



***REPORT TO THE UNIVERSITY SENATE***

TO: University Senate

FROM: Minghua Zhang, Interim Provost and Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs  
Distinguished Professor in School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences

DATE: Monday, February 3, 2020

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***Robert Frey Inducted into 2020 CEAS Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame***

Robert J. Frey has been chosen as the 2020 inductee to the Stony Brook University College of Engineering and Applied Sciences Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame. The Hall of Fame was established in 2017 to recognize and honor alumni who have demonstrated exceptional success in their field and served as an inspiration to past and future innovators. Graduating with both his BS and PhD in Applied Mathematics and Statistics from Stony Brook, Dr. Frey is the fourth alumnus to be honored.

Dr. Frey has nearly 30 years of experience as an executive and applied scientist in both the private and public sectors. His last 20 years have focused on the management, research, and development of all phases of securities trading including mathematical modeling, portfolio management, trading strategy, order-execution systems, marketing and the trading desk.

Dr. Frey will be officially inducted into the CEAS Hall of Fame on Thursday, April 2, at Stony Brook's Annual Engineering Ball at Flowerfield in St. James, NY. For ticket and sponsorship information, please call (631) 632-4126 or email [Eng\\_HallofFame@stonybrook.edu](mailto:Eng_HallofFame@stonybrook.edu).

***February Provost's Lecture Series***

**Staging Innocence: Erle Stanley Gardner's *Court of Last Resort* and the Imaginative Landscapes of Frontier Justice in Post-War America**

Ian Burney is Professor of History at the University of Manchester's Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine. He is the author of *Bodies of Evidence: Medicine and the Politics of the English Inquest* (Johns Hopkins, 2000), *Poison, Detection and the Victorian Imagination* (Manchester, 2006), and, with Neil Pemberton, *Murder and the Making of English CSI* (Johns Hopkins, 2016). With Chris Hamlin, he has edited a collection of essays entitled *Global Forensic Cultures: Making Fact and Justice in the Modern Era* (Johns Hopkins, 2019). For the 2019-20 academic year, he is working on his "history of innocence" as a fellow at the National Humanities Center in North Carolina. In May 2019, he was also awarded a fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation to pursue this work.

*Abstract:* We live in an age of innocence consciousness. Since the first US case of post-conviction DNA exoneration in 1989, national advocacy organizations have championed the cause of potentially innocent prisoners, raised public awareness, and promoted policy reform.

These developments have been hailed as the dawn of a new moral, legal and scientific order – an "innocence revolution" – driven by a unique set of contemporary forces: principled critique criminal justice bias, media advocacy, and the declarative power of forensic genomics. But, of course, the pursuit of innocence has a history, and this talk will consider one of its more colorful chapters – a post-war experiment in the public pursuit of justice driven by Erle Stanley Gardner's *Court of Last Resort*. Best known today as the creator of Perry Mason, the intrepid attorney who successfully cleared underdogs caught up in false criminal charges, in 1948 Gardner established his "Court" as a group of handpicked freelance "experts" in law and criminal investigation charged with investigating possible cases of wrongful conviction. Its work was publicized in feature articles in one of America's leading popular men's magazines – the *Argosy*. This talk will focus on the relationship between Gardner's initial conceptualization of his project and the representational space in which this conception was articulated. For his Court to succeed, it required an engaged public following, and in turn the means of achieving this depended on the nature of the "public" being solicited. As Burney will argue, the generic features of the post-war men's magazine industry presented Gardner with a well-specified set of textual and visual themes from which he might forge links between individual readers and his projected collective cause. Burney will focus on one such trope, one that was a staple of this publishing genre, but one that also resonated well beyond it: the spirit of the Western frontier. Through an analysis of the Court's first published case – featuring a shoot-out set in the Southern Californian desert – he will show how the frontier figured at once as a physical space and as a site for conceiving and acting out a set of highly stylized values that Gardner sought to associate with his quest for an authentic version of American liberty and justice.

This event will be held on Thursday, February 6 at 4:00 pm in Wang Center, Lecture Hall 1. It is co-sponsored by the Department of History.

### ***NSF Data Science Workshop***

On January 9 and 10, the Department of Technology and Society hosted a national workshop entitled "Data Science Across the Undergraduate Curriculum: University-Industry Online Case Studies on Applications of Data Science." The explosion of data that are derived from numerous sources (technology studies, business/industry transactions, social media, environmental and health monitoring, energy studies, educational interventions, games and other entertainment industries, and other areas) is impacting research, design, manufacturing, marketing, and many workplace practices. Colleges and universities, working in close collaboration with industries, need to better prepare undergraduate students-regardless of major field-to gather, analyze and use data effectively to improve processes. The workshop had two major objectives: 1) Review the national landscape on major online resources for the learning and teaching of data science across the undergraduate curriculum. 2) Lay out initial plans for developing frameworks for doing curricular design, facilitating learning environments, and doing assessments in the context of online case studies on applications of data science. For more information about the event, please visit <https://sites.google.com/view/nsf-data-science-workshop/>.

### ***SBU-Led Team to Teach AI Systems to Understand and Respond Like Humans***

Department of Computer Science faculty members, Niranjan Balasubramanian (PI) and Minh Hoai Nguyen (Co-PI) along with PhD graduate students Heeyoung Kwon and Mahnaz Koupaee, and researchers from the University of Texas-Austin, the University of Maryland Baltimore County and the US Naval Academy, have received a \$4.2 million DARPA KAIROS (Knowledge-directed Artificial Intelligence Reasoning Over Schemas) award for the project, “Structured Generative Models for Multi-modal Schema Learning.”

The researchers plan to design new machine learning algorithms that can combine information from news and videos to understand how to determine which events are core to a situation and which are incidental. Based on the human ability to understand real-world scenarios using common-sense expectations, this research aims at creating AI systems that can use a similar process to predict what is likely to happen and generate an appropriate response.

The cross-institution team assembled for this 54-month project includes some of the leading researchers in the field of learning event knowledge. They seek to create an AI system that can learn automatically from this type of rich common-sense knowledge about events from multimodal data: text, audio transcripts and videos. This project’s predictive-tracking tools will automate this process and help analysts decide when to provide critical services to the general population.

### ***Javits Center Renovation Project Update***

Jacob K. Javits Center is one of the main lecture halls on Stony Brook campus. Starting in Summer 2021, the building will be closed for a major renovation. For up-to-date information on this project, please visit [www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/javits](http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/javits).