

# Princeton University

HONORS FACULTY MEMBERS  
RECEIVING EMERITUS STATUS



*May 2016*

The biographical sketches were written by staff and colleagues in the departments of those honored.

# CONTENTS

## *Faculty Members Receiving Emeritus Status 2016*

Scott Gordon Burnham . . . . .	3
Edward James Champlin . . . . .	6
Douglas Wells Clark . . . . .	10
Ronald J. Comer . . . . .	13
John Madison Cooper . . . . .	15
Angus Stewart Deaton . . . . .	18
Paul Joseph DiMaggio . . . . .	22
Robert A. Freidin . . . . .	25
John Richard Gott III . . . . .	28
Abdellah Hammoudi . . . . .	30
Nancy Weiss Malkiel . . . . .	34
Kirk T. McDonald . . . . .	36
Ignacio Rodríguez-Iturbe . . . . .	40
Jerome Silbergeld . . . . .	43
P. Adams Sitney . . . . .	46
Szymon Suckewer . . . . .	49
Ronald Edward Surtz . . . . .	52
Robert Daniel Willig . . . . .	55

# EDWARD JAMES CHAMPLIN



Edward (Ted) J. Champlin, the Cotsen Professor of the Humanities, will advance to emeritus status on July 1, 2016. In baseball, one speaks of the “40-40 Club” to highlight the all-around excellence of players who hit forty home runs and steal forty bases in a single season. Ted’s achievements add a new, academic dimension to that metric. During his forty-one years as a member of the Department of Classics, he has hit for power with forty published articles (so far), and taught over forty different courses, establishing him as one of our most versatile, popular, and influential classroom presences. His six years as chair and two terms as head of Butler College add further distinction to a career that exemplifies multifaceted scholarly excellence.

Though born in New York, Ted moved with his family to Toronto at the age of one and was raised and educated in that city. He earned his B.A. in modern history and M.A. from the University of Toronto and went on to the University of Oxford, then basking in a particularly golden era for the study of Roman history, where he earned his D.Phil. in 1976. Hallmarks of the Oxford approach included extreme philological rigor, the imaginative use of literary texts as historical documents, and a meticulous tracing of networks of individuals and institutions, all conveyed with distinctive stylistic artistry. Ted’s first book, *Fronto and Antonine Rome* (Harvard University Press, 1980), a revision of his dissertation, shows all these qualities. (Indeed, Sir Ronald Syme, the modern Tacitus, praised his work, characteristically, as “neat, clear, and powerful.”) M. Cornelius Fronto was a virtuoso rhetorician of the second century BCE and tutor to the emperor Marcus Aurelius. In 1815, a collection of his letters was found written under a tenth-century transcription of the Acts of the Council of Chalcedon in the Ambrosian Library in Milan. Despite, or perhaps because of, their striking and unexpected rediscovery, the author of these letters was thereafter neglected when he was not actively despised. Latinists hated his anything-but-classical style, while the triviality of his subjects disgusted historians. Ted’s achievement in this book is to give a thick description not

only of the cultural and political worlds depicted in this collection, but of the figure of Fronto himself as an actor within them. Still an important resource for understanding what Edward Gibbon called “the happiest age of mankind,” Ted’s book follows in the tradition of his own great teacher Sir Fergus Millar’s work on Cassius Dio, offering an example of how rich a historical picture patient and sympathetic reading can find in a literary work that seems to speak to the pressing interests neither of its own time nor ours.

If Fronto had been judged a trivial writer, the subject of Ted’s next book, *Final Judgments: Duty and Emotion in Roman Wills* (Princeton University Press, 1991), might have seemed rebarbatively obscure. Legal Latin is practically a foreign language even to most classicists. And that is only the beginning of the challenges raised by this body of evidence. As Ted points out, no complete Roman will survives from antiquity. They must be reconstructed from an assemblage of legal opinions, papyrological evidence, and inscriptions. Yet one of the most notable accomplishments of Ted’s book is to look beyond technical problems to reveal all that wills can tell us about the motives and desires of Romans of many more classes than could express themselves in “literary” texts. For an overview of the impact of this work, I quote the review written by Brent Shaw: “Indeed Champlin’s study provokes so many suggestive ideas for historians of Roman society that reviewing it is a model of frustration. A brief notice such as this cannot adequately describe the frequency with which any sympathetic reader will discover insights into central aspects of Roman social structure, behavior, and, not least importantly, values and emotions. Suffice it to say that it is as good a demonstration as one could reasonably demand of what can be achieved in the historical sociology of the Roman law.”

For his next monograph, *Nero* (Harvard University Press, 2003), Ted turned from some of the least accessible material in the field of Roman history to its most recognizable megastar, the emperor Nero. While his previous books had already been models of accessibility, his biography of Nero aimed at once to advance new claims of importance to historians and to capture the imagination of a broader readership. It argues that the theatrical excesses that mark Nero’s career are just that. Rather than being the product simply of the collective prejudices of our sources to be bracketed in any evaluation of Nero’s historical actions, the deeds that shocked and fascinated both contemporaries

and later readers should rather be treated as performances that deliberately evoke the world of mythology. As Harvard's Kathleen Coleman described in a review, "Champlin weaves a stunningly cohesive picture of a man of unlimited power confined only by the theatrical capacity of his imagination. . . . Nero and Champlin share the same dexterity in persuading audiences of the logic of their vision; their dual act will be very hard for the next biographer of Nero to follow."

For all their differences of subject and method, these three books are unified by characteristics that will be immediately recognizable to all who have known Ted as a teacher. Perhaps the most important of these characteristics, beyond even their learning and their clarity, is the empathy that lies at the root of all his scholarship, an effort to recover the lost intentions of the real people who populated the distant world of Rome, from the modest landowners whose wills revealed "what mattered to them and why," to the emperor Nero himself. Ted's Roman history lectures introduced generations of students to this world. Given the perennially broad appeal of these courses, probably more Princeton undergraduates during these last forty years learned what they know about the classics from Ted than any other faculty member. His energy, accessibility, and talent for making difficult subjects clear have been both emulated and admired. As one student put it, with Champlinesque concision, "this was teaching like it's supposed to be."

Ted's consideration for what matters to people and why also explains the profound gratitude he has inspired through his service to the University. As head of Butler College, he described himself as a "hands-on" leader who made a point of getting to know students and staff as individuals. During his six years as chair of the classics department, he always took most satisfaction simply from the things he was able to do to improve the lives of colleagues and students — and the records of the department reveal a tireless dedication to this purpose. He has also volunteered his time to read two recent translations of ancient epics for audiobooks for the blind and dyslexic.

The next dynasty of Roman emperors seemed very boring after Nero left the stage, but we at least can look forward to Ted's continued presence as a scholar. His duties as chair left him little time to work on what may prove his most important book of all, the

study of Augustus' much-maligned successor, Tiberius. Building on the approach developed in his *Nero*, Ted will use that emperor's own fascination with the cultural power of myth as a guide for interpreting his actions. The completion of this project will become a new milestone in a career devoted in equal measures to teaching, scholarship, and service.