through the lens of special collections. Fellows join an intergenerational team working to expand the field of Plant Humanities through investigation of rare books and manuscripts, herbaria specimens, online resources such as [JSTOR Global Plants](#), and scholarly literature. The team will develop a digital tool to interpret and contextualize these materials through narrative and mapping means, with the aim of engaging teachers, students, and the public.

“The excitement of this initiative lies in its dual nature—fellows will both undertake hands-on research in our special collections and participate in shaping the digital tool from the beginning and in dialogue with technical experts,” said Yota Batsaki, executive director of Dumbarton Oaks.

The Fellows at Dumbarton Oaks and JSTOR were selected after a competitive application process. Reflecting the multidisciplinary nature of the endeavor, the fellows bring to the project diverse skills in archaeology, anthropology, literary studies, early modern history, the history of science and medicine, ethnobotany, and gender studies.

For more information about fellowships at Dumbarton Oaks, along with details on how to apply for 2019-2020 scholarly opportunities in Plant Humanities, please see <https://www.doaks.org/research/garden-landscape/plant-humanities-initiative>.

2019 Andrew W. Mellon Plant Humanities Fellowships

Dumbarton Oaks Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow (2019-2021)

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Dr. Ashley Buchanan

Tampa, Florida

Dr. Buchanan is a historian of the early modern world with a particular interest in plants, recipes, and medicinal cultures in 17th- and 18th-century Europe. She received a PhD in early modern history from the University of South Florida. Her current book project investigates the social, cultural, and political significance of pharmaceutical experimentation as well as the medicinal and botanical patronage at the court of the last Medici princess, Anna Maria Luisa de Medici (1667–1743). In addition to almost a decade of teaching and working with undergraduates both in the United States and in Italy, Dr. Buchanan has been a junior fellow in residence with the Medici Archive Project in Florence and an Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fellow at The Huntington. At Dumbarton Oaks, besides coteaching the Plant Humanities Summer Program, she will expand her original research and contribute to digital resources focused on the power of plants in shaping societies and cultures.

JSTOR Digital Humanities Fellow (2019-2021)

Dr. Nathan Kelber

Chapel Hill, North Carolina

Dr. Kelber recently served as Digital Scholarship Specialist of the University Libraries at UNC Chapel Hill. His work has included cutting-edge, grant-funded digital projects in universities, libraries, and museums. He received a PhD in English from the University of Maryland. As part of his work at JSTOR, Dr. Kelber will offer digital humanities workshops on a range of topics, including planning successful digital humanities projects; text and data mining (TDM); mapping; and data wrangling. He will also assist in disseminating and gathering feedback on the final Plant Humanities Initiative tool.

Dumbarton Oaks Academic Year Fellows (2019-2020)

Dr. Victoria Pickering

London, England

Dr. Pickering joins Dumbarton Oaks from the British Museum, where she was a postdoctoral researcher working on the project “Enlightenment Architectures: Sir Hans Sloane’s Catalogues of his Collections” funded by the Leverhulme Trust. The project, combining traditional humanities and digital humanities approaches, focused on making catalogues of natural history collections machine readable to understand how the physician Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1759) and his contemporaries collected, organized, and classified the natural world. Dr. Pickering completed her AHRC-funded PhD at Queen Mary University of London. Most recently, she curated an exhibition at the British Museum entitled *A Physician’s Cabinet* and co-authored a chapter for the edited volume *Curious Encounters: Voyaging, Collecting, and Making*

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Knowledge in the Long Eighteenth Century, edited by Adriana Craciun and Mary Terrall (University of Toronto Press, 2019). Dr. Pickering will undertake research in the Dumbarton Oaks special collections and develop priorities and content for the Plant Humanities digital tool in close collaboration with JSTOR Labs.

Rebecca Friedel

San Antonio, Texas

Friedel is a PhD candidate and lecturer in anthropology at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). She completed an honors undergraduate thesis focused on the analysis and interpretation of plant remains at ancient Maya ritual cave sites in Belize. Friedel has been the project paleoethnobotanist for the Mopan Valley Archaeological and Preclassic Projects in Belize since 2013. Her dissertation project on ancient Maya human-plant relationships has led to interdisciplinary collaboration with many research institutions, including the National Lacustrine Core Facility at the University of Minnesota and El Colegio de la Frontera Sur in Chetumal, Mexico. As cofounder of an organization focused on improving community outreach and education regarding archaeology and cultural heritage in Belize, Friedel coauthored and published a trilingual children's book on the importance of native plants and their uses. At Dumbarton Oaks, she will undertake research in the special collections and develop priorities and content for the Plant Humanities digital tool in close collaboration with JSTOR Labs.

ABOUT JSTOR

Launched in 1997, JSTOR is a cloud-based library where scholars, students, and the public can access thousands of journals, books, images, and other content as well as tools that promote research, teaching, sharing, and contribution. JSTOR includes content from more than 1,000 publishers and serves 10,000+ universities, schools, and institutions across 176 nations. Learn more at about.jstor.org.

ABOUT DUMBARTON OAKS

Dumbarton Oaks is a research institute of Harvard University that exists to further and publish research in the three areas of study: Byzantine Studies, Pre-Columbian Studies, and Garden and Landscape Studies. Residential fellowships for an academic year, semester, or summer are awarded in all three areas of study to scholars from around the world. In addition, Dumbarton Oaks offers one-month nonresidential awards to researchers, and short-term predoctoral residencies to advanced graduate students. Each of the three programs of study supports and disseminates research in its relevant fields through an annual symposium; a program of public lectures, informal talks, and colloquia; and publications. Learn more at www.doaks.org.