

Four UCSD faculty members win Guggenheim Memorial Fellowships

May 16, 1988

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FOUR UCSD FACULTY WIN GUGGENHEIMS

Four members of the University of California, San Diego faculty are among 262 American and Canadian winners of John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowships this year.

The recipients from UCSD are: Peter B. Evans, professor of sociology; Philip Kitcher, professor of philosophy; Don E. Wayne, associate professor of English literature and Halbert White, professor of economics.

According to the foundation which makes the awards each year, the new Guggenheim Fellows "were appointed on the basis of unusually distinguished achievement in the past and exceptional promise for future accomplishment."

The winners come from a variety of disciplines including the physical and biological sciences, social sciences, and the humanities.

Guggenheim Fellowships provide recipients with funds to allow them release time to pursue their research or other creative endeavors.

Evans, who is on the faculty of the Graduate School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, is currently on leave at the University of New Mexico.

He is working on a manuscript analyzing attempts of newly industrializing countries to become participants in high technology manufacturing industries.

"I was surprised and delighted to win the fellowship," he said. "As one gets on in one's career it gets harder to get away and do some serious writing, and the advantage of the Guggenheim is that it will allow me to do this."

White's field is econometrics, the application of statistical methods to economic problems.

He plans to spend the next year studying how recent advances in cognitive science in an area called neural network modeling might be applied to economic theory.

"In other areas of application these neural network models have achieved quite a record of success such as pattern recognition, object classification, decoding of continuous speech, recognition of handwritten characters, and the learning of English verbs," White said. "To my knowledge, nobody has attempted to use these models in an economic context. My intent is to see if I can apply them to improve economic forecasts."

Wayne will use his Guggenheim to continue his study of the 16th century playwright and author, Ben Jonson.

"I maintain he has not been understood in the 20th century because of certain biases in the aesthetic tradition," Wayne said. "The book will be a study of all of his plays, poems, masques and critical writings."

Kitcher, internationally known for his work in the philosophy of science, will spend the next year writing a book on the study of progress and rationality in science.

"I am trying to understand what scientific progress is, and the role of reasoning in experimentation and theory construction," Kitcher said. "This is an attempt to write about general issues in the philosophy of science in a way that will be accessible to philosophers of science, historians of science, and sociologists of science, as well as to scientists themselves."

Kitcher recently won the Imre Lakatos Award for the outstanding book in the philosophy of science, from the London School of Economics and Political Science, for his book "Vaulting Ambition: Sociobiology and the Quest for Human Nature."

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