

Preface



In the early 1930s, as the College implemented the precursors to its Core sequences, the architects of the Social Sciences Course deployed a powerful idea of Chicago as a distinctive and formative place to pursue an education. A class with Louis Wirth or Harry Gideonse could include excursions to the Stockyards, the Stock Exchange, the unemployment office, or the slums, among other sites. At these places, students encountered in sober reality the phenomena discussed in the classroom, rendered all the more poignant by the disruptions of the Great Depression. Chicago was a social laboratory, where the problems of a diverse, urban, industrial society could be observed, studied, and addressed. But the city was more than a fortuitous site for scholarship and classroom illustrations. It also shaped the educational experience, giving rise to the interests and questions that one posed about the world. Students, it was hoped, would approach problems differently because they learned to do so in Chicago.

These patterns of intellectual traffic with the city are deeply rooted in the history of the College. Today they are far more robust and sponsored in many forms by the College's Chicago Studies Program. Chicago Studies encourages students and faculty to engage the city from all the disciplinary perspectives represented at the University of Chicago and offers a variety of resources for those who want to integrate their academics with the opportunities of the region. At the curricular level, it supports

Chicago-themed courses throughout the year and organizes each spring the immersive Study Chicago Quarter, which allows a cohort of twenty students to devote an entire term to the intensive study and exploration of the distinctive folkways and civic codes of Chicago. Now in its second year, Study Chicago pairs courses in the geography, history and policy debates of the city with weekly site visits, bus and walking tours of neighborhoods, guest lectures, and other means to promote civic literacy. At the cocurricular level, Chicago Studies connects students with internships, summer programs, and research opportunities, and also organizes events with institutions around the city.

The *Chicago Studies Annual* is one place we see, in first-rate BA theses, the creative intersection of the College curriculum with our urban context. Indeed one of the privileges of editing the *Annual* is seeing how undergraduate engagement with the city converges with the intellectual rigor and ability to think across disciplines that comes from the Core and the completion of a major. Our submissions feature skilled quantitative analyses and close readings of texts, archival research and careful attention to narratives and framing devices. They are formulated and honed in coursework and seminars. But they are frequently inspired by summer internships, volunteering with neighborhood organizations, public lectures, and engagement in the boisterous debates that characterize public life in Chicago. In this sense, the *Annual* shows the nexus of many different kinds of undergraduate activity in the classroom, on campus, and in the city.

In this volume, Isaac Dalke, AB'13 (Sociology), guides the reader through the world of "fictive families" that form among homeless, LGBT youth who come to Chicago's Boystown neighborhood to express and explore their gender and sexuality. The product of careful ethnographic fieldwork, Dalke finds multiple uses and meanings for the bonds of kinship—children to parents, aunts and uncles—forged between new and longer-term homeless residents. On one hand, these relations are leveraged to secure resources and train new arrivals how to navigate life on the streets. Yet they are also a context for working out and reinforcing the contours of one's identity in codes of dress, speech, public comportment, and storytelling. Crucially, Dalke finds that these codes exist in

tension with the expectations of service providers, businesses, and other, more prosperous Boystown residents, placing added pressure on the fragile identities of the LGBT homeless. Ultimately, Dalke's essay elucidates a process of boundary making within the Boystown neighborhood itself.

We gain a different view of challenges to neighborhood cohesion in Rachel Hyman's deeply researched, quantitative study of redevelopment projects in Pilsen since the 1990s. As her title indicates, gentrification there has been represented as a process comparable to ethnic cleansing, whereby poor residents of Hispanic descent—and with them, a center of Mexican American culture—are displaced by higher income whites. Hyman, AB'13 (Geography), mines several data sets from the city and case studies to explore the relationship between this heated discourse and the material reality of gentrification. By cross-referencing data on population shifts, property values and rental rates, building permits, demolitions and renovations, she uncovers a nuanced story of change to the built environment. Not only has neighborhood change occurred at a slower pace than elsewhere in the city, but it has been led in large part by middle- and upper-income Hispanics, often returning to their community of childhood. All the while, local leaders have invested in projects and services to mitigate the effects of redevelopment, particularly for the most vulnerable populations. In Pilsen, Hyman concludes, one finds the resources and public will to maximize the benefits of gentrification while minimizing the social costs.

The timely but uncharted history of Illinois's trauma-care system is the subject of Akshaya Kannan's contribution. That the Illinois system has deteriorated since the late 1980s, with consequences for the South Side of Chicago, is well known; that it was originally a national model in the early 1970s is not. Kannan, AB'13 (Public Policy), shows how a convergence of factors prompted hospitals to close their trauma centers, unraveling what had been a tightly coordinated, regionalized system of catchment areas with centers providing varying levels of service. While the structural obstacles have grown worse with time, the Illinois system has not adapted to them, placing an unmanageable financial burden on individual hospitals, especially in urban areas. Kannan contrasts this state of affairs with that in two other states, Georgia and Maryland, to

investigate ways that trauma care in Illinois could be reformed to increase efficiency and distribute costs. She closes with recommendations to diversify sources of funding at the state level and increase incentives for surgeons, while also taking advantage of the resources newly available through the Affordable Care Act.

