



The University of Chicago
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
5828 South University Avenue
Chicago, IL 60637

May 6, 2019

Provost Persis Drell

Stanford University

Cc: jeff.raikes@raikesfoundation.org, chair of Stanford Board of Trustees

Dear Provost Drell,

Recently I heard about Stanford's decision to stop its annual subsidy of Stanford University Press, which most likely will cause it eventually to cease its academic publications. My university is home to one of the finest University Presses in the land, which Chicago is proud to subsidize, not only because of the public good of scholarship (although that is reason enough) but also because the Press contributes mightily to the university's reputation and image. Your decision to (in effect) shut down Stanford University Press speaks volumes about the true values of Stanford University, and hence contributes likewise to your own reputation and image. Most of the social science and humanities disciplines are still very much book-first disciplines and will keenly notice this decision, both practically and symbolically.

Last year I sent my top graduate student to Stanford as a new assistant professor. I wonder now whether I gave him good advice, and whether I will continue to give such advice to my future students.

Regards,

John F. Padgett

Professor, University of Chicago

Also: courtesy Professor, Departments of Sociology and of history, University of Chicago

ex-Research Professor, Santa Fe Institute

Member, Institute for Advanced Studies