



Nussbaum Receives Prestigious Prize for Law and Philosophy

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Martha Nussbaum, the Ernst Freund Distinguished Service Professor of Law and Ethics in the Divinity School, Philosophy and the Law School, has been awarded the 2009 Henry M. Phillips Prize in Jurisprudence.

The American Philosophical Society, the oldest learned society in United States, bestows the Phillips Prize in recognition of outstanding lifetime contributions to the field of jurisprudence.

Nussbaum, only the 22nd winner in the Prize's 121-year history, was selected "in recognition of her intellectual leadership in philosophy, law and religion, including in particular her development and application of a 'capabilities approach' to justice in a variety of contexts." Those include women's rights in developing countries and worldwide, of the disabled and the impaired, and animal species.

The Phillips Prize originally acknowledged the most important publications in the field of science and philosophy of jurisprudence. Nussbaum is the first woman to win the Phillips Prize since it became a lifetime achievement award in 2000, and only the second since its foundation in 1888. Biographer Catherine Drinker Bowen was selected in 1957.

"For me it is an important recognition of the importance of philosophy for the study of law," Nussbaum said. "I have no law degree, unlike the other recipients, and my contribution to law is made through philosophical work on justice.

"I think it's very important to establish that law is now interdisciplinary, not only because of the outstanding contributions made by the law-and-economics movement, but also because of the input of the philosophers."

The last two prize winners have been from the University's Law School. Cass Sunstein, a faculty member from 1981 to 2008 and now the Harry Kalven Visiting Professor of Law, won the award in 2007. Other winners since the prize became a lifetime achievement award are Louis Henkin, current chairman of the Center for the Study of Human Rights at [Columbia University](#); Frank Michelman of Harvard Law School; and Bruce Ackerman of Yale Law School.

Benjamin Franklin founded the American Philosophical Society in 1743. "The first drudgery of settling new colonies is now pretty well over," he then wrote, "and there are many in every province in circumstances that set them at ease, and afford leisure to cultivate the finer arts, and improve the common stock of knowledge."

Distinguished early members included George Washington, John Adams, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, Thomas Paine, Benjamin Rush, James Madison and John Marshall.

Nussbaum plans to donate the \$20,000 prize to the Law School in support of a new summer internship program that sends students abroad, to work with legal organizations on human rights issues.

MEDIA CONTACT

Sarah Galer
773.702.8365
sgaler@uchicago.edu

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