Jennifer McPhillips, AB'13 (Public Policy), enters the controversial terrain of illegal gun possession and violence in Chicago with a careful analysis of court dispositions and recidivism rates. How can the criminal justice system best deter future criminal activity in connection with guns? To explore this issue, McPhillips compared arrest records from the Chicago Police Department with publically available court records, allowing her to follow the treatment and subsequent histories of individuals whose first adult arrest was for the unlawful use of a weapon. The results of this analysis are surprising, given the finding of recent research that consistent, harsh sanctions, often framed in the language of mandatory minimum sentences, are the best deterrent to such behavior. McPhillips's analysis suggests a different relationship. While the court, it turns out, is very effective at distinguishing between low-risk offenders and dangerous criminals, its treatment of the latter group does little to discourage recidivism. Those who receive the harshest dispositions are in fact the most likely to reoffend. Hence, McPhillips concludes, current methods of intervention are not working to lower the rate of weapons-related violence, and stricter, more aggressive legislation is unlikely to change this outcome.

Our final essay returns to the role of social divisions in a changing, built environment, but does so in the context of the 1870s, in the aftermath of the Great Fire. Joshua Schwartz, AB'13 (History), utilizes a rich source base of letters, diary entries, and court documents from the Newberry Library and the Chicago History Museum to chart how propertied elites in the burgeoning city came to grips with the cultural and social consequences of the fire. The fire, he reminds us, served momentarily as a great equalizer with its indiscriminate destruction of property. It destroyed the institutions and material conditions that Chicago's commercial elites had recently constructed to distinguish themselves from nonelites. One way of conceptualizing subsequent years, Schwartz

argues, is through the process of “social restoration,” by which these same actors reconstituted the networks and institutions that confirmed their position of privilege vis-à-vis immigrants and newly arrived, single laborers. These broad categories are crucial to understanding the city of Chicago in that decade, Schwartz insists, because a still developing class structure, more fluid than in eastern cities, underscored practices of “distinction” in the sense articulated by Pierre Bourdieu.

This sixth volume of the *Chicago Studies Annual* owes a special debt of gratitude to Michael Toporek, AB’86 (Economics), MBA’87 (Finance and Accounting), whose generous support enables the very best undergraduate research about the city to receive the quality publication that it deserves.

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Acknowledgments

ISAAC DALKE | Isaac graduated from the University of Chicago in 2013 with a BA in sociology. This paper served as his senior thesis, completed under the supervision of James Evans. He is also thankful for further input and insight from Forrest Stuart, Kristen Schilt, Naeyun Lee, and numerous fellow classmates. Of course, he is grateful to the people he met in Boystown for their generosity with their time and their openness to share their experiences and their vantage points of the world. To the best it can, this paper holds fidelity to the vision they articulated of their lives, their challenges, and their hopes.

Following graduation Isaac stayed in Chicago to work in education policy for the University of Chicago Consortium on School Research before venturing to eastern Oregon to assist with community development projects for the State of Oregon. He now lives in Oakland and works for the Prison Law Office, a law firm focused on reforming the State of California's prison system.

RACHEL HYMAN | Rachel offers many thanks to Michael Conzen, Sarah Lopez, and David Hyman for helping to whip this thesis into shape. Since her graduation in 2013, Rachel has lived in Detroit, a place of much geographic interest. She is currently working in Chicago as a software developer and has given a speech at NSScotland titled, "Top Ten Tips for Building Apps with Maps," putting her geography degree to good use.

AKSHAYA KANNAN | This paper was inspired by the work of Fearless Leading by the Youth, a group that fought tirelessly for years to improve trauma care on the South Side and won their campaign in September 2015. I thank them and Students for Health Equity (SHE) for their support of my project. I also thank Doctor David Boyd, my adviser, whose guidance was invaluable.

Upon graduating in June 2013 with a BA in public policy, I spent a year in India as a Fulbright-Nehru Fellow, where I conducted anthropo-

logical research on a puberty ceremony in South India. From January 2015 to June 2015, I interned with Families USA, a health-reform advocacy organization based in Washington, DC. As their health equity intern, I coordinated advocacy efforts for communities of color and wrote policy to guide advocates at both the state and national levels. I am currently a Robert W. Woodruff Fellow at Emory School of Medicine and expect to graduate in June 2019 with an MD degree.

JENNIFER MCPHILLIPS | Jen graduated from the University of Chicago in 2013, where she studied public policy and French literature. Since graduating, Jen has been with the Boston Consulting Group's Chicago office. Jen is now a consultant and a participant in BCG's Social Impact Immersion Program, a one-year fellowship that supports non-profit and social-sector clients exclusively. Jen continues to explore her interest in public policy through volunteer consulting work with Accion International and the University of Chicago Urban Labs.

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JOSHUA SCHWARTZ | Since graduating with a BA in history in 2013, Josh has gone on to become a PhD student in American history at Columbia University. His work focuses on class and culture in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century urban America. He would like to thank his thesis advisor, Professor Amy Dru Stanley, and his graduate student preceptor, Sarah Weickel, for their guidance. Without their input and criticism, "From Ashes" would have been a vastly inferior essay—and he never would have made it half as far as he has